

PRWC 1- "Wild Beginning"

*"Oh, my baby, when you're older
Maybe then you'll understand
You have angels that stands around you shoulders
'Cause at times in life you need a loving hand"
~ "Come To Jesus" Mindy Smith*

Six months. Well, six months and 23 days if you want to be exact. That's how long Starlight Academy had been open, how long I had been attending Reefside University, and how long it had been since I had seen my boyfriend, Jay.

I can't say life had been that bad. I actually enjoyed working with the students at Starlight. My group was making more progress everyday. Of course there had been changes I had to make in myself. For one this was the first time I hadn't had Melody or my other friends around. That was the hardest part. I also saw all these kids with issues I never dreamed of. Abuse...drug use...the list goes on. It was very taxing at first but I got into the swing of things. Living at the Academy wasn't so bad either...except for Julie, my annoying room mate (more about her later). But the real highlight of my life at Starlight was my group. My Wildcats (every group at Starlight had a name. That was ours.)

First was April Snyder. She was 16 and a real hard case. April never knew her birth father. When her mother remarried it was to a low life scumbag who did drugs and eventually raped April. She turned to drugs herself as her way of coping. Eventually she ran away. When she was caught by authorities for streetwalking her mom was forced to do something. She took their lawyer's advice and sent her here, it was the only way to keep her out of juvenile hall (juvie). She's been here for all 6 months of the school's existence and she's made amazing progress.

Next we have Jesse Foster. He's 16 also and unlike the others he wasn't abused nor was he self destructive. Jesse actually had a very loving family at one time. That was before his parents were killed in an auto accident. After that he was sent to live with his aunt. She didn't want him but she did want the money that came with him (his parents had a great life insurance policy). She spent 2 years neglecting him before she heard about Starlight as a cheap alternative to having him in her way. Most of Jesse's issues deal with abandonment and self esteem. Jesse has only been here 3 months and slowly, but steadily, he's making progress.

Then there's Chris Hayes. He's only 15 but his troubles run deep. His father was very abusive to his mother. He grew up seeing that and ended up a violent person himself. He also saw his father's constant drinking and when he got into high school he starting drinking, experimenting with drugs, and even went as far as to get involved with gangs. Chris has been here for 5 months and...well he's still a work in progress. I haven't given up hope though.

Finally, we have Tiffany Jennings. She's 14 and on the surface you would think this girl had it all. Her parents were both very important CEOs of major corporations. Tiffany could have anything and everything she wanted, except time with them. They would always be busy with work functions and they would give Tiffany money to keep her satisfied. Eventually she started to think her parents didn't love her. She believed it was because she wasn't perfect enough. She started to purge her food in order to fit the perfect model description. When that didn't get their attention she fell into deep despair and didn't know how to deal. Her answer was to turn to cutting to release her feelings. When she passed out from malnutrition the doctor recommended sending her to us. She's only been here for 2 months and it's hard to measure her progress because she still hasn't let go of her perky front and let us in on her deeper problems too many times. I'm confident that will come with time though.

Remember I mentioned my roommate Julia? Yeah, her. She has a troubled past herself. I guess she was abused by her stepfather and she ended up doing drugs and running away after she tried to off him with a piece of sports equipment. She got a scholarship to a school that was like this one and it turned her life around. Working here is her way of giving that gift to someone else. I respect her for what she's doing. I just find her to be very annoying.

I'd have to say my best friend since I moved here would have to be Josh McKnight. He's the son of two of my Mom's former team mates. Josh also attends Reefside U and he helps out at Starlight quite often. He's a really cool guy and is a

total blast to hang with.

And that covers mostly everyone around here...except my family of course. My parents seem very happy with their work here. They are head masters of Starlight. They are also in charge of the Wildcats most of the time since I'm at school most of the day Monday-Friday. My baby sister is 3 now, she's talking somewhat. She's walking (and as my mom told me, she did learn to walk without me pushing her) and she brings so much joy into lots of the student's lives. She's a spunky kid. You can tell she belongs in this family.

Today happened to be a Saturday and that meant no classes. It also meant it was hiking day and I got to spend more time with my kids.

"How much further?" Tiffany whined.

"Don't start Tiff. We haven't even gone a mile yet." April said.

"You can't expect any less from Princess." Chris said.

"I'm not a Princess." Tiffany said getting defensive.

"Whatever you say...Princess." Chris said laughing.

"Don't start you guys. Tiff, you don't need to complain. It will only make the hike seem longer." I said.

"How long is it today?" Tiffany asked.

"You know the drill. 3 miles each way for a total of 6 miles. Today is no different." I said.

"Ugh." Tiffany whined.

"Don't start Tiff." I said as we continued our hike.

"We're going to have to listen to her all day!" April said covering her ears.

"Probably." I said as I heard a voice come over my two way radio.

"Harley, come in..." Mom said.

"Mom? I'm here. Go ahead." I said into the radio.

"How far out are you?" she asked.

"About a mile or so." I said.

"I figured about that. Turn around and get back. We have a new student coming in and I am placing him in your group. You need to help us with introduction and admission." Mom said.

"Ok, it'll take me about an hour." I said.

"I know. That's fine. That's about when he'll be here." Mom said.

"Ok, got it. Harley out." I said putting the radio away. "Well Tiff, looks like your prayers were answered. We're turning back." I said.

"Why? I couldn't understand what was being said on the radio." Tiffany asked.

"We're getting a new student in our group and I have to help check him in." I said.

"What? A new kid? Ugh, just great." April said.

"April, don't be that way. I want you to welcome the new kid. Remember, you were new once." I said.

"Yeah, whatever." April said.

"Let's head back." I said getting everyone to turn around.

An hour later we got back to the Academy.

"Ok guys, you all can have some free time. Stay in the lodge though so I can find you when I need to." I instructed.

"Fine by me." Tiffany said walking into the lodge. Once I saw they were all in I walked over to my parents' office.

"OK, I'm here." I said.

"Good, just in time. We just got a call. Your new student is 5 minutes away." Dad said.

"Ok. What's his name? I could use some background info." I said.

"Ok. His name is Derek Hall. He's 17 and he's here because of being busted for drugs. He was an athlete at school and had good grades until the past couple of year. Something happened in him and he changed almost overnight according to his coach and teachers. Our job is to find out what." Dad said.

I nodded. "Ok, got it." I said as there was a knock on the door.

"Come in." Dad called.

A social worker walked in with this guy. He was tall and had blonde hair. He looked like your typical jock. Actually he sort of reminded me of my friend Alex, except Alex never was messed up.

"Welcome to Starlight Academy." Mom said standing up to greet the boy.

“We can take it from here. Thank you.” Dad said as the social worker left.

“I’m Michelle Bradley and this is my husband Hunter Bradley. We’re the head masters to the Academy. That is our daughter Harley Bradley and she will be your group leader.” Mom said.

“How sweet. It’s a family business.” Derek said.

“We like to think it’s pretty nice. Now we have to get you checked in. Harley, show Derek to his room and find one of the males to do the search.” Mom said.

“I thought you guys did the search and seize.” I said.

“I trust the dorm monitors to do it. I’ve had them do the last few and it’s working out well. Hunter trained some of the staff to do it. I have to finish his paper work and Hunter is going to wait in the clinic so Derek can get his physical.”

Mom said.

“OK. Derek, this way.” I said as I walked out with the new kid behind me. “I think you’ll find it’s not so bad here once you get used to it. I’m not sure if you’ve been informed of all the rules. We do follow a strict schedule here. We also don’t allow drinking, drugs, or sex obviously. We also monitor any public displays of affection to make sure it is not upsetting to anyone. We assign chore duty and there is allotted time for them to be done. One Sunday a month everyone has to help deep clean the lodge and dorms. If you have any questions I’m your group leader. You can ask me or another group leader or monitor. Any questions?” I asked.

“No. I think I’m good.” He said.

“Ok...” I said as I saw Josh. “Hey, Josh! Wanna do me a favor?”

“Har, what’s up?” he asked.

“I need someone to do the search and seize on Derek here.” I said.

“Ah, a new kid. Welcome to Starlight. I’m Josh McKnight.” Josh said.

“Derek Hall. So what’s your job around here?” Derek asked.

“Um, I don’t have an official title. I just help out.” Josh said.

“How noble of you.” Derek said.

“Anyway, can you do the search?” I asked Josh again.

“Of course.” Josh said as he started walking with us. “Did you hear Coach Daniels quit?”

“What? Why?” I asked. Coach Daniels had been our sports coordinator.

“Because Mark Williams hit him in the head with a baseball for making him run laps. Coach said he couldn’t take anymore of...well let’s just say he was angry.” Josh said. I guess the Coach said something insulting about the students and Josh didn’t want Derek hearing it.

“Wow. We need a new coach.” I said.

“Yeah, I’ll say.” Josh said.

“I wonder why my parents didn’t tell me about this.” I said.

“New student stress.” Josh said as we walked in the dorm.

“Ok, you’ll sleep in this bunk. Josh is going to check your bags now and make sure you don’t have any contraband on you.” I said stepping back so Josh could work.

“You think I’m stupid enough to bring anything to a place like this?” Derek asked.

“It’s procedure.” Josh said as he started the search.

“Yeah...right.” Derek said as he stood back and let himself get searched.

When Josh was done with the search (we found nothing to seize) I took Derek to the clinic.

“Ok, go on in. My dad is in there with the doctor. I’ll be right here when you get done.” I said.

“Yeah...fine.” Derek said going in.

15 minutes later he came out with Dad.

“Ok, surprisingly his clothes are appropriate and fit dress code so that’s not an issue...he’s all yours Har. You can take him with the rest of your group now.” Dad said.

“Great. Let’s go Derek.” I said leading him to the lodge. We got in and I found the others all sitting around playing cards.

“Good, glad to see you all making an effort to act as a group. Guys, this is our newest Wildcat, Derek Hall. Derek, this is Tiffany Jennings, Jesse Foster, Chris Hayes, and April Snyder.” I said.

“Hey.” He said.

“Hey Derek. Welcome to Starlight!” Tiffany said in her normal perky voice.

“Yeah, thanks.” Derek said sitting down.

“Ok, well it looks like our hike isn’t gonna happen today. I’m sure you’re beyond disappointed. Instead we’re going to do a group talk until lunch.” I said

“Ugh...” April groaned.

“Hey, it’s better than hiking.” Tiffany said.

“Ok, first off, Jesse, you’re going to be Derek’s buddy for the first week. Show him around, make sure he gets adjusted.” I said.

“Ok, not a problem.” Jesse said softly.

“Now, let’s start with the emotion circle. Derek, what we do here is everyone goes around and tells how they feel in one word then we go back and elaborate. You’ll catch on fast. Tiff, since you’re so keen on this you can start.” I said.

“OK. I feel happy. Chris...”

“I feel...tired. April...”

“I feel annoyed. Jesse...”

“I feel nervous. Harley...”

“I feel excited. Derek...”

“I feel confused.” Derek finished.

“Ok good job. Now Tiff, why do you feel happy?” I asked.

“I feel happy because we don’t have to hike today. Chris...”

“I feel tired because we’re never allowed to sleep in here. April...”

“I feel annoyed because I hate these emotion circles. Jesse...”

“I feel nervous about being Derek’s buddy because I don’t want to mess up. Harley...”

“I feel excited because we have a new Wildcat. Derek...”

“I feel confused because I’m still trying to figure out what the hell is going on here.” Derek finished.

“Derek, we don’t use language like that here.” I said.

“Ok, heck then.” Derek corrected with a hint of sarcasm.

“Thank you.” I said.

“Har, your dad wants you.” Josh said coming in.

“Oh, ok. Can you hang with them for a bit?” I asked.

“Sure, no problem.” Josh said sitting down. I got up and ran into my parents’ office.

“What’s up?” I asked.

“Can you handle getting lunch out by yourself today?” Dad asked.

“Sure. Why?” I asked.

“Because Felicity is sick so your mom had to take her to the clinic and I have to come up with some lessons plans for Monday.” Dad said.

“Lesson plans? For what?” I asked.

“I’m the new coach for now.”

“You? Why?”

“Because your mother won’t let me hire the one person who’s already applied.”

“Who’s that?”

“Conner McKnight.”

“Josh’s dad?”

“Yeah.”

“Well he’s a great coach at RHS. If he wants to work here wouldn’t that be great?” I asked.

“That’s what I thought but your mom won’t let me hire him.” Dad said.

“I am not working side by side with Conner McKnight for the rest of my life. Not a chance. Hell will freeze over before I hire him.” Mom said.

“Mich, you’re acting like your 15. Conner is a good coach and he’s willing to work here. We’d be lucky to have him.” Dad said.

“No, no, no, and oh yeah, NO!” Mom said.

“Don’t worry about lunch Dad. I got it covered. I hope you figure out the coach thing.” I said as I walked out. When I got out I noticed the sky was darker. A storm must be heading in.

I got in to make lunch. I watched my Wildcats from a distance. I was truly excited to have Derek. I just hoped he'd fit in with this bunch...I hoped I could help.

*"She wants to go home
But nobody's home
That's where she lies
Broken inside
No place to go
No place to go
To dry her eyes
Broken inside"*
~ "Nobody's Home" Avril Lavigne

"Bed check." I said walking into one of the girls' rooms. Everyone was in their beds. "Ok, lights out. Goodnight girls." I said.

"Night Harley." Tiffany said.

"Yeah, goodnight." April said.

"Night." The rest of the girls chorused as I turned out the light.

That was the last room so I went up to my room. My roommate, Julia, was already back from her checks. We each had two rooms to check on. I went and sat on my bed. I tried to ignore Julia. She wasn't my favorite person in the world.

"So, how goes the work with the newest Wildcat?" she asked me.

I sighed, "Derek? Um, well...it goes."

"He seems normal enough...typical jock guy." She said.

"It's a cover."

"Duh it's a cover. If it wasn't he wouldn't be here."

"Well excuse me for pointing out the obvious." I said sarcastically.

"You're excused."

"Just leave me alone." I said.

"What's wrong Airy?" Julia asked using my nickname. She started calling me "Airy" because she said I reminded her of Ariel, the princess in "The Little Mermaid".

"Nothing Ju Ju." I said using her nickname. I chose that name for her because she reminded me of that alien, Jar Jar Binks, in Star Wars.

"You're snappy tonight even for you." Julia replied.

"I just don't feel like answering 20 questions." I said as I braided my hair and lay down.

"I wasn't asking 20 questions. I was just trying to make conversation."

"Whatever."

"You know you have major issues."

"I do not!"

"You do too. See I think you still have trust issues stemming back to when you found out you had two dads."

"Oh god, I can't believe I'm hearing this. You're one to talk. You're the one who tried to take out your dad with a baseball bat."

"Yeah, and I ended up at New Starts to deal with that. You didn't get any professional help."

"You think you know everything about me don't you? What if I told you I did get professional help? Would that shock you? I bet so because you think you know it all."

"You had professional help? Yeah right. Just for dealing with your Dads?"

"For your information I tried to fuc...I tried to kill myself and I almost succeeded. I ended up in counseling after that. Guess you didn't know it all after all did you? I'm out of here." I said getting up and leaving the room leaving a very shocked Julia behind.

I walked to the lake that was on site and sat down and looked out at it. I was really missing Jay. I didn't even know if we were still together. We had barely talked in months. I missed Mel too. She was my best friend and I missed running to her house. I missed all my friends. We had finally gotten close again now we were all spread out at different colleges. I

even missed Aaron. Now that was weird to admit.

I was snapped out of my thoughts by foot steps. I turned around and saw Josh.

“What are you doing here?” I asked.

“I could ask the same of you.” Josh said sitting next to me

“I needed to think.”

“Me too.”

“What did you need to think about?”

“Stuff.”

“Yeah, me too.” I said.

“Shouldn’t you be in the dorm?”

“Nah. I’m a free agent. I’m not a student here. My parents wouldn’t care.”

“What does your mom have against my dad?”

“I don’t know. I think they have this rivalry thing that goes way back.”

“She needs to let it go.”

“I know. My mom doesn’t let go of anything easily though. That’s just how she is.”

“So why do you look so sad?” Josh asked.

“I’m just missing my friends.”

“I’m your friend.”

“You’re all I have here.”

“What about Julia?”

“Ju Ju? As if. She’s anything but a friend. She’s a major annoyance.”

“She isn’t that bad.”

“You don’t have to live with her.”

“True.”

“So what’s new?” I asked for lack of anything better to say.

“My Uncle Eric is coming in next week with my cousin to check out Reefside U.”

“Cool. Is Eric moving back to Reefside?”

“I don’t know. Maybe.”

“That’s cool.” I said.

“So what’s up with the Britney look?” Josh asked as he messed with my pigtail braids.

“Something different.”

“It looks good on you.” He said.

“Thanks.” I said smiling.

“You’re welcome.” He said as he leaned towards me. I swear he was about to kiss me when we heard someone clear their throat. I turned around and saw Julia.

“So how come no one invited me to the party?” Julia asked as she sat on the other side of Josh.

“Because it’s a private party. No alien life forms allowed.” I said.

“Then what are you doing here?” Julia asked.

I was about to attack. Since I found out about the whole Sataurian thing I was a bit defensive about being called an alien. I then reminded myself that Julia knew nothing about that so I just calmed down. “Whatever.” I mumbled.

“Oh great comeback Airy.”

“Stuff it Ju Ju.”

“Girls, girls...do I need to separate you?” Josh teased in his best teacher voice.

“No sir.” We said mockingly said in unison. We all cracked up laughing.

“Hey, Ai...Harley, I’m sorry.” Julia said.

I nodded. “It’s ok.”

“Did I miss something?” Josh asked.

“Nothing important.” I said.

“You girls should get back to the dorm. Both dorm monitors shouldn’t be gone.” Josh said.

“He’s right.” I said.

“Ok, let’s go back.” Julia said.

“Goodnight Josh. Thanks for the talk.” I said hugging him.

“Goodnight Har. Night Jules.”

“Night Josh.” Julia said as we headed for the dorm and Josh headed for his car to go to his home. He lived with his parents still.

“So how long have you had a thing for Josh?” Julia asked

“What?!” I cried.

“You know you do.”

“I do not!”

“Oh you so do!”

“He’s just a friend!” I cried.

“A friend with benefits?”

“Oh shut up Ju Ju!”

“Whatever you say Airy.” Julia said as we got back into the room.

I sighed as I got in bed. I thought back to the moment before Julia got there. Josh was so going to kiss me. And I planned on letting him. Why? What did I feel for him? Was Julia right? Did I have a thing for Josh? Of course not! I still loved Jay. Right? ‘Ugh! Forget it! I’m going to sleep!’ I thought to myself as I pulled the blanket over my head and went to sleep.

The next morning I was up at 6:30 to get ready so that I could get the students up at 7 sharp then get myself to class on time.

“Ok! Everyone up!” I said at 7 to the girls in room B. Then I went to room D and did the same.

“God, this is unfair. Can’t we sleep in just once?” April moaned.

“Sorry Ape. No can do. Up, now.” I said leaving the girls to get ready. I ran downstairs and grabbed a bagel. I saw my dad in the kitchen.

“Morning Har.” He said.

“Morning Dad. Gotta run.”

“Have a good day. See you this afternoon.” He said.

“Ok, see ya.” I said kissing his cheek as I ran out the door. I got in my car and drove to Reefsides U.

Hunter

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After Harley left I got ready for the day. I would be coaching since Michelle still refused to let me hire Conner. I didn’t see her problem with it. He was qualified and willing but she was being insistent that it was a bad idea. I had to find some way to convince her otherwise because I couldn’t handle coaching, on top of everything else, for long.

I had decided that flag football would be something fun for the kids to do. I pulled out the flags and the footballs and the goal cones then went in to see to it that everyone was eating breakfast. I walked over to the Wildcats’ table.

“Good morning Wildcats.” I said.

“Morning Hunter.” They chorused.

“Tiffany, what did you eat this morning?” I asked.

“A bowl of oatmeal and 2 slices of buttered toast.” She replied.

“She did, we saw her.” Jesse added.

“OK, very good. Derek, how are you adjusting to Starlight?” I asked.

“Eh, it’s alright.” He said.

“Well, good. I look forward to talking to you more...for now I have to go get ready for football.” I said.

“Oh yeah, you’re the new coach right?” April asked.

“No, only temp.” I said.

“Yeah, until Michelle hires someone else.” Jesse said.

“In other words it’s like I said, you’re the new coach.” April laughed.

“Ha, ha. Watch it or I’ll make you run laps.” I said rolling my eyes as I went to get ready for the first class.

A couple of hours later I had the Wildcats and Cardinals.

“Ok guys, let’s get going. Wildcats, blue flags, Cardinals, red flags. I want a clean game, let’s go.” I said blowing the whistle. The kids got their flags on and the game started. April threw the ball to Chris who started to run it until he got flagged.

“First down, Wildcats.” I said as Chris got his flag and the game continued. Chris threw the ball to Tiffany who ran away at the sight of a ball coming at her. April jumped in and caught it.

“I knew Princess wouldn’t try to catch it.” April said as she ran down the field. She tried to pass it to Derek but it was intercepted by the Cardinals and they started the other way. Derek came running up from behind and tackled the guy and started beating the crap out of him. I ran over and pulled Derek off him.

“Derek, this is flag football, not tackle.” I said.

“He cheated!” Derek screamed.

“No he didn’t.” April said.

“All of you go to the lodge and wait there until I get back. Derek, my office now.” I said walking Derek to the office. Michelle wasn’t in there, which meant 1) she was with Felicity and 2) we REALLY needed a new coach ASAP.

I sat Derek down. “Ok, I want to know what your deal is. Why did you tackle Kevin back there?” I asked.

“Felt like it.” Derek said.

“Felt like it’ doesn’t fly here Derek. We’re a non-violent school, which is why we play flag ball. Now, I can’t force you to tell me what’s wrong but I would like it if you would.” I said.

“I have no deal. My parents didn’t want me and here I am. Good enough for you?”

“No, it’s not. I don’t buy that for a minute but I won’t push you. I will tell you that you’re on lunch duty today. Maybe washing dishes will get out some of that energy you had on the field.” I said.

“Whatever.” Derek said storming out of the office.

I sighed, this was going to be a hard one.

Harley

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“I wish I knew what my mom’s deal was. She won’t even entertain the idea of hiring your dad.” I said to Josh as we sat around in between classes.

“My mom is mad that he even applied. Your mom and my parents have some past issues or something obviously...I just wish I knew what.” Josh said.

“Maybe we should sit them all in group and make them talk it out.” I joked.

“Ha, ha. So how’s the new Wild Cat?” Josh asked.

“Derek? Getting him settled is a long process. He hasn’t let his front down yet.” I said.

“He will...give him time.”

“I know...I know.” I said.

“So what’s your next class?”

“History at 1:00.” I said. Josh and I were taking our lunch break together.

“Cool. Hey you gonna come to Cyberspace tonight?” Josh asked.

“Um, well...if I can. With Dad pulling coaching duty they’ve needed me to do extra work.” I said.

“Oh come on, Anna’s band is playing...I’m sure they’ll let you come.” Josh said.

I sighed, “I’ll try, I promise I’ll try.”

“Ok. Fair enough...you should head to class, you’ll be late.”

“Ugh, do I have to go?”

“Yes you do. What kind of example will that be for the Wild Cats if you skip class?”

“I won’t tell them.”

“Skipping class and lying? Good role modeling Har.”

“OK, ok...I’m going...see ya.” I said hugging Josh.

“See ya.” He said. I turned and headed to class.

Hunter

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“Michelle, this can’t keep up. Come on, Conner is an excellent coach with years of experience. We’re lucky someone like him applied.” I said.

“No. I said no and I meant it.”

“Why? Give me one good reason, just one, and I’ll drop it.”

“Because I said so! I don’t like Conner, I don’t want Conner around, and I don’t want to deal with him on a daily basis again.”

“Those are childish reasons. Here’s the deal Mich, I own half this school and so I get some say in what goes on here. If we don’t get a new coach in 24 hours I’m hiring Conner with or without your consent.”

“You wouldn’t...” she said

“Oh yes I would.” I said.

“Hunter! No!”

“Yes. We need a coach and Conner is good. Like I said, you have 24 hours to find someone else. End of discussion.” I said.

“Mommy...” Felicity said toddling in.

“Hey Liss.” Michelle said picking her up.

“Hungry.” Felicity said.

“Can you take her for lunch? I have paperwork to do.” Michelle said.

“Sorry, can’t. I have a class to coach. If there was someone else to do it I’d be happy to.” I said leaving the office. I couldn’t believe Michelle was being so childish about this. I mean I didn’t like Conner exactly but the fact was he’d be a great addition to the school. I made it to the field.

“Hey Wildcats.” I said.

“Hey Hunter.” Tiffany said brightly.

“Did you eat lunch?” I asked.

“Yes sir.” She said.

“Witnesses?” I asked.

“I saw her.” Jesse said.

“Yeah, she didn’t even go barf afterwards.” April said.

I sighed at April’s comment. “Good to hear. You’re improving everyday Tiff.”

“Unlike some of us.” April said looking at Chris.

“Don’t start with me.” Chris said.

“Oh, you got something to say to me homeboy? You think you’re so badass? I bet I’d take you easy if we were on the streets.” April said.

“A chick? Take me out? Sorry chicka, ain’t how that works.” Chris said.

“Enough you two. Where are the Windchasers? We need to start.” I said.

“I don’t think they’ll be coming.” April said smirking.

“What did you do?” I asked.

“Me? Nothing at all.” April replied.

“It’s that tone that worries me. Stay put, all of you. I’ll be back.” I said taking off to find the Windchasers. When I found them they were cleaning their dorms. Someone had flooded them, and I had a pretty good idea who. I told them to go ahead and skip class so they could clean it up then I went back to the Wildcats.

“Ok, someone used the garden hose to flood the Windchasers’ dorms, I want to know who and I want to know now.” I said.

“Wasn’t me.” Chris said.

“I didn’t think so, but I have a pretty good idea who it was...April?”

“Yes. It was me, ok?” April replied.

“Not ok. April, you’re on room restriction for 2 days.” I said.

“Like I care!” April cried as she ran for her dorm.

April

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I ran to my room and sat on my bed. I hated this school so much. I hated everything about it. I hated the perfect Bradley family...

Ok, not totally true...I was jealous of the Bradleys and I...ok, maybe I kinda liked it here...it was better than the streets

anyway, and going home wasn't an option. So why did I flood the Windchasers' room? I guess I wanted to get a rise out of Hunter. Everyone is always so peaceful. It's enough to drive a girl mad.

I looked around the room. Most of the girls had pictures of their families by their beds. Tiffany had a photo of her and her parents. I didn't. I didn't even have a father. Hell, I didn't even know who my father was. For that matter I may as well not have a mother...she doesn't even deserve that title...she's such a mess...more than I ever could be. I've never had a 'home' before. Even when Tiffany was going through her worst times she could go home. I couldn't. When I wanted to go home I had no where to go. Sure I had a house...more of a shack really...but it wasn't home. It was the place he abused me...I couldn't even sleep because I knew at any moment I might here the creaking of the door, warning me that he was coming. I guess Starlight really was the closest thing I ever had to a home...

Anyway, after sitting on my bed for awhile Michelle walked in.

"Hey April...what's the matter? Hunter told me you pulled a little prank on the Windchasers." She said.

"Yeah."

"Why?"

"Felt like it. Is that so hard to get?" I replied. Seriously, was that a hard concept to grasp?

"You know 'felt like it' doesn't fly here. Come on...why did you do it?"

I sighed, I broke so easily these days. I'd have to work on keeping my guard up, "I wanted a rise out of someone. Happy?"

"Why did you want a rise out of someone?"

"Ugh god! What is this? 20 question? It's the quiet...the peace...it's getting to me! You guys are always so calm, even when we lose it. I wanted to get a rise out of someone!"

"Is peace such a bad thing?"

"It's a foreign thing"

"Maybe you should get used to it."

"Why? So it can be taken the second I leave here? Thanks, but no thanks."

"It doesn't have to be that way."

"As long as you can't pick your mother, it does."

"April, I know you're angry but you're getting closer and closer to being an adult and then you can live your life however you choose."

"Sure...just like that."

"I can see I'm not getting anywhere right now. I'll be back later, for now you can work on cleaning up this dorm." Michelle said walking out.

PRWC 3- "The Birth of a Wild Force"

*"I am small
And the world is big
But I'm not afraid of anything"
~ "How Does It Feel?" Avril Lavigne*

After I got out of class I headed back to the Academy to see if I could go see Anna's band. I got there and went in my parents' office.

"I have a favor." I said.

"Ok, what?" Dad asked.

"I want to go to Cyberspace tonight and see Anna McKnight's band." I said.

"I don't have a problem with it." Dad said.

"Problem with what?" Mom asked coming in.

"Har wants to go to Cyberspace and see Anna McKnight's band tonight. You can cover her dorm checks for one night right?" Dad asked.

"Um...I guess so." Mom said.

"Mom, what's the matter? Every time you hear the name 'McKnight' you turn pale." I said.

"That's a very good question, what's the matter? Is there something that happened between you and Conner we don't know about?" Dad asked.

"No, of course not. I'm going to check on Liss...excuse me." Mom said taking off.

"I don't believe her." I said.

"I don't either. There's something she isn't telling us and I'd like to know what." Dad said.

"Me too...anyway I should get going. See you later." I said kissing my dad's cheek and taking off.

I got to Cyberspace and saw Josh sitting at a table.

"Hey Har!" he called.

"Josh, hey."

"I see the wardens let you out." He joked.

"Yeah, I got a night pass." I laughed.

"Did you hear that Hayley is handing over Cyberspace to her daughter?"

"No I didn't."

"I guess her daughter just left a messy marriage or something so she's moving back to Reefside and Hayley said she could manage Cyberspace."

"But Hayley will still own it?"

"I think so."

"Hey guys." Ethan said walking up.

"Hi Ethan." I said.

"I'd like you guys to meet my daughter, Savannah James, Savannah this is Harley Bradley and Josh McKnight." Ethan said.

"Nice to meet you Savannah." I said.

"Yeah, likewise." She said. She seemed to be looking me over, I kinda felt like I was under scrutiny.

"So Savannah, how old are you?" I asked.

"27, you?"

"18"

"Harley!" Anna cried running over and hugging me.

"Anners!" I said hugging her.

"I'm so glad you could make it." She said.

"Me too. Oh, Anna, this is Ethan's daughter Savannah, Savannah this is Josh's sister, Anna." I said.

"Hi Anna." Savannah said.

"Hey. So you're Ethan's daughter? Don't really look much like him." Anna said.

"I'm adopted." Savannah said.

"Oh...do you know who your birth parents are?" Anna asked.

"I know who my birth mother is...she's someone I'd rather not know though." Savannah said.
"A real bitch eh?" I asked
"You could say that. She's just selfish and self centered and thinks she's the center of the world. I want nothing to do with her." Savannah said.
"Sounds bad." I said.
"Savannah, you have work to do." Ethan said pulling her away.
"She seems cool." I said.
"Yeah...anyway I have to go get ready for my set. I'll see you later." Anna said taking off.

A few minutes later Anna started her set. 30 seconds into the intro the power went off and I noticed that there was some green light coming over the city outside. Anna put her guitar down and ran to our table.

"Um, guys...this doesn't look normal." Anna said.
"This looks like Ranger business." Josh said.
"Agreed. Let's check it out Anna." I said as we ran outside. Sure enough there was a space ship that was radiating a green light.
"What the hell?" Anna asked.
"My thoughts exactly." I said, "Who are you?!" I called. A green light started to take form in front of us.
"I think we're about to find out." Anna said.
"I am Arissa and I have come to claim the Earth and extract revenge on the Queen and Princess of Saturn." The being said.
"Um, Har...wouldn't that be you and your mom?" Anna asked.
"Yeah." I said looking Arissa over. "Sorry babe, not gonna happen...Genesis Evolution!"
"Neo Change!"

Anna and I morphed and took a fighting stance.
"You are not worth my time now but I will be back and I will win." Arissa said beaming back up and ascending her ship into the sky.
"Ok great...I think we need to warn your mom." Anna said.
"I agree. Let's go tell Josh what's going on." I said as we went back in.
"Josh! We need to get to the Academy now." Anna said.
"Why? What's wrong?" Josh asked.
"We'll explain on the way." I said as we all piled in Josh's car and went to Starlight. We went to my parents' house, it was a house they had build right on the outside corner of the school grounds. I banged on the door.

"Harley? What's wrong?" Dad asked.
"We have to protect Mom! This alien being named Arissa said she's after the Queen and Princess of Saturn." I said.
"She did, I heard her." Anna confirmed.
"Ok, slow down..." Dad said as Mom came out with Felicity.
"What's going on?" Mom asked.
"Well..." I started as a green light shone down on the school.
"Oh no, it's her again...there's no time to explain." Anna said.
"Ready to morph?" I asked.
"Ready." Anna said.
"We have to protect the students. I'll go get Julie and we'll round everyone up in the lodge, give you more battle grounds." Josh said.
"Ok, thanks." I said, "Dad, get Mom and Liss to safety, they aren't safe here."
"I'm not going anywhere." Mom said as I saw an army of these robot looking things invade the school.
"Har, we need to take care of this." Anna said.
"With you." I said. "Genesis Evolution!"
"Neo Change!" Anna called as we went to fight.

Michelle

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OK so some weird alien was after me...again...

“It’s time Mich...” Hunter said.

“No Hunter...there isn’t anyone capable of it.” I said.

“We’ve got to find someone...Josh, Har, and Anna can do it.” Hunter said.

“That still leaves three.” I said.

“We’ll discuss it on the way to the lodge. We need to get Liss over there.” Hunter said picking our daughter up. I picked up a purple and crimson box and followed them.

April

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As if my life couldn’t get any more messed up, my school was under an alien attack.

“Are they going to hurt us?” Tiffany asked and Julia ushered us to the lodge.

“Yeah, they’ll take us and anal probe us.” I said sarcastically.

“April, enough...had anyone seen Harley?” Julia asked.

“No...” I said as I saw Derek, Chris, and Jesse with Josh.

“Let me at them!” Chris cried trying to get outside to fight the aliens.

“Chris, enough, there are people working on this, just stay inside with your group.” Josh said uniting us in one corner of the lodge.

“Hey Chris, rough night?” I asked.

“Why do you want to fight the aliens?” Tiffany asked.

“Some excitement.” Chris said.

“You don’t know how to do it. I’ll get us out there to fight the aliens.” Derek said.

“Oh yeah, go for it big shot.” Chris said.

“Watch and learn.” Derek said getting up and walking over to Josh, who was the only one watching us now, Julia had gone over to the Windchasers, “Hey Josh, one of the Cardinals is escaping through the kitchen.”

“Oh really? Who?” Josh asked.

“I don’t know...the blonde girl...” Derek said.

“Amy? Oh no, she’s a run risk...” Josh said running towards the kitchen.

“See, now let’s go take out those aliens.” Derek said.

“That was luck...” Chris said.

“You wanna go or not?” Derek asked.

“Let’s do it.” Chris said following Derek as they slipped out the door.

“Hey Jesse, aren’t you Derek’s buddy? You have to shadow him.” I said.

“But he is breaking rules.” Jesse said.

“So are you by not following him.” I said.

“Well...ok.” Jesse said going after them.

“See ya Princess.” I said.

“Where are you going?” Tiffany asked.

“To fight aliens. I’m not letting the guys have all the fun.” I said heading for the door.

“Wait, don’t leave me here alone...” Tiffany said following me.

“You think you can hack it?” I asked.

“I...” Tiffany started as we got outside and saw the boys fighting the aliens.

“Woo hoo! About time we got some real fun here!” I cried as I joined in.

“Oh, no! Help!” Tiffany cried as she ran from the aliens, kicking one every now and again in the process.

We fought for a while but then the aliens started to win, we were getting our butts kicked.

“Ok, not what I had in mind.” I said.

“Let me go!” Tiffany screamed.

“Hands off the Princess.” Chris said trying to get free himself.

Michelle

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As Hunter and I got closer to the lodge we saw the Wildcats fighting the aliens.

“Oh no...” I said.

“This is bad.” Hunter said.

I looked at my box. “Hunter, we have to...”

“Them? Are you sure?”

“I’m sure.” I said opening the box. “Wildcats!!! Catch!” I cried throwing each of them a Morpher.

“What is this?!” April asked.

“Put it on your wrist and call out ‘Wild Cat Transform!’” I called.

“Why?” Tiffany asked.

“Don’t ask question Princess, just do it!” Chris said.

“Wild Cat Transform!” they called as they morphed into a new team of Rangers.

“No way...” April said.

“Power Rangers?” Tiffany asked.

“Pink...how perfect for you.” April, the new Yellow Ranger said.

“Um, now might be a time to fight...” Jesse, the new Blue Ranger said.

Hunter took Felicity to the lodge while the new Rangers fought off the attack. I helped out as well.

Eventually the aliens gave up and I was faced with five very confused Rangers.

“OK, I guess you want an explanation...go to my house. Let me round up Harley and Hunter and I’ll meet you there.” I said.

I got Josh to watch Felicity then Hunter, Harley, Anna, and I went to my house.

“Mom, what’s going on, why are they Rangers?” Harley asked.

“Good question.” April said.

“Ok, ok...Harley, when we moved here Hayley told us of a technology she developed that would power a team of Rangers...she entrusted Hunter and I with guarding it until it was needed. When I saw these five fighting I knew they were meant to have the power. Wildcats, you have been chosen to become Power Rangers, it’s a great responsibility not to be taken lightly, if you aren’t up for it say so now because the fate of the world is on the line.” I said.

“I’m in.” April said.

“Yeah, why not.” Derek said.

“Count me in.” Chris said.

“Of course. I will be glad to help.” Jesse said.

“Not a chance, no way.” Tiffany said.

“Oh come on...this will be good for you Princess. She’s in.” April said.

“April, she must decide for herself.” Hunter said.

Tiffany sigh, “OK, I’m in.”

“Ok then, April, you will be the Yellow Ranger and control the Cheetah Zord and Cheetah Daggers. Chris, you will be the Black Ranger and control the Jaguar Zord, a crossbow will be your weapon. Tiffany...” I started.

“Wait, Princess can’t get a weapon, she might use it on herself.” April said.

“May I finish?” I asked.

“Yeah sure, I don’t mind.” April said.

“Thank you. Now then, Tiffany, you are the Pink Ranger and will control the Panther Zord and the Panther Baton.”

“No sharp edges...perfect for her.” April said.

“And a Pink Panther Zord...how cute.” Chris mocked.

“May I? Jesse, you will be the Blue Ranger and control the Cougar Zord and have a blaster for your weapon. Finally, Derek, you will lead the team as the Red Ranger. You will have the Tiger Zord and Tiger Sword.” I said.

“Um, forgetting someone?” Harley asked.

“I didn’t forget, I’m not done. These are our five Rangers, but I can’t expect you five to be Rangers without any sort of guidance. Harley, you have been a wonderful Ranger for the past three years and I am proud to have passed my Purple power down to you. I now pass on something else, you will be the second Ranger Trainer. As the Purple Ranger, in control of the Lion Zord and Staff weapon you will be responsible for Training this new team.” I said.

“Awesome! New powers!” Harley said excitedly.

“Way to go Har.” Anna said.

“Anna, I’m sorry I have no power for you, but your Neo Powers are still active and I’m sure the Rangers will be happy to have your help from time to time.” I said.

“No problem. I’m happy to have my normal life back anyway.” Anna said.

“OK then, are there any questions?” I asked.

“I’m too overwhelmed to even think of questions.” Jesse said.

“Well then let me fill you in on the rules. 1) Keep your identities secret. 2) Do not seek a battle, let it find you, and do not escalate it. 3) Never use your powers for personal gain.” Hunter said.

“Understood.” Derek said. It was the first time since he’d been here I saw him look serious about something. Maybe this crazy idea of having our students as Rangers would actually work.

## PRWC 4- "Learning to Cope"

*"I need you now  
Do you think you can cope  
You figured me out - I'm lost and I'm hopeless  
Bleeding and broken - though I've never spoken  
I come undone - in this mad season"  
~ "Mad Season" Matchbox 20*

"OK, group dismissed, Chris may I talk to you for a second?" Hunter asked.

"What's up?" I asked walking over.

"Your mom is coming up to see you tomorrow." He said.

"Just my mom?"

"Yeah."

"Oh...why?"

"To see you...she didn't say any specific reason."

"OK...thanks." I said heading to the kitchen to help serve dinner.

My name is Chris Hayes and 15, I'm also the new Black Ranger...now that's something I never expected. I ended up at Starlight Academy because I was busted for tagging and possession of weed. Now I'm a Power Ranger...

What freaked me out about my mom visiting me alone was that my dad kept her on a pretty short leash. She was never allowed to do anything without his permission and normally she couldn't go anywhere without him either.

"So what did you do now?" April asked as I pulled down some plates.

"Nothing. I'm getting a visit." I said.

"Lucky you." April mumbled.

"Like you wouldn't want your parents to visit." Tiffany said.

"I don't. In case you forgot Princess I was the one who ran away so I could escape them." April said.

"At least you have parents to visit you." Jesse said softly.

"Look at that, he speaks." I said.

"So when are they coming?" Tiffany asked.

"Not they...just my mom and tomorrow." I said.

"Oh great, this means we'll have to clean the dorms." Derek said.

"Hey, I'm not thrilled about this either." I said.

"Guys, hurry with dinner, we have some hungry students out here." Harley said peeking her head in.

"Yeah, yeah." April said.

"You guys are more like turtles than wildcats." Harley said coming in to help.

"We're just allergic to work." I said.

"Oh please...if that's true the world is in serious trouble." Harley said.

We finally got dinner out to everyone and were able to sit down and eat.

Hunter

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"I don't believe you Hunter...how could you?" Michelle asked.

"I warned you Mich. I gave you time and you didn't find anyone." I said.

"But to hire Conner after I said no..."

"You never even gave me a good reason! We need someone and he applied."

"Isn't the fact I said no enough of a reason?"

"Not when I'm running around like a chicken with my head cut off trying to coach and keep up with my head master duties."

“But Conner...”

“Conner is good. We’re lucky to have him so just deal. He starts tomorrow.” I said.

“And how does Kira feel about this?”

“I don’t know.”

“I bet she’s no happier than I am.”

“What is it between you three? I asked. She obviously had a problem with both Conner and Kira and I couldn’t figure out why.

“Nothing, I just don’t want Conner working at my school.” She said as Felicity toddled in.

“Daddy, apes.” She said

I smiled. “Ok sweetie. Mich, I’ll be at the house if you need me.” I said picking up Felicity and walking to the house to give her grapes.

Chris

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“Ok Wildcats, I want this dorm spotless. We have a visitor tomorrow.” Harley said.

“Har, this is the boys dorm, you shouldn’t be here.” I said.

“It’s before 8 and I’m a staff member. I think it’s ok. Don’t think you’re escaping my supervision.” She said.

“Fine.” We mumbled as we started to clean. I was folding my clothes when we heard footsteps stomp upstairs. Seconds later Josh came in, he didn’t look happy.

“Whoa, where’s the fire?” Harley asked.

“Sorry guys, didn’t mean to interrupt...Julia said I’d find you here Har.” Josh said.

“Yeah, Chris’s mom is visiting tomorrow so we’re cleaning up.” Harley.

“No, you mean we’re cleaning up and you’re supervising.” I said.

“Yeah, I don’t see you cleaning.” Derek said.

“What’s wrong Josh?” Jesse asked.

“Maybe he needs to talk in group.” I laughed.

“Stop it...Josh, are you ok?” Harley asked.

“Can we talk alone?” Josh asked her.

“Of course...guys I expect you guys to keep cleaning. I want to see progress when I get back.” Harley said walking out with Josh.

“I want to see progress when I get back.” I mimicked.

“Guys, I don’t think she was kidding, we should keep working.” Jesse said.

“You keep working, I’m taking a nap. We don’t get nearly enough sleep in this place.” I said laying down.

“I hear that.” Derek said laying on his bed.

“You can’t seriously expect me to finish this myself...” Jesse said.

“Hey, that’s your call.” I said.

“Well...I guess I can keep cleaning.” Jesse said.

“Is he always such a push over?” Derek whispered towards me.

“Always.” I said laughing. I knew we’d get Jesse to do the hard work.

Harley

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“Josh, what’s wrong?” I asked once we were alone.

“I couldn’t stay at home. My mom is pissed that my dad took a job here.” Josh said.

“They ended up hiring him?” I asked.

“Yeah? You didn’t hear? My dad is the new coach and my mom is furious. They were fighting really bad so Anna went to practice with her band and I had to get out.”

“I’m sorry this is causing problems for you.”

“Thanks....so Ms. Hayes is coming in tomorrow?”

“Yeah...”

“You know, we should get in there. Ten bucks says those lazy cats got Jesse to do all the cleaning.”

I sighed, “I bet you’re right. Jesse needs to learn not to be such a push over.”

“HARLEY!” Julia called as she ran over.

“What?” I asked.
“Phone call for you.” She said.
“Phone call? Ok. Josh can you supervise?” I asked.
“Sure, not a problem.” He said.
“Ok, thanks.” I said running off with Julia.

Chris

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I was just starting to fall asleep when I heard a voice.  
“ATTENTION! All Wildcats front and center!” Josh barked.  
“Ugh, man can’t a guy sleep around here?” I mumbled.  
“Chris, Derek, now!” Josh said.  
Yeah, right. Like I had any intention of moving now.  
“Dude, just step off.” I mumbled.  
“Yeah, we’re just trying to rest.” Derek added.  
“If I have to go get Hunter he’ll not be so kind. Do you really want to spend Sunday chopping wood?” Josh asked.  
“Fine, fine.” I groaned and Derek and I stood up.  
“Ok, room looks good. Jesse you’re dismissed. Derek and Chris, get to work or face wood chopping duty.” Josh said.  
“You’ve got to be kidding.” I said.  
“Why is he getting out?” Derek asked.  
“Because he did more than his share of the work so now he gets rewarded while you guys finish the job.” Josh said as he let Jesse out of the room.  
“Man, this is whack.” I said as I went back to cleaning.  
“Come on guys, pick up the pace. We wanna finish before midnight.” Josh said.  
“Where’s Harley?” Derek asked.  
“She had a phone call to answer.” Josh said.  
Just our luck. Harley was bad enough then we get stuck with Mr. Drill Sergeant. Can a guy never catch a break?

Harley

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I went into the lodge and got the phone.
“Hello?” I asked.
“Harley? Hey baby.” Jay said.
“Jay? Oh god, it’s good to hear from you. How have you been?” I asked.
“Great. I’m doing great. You?”
“I’m great too. How’s training?”
“I’m getting back into the swing of things.”
“That’s good.” I said.
Insert awkward silence.
“Listen, I called because I’m coming to town this weekend. I need to see you.”
“Oh...that’s great! Um...is everything ok?”
“Yeah...um everything is fine.”
“OK...then I guess I’ll see you Saturday?”
“Ok...see you then. Bye.”
“Bye.” I said hanging up.

“Everything ok?” Julia asked.
“I guess so...but I felt like I was talking to a total stranger.” I said as Jesse walked in. “Jesse, shouldn’t you be cleaning?” I asked.
“Josh dismissed me because Derek and Chris made me do most of the work. He is making them finish it.” Jesse said.
I laughed, “Serves them right. What did they do?”
“They were going to take naps while I cleaned.” Jesse replied.

“Can’t leave Chris alone for a second without him trying to get some extra sleep.”

“His mom is coming tomorrow right?” Julia asked.

“Yeah.” I said.

“Good luck...parent visits aren’t always a walk in the park.” She said.

“No kidding.” I said as Felicity came toddling in with a cup of grapes.

“Hary ape?” she asked holding a grape up.

“Thank you Liss.” I said taking the grape and eating it.

“Esse ape?” she asked holding up another grape.

Jesse smiled. “Thank you Felicity.” He said taking the grape.

“Ju Ju ape?” she asked.

I started cracking up.

“Ju Ju? I wonder who taught her that.” Julia said shooting me a look.

“That’s my sister, what can I say?” I asked picking up Liss and hugging her.

Chris

~~~~~

We finally finished cleaning just as it was time for lights out, which was fine with me. I happily got into bed and quickly fell asleep. As I slept I dreamt.

*“Chris let’s move it. They’re coming.”*

*“No Dave, we can take ‘em.” I said.*

*“There’s 5 of them, 2 of us. We need back up.” Dave said.*

*“No, we need to teach those trespassers a lesson.” I said turning back.*

*“Mike will be pissed if you try taking them without help.”*

*“Like I give a shit what Mike thinks.” I said as I turned to face the rival gang coming at us.*

*“Chris, come on.” Dave said.*

*“Not smart little boy, should have listened to your friend.” One of the guys said coming at me.*

*“I’ll show you little boy. This is my hood, you should have stayed out.” I said.*

*“Big words little boy.” Another guy said coming at me. This one pulled a gun.*

*“Chris!” Dave cried pushing me out of the way.*

*“Dave!” I cried as I noticed he had been shot.*

*“Get gone...get gone and don’t look back, go!” Dave screamed.*

*I jumped up and ran.*

*“That’s it, run away little boy. Run home to Momma.” They all called after me.*

I sat up in bed and jerked awake. I looked at the time. They’d be waking us up in 5 minutes anyway. I rolled out of bed and went to take a shower before anyone woke up. By the time I was showered and dressed everyone else was getting up. I went out to get an early start on breakfast.

“Hey, you ok? You’re never up first.” Hunter said coming in the kitchen.

“Fine.” I mumbled as I took my toast out of the toaster.

“Your mom called. She’ll be here around 10”

“Ok, so I’m missing class?”

“Yes. Your grades have been good so Michelle and I decided to give you a day pass so you can leave campus with your mom.”

“About time I got away from this dump.”

“But that means you’re in charge of breakfast clean up on your own. Well that and I heard what you and Derek pulled on Jesse last night.”

“Oh? And what does Derek have to do?”

“He has to cook oatmeal for 160 students on his own.” Hunter said as Derek walked in mumbling.

“At least it’s not wood chopping” I said.

“Oh the week is young. Keep up mistreatment of Jesse and you’ll be chopping wood until your arms fall off.” Hunter said leaving us alone.

“Just great.” Derek said as he filled a pot with water. “So what are you doing up. I thought your goal in life was to sleep until they dragged you out of bed.”

“Yeah, nightmare.”

“Yeah, my mom visiting would give me nightmares too.”

“No, not that...other stuff. I’m not worried too much about my mom visiting.”

“I would. Moms suck.”

“Michelle is a cool mom.” I pointed out.

“Michelle is different. She’s like superhuman or something...in general.”

“My mom is pretty cool I guess.” I said.

“Then you’re lucky.” Derek said.

Derek finally got breakfast served and when everyone was done I cleaned up. Right as I was finishing Michelle came in and told me my mom was there. I went to the office and there sat my mom.

“Ma...” I said hugging her.

“Christopher, my boy.” She said hugging me tight.

“Good to see you.” I said.

“Yes it is. Mr. Bradley tells me I can take you off campus for the day.”

“Then let’s go.” I said

“Please have him back by 7:00.” Michelle said.

“Of course, can’t miss group.” I said.

“Don’t worry, I’ll have him back.” Mom said as we left. I got in her car and we drove. “So where do you want to go?”

“I don’t know...let’s see what there is around here.” I said.

We drove quietly until we got to town.

“Cyberspace...I hear Harley and Josh talking about that place a lot, let’s check it out.” I said.

“Ok.” She said parking the car.

We went in and found a table.

“Hi, welcome to Cyberspace. I’m Savannah, what can I get for you?” a lady asked. Something about her was very familiar.

“I’ll just have a soda.” I said.

“Me too.” Mom said.

“Coming right up.” Savannah said.

“So what are you doing here without Dad?” I asked.

“That can wait...how’s school?” Mom asked.

“It’s ok. I guess I like it ok.” I said as Savannah brought us our sodas.

“Have you made any friends?” Mom asked.

“I guess sorta.” I said.

“Good.”

“Mom, where’s Dad?” I asked again.

She sighed, “I left him. We’re getting a divorce.”

“What?” I asked. I couldn’t have heard right.

“I can’t take his abuse anymore Chris. I had to get away so I filed for divorce.” She said.

“How could you? He gave you everything.” I said.

“All he gave me was black eyes. Chris, I came here to warn you...when you get out of Starlight you’ll have to pick who you want to live with.”

“And you want me to pick you...”

“Yes. I’m moving to Angel Grove. I hear it’s a nice place and it’ll be easy to stay out of trouble.”

“How could you break up my family? Take me away from my father? You bitch! I hate you!” I screamed.

“Chris, don’t cause a scene.” Mom said trying to calm me down.

“Just get the hell away from me! Stay out of my life!” I cried running outside. I looked around then just took off running. I didn’t care where I was going, just that I was going.

I was running through the town square when a monster showed up.

“A lone Ranger...goody good.” The monster said.

"I am so not in the mood for this!" I screamed as I held up my Morpher. "Wild Cat Transform!"

I faced off with the monster and pulled my crossbow and shot at him. He dodged.

"Ok, that's how you want it? Fine." I said jump kicking. The monster threw me back. "ARG!" I screamed as I attacked with a furied rage. I was thrown back again. That's when I heard a voice.

"You know it isn't smart to take on a monster alone Chris, get out of here and call for back up." Josh said.

"You know?" I asked.

"Yeah, but can we talk about that later? You can't take him alone" Josh said.

"But this is my turf" I said as I saw the monster aim at us.

"Chris watch out!" Josh said pushing me out of the way. I suddenly felt a major sense of déjà vu.

"Not this time!" I cried stepping in front of Josh to protect him. I fired my bow to knock the monster's blast off. "You're right Josh...let's go get back up." I said helping him up as we ran for cover.

"Ok, you do know your Morpher doubles as a communicator right?" Josh asked.

"It does?" I asked.

"Yup, they must have forgotten to tell you that part." Josh said.

I held my Morpher up. "Hunter, Michelle, Derek...come in...trouble in the town square." I said.

"We're on our way." Derek said.

In no time all my team mates, Harley included, were with me. We fought the monster together and in to time he was history. I thought we were done but then the monster grew.

"Big shock." Harley mumbled, "Call the Zords." She said.

We formed the Wildcat Megazord for the first time. Totally rocked.

"I could get used to this." I said.

"Totally. This is killer." April said.

"It's kinda high up." Tiffany said.

"Princess..." I mumbled.

We decimated the monster and the others went back to campus. Harley stayed behind.

"Power down!" we commanded.

"So, what's the problem? What were you doing out here alone anyway?" she asked.

"My mom just notified me she's leaving my father and I lost control." I said.

"I'm sorry...but have you considered it might be for the best. When my mom left...my other dad...I was angry too but in the end it turned out great because if my parents never got married then we wouldn't have Starlight Academy or Felicity. Everything happens for a reason. Maybe you should try talking to your mom...you don't have to be happy but just discuss things with her." Harley said.

I sighed, she made a good point. "Ok...I'll go talk to her."

"Good...and keep control of that temper...see ya round." She said heading back to Reefside U.

I went back to Cyberspace and saw my mom talking to Savannah and crying.

"Ma?" I asked.

"I'll leave you two alone." Savannah said leaving.

"I'm sorry this is so hard for you Chris, but it's what I have to do." Mom said.

I sighed, "I'm sorry I lost my temper...I think we should talk about this." I said sitting back down.

## PRWC 5- "My Happy Ending"

*"You were everything, everything that I wanted  
We were meant to be, supposed to be, but we lost it  
All of the memories, so close to me, just fade away  
All this time you were pretending  
So much for my happy ending"  
~ "My Happy Ending" Avril Lavigne*

"What time is it?" I asked.

"Five minutes since last time you asked Har." Josh asked.

"Maybe I should go to Cyberspace now...ya know just in case he gets there early." I said.

"If you want to then go for it." Josh said.

"Josh, you're so clueless. She hasn't seen her boyfriend in months, she just excited." Julia said.

"Yeah, I know." Josh mumbled.

"Har, go ahead and go to Cyberspace. Maybe if you use the net or something time will go faster." Julia said.

"Great idea...see you guys later." I said running out the door. I saw my Wildcats coming back in from their hike as I headed for my car.

"Harley! Good luck with Jay." Tiffany said.

"Don't let him give you any lame excuses about why he hasn't come to visit sooner." April said.

"And don't let him use lines to get in your pants." Chris said.

"If he says how much he missed you and he won't see you again for awhile so you need to do it now, that's a line. Run the other way." Derek said.

"But other than that have fun." Jesse said.

I laughed, "Thanks guys. I'll keep that in mind." I said. It was cute they were trying to protect me. I got in my purple mustang and headed for cyberspace.

I walked in and sat down. The place was really slow for a Saturday.

"Hey Harley." Savannah said sitting down with me.

"Hey Savannah, slow day?" I asked.

"Yeah, it should pick up later. So what brings you here alone?"

"I'm meeting my boyfriend. He's coming in from out of town."

"I didn't know you had a boyfriend."

"It's been awhile since I've seen him. He goes to college in Thousand Oaks."

"What's he like?"

"Well, his name is Jay and he's...well honestly I don't know what he's like anymore. I haven't seen him in about six months." I said.

"Maybe you guys can reconnect while he's here." Savannah said.

"Maybe." I said as I saw a familiar face walk in. "Jay!" I cried.

"Harley!" he rushed over and pulled me into his arms. We hugged tight. "It's so good to see you Har."

"Good to see you too!" I said hugging him again. "Oh...Jay, this is my friend Savannah James, she runs this place."

"Nice to meet you. I'm Jay Watanabe." Jay said shaking her hand.

"Nice to meet you." Savannah said, "If you'll excuse me, I'll just leave you kids alone." She walk walking to the counter.

"So, how have you been?" I asked.

"Good. School is good, Academy life is good. If I had you everything would be perfect." He said.

"I can't leave here." I said.

"I know, the school." He said.

"That and...well a new team of Rangers was recruited and I'm training them." I said lowering my voice.

"You're kidding. Another team?" he asked.

"Yes, another team. And this team really needs me."

"So then you really are stuck here..."

"Yeah...but I like it here. I have friends here...I have a life here now."

“You make it sounds like that erases everything we went through in Angel Grove.”

“Of course not! You guys will always be my friends. Mel will always be my best friend and of course Tony and Lindsey will always be my cousins...things are just different now.” I said as I head a voice.

“Jay?!” Anna asked.

“Anna! Hey!” Jay said hugging her.

“How are you doing?” she asked.

“Good, good. Have you heard from Aaron lately?” Jay asked.

“Yeah, he’s doing good. He’s gonna try to come see me first chance he gets but we talk or e-mail everyday.” Anna said.

“That’s great.” Jay said.

“Well, I just came to get a guitar I left here. I’ll let you guys visit, it was great seeing you.” Anna said hugging him again before she left.

“She seems happy with Aaron.” Jay said.

“Yeah...imagine that, a couple that talks everyday and they’re happy. Someone alert the media.” I said sourly.

“Har? Is something wrong?”

“No, I just wish we talked more.”

“You know I’m busy with school and the Academy and you have your own life here...but I’m here now. Let’s make the most of it.” He said leaning over the table to kiss me.

I kissed him back. “Let’s get out of here.” I said.

“Ok.” He said. We went for a walk through town and talked about the way things were. We had so much fun. We went to the park and goofed around. He pushed me on the swing and I jumped on his back in the sandbox which sent us both tumbling to the ground. He tickled me and I used an escape to get away and jump on his back again. He carried me around the park. It was awesome. Almost like we turned back time and that six months apart never happened.

We ended up sitting on the beach, watching the ocean. He had his arm around me and I leaned on him.

“Harley, I really missed you.” He said.

“I missed you too Jay...more than I thought.” I said kissing him.

Derek

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It was time for our Saturday group activity. After the hike Hunter took us on we all were ready to collapse in the lodge and not move until dinner.

“Were those mountains really necessary?” April asked as she fell next to me on the sofa.

“Builds endurance. Now come on, activity time.” Hunter said.

“I think a nap is something we all want ergo making it a group activity.” Jesse said.

“Oh come on guys, I thought Chris was the only one who tried to sneak naps.” Hunter said.

“Hunter, I’m a trained athlete and even I’m worn out.” I said.

“Fine, don’t tell Harley and you guys can rest in here until dinner. I have work to do to get ready for our new coach anyway.” Hunter said.

“New coach?” Tiffany asked.

“Yeah, I hired Conner McKnight.” Hunter said.

“So Michelle finally gave you permission?” Chris teased.

“I don’t need permission! I own half this school.” Hunter said.

“Either she gave you permission or she’s not speaking to you.” Chris said.

“And since I haven’t seen her around you lately I’m guessing she’s not speaking to you.” April said.

“Well, I may have done it without her consent...but it’ll be ok. Conner is a great coach and you guys will love him.” Hunter said.

“It’s ok Hunter, if Michelle kicks you out you can bunk with us.” Chris said.

“Not if...when.” April said laughing as Julia and Josh walked in.

“Hey Wildcats.” Julia said.

“Hey Jules.” Tiffany said.

“What’s wrong with you?” April asked Josh.

“He’s sore because Harley is on a date with her boyfriend.” Julia said.

“I am not! I told you Julia, I don’t have a thing for Harley. She’s just my friend.” Josh said.

“Yeah, sure.” Julia said.
 “How sweet...you’re jealous!” Tiffany said.
 “I’m not jealous. I’m just...leave me alone.” Josh said walking away from us.
 “He likes her.” April said.
 “No kidding.” I said.
 “Hunter, you have to fix them up.” Tiffany said.
 “No way. Harley sees who Harley wants. She’s a grown woman now, she can pick her own boyfriends.” Hunter said.
 “He’s afraid she’ll stop speaking to him too.” April said.
 “I just know better than to get involved with Harley’s love life. As long as she’s with Jay that’s fine with me.” Hunter said.
 “Do you like this Jay guy?” I asked.
 “He’s the son of a friend and my sister so he’s kinda me nephew...I guess he’s ok...has a long way to go if he were where he wants though.” Hunter said.
 “He’s your nephew and Harley is your daughter...that means...” Tiffany started.
 “No, no...they aren’t blood related. I was adopted remember? Jay’s mom is my foster sister.” Hunter said.
 “Oh...that’s still a little weird.” April said.
 “Yeah, it is.” Hunter said.
 “Like it’s any weirder than any of us. We’re all a little messed up or we wouldn’t be here.” I said.
 “Well since we were all inside sitting around how about a group session?” Hunter asked.
 “Ugh...” we groaned.
 “What about your work?” I asked.
 “It can wait. Oh come on, it’ll be fun...” Hunter said.
 “Since when is group anyone’s idea of fun?” April asked.
 “It’s group or short individuals, your call.” Hunter said.
 “Group sounds good.” April said.
 “Yeah, let’s get started.” Chris said.
 “Circle up.” Hunter said.
 “Can’t we stay where we are and talk?” I asked.
 “Ok, fine...just this once.” Hunter said as Felicity came in. I really didn’t like that kid. She was spoiled and annoying. Everyone around here, including most of the students, treated her like a princess.
 “Daddy...hone.” She said.
 “Phone? Your mother sent you didn’t she?” Hunter asked.
 Felicity nodded.
 “Ok, did she say who it was?”
 “Conehead.” Felicity said.
 Hunter sighed, “She can’t say ‘phone’ but Mich had her saying ‘Conehead’ crystal clear.” He turned to us, “Ok guys, you’re safe, that’s the new coach on the phone.”
 “Coach Conehead?” April laughed.
 “Enough, I better not hear you guys call him that. That’s something Michelle started when they were younger.” Hunter said walking away to get the phone.

Harley

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As the sun started to set we went to get dinner.  
 “You know, all day we’ve been reliving the past and we haven’t actually discussed the present or future.” I said.  
 “Sure we have.” Jay said.  
 “We have? All I know is you’re really busy at the Thunder Academy and you’re attending classes. I don’t know who you hang with these days or what you do for fun...where you see your life going, am I part of it...”  
 “Harley, I love you and I hope you’re always a part of my life.”  
 “Do you? Then why won’t you talk to me? If you cared so much why not make time to call me?”  
 “You know that goes both ways.” He shot back.  
 “How exactly? You never left me your damn number.”  
 “I live at the Thunder Academy, how hard is it to call over there?”

"I called a couple of times a few months back and you were never around."

"Sorry I have a life."

"You obviously are fine without me."

"Har..." he took a breath, "Harley, listen to me...I love you and I don't want to spend the rest of my visit fighting... come on...let's get out of here."

"Ok." I said. We were finished eating so he paid and we went to his car. He drove to the beach parking lot, which was deserted, and killed the engine.

"What are we doing here?" I asked.

"You're right, we need to reconnect." Jay said.

"Ok..." I said.

"So we're gonna reconnect." He said leaning over to kiss me. I kissed him back. He put his hand under my shirt and I pushed him away. I knew where this was going.

"Jay no." I said.

"Why not? We love each other so why not?"

"Because I'm not ready."

"We've been together two years, when will you be ready?"

"I don't know but it's not tonight. Not when our relationship is so shaky."

"Maybe this will save it."

"Sex never saves anything. It only complicates things more. Look what happened with my mom...sex never gave her anything but trouble. I don't want to end up like her."

"Harley, come on...we have solid relationship."

"No we don't! How can you say that when you won't even wait for me?!"

"I've waited two years! Even Crystal only made me wait two mo...oh..."

"You've been sleeping with Crystal?"

"I...Har...you don't understand...I was lonely and she was there..."

"Oh I understand. I mean so little to you that you couldn't wait. You decided to screw my best friend's cousin. I should have left you two years ago. I was an idiot to let Aaron go for someone like you. It's over Jay and I don't want to see you ever again." I said reaching for the door handle to get out of the car.

He grabbed my wrist. "Harley, don't go...I do love you."

"Bullshit, if you loved me you wouldn't have screwed Crystal...and Crystal maybe a lot of things but boyfriend stealer isn't one of them, you told her we broke up didn't you?"

"Well...I..."

"Fuck you...let me go." I said pulling away from him and getting out of the car.

"Harley!"

"Leave me alone!" I screamed as I took off running. I ended up running back to Cyberspace. It was closed and I fell down by the building and started to sob.

"Harley? What's wrong?" Savannah asked.

"Oh...I didn't know anyone was here." I said.

"I was just leaving...what happened?" she asked.

"Jay and I broke up." I said.

"Oh sweetie, I'm sorry. Come inside, I'll make you some cocoa, on the house." Savannah said unlocking the door and leading me in. I sat at the bar as she made some cocoa. She poured us each a cup and then went to the back and brought out a cheesecake.

"It's my emergency boy crisis kit." She said smiling. "So what happened?"

"Well, Jay and I have been having problems for awhile now...the long distance thing just wasn't working out and...and well we had fun today and I thought maybe we could fix things. I wanted to talk things out...he wanted to take a more physical approach." I said.

"Typical."

"And when I said I wasn't ready he got angry and admitted to sleeping with my best friend's cousin."

"Oh god...I'm so sorry Har."

"Me too."

"Needless to say I dumped him."

“Good for you. You did the right thing.”

“I know...it’s for the best.” I said taking a bite of the desert. “Oh, good cheesecake.”

“Thanks. I made it myself. Always like to keep one on hand for such an occasion.”

“You stayed here and had all this ready for me didn’t you?”

“Guilty as charged. I saw Jay’s body language earlier and I just had a feeling something wasn’t right. I saw you left your car here to go with him so I decided to hang till you came to get your car. I had my emergency kit ready just in case I was right. For what it’s worth I wish I were wrong.”

“Thanks Savannah.” I said.

“Hey...we’re practically family...” Savannah said.

“Huh?”

“I mean...us kids of former Rangers gotta stick together right?”

“Oh...of course...you know?”

“Yeah...I’m like my mom, I know pretty much everything...pretty much.”

“Except who your birth father is.”

“Yeah...and I guess it doesn’t matter...I love my dad a lot...but I guess I’d just like to see where I came from...I mean as far as I know my birth father doesn’t even know I exist...my birth mother never told him about me...I think he has a right to know he has a daughter in the world.”

“If you want I could try to help you find out who he is.”

“Um...thanks Har, but I think it’s better I do it on my own.”

“Ok...well I guess I should head home.”

“Ok...I’ll see you later.”

“Sure thing. Thanks for the cheesecake...and the talk.” I said hugging Savannah as I walked out the door. I felt safe with Savannah...like we were somehow connected...I didn’t know why though...

I got back in my car and drove back to the Academy. I wasn’t ready to go to the dorms and face Julia’s questioning so I went to the lake. I saw Josh sitting out there.

“This seat taken?” I asked.

“Is now.” He said.

I plopped next to him.

“So how did it go?” he asked.

“We broke up.”

“What? Why?”

“Stuff.”

“Oh come on Har...tell me what happened.”

I told him the story. By the end of retelling it I was crying. I guess it just got to me.

“Oh god...Har...I’m so sorry.” Josh said pulling me into his arms.

“I should have seen him for what he was sooner.”

“You thought you loved him.”

“I was an idiot.”

“No...not at all. He’s the idiot.”

“How do you figure?”

“For not seeing what a great girl he had. If I had someone like you I’d wait forever.”

I smiled. “Thanks Josh.” I said leaning on his shoulder. I fell asleep leaning on him.

I don’t know how much time passed but I half way woke up when I felt Josh pick me up to carry me to my room. I felt him put me in bed and kiss my head before leaving.

As I drifted back into sleep I wondered if breaking up with Jay was really the worst thing in the world.

*"I just got to get it right  
Before I make it wrong  
Cause I'm breaking out and rising up  
While the world is falling down..."  
"Dreaming in Red"~ The Calling*

"And this is the field, it's nothing like the one at RHS but it should work." I said.  
"Thanks Hunter, I appreciate this. It'll be nice to get a fresh start. Everything at the high school was just so political, it wasn't even about the team anymore, it became about the money." Conner said.  
"Not here, here it's all about the students." I said as we saw the Wild Cats walking with Harley. "Speaking of student, these are the Wild Cats. April, Tiffany, Chris, Jesse, and...where's Derek?"  
Harley turned and looked. "Um...good question, I thought he was right behind me."  
"Harley, you know he's a run risk, you should have been watching him." I said.  
"I'm sorry Dad...I messed up. I'll find him." Harley said.  
I sighed, "We'll all look for him. I'm sorry about this Conner, sometimes stuff like this happens."  
"It's ok. I understand. I knew what I was getting when I took this job." Conner said.  
"So this is Coach Conehead?" April asked with a smirk.  
"I see Michelle has mentioned me." Conner said.  
"Yes she has...I'm sorry Conner. Guys, I told you not to call him that. It's Coach McKnight or Conner." I said.  
"On that note can we look for Derek?" Harley asked.  
"Do you need help?" Conner asked.  
"I think we got it covered. Didn't you say your family was coming in today anyway?" I asked.  
"Yeah, but if you need help..." Conner started.  
"No, go see your family." I said.  
"OK, see you later. Good luck" Conner said leaving.  
"Now then, Harley, you take Jesse and April, Tiffany and Chris you come with me." I said.  
"OK, Wild Cats, let's move." Harley said as we split up.

We spent the next half hour looking for him.  
"This sucks. Our free time gets cut because Mr. Prom King had to go run off." Chris said.  
"Save it for group Chris." I said.  
"Why would Derek take off?" Tiffany asked.  
"I don't know Tiff...let's keep looking." I said.  
"Dad! I found him, we're going back to the lodge." Harley said over the 2-way radio.  
"Ok, we'll meet you there." I said.  
"About time." Chris mumbled.  
"Chris, stop it. Let's go." I said as went back to the lodge. We got in and I found Harley talking to Derek.

"I said I felt like it ok? Lay off" I heard Derek say.  
"Hey Dad, Derek here says he took off because he felt like it." Harley said.  
"Derek, I've told you, that doesn't fly here." I said.  
"Guys, hate to interrupt but we have problems." Michelle said walking up.  
I sighed, this was the problem with having students here be Rangers. "Ok, go. We'll finish this later." I said.  
"Fine, let's get this over with." Derek said as Harley led the Wild Cats to a safe spot. I turned to talk to Michelle but she was gone. "Just great." I sighed.

Harley  
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"Ok, let's do this." I said as we morphed. We went and found Arissa and those robot things. "You again." I said.

“Me again. I don’t think I’ve had the pleasure of meeting these Rangers. I am Arissa and really, there is no need to fight, hand over the Purple Ranger and her mother and I’ll leave quietly.” Arissa said.

“Arissa...have we met? You look familiar....” Jesse said.

“You expect us to hand over Harley and Michelle? Yeah right, not gonna happen.” April said.

“Fine, then face the wrath of my Bots.” Arissa said sending them to attack.

“Ok, Rangers, time for action.” I said as we started to fight. We beat them.

“Nice Rangers, but that’s not all I’ve got...meet Apophis” Arissa said as this big Egyptian snake thing showed up.

“Oh, eww!” Tiffany cried.

“Can we please keep the squealing to a minimum?” April asked.

“Guys, come on. We can do this.” I said. I called on my weapon and fought. I was holding my own but the others were having some trouble...well except for Derek. He had a real knack for fighting. “Guys...you can do it.” I said as we got blasted.

“Well, I think that’s enough for now, you’ve seen what I can do so maybe you’ll rethink giving up the Princess and her mother. See you soon Rangers.” Arissa said disappearing with Apophis.

“You guys are such losers!” Derek cried.

“Hey man, step off...we tried.” Chris said.

“Trying won’t save the world. How could you have picked these guys Harley? They are nothing!” Derek shouted.

“Derek, that’s enough.” I said.

“Yeah, we’re still new to this. Some of us aren’t champion athletes like you Mr. Big Shot.” April said.

“Enough, everyone back to the Academy now!” I yelled.

We de-morphed and got back to the Academy.

“Oh no, you guys don’t look like you’re celebrating a victory.” Dad said.

“How can we win with this group of losers?” Derek asked.

“Derek I said that’s enough.” I said.

“Stop defending them, you know they suck.” Derek said.

“Ok, enough. Michelle and I wouldn’t have picked you guys if we didn’t think you could handle things. Derek, you are leader for a reason. You have experience being captain of your sports teams, what I’m seeing isn’t leadership.” Dad said.

“I lead winners, not losers.” Derek said.

“Ok, fine, have it your way. You’re on room restriction until further notice.” Dad said.

“Fine! You act like I care!” Derek said storming off.

Dad sighed. “Ok, Harley, Josh invited you over for dinner. His cousins are in. You can go if you want, I’ll cover for you here. I’m not in any hurry to get back to the house anyway.”

“Mom still mad?” I asked.

“Yep.”

“Ok. I’ll see you later then...bye Wild Cats...and you did well. We’ll get it later.” I said leaving.

I got to the McKnight house and rang the doorbell. Josh answered.

“Hey Har, glad you could make it.” He said hugging me.

“Wouldn’t miss it.” I said following him in.

“OK, let me introduce everyone. Harley, this is my Uncle Eric, Aunt Tally, and my cousins, DJ, Noah, and Beth. Guys, this is my best friend Harley Bradley.” Josh said.

“Oh, Michelle and Hunter’s daughter?” Eric asked.

“Yes.” I said.

“I know your parents. It’s very nice to meet you.” Eric said.

“Likewise.” I said finding an empty chair as Kira walked in.

“Oh...hello Harley.” Kira said shortly. I knew she didn’t like me because of who my mother was.

“Hi Mrs. McKnight.” I said politely, no need to make her hate me more.

“How’s your dad?” Kira asked.

“He’s fine.” I said.

“Glad to hear it. Where is Anna?” Kira asked.

“Her room.” Josh said.

"I'll go get her if you'd like." I said...see I'm trying to make peace.

"Thank you Harley, that would be nice." Kira said, her tone softening just a bit...I knew I had a long way to go. I sighed and went to Anna's room and knocked on the door before I went in.

"So you hiding?" I asked.

"Yes. Anything to get away from that air headed cousin of mine. Beth is a total snob job." Anna said.

"What makes you say that?" I asked.

"It's the truth. She's a cheerleader and everything. I so don't want her going to my school. She's gonna make my life hell!" Anna cried.

"Well if you stay in here your mother is gonna make your life hell." I said.

Anna sighed, "Fine...let's get this over with."

Derek

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I was sitting on my bed furious when Hunter came in.

"Derek, you were way out of line."

"Me? I'm not the one that let the giant snake escape." I said.

"Don't you get it? This isn't all about winning. You guys stopped the monster for now so it can't hurt anyone, that's what counts! As for the others...do you know these kids have been called losers in some form or another their whole lives? You're confirming everything they think about themselves and it's not true!" Hunter said, his voice rising.

"It is true! They are losers!"

"You know why they're here? Tiffany for example, do you know why she's here?"

"Yeah, she can't keep her food down."

"Yes, but do you know why? Because she never felt she was good enough to deserve her parents' love. She always felt inferior. And Jesse...he didn't even do anything to warrant being here except breathing. His parents died and his aunt didn't want him so she shipped him here. Do you see where I'm going? Those kids have been through one problem after another and you are shooting them down again! This is their chance to feel like they can make a real difference...like they mean something. Don't take that away from them." Hunter said.

"Whatever." I said.

"I see I'm not getting through. Just stay here and think about what I've said. I'll have your dinner sent up to you." Hunter said leaving.

I lay back on my bed and stared at the ceiling. What in the hell was everyone's problem here? Why did I get stuck with the biggest losers to ever be Power Rangers? I could do better alone...that was the answer! I would find Apophis and take it out myself...then maybe I could get rid of the losers once and for all...

First I had to get out of here. I looked at the window. No bars...this trust thing they had going with us was stupid. I opened the window and climbed out then began my search. I ended up deep in the woods.

"Arisa! I'm here! Where's Apophis? Scared all of a sudden?" I cried.

"Scared of a lone Ranger? Never." Arissa said sending Apophis back.

"That's more like it. Wild Cat Transform!" I cried. I called on my sword and started to fight. "I've had about enough of you." I said attacking hard.

"Where's your friends?" Arissa asked.

"Don't need them. I can take your lame snake out by myself." I said.

"You think so? You know Red Ranger I could use a warrior like you by my side. Together we could rule the Earth and any other planet we wanted." Arissa said.

"I thought you only wanted Harley and Michelle." I said.

"That's just for revenge, after that I have bigger ambitions. Fight with me Red Ranger, leave your team of losers behind. Fight for the winning team." Arissa said seductively.

I gave this some thought...maybe I shouldn't have but I did. Power and victory seemed so appealing. I almost accepted her offer but something stopped me. "I'd never join you."

"Fine have it your way. Kill him Apophis." Arissa said.

"Not likely." I said attacking with everything I had. I was kicking his butt...for a second. Then I got to see exactly what

Apophis could do. He shot some sticky venom at me which pinned me to a tree. I couldn't move and he was coming right at me with my own sword, which I had dropped when I was hit.

Harley

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"So you guys are going to enroll at Reefside U too?" I asked.

"Yeah." DJ said.

"You gonna live at home?" I asked.

"No, I think Noah and I are gonna get a dorm or something." DJ said.

"Cool, if you guys ever have free time we always need the help at Starlight." I said.

"Sounds cool." Noah said.

"Maybe, we'll see." DJ said.

"And you're going to Reefside High?" I asked Beth.

"Yes. Oh Anna, I was going to talk to you about that...since we share a last name everyone will know we're related, you think you could get some presentable clothes to wear? You'll kill my rep if you don't." Beth said.

Anna glared.

"That's enough Beth; Anna is fine how she is. You need to stop being so image conscious." Tally said.

"Yeah...sure." Beth said.

"So anyway, what do you do for fun around here?" DJ asked.

"Well mostly we hang out at Cyberspace. It's pretty cool." I said.

"Yeah, we'll have to check it out later." Josh said.

"So what bring you guys to Reefside?" I asked.

"Well, my boss, Kelly Holloway, has opened up a chain of Storm Chargers throughout California. She couldn't oversee all of them anymore so she asked me to take half the stores and the base office for that half is here." Eric said.

"Oh wow, Storm Chargers is that cool bike shop right?" I asked.

"Yes it is." Eric said.

"Sweet, we're getting one here? That rocks." I said.

"You ride?" DJ asked.

"A bit." I said.

"A bit? Har was Angel Grove junior moto champ for three years in a row." Josh said.

I blushed. "Yeah, ok. I ride."

"So do I? You think you'd be up for a race sometime?" DJ asked.

"Name the time and I'm there." I said, I was never one to back down from a challenge.

"You're on." DJ said.

I smiled. "What do you do Mrs. McKnight?" I asked looking at Tally.

"You can call me Tally, and I'm an athletic physical therapist." She said.

"Have you found a job here yet?" I asked.

"Yes, I got a job at that huge sports clinic downtown."

"Oh wow, that's awesome." I said.

"Yes it is. I'm very excited." She said

I was about to say more when my cell phone rang. "Excuse me." I said getting up from the table. I went to the other room. "Hello?"

"Har, it's me. Derek is gone again." Dad said.

"Gone? Where?" I asked.

"I don't know exactly...oh hold on a second...the monitor picked him up just now...he's in trouble in the forest, I'll send the others, meet them there." Dad said.

"Ok on it." I said hanging up. "Thank you for dinner but I need to get going. Duty calls." I said taking off. I morphed and met up with the others.

Derek

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Ok so I had gotten myself into a sticky spot...literally. I couldn't think of anyway out. I was just about out of hope when

a flash of purple light hit the monster.

"Hey look, Prom King is stuck to a tree." Chris said.

"Couldn't have happened to a nicer guy." April said.

"Can you guys get me down?" I asked.

"Oh, but we're a bunch of losers." Tiffany said.

"Not you too Tiff..."

"Come on guys, let's get him down." Jesse said.

"Why should we?" April asked.

"Because he's our leader and we're still a team." Jesse said.

"Some leader." April said.

"Guys get him down, you need him to form the Wild Blaster and without that there's no stopping this monster." Harley said as she held Arissa back.

"OK fine...let's get him down." Chris said.

"If we have to." April said as they cut me down.

"Thanks guys...now let's finish this." I said as we formed the blaster and finished the monster.

"You Rangers may have won this time but I'll be back. Count on it." Arissa said disappearing.

I looked at my team mates and sighed. "OK guys...I'm sorry...maybe you were the right choice for the Rangers after all..."

"Apology accepted. Now let's get back, I'm starved." Tiffany said.

"You starved? Why bother eating anyway? It's gonna come right back up." April said.

"Enough guys, back to the lodge, now." Harley said.

I laughed to myself. Maybe I'd be ok here after all...maybe...

Arissa

~~~~~

I went back to my base. I couldn't believe the Rangers had won...I couldn't let this happen again. I heard my picture phone. I picked it up and turned the screen on.

"Arissa, how is the take over going? Have you got the Saturn Princess and Queen yet?" Aunt Aria asked.

"Not yet, but I will. I will avenge my mother's death." I said.

"You better make it fast. You're on Earth now and as long as you're on Earth you will age at the rate of an Earthling."

I nodded "Don't worry Aunt Aria, the Rangers stopped me this time, but they won't again."

Harley

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We got back to the lodge and I saw my Dad and Felicity.

"Hey, we won." I said.

"Great...I have a favor." He said.

"OK, shoot." I said.

"Keep Felicity in your room with you tonight?"

"Why?"

"So your mother and I can have some alone time...I want to fix this with her."

"And how do you plan on doing that?" I asked.

"Candlelight, roses, bubble bath..."

"Bubble bath...eww gross mental image..."

Dad laughed, "Sorry."

"Fine she can stay with me, just don't share details." I said

Dad laughed again and handed Liss to me. "Ok, deal."

"Have fun..." I said laughing as I took Liss. I made sure the Wild Cats were eating then I took Liss to bed. When she was asleep I watched her. She didn't know how simple she had it...and I had a feeling my life wouldn't be any easier anytime soon.

*"Well there's a hunger in my veins  
And it's driving me insane  
But I guess it all comes down to love and pain"  
~"Love and Pain" Cher*

"And this is Cyberspace." I said as I walked in with DJ, Josh, and Noah.  
"Very cool." Noah said as we found a table.  
"Hey guys, what can I get you?" Savannah asked coming over.  
"Oh hey Savannah. These are my cousins DJ and Noah. Guys this is Savannah James, she runs the place." Josh said.  
"It's nice to meet you guys. So are the McKnights trying to over run the city or what?" Savannah joked.  
"Never can have too many McKnights." DJ said with a smirk.  
"I'm not so sure about that." Savannah said, "Anyway, what can I get for you guys?"  
"Milkshake." Josh said.  
"I'll take a smoothie." I said.  
"Hmmm...root beer float." DJ said.  
"Noah? What do you want?" I asked.  
No response.  
"Noah? Earth to Noah..." Josh said.  
"Oh...um...just a date...I mean shake...milkshake." Noah stuttered.  
Savannah smiled. "Coming right up." She went to make our order.  
"Someone's got a crush." I teased.  
"No I don't" Noah said.  
"Oh come on bro, you're so in to her!" DJ said.  
"Maybe a little." Noah said.  
"Ask her out then." I said.  
"What if she says no?" Noah asked.  
"I don't think she will." I said.  
"No...she's so beautiful...and I'm so..." Noah started.  
"You're my twin and we all know how good looking I am so that means you are too." DJ said.  
"And so modest." I said.  
"I don't even know if she has a boyfriend." Noah said.  
"She doesn't." Josh said.  
"There, now you know." I said.  
"Maybe later, after I know her better." Noah said.  
"Suit yourself." I said.  
"So Har, you up for a race after this?" DJ asked.  
"You know it." I said.  
"Here's your drinks." Savannah said coming back and setting our drinks in front of us.  
"Thanks Sav." I said.

Tally

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"Thanks for helping Kira. There's no way I could have got this unpacked without your help and with Eric setting up the new store and the kids taking off no one else was willing to help." I said.
"No problem. Always glad you help. We're sisters, right?" Kira said sitting down and sipping her lemonade.
"So you didn't seem too happy about Conner working at Starlight." I said.
"I'm not. The idea of my husband working with that traitor day in and day out repulses me." Kira said.
"I know Michelle was wrong but it's been years...maybe it's time to talk it out." I said.
"I don't think so." Kira said.
"OK...well at least Starlight is a worthy cause."

“That’s true...though Hunter and Michelle are the poster couple for troubled. I can’t see them helping these poor kids.”

“Aside from that how are things with Conner?” I asked.

“Great. I’m really happy with him...happier than I ever was with Trent. And our kids...I’m so proud of them. I couldn’t ask for more really.” Kira said.

“Sounds great.” I said. I couldn’t help but wonder what my life would have been like if I had gotten Conner instead...not that I didn’t like my life, but it was so mundane. Kira seemed so happy with Conner. I had a chance with Conner and I often wondered, especially now that I saw he and Kira’s life first hand, if I should have taken it. Sometimes I even felt like second choice to Kira with Eric...I mean she did date him long before I did.

“What about Eric...are you guys happy?” Kira asked.

I nodded. “Yes. Eric is a wonderful husband and a very involved father. My biggest concern is Beth. I’d like to teach her there’s more to life than boys and clothes...speaking of which I’m really sorry about that comment she made to Anna.”

“Don’t worry about it. You can’t control what Beth says.”

I nodded. “Yeah...I know.”

“Anyway I should get going. I told Anna I’d stop at the music store and get her some strings for the guitar.” Kira said standing.

“Ok, thanks again for your help.” I said.

“Anytime.” Kira said leaving.

I went and sat in my new living room and sighed. I did love Eric, I loved him more and more everyday and he was a wonderful man. Any girl would love a husband like him...but there was still that voice in me that questioned if I had made the right choice.

Harley

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I was on the last lap of the race against Noah and DJ. I knew I had Noah beat, but just barely. DJ on the other hand...I was having a hard time pulling ahead of him. Then I got my chance. DJ was a free-styler, he took his jumps to high. I used that and got ahead at the last minute. Winning by an inch. We pulled our bikes to the pit and took our helmets off.

“You’re good.” DJ said.

“Thanks. So are you guys.” I said taking a drink of my water.

“I was a little off today.” Noah said.

“Yeah, in a race Noah can normally beat me. Racing is his thing, free style is mine.” DJ said.

“You were all really good.” Josh said. He had been watching.

“How come you never took up moto?” DJ asked.

“Not my thing. I’ll stick with music.” Josh said.

“Music is good too.” Noah said.

“So Harley, I really am impressed with your riding. I’d love to get some tips from you...over dinner maybe?” DJ asked.

“Are you asking me on a date?” I asked.

DJ smiled. “I guess I am. You accepting?”

I nodded. “Yeah, sure. Sounds fun.” I noticed Josh looked like a deer in headlights. “You ok?”

“Um, yeah...just remember...I promised Jesse I’d...help him with something. Got to go.” Josh said running off.

“That was weird.” I said.

“So anyway, pick you up at 7?” DJ asked.

I nodded. “I can’t wait.” I said loading up my dad’s truck and heading back to the Academy.

## Josh

~~~~~

I couldn’t believe I was so stupid! Here I was, waiting for Harley to get over Jay fully before I asked her out and DJ swoops in and asks her first. I got to the Academy and ran into Julia.

“Whoa boy...what’s wrong with you?” she asked.

“Nothing.” I growled.

“Oh come on, what did Harley do now? I know it’s something with her.”

I sighed. "My cousin asked her out."

"And she agreed. That sucks. You gotta be fast on these things. You waited too long." Julia said.

"Obviously...whatever. How are things around here?" I asked.

"Fine. Actually I need to get back to the lodge and check on things. You wanna come?"

"Sure." I said following her. We got back and I heard the phone. "I'll get it." I said. "Starlight Academy, Josh speaking."

"Hello Josh, this is Christine Jennings. Is my daughter, Tiffany, available?"

"I believe so. Just a second Mrs. Jennings." I said putting the phone down. I went to the sitting room. "Tiffany, telephone, it's your mother."

"Ok, thanks." Tiffany said going to get the phone.

Tiffany

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When Josh said my mother was on the phone my blood ran cold. What did she want? I took a deep breath and picked up the phone.

"Hello Mother." I said sweetly.

"Hello Tiffany dear. How are things at that school? Are you keeping your weight down?" Mother asked.

"Yes Mother." I said.

"Good girl. I just wanted to let you know that your father and I will be in Reefsides on business next week and we will be stopping by to check on you. Make sure you look your best, we might take you to one of our banquets while we're there and we don't want you embarrassing us." Mother said.

"Yes Mother. I'll make sure I look perfect." I said.

"That's my girl."

"Anyway, yesterday we took a history test and I made an 'A'! Can you believe I made an 'A' in history of all things?" I said excited. History was my worst subject so that was a big deal for me.

"That's nice dear, I have work to do now. See you next week. Ta." Mother said hanging up.

"I love you too." I sighed hanging up.

This was great, I had to have gained at least 6 pounds since I'd been here and I had to lose 10 before my mother would be anywhere near happy. I had work to do and I had to get started.

"Tiffany? Lunch time." Conner said walking over.

"I'm not hungry." I said.

"You have to eat something."

"Fine..." I said knowing it was pointless to argue. I went to the dining hall and got a tray then sat with my group. "Yum, soy burgers."

"At least it's healthy." Jesse said.

"I'd rather have a real hamburger any day. Something big and juicy from McDonalds." Chris said.

"So Princess, what did the Queen have to say?" April asked.

"She and my father are coming to see me next week." I said.

"Oh fun. The return of royalty." April said.

"Step off Ape, you know none of us like having parental visits." Chris said.

"At least you all have parents to visit you." Jesse said sourly.

"Dude, chill. What's the deal?" Chris asked.

"I'm so sick of hearing you guys whine about your parents. At least you have parents that are still alive. Some of us just wish we did." Jesse said getting up and leaving.

"Guys, he's right. Maybe we're being insensitive." I said.

"Us? Um no. He just doesn't know what it's like to have crappy parents because his parents actually cared about him.

My mom, if you can even call her that, cares more about finding another bottle of Jack than my well being." April said.

"Whatever." I said as I finished eating. I stood up.

"Where are you going? You have to stay with a witness for 30 minutes after you eat." April said.

"Lay off. I'm going to find Jesse. He looked like he needed a friend." I said.

"Ok, fine. Go." April said.

“I am.” I said taking off.

I ran back to the dorms and went in the bathroom. I hated using Jesse as an excuse like this but I had no choice. I lifted the lid on the toilet and knelt next to it and forced two fingers down my throat, which forced my food back up. It was the only way to lose weight and keep the staff here happy and I knew I had to look perfect when I saw my mother. When I was finished I cleaned up and went to go find Jesse for real.

Harley

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I got back to the Academy and found Mom walk with Felicity.

“Hey!” I said.

“Harley!” Felicity said running over to me as fast as her little legs could go.

“Liss!” I said picking her up and spinning her around.

“Have fun?” Mom asked walking over.

“Totally. And I got a date.”

“With who?”

“DJ McKnight.” I said smiling.

“Wow...that’s great.”

“He’s awesome. He’s hot and funny and rides moto.”

“Sounds perfect for you.”

“He is. Anyway, did you and Dad make up?”

“Yes we did. I’m still not thrilled about Conehead working here but it’s not worth risking my marriage over. I love your father more than I dislike Conner.”

“Glad to hear it. What is the deal with you and the McKnights anyway? Kira doesn’t seem too fond of you either.” I said.

“She isn’t. But it’s a really long story and it all happened a really long time ago. I’d rather not go into it. Shouldn’t you be showering anyway? You have to get ready for your date.”

“Oh...right.” I said handing Felicity back to Mom.

“Have fun.” Mom said.

“I will.” I said heading for the dorms. I knew there was something Mom wasn’t telling me...I seriously wished I knew what though. Knowing Mom it was big. I was close to the dorms when I saw Conner. “Hey, how’s it going?”

“Pretty good. I think I’m gonna like it here.” He said.

“That’s great. We’re glad to have you.” I said.

“Thanks Harley. Hey have you seen Josh?”

“No, he took off from the track earlier and I haven’t seen him since.” I said

“Ok, well I need to find him. See you later.”

“See ya.” I said going into the dorm. I went up to my room and took a shower then picked out my clothes for my date. I was just about ready when Julia walked in.

“You are such a clueless freak.” She said.

“What are you talking about Ju Ju?” I asked.

“DJ. Did you ever stop to think it might be weird for Josh to see his best friend and cousin dating?”

“Um...not really.”

“Of course not. That would require unselfish thought.”

“Are you implying I’m selfish?” I asked.

“Of course not Airy, I’m flat out saying it. You’re selfish.”

“Just shut up ok? DJ is a cool guy and if Josh had a problem with me seeing him I think he’d tell me.” I said.

“Like I said, clueless freak.”

“Whatever. Now if you’ll excuse me I’m sure DJ will be here soon.” I said leaving the room.

I went to the lodge and saw DJ talking to Derek.

“Hey, you ready?” I asked.

“Hey you, wow you look great.” DJ said.

I smiled. "Thanks."
"You do look nice Har." Derek said.
"Totally...you're hot." Chris said.
I laughed, "Thanks guys."
"Have fun." Tiffany said.
"But not too much fun. It's only the first date." April said.
"Bye Wild Cats." I said taking DJ's hand and leaving.

Josh

~~~~~

I couldn't stay at the Academy and watch DJ pick up the girl of my dreams so I went to Cyberspace to hang out. I was sitting alone, sipping a soda, when this girl came up to me. She was very pretty, kinda reminded me of Harley...but she was somehow different.  
"Hey, this seat taken?" she asked.  
"Is now." I said.  
"Thanks. I'm...Marissa." She said.  
"Nice to meet you. I'm Josh."  
"So what are you doing here all alone? Girlfriend off on her own or something?"  
"Actually I don't have a girlfriend."  
"You've got to be kidding me, someone that looks like you doesn't have a girlfriend?"  
"Afraid not."  
"Well how sad for you...but good for me...I hope you don't think this is too forward but...would you like to go out sometime?" she asked.  
I gave this some thought, normally I would have said no because of my thing for Harley but then I stopped. Harley was on a date with DJ, I was here alone...except for Marissa. She was hot, I was single...what was the problem. "I'd like that." I said.

Tiffany

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After dinner, during clean up, I slipped away for just a second and went to the bathroom for my ritual. I even took a moment to step on the scale, I weighed 105 pounds. I was so fat; Mother would never accept me looking like this. Even purging I'd never lose enough weight in time. I sat down on the floor and started to cry. Why did I have to be such a cow? I saw a razor the dorm monitors had forgotten to pick up (we were only allowed razors for shaving under supervision). I picked up the razor and pressed it down to my skin and cut. I watched as blood started to ooze. It felt good. I started to cut again, faster and faster all up and down my arm. I finally dropped the razor and looked at the dripping blood. I stood up and washed my arm off and once the bleeding stopped I put on a long sleeve shirt and went back down to help clean. They never even knew I was gone...then again when did anyone notice me anyway?

PRWC 8- "Something to Call My Own"

*"So tired of the straight line
And everywhere you turn
There's vultures and thieves at your back
The storm keeps on twisting
You keep on building the lies
That you make up for all that you lack
It don't make no difference
Escaping one last time
It's easier to believe
In this sweet madness oh
This glorious sadness that brings me to my knees"
~ "Angel" Sarah McLachlan*

"So how was your date?" Mom asked.
"Great! DJ is a great guy. I really like him." I said.
"That's good. I'm glad you've found someone new." Mom said.
"Me too. Anyway, how are my Wild Cats?"
"Fine. Tiffany's mom is visiting in a few days."
"What? Is she ok with it?"
"She seems ok. I haven't noticed a change in her since she found out the news."
"I think I'm gonna go talk to her anyway." I said.
"Ok, see you later." Mom said.

I went to the lodge and found Tiffany working on homework.
"Hey kid." I said sitting next to her.
"Hey Har." She said looking up from her book.
"Heard your mom is coming in. Are you ok with that?"
"Of course. I'm so excited! I miss my parents." She said brightly.
"Ok...well if something about it does bother you...well you can come talk to me."
She nodded. "I know Har, but really, I'm happy about this."
"OK...well I'll let you get back to work..." I said getting up. I went to make sure the kitchen had been cleaned up then I checked on all the Wild Cats. Everyone was fine so I went to do my own homework and ended up running into Josh on the way to my room.

"Hey you." I said.
"Hey Har. How was your date?" he asked.
"Very nice, thanks. Hey, you don't have a problem with me seeing your cousin do you?" I asked.
"Of course not."
"Ok, I didn't think so. Anyway what have you been up to?"
"I went on a date myself."
"Oh? With who?" I asked quicker than I should have.
"This girl I met. Her name is Marissa and she's an awesome girl. I like her a lot." He said.
"I'm so happy for you. Anyway I need to get to my homework...see ya?"
"See ya." Josh said.
I went on to my room and as I sat down I noticed a weird feeling of jealousy I couldn't quite explain.

Tiffany

~~~~~  
So I probably should have told Harley how I was really feeling, but she would just put me under watch and make me

start eating and that wouldn't help me lose the weight I needed to lose.

After I finished my homework I went to my room and pulled the razor I had hidden. It felt so good to cut. It was a pain I could control. No one made me do it, no one made me hurt. I did this to myself, it was my pain and I owned it. I watched as blood dripped down my arm again. I cut more, and more...and more. I couldn't stop, it just felt so good to have something I could control in my life. I finally made myself stop. I could control that too. I could stop the pain. I washed off my arm and put my jacket back on. That's when April came in. She went to her bunk to get something and then looked at me.

"It's burning up in here. What's with the jacket?" she asked.

"I'm cold." I said.

"Don't give me that shit. I'm not an idiot. Come here." She said grabbing my wrist.

"No! Stop!" I cried trying to pull away.

"No. Stay still." She commanded as she tried to take my jacket off of me. She ended up tearing the sleeve off, revealing my cut arm. "I knew it. You moron."

"Thanks." I said softly pulling away.

"Why would you do something so stupid?"

"It feels good ok?"

"Let me guess, you've been sneaking off and barfing again too?"

"Yes." I said softly.

"Does this have anything to do with your parents visiting?"

"You don't know what it's like to be a Jennings. My mother expects perfection. I have to be perfect or I'll embarrass her. Since I've gotten here I've gotten so fat. I had to do something."

"You are such an idiot. You're not fat. You're like a stick. And cutting...god...you really should talk to Harley about it. Stay here and I'll go get her." April said.

"You trust me to stay?"

"You don't have the guts to run." April said leaving me alone.

"Whatever." I said sitting on my bed. I knew Harley would be in anytime now and they would make me start eating. I'd gain weight and my mother would hate me. I couldn't let that happen. I grabbed my backpack, tossed in some clothes, left my Morpher on the bed and headed out the door. I knew they'd be after me soon so I took off running fast as I could. I had to stay one step ahead of them.

April

~~~~~

I couldn't believe what Tiffany was doing, though I'd never admit it, seeing her arm scared the crap out of me. I got to Harley's room and banged on the door.

"What's wrong?" she asked as she opened the door.

"It's Tiffany, you need to talk to her now." I said running back to the dorm. Harley was right behind. We got back and she was gone. "NO!" I cried.

"April, what's wrong? What's going on?" Harley asked panicked.

"I found out Tiffany has been cutting again and purging because she is upset about her parents visit. I told her to stay here." I said.

"You left her alone after you knew all that?!" Harley cried.

"I...I'm sorry. I never thought she'd actually run!" I cried.

"Ok we need to let my parents know about this. You get to the lodge and round up the other Wild Cats. I'll find my mom and dad." She said.

"Ok." I nodded as I ran off to the lodge. Before I entered I slowed my pace. "Hey, morons, Harley wants us rounded up now." We all gathered in our normal area.

"What's the deal?" Chris asked.

"Princess decided to run off." I said disgusted, like I didn't care.

"Oh great, we gotta look for her now." Chris said.

"I know, I think we should let her try to make it on her own. She'll come back on her own. She can't make it out there." I said.

Harley

~~~~~

I got to my parents' house and ran in.

"Guys! Tiffany ran." I called.

"What?" Dad asked running out of the bedroom with Mom.

"Tiffany ran. April found out she's been cutting and purging again so she ran." I said.

"How much of a head start does she have?" Mom asked.

"I'd say 15 minutes or so." I said.

"We can track her with her Morpher." Dad said.

"No, she left it behind on the bed." I said as the alarm on the computer went off. "Perfect timing Arissa" I said.

"No...not now...ok we'll get a search party together, you take the Wild Cats and handle Arissa." Mom said.

"You got it." I said running back to the lodge. "Ok guys, Tiffany is missing but there's other trouble to deal with."

"Now?" April asked.

"Sorry, but now. Let's go Wild Cats." I said. We went to our safe spot to morph and then went to face Arissa and her Bots.

"Hello Rangers." Arissa said.

"Sorry Arissa, now is not a good time, can be maybe do this later?" I said.

"What's the matter? Can't fight without the Pink Ranger?" Arissa asked with a laugh.

Michelle

~~~~~

After the Wild Cats were gone Hunter and I found Josh.

"Hey, Tiffany is missing, we need to form a search party. You think your dad would help?" Hunter asked.

"Of course. Let me call him." Josh said running to the phone.

"I can't believe we didn't pick up on this sooner." I said.

"I know...but Tiff always puts on a happy face. It's hard to tell when she's sincere" Hunter said.

"I'm worried...she's not meant for life on the street."

"I know sweetie, but we'll find her."

"I hope so." I said as I saw Julia. "Jules! We need your help, Tiff is gone and we need to form a search party."

"Where's Harley and the other Wild Cats?" Julia asked.

"Um...already looking for her. Will you help?" I asked.

"Of course." Julia said as Conner's car pulled up. Conner and several other McKnights walked over. (Eric, Conner, and their families).

"What can we do?" Conner asked. I noticed Kira at his side.

"Thanks for coming. Ok we need search teams. Michelle, you take Josh, Noah, and Tally. Conner, you take DJ and Eric. Julia, Anna, and, Beth you're with me." Hunter said.

"What can I do? I want to help." Kira said.

"Actually if you don't mind we need someone to stay here to watch Felicity and in case Tiffany comes back on her own." Hunter said.

"Ok, got it." Kira said going to the house to get Felicity.

"Ok everyone, stay in contact, let's move out." I said.

We all headed in different directions and started the search.

"Tiffany!" I called.

"Tiff!" Josh called.

"How much ahead is she?" Tally asked.

"By now? About half an hour or so." I said.

"You think she made it to town?" Noah asked.

"Maybe. I think that's where Hunter was headed for." I said.

Hunter

~~~~~

“OK, it’s possible she went into town. We’ll start there first.” I said as my group piled in my Durango and we headed for town. We parked in a parking area and started to search on foot.

“Tiff!” I called.

“Tiffany!” Anna called.

“You really think she’ll come if she hears?” Beth asked.

“What?” Anna asked.

“Well she doesn’t want to be found obviously.” Beth said.

“If you don’t have something positive to contribute then shut up.” Anna said.

“Don’t tell me to shut up. I’m just trying to help. I mean why would a kid run away anyway? You guys must have been real bad to her.” Beth said.

“You don’t know what you’re talking about.” Anna said.

“I’m just saying, normal kids don’t just run away from a place they like. She must have hated that school. It’s like a prison or something anyway isn’t it?” Beth said.

“Ok, I’m sorry Hunter but I can’t listen to this. You shut the hell up Miss Prep, Starlight is a safe haven. Without it some of those kids would be dead. Without schools like it I’d be in prison or worse. Do you know why Tiffany ran away, did you even bother to ask? Because she couldn’t handle the thought of her mother visiting. You know why? Because her mother is always on her about her weight. In order to please her mother Tiffany purges her food, to mask the pain she feels she cuts her own arm. Starlight and schools like it save kids. If you have a problem then go back to your perfect little world where cheerleaders rule and the popular girls always win because in this world there is no winning, there is no perfect, there’s just getting by and surviving day to day.” Julia said.

Beth stood there speechless.

“Bless you.” Anna said patting Julia on the shoulder.

“Now that we have that settled let’s get back to trying to find Tiff.” I said. I agreed with what Julia said and I’d tell her so later, for now I had to stay impartial and focus on finding Tiffany.

Harley

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“I’m getting really sick of you.” I said attacking Arissa.

“And I’m sick of you. I will have my revenge.”

“For what exactly?”

“Your mother killed mine and now you both will pay.”

“If your mother was anything like you we’re all better off.” I said holding up my staff to block her attack.

“You will pay for that.” Arissa said shooting a fire ball at me. It hit me in the stomach and sent me flying.

“Harley!” the Ranger called.

“Get up and fight Purple Ranger.” Arissa said standing over me.

“Can’t you just go away and leave me alone? Geez, I didn’t kill your mother.” I said.

“But your mother did.”

“Ok I get that...but why attack me?”

“The off spring of that woman doesn’t deserve to live.”

“So you’re after me because I’m my mother’s daughter?” I asked.

“Now you’re starting to get it.” Arissa said.

“How lame are you.” I said getting up, with the help of my staff. I charged Arissa with my staff at full power. After hitting her a few times she was forced to retreat, so were the Bots. “Nice work guys. Now Power Down! We need to find Tiffany.” I said taking the team to search.

Tiffany

~~~~~

I had run for quite awhile, not knowing how much of a head start I had. After about 30 minutes I got tired of running. I was getting tired period. I needed a place to sleep but I was broke. I saw a place called Cyberspace. There was a pretty

nice size ally in the back so I slumped next to the wall and curled in a ball. In the morning I'd find a way out of town. Maybe head for Mexico and start a new life. One that didn't include being a Jennings. No pressure to be perfect, no one to control me. That sounded so wonderful. I sat there and saw a tin can lid on the ground. It had jagged edges. I picked it up and began to cut again. This time there was no one to stop me. No fear of being caught. No need to clean the blood, and really no way even if I wanted to. I cut deeper this time than before, causing blood to ooze faster and faster. I watched as the blood droplets hit the ground. I was entranced by this sight when I heard a voice.

"Looks like you've hurt yourself. Come with me. I'll clean that up for you." A man said.

"No thank you. I'm fine right here." I said not looking up from the blood.

"No, you don't understand. That wasn't a request. It was a demand." He said grabbing my arm and pulling me up.

"What do you want?!" I screamed.

"You." He said pinning me to the wall and reaching his hands up my shirt.

"Let me go! Help!" I screamed as loud as I could. Someone heard and came out the back door of Cyberspace.

"I believe the girl said to let her go." A girl said coming out and grabbing the man by his shirt. She threw him against the wall and proceeded to kick his ass. He ran off in a panic. I was standing there in shock when the girl came over to me. "Hi, I'm Savannah. I run Cyberspace, would you like to come in and clean that arm up?"

"No, thank you." I said turning to walk away.

"Come on, you can sleep on the sofa if you'd like." Savannah said.

I had to admit that a sofa sounded better than an ally. "OK, fine." I said following her in. She cleaned up my arm for me with a first aid kit then wrapped a bandage around it.

"OK, go ahead and go to sleep. You look like you need the rest." She said handing me a blanket. I curled up on the sofa and fell asleep very quickly.

Michelle

~~~~~

I was still searching with my team when my cell rang.

"Hello?" I asked.

"Michelle? Hey it's Savannah. I think I have something at Cyberspace that belongs to you."

"You do?" I asked.

"Yeah, blonde girl in a pink shirt. Sound familiar?"

"Oh god...Tiffany! We'll be right there." I said hanging up. "Savannah found her. She has her at Cyberspace."

"Savannah has her?" Noah asked.

"Oh no, he's gonna start crushing again." Josh said.

"Noah has a crush on Savannah?" I asked. This was very bad.

"Totally." Josh said as we headed for my car to drive over.

"I really don't think you should ask her out or anything." I said.

"Why not?" Noah asked.

"Because...she's...she's recently divorced. I don't think she's ready for a relationship yet." I said.

"Oh...that makes sense. I can wait a while." Noah said.

I sighed, someday this was gonna come bite me in the ass.

On the way to Cyberspace I called Harley, Conner, and Hunter. Harley and Hunter took their teams back to Cyberspace and Conner met us there. When I walked in to Cyberspace I saw two things that caught my attention. 1) Tiffany was peacefully sleeping on the sofa and 2) Conner and Savannah were sitting at the bar talking. The second one really hit me. I had to come clean with this someday.

"Hey, thanks for keeping her here." I said sitting next to Conner.

"No problem. I found her out back. She was getting attacked so I beat the guy up then brought her in here. Her arm is pretty cut up, it could get infected. I'd keep an eye on it." Savannah said.

"Ok, thanks. How did you know she was a Starlight Kid?" I asked.

"Self mutilation, obvious emotional issues. If she wasn't she should be."

I nodded. "Thanks again." I said.

"Want me to carry her to the car?" Conner asked.

"If you could without waking her up that'd be nice." I said.

“Ok. I’ll get her back to the Academy.” Conner said.

“Thanks.” I said. Conner went over and picked Tiffany up and took her to his car. I turned to Savannah. Everyone else had gone outside and we were alone. “Listen, I know I’m not your favorite person in the world but thanks for calling me...and thanks for not telling Harley anything.”

“It’s your job to tell Harley. You’re her mother. I’d love to get to know her on a sisterly level but I’m not going to be the one to tell her your secret. I do have a favor though...please, I know I’ve asked before but who is my birth father?” Savannah asked.

“I can’t tell you that Savannah, I know you’re curious but it’s for the best that you don’t know.” I said.

“I will find out someday.”

“How? It’s not in your birth records. I’m the only person alive who knows and I’m sorry but I can’t tell you. Not now. It’s been too long. He has a wife and other kids now. I can’t complicate his life by adding you to it.”

“How could I actually think you’d help me? You’ve never done anything for me, why start now?” Savannah said. I knew she was mad.

“I’m sorry...I really am.” I said turning and leaving. God, why did I do this to myself?

Tiffany

~~~~~

When I woke up the next morning I was in the lodge and Harley was standing guard.

“How are you feeling?” she asked.

“Fine.” I said. I didn’t even have to ask how I got back. Savannah turned me over, I shouldn’t have trusted her.

“Good because there will be consequences for your running.” She said.

“What?” I asked.

“Shuns for a week, guarded of course.”

“Guarded by who?”

“Whom. Yours truly. Josh is taking over my Wild Cat duties so I can be with you every second of every day for the next week. Only exception is when you’re with a teacher and I’m in class. We’ll get to be good friends.” She said.

I sighed. What had I gotten myself into now?

## PRWC 9- "Reality Check"

*"I can't deal with reality  
It's nothing but excruciating agony  
I can't deal with my apathy  
It's just in my genes and personality"  
~ "Reality Check" Konkhra*

"Derek, we've been going in circles since you've gotten here. A star athlete doesn't just decide to give it all up one day. I'm gonna try the direct approach here...what happened to you?" Hunter asked.  
"I told you, peer pressure got to me. Nothing else happened. Can I go now?" I asked.  
Hunter sighed, "OK, we're done for now. See you later."  
"Thank you." I said taking off. There was no way I could tell Hunter what really happened. He'd never understand.

I headed for the field, it was gym time.

"Hey Conner" I said.

"Derek, hey. Just in time." He said tossing me a football.

"Yeah, let's do it Wild Cats." I said putting on my flag belt.

"The odds are uneven." Chris said.

"Yeah, with Tiffany on shuns it's 4 on 5." April said.

"Sorry guys, nothing I can do about that." Conner said.

"It's ok. Doesn't matter, we'll take them anyway. Let's do it." I said as the game started.

Harley

~~~~~

I had spent the last few days going between school and baby-sitting Tiffany. I knew it had to be done but I was missing my friends in a major way. I so wanted to go hang out at Cyberspace. Only 2 more days...

At this moment I had finished my classes for the day so I was watching Tiffany eat. I had to make sure she ate and that it stayed down.

"Harley?"

"Yeah Tiff?"

"You've been a Ranger awhile?"

"Yeah."

"What was your hardest battle as a Ranger so far?"

"Probably fighting Viper...or Nick. He went from good to evil so much you never knew what side he was on. It's hard to not know what is real and what isn't. Now eat." I said.

She was just about done when my mom came in.

"How's it going?" she asked.

"She's almost finished eating." I said.

"Good...listen Har, if you want to go to Cyberspace I'll take over for a few hours." Mom said.

"Are you sure? This is my job."

"I'm sure. Go."

"Are you ok with that Tiff?" I asked.

"Totally. Go, have fun."

"OK later." I said taking off. I got in my car and went to Cyberspace.

Anna was on stage with her band, Josh was doing homework, DJ was watching Beth flirt with some guy like a protective big brother, and Noah was watching Savannah's every move...I think Savannah was glancing back at him when she got the chance too.

“Hey guys,” I said.

“Har, hey long time no see.” Josh said.

“Yeah, I missed you.” DJ said pulling me into his lap.

“Missed you guys too.” I said kissing DJ.

“So how’s Tiff?” Josh asked.

“She’s doing better I guess. My parents are meeting with her’s tomorrow to discuss what happened.” I said.

“I feel sorry for her. It must be awful to think your parents don’t love you.” Noah said.

“Sad how many kids think that.” Josh said.

I nodded. “Hey, Anna looks even happier than normal on stage, what’s going on?”

“Oh you haven’t heard yet? There was a teacher strike at Blue Bay U and they expect classes to be out for a month so Aaron is coming to stay here for a couple of weeks.” Josh said.

“Aaron Kay?” I asked.

“Um...he is Anna’s boyfriend, duh.” Josh said.

“Just checking...wow...I haven’t seen Aaron in awhile.” I said.

“You’re over him right?” Josh asked.

“Yeah...I mean I’ve moved on, but he was my first love. You don’t forget something like that.” I said.

“Sometimes love gets more intense as you get older anyway.” DJ said wrapping his arms around my waist.

I smiled.

“What time is it?” Josh asked.

“Five till four, why?” I asked.

“I need to go meet Marissa at the movies. I’ll catch you guys later.” Josh said.

“Ok, have fun.” I said.

Josh

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I got to the theater and found Marissa.

“Hey baby.” I said kissing her.

“Hey yourself. I’ve missed you.” She said kissing me back. I bought us movie tickets and popcorn then we found seats and waited for the movie to start.

“So how was your day?” I asked.

“Uneventful. Just talked to my aunt and stuff. What about your day?”

“School...normal stuff. My sister’s boyfriend is coming in tonight so I helped set up the guest room.”

“Your sister has a boyfriend?”

“Yeah he lives in Blue Bay Harbor. I’m kinda worried about him visiting.”

“How come?”

“You remember I mentioned my friend Harley? Well Aaron was her first love and now he’s dating Anna. Harley says she’s over Aaron but I just worry she might not be and cause problems for him and Anna.” I said.

“I’m sure it’ll be ok.” Marissa said as the movie started.

Arissa

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If you haven’t figured out I’m Marissa by now how stupid are you? I knew that the Purple Ranger was friends with this guy and hooking up with him was giving me valuable information...like this Aaron guy...what if I had the Bots kidnap him? Harley would go insane with worry and it would cause tension between Anna and Harley which would cause tension among everyone else. It was a great plan. It had to work. My aunt was getting very impatient with my failures, and I was in no hurry to age at a human rate anyway. I needed to take over Earth and get back to my TK-91 fast.

After the movie I kissed Josh goodnight...the guy was a good kisser I could admit that much...and I headed back to my lair. I pulled out my picta-phone and got my aunt on screen.

“I won’t fail you again, by this time tomorrow the Rangers will be doomed.” I said.

“Good...see that you don’t fail again.” She said.

“I won’t...I won’t.” I turned off my Picta-phone and set to work. I would need several monsters for this project. Of

course they would all be copies off a main one, but they could all serve my purpose...these shape shifter monsters would bring forth the Rangers', past and present, worst fear. First thing first, I had to separate them. I sent down scattered armies of Bots.

Derek

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We had just finished dinner, Wild Cats had kitchen duty again. I was washing some plates when Hunter came in.

"Derek, telephone."

"Oh? Who is it?" I asked.

"Your mother. She said she really wants to talk to you." Hunter said.

Hearing that she wanted to talk to me made something in me snap. I picked up a plate and threw it at the wall, shattering it. "Tell her she can fuck herself!" I screamed as I ran from the kitchen. I ran into the woods before I finally fell against a tree and started to cry. I was alone for a little while before I heard someone.

"Something you didn't share in group?" April asked sitting next to me.

"Fuck off."

"I would, really...but you look like you need to talk and you're obviously not going to tell Hunter what's going on so you can tell me. I won't tell Hunter." April said as an army of Bots showed up. "Bad timing much?"

"Come on, we have a job to do." I said as we started to fight.

"April, Derek, there's an army of Bots in the city." Michelle said over the communicator.

"There's one here too." April said.

"They are scattered all over the city." Michelle said.

"Go, I can hold it down here." I said.

"OK. I'm gone." April said taking off.

I continued to fight on my own. "I'm so sick of you bots!" I cried. I was just about to finish them off.

"Derek, come here. Mommy needs her boy." A voice said.

I turned around and saw my mother.

"Go away." I said.

"Sweetie, come here...I love you my baby."

"No...go away. Just leave me alone!"

"Don't you love me anymore Derek?"

"No! No I don't! Just go away!" I screamed

"I love you."

"No you don't. Mothers shouldn't do what you've done."

"I just want to show you how much I love you." She said coming at me.

I froze. "No..." I whispered as I cried.

Anna

~~~~~

I was nervously waiting at the airport when I finally saw Aaron come down the stairs. I ran over to him.

"Aaron!" I cried jumping into his arms.

"Oh god, Anna!" he said hugging me tight.

"I've missed you so much." I said.

"I've missed you." He said kissing me.

I kissed him back. "We should get outside. Josh is waiting in the car."

"Ok, let's go." Aaron said.

We went back outside and got in the car.

"Hey Aaron." Josh said.

"Hey Josh, how's it hanging?" Aaron asked.

"Pretty good." Josh said.

"How's Harley?" Aaron asked.

"She's good. She's dating our cousin DJ." I said.

"She sure gets around." Aaron said.

“Like mother like daughter.” Josh mumbled. We finally got to Cyberspace.
“I need to run to the restroom.” Aaron said.
“Ok. I’ll be here.” I said sitting down. While Aaron was in the bathroom Harley came in.
“Hey guys.” Harley said.
“Hey Har.” I said.
“Aaron get in ok?” she asked.
“Yeah, he’ll be right back.” I said. He ended up being gone for quite awhile. Finally he came back.
“Aaron!” Harley said standing up to hug him.
“Hey baby...I’ve missed you.” Aaron said kissing Harley right in front of me!

Michelle

~~~~~

I was about to call Harley to join the fight when there was a knock on my door. I ran to the door and opened it. There stood my worst nightmare. Sara Austin.  
“What do you want?” I asked. I noticed she was holding a baby that looked to be a little less than a year old.  
“I came to introduce my little son to his father.” Sara said.  
“What? Liar!” I cried.  
“Don’t believe me? We can do a DNA test. You know Hunter and I have been carrying on an affair since the week after you guys got married. I’m so happy I was finally able to give him a son...something you could never do.” Sara said rocking her baby.  
“No! You’re lying!” I cried. I felt like my world was crumbling around me.  
“What’s the matter Michelle? Truth hurt?” Sara asked.  
“No...this can’t be...it’s a trick...Hunter would never cheat on me...ever.”  
“Of course, because you’re so faithful. Gave him plenty of reasons not to stray and its not like he cheated on you already or anything.”  
I turned pale. She was right. Hunter had cheated on me with Cam before. “NO!” I screamed.

Hunter

~~~~~

I was sitting in the office waiting for word from Michelle when someone walked in.
“Oh, hey Rocky. What can I do for you?” I asked.
“I came to get *my* daughter.” Rocky said.
“Harley? She’s out right now.”
“Not Harley. The daughter that shares my DNA.”
“What are you talking about?”
“Felicity.”
“What? No. Felicity is my daughter.” I said.
“I thought so too but I got a call from the hospital. Seems Michelle lied about who the father was again. She’s making that a habit, don’t you think?”
“No...I don’t believe it. Felicity is my daughter...how could she be yours?”
“Michelle and I may have done a lot of fighting, but we did a lot of making up. You know all about how Michelle ‘makes up’ don’t you?” Rocky said.
“But if Felicity is yours...”
“She cheated on you with me. You didn’t honestly think Michelle could stay faithful, did you? She cheated on me with you, what made you think the reverse wouldn’t be true?”
“But Felicity is my baby girl.” I said. I felt tears well in my eyes. This was my worst fear. I couldn’t lose my little girl.

Tally

~~~~~

I was working on sewing some patches on Beth’s cheerleading uniform when there was a knock on the door. I went and answered it. It was Conner.  
“Hey Conner, Eric isn’t here right now.” I said.

“Good. I didn’t come to see Eric. I came to see you.” Conner said.

“Oh, ok. What’s up?” I asked.

“Having you back in Reefside has made me realize what a mistake I made. You’re the one I should be with. Not Kira. I want you...I want you right now.” Conner said pulling me into his arms and kissing me. My mind was racing. It was like a dream. I had thought about something like this happening but never expected it would. I returned the kiss and wrapped my arms around his neck.

Kira

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I was headed to Tally’s. I needed to ask her a question and I happened to be close by. When I turned the corner I saw her making out with Eric...*Wait...that isn’t Eric...that’s the other twin...my twin! Conner! NO!* my mind screamed. I continued driving. I needed to go somewhere and think about this. I needed to let this all sink in. It didn’t feel real. I ended up at the Storm Chargers office. I guess Eric was the closest friend I had in town. I went in and ran back to his office.

“Eric? Are you busy?” I asked.

“Oh hey Kira? Not too busy. Wait, what’s the matter? You look like you’ve been crying.” He said.

“Can we go somewhere and talk?”

“Sure, how about I drive you home? You don’t look in shape for driving.”

“Ok.” I agreed. I got in his car and I stayed quiet until we got back to my house. He walked me in and we sat down on the sofa.

“What happened?” Eric asked as he wiped a tear from my eye.

“Conner...he...Conner cheated on me.” I said.

“What? How do you know?” Eric asked.

“I caught him making out with someone else.”

“Who?”

“You don’t wanna know.”

“Who?”

I took a deep breath. “Tally.”

“What? No.”

“Yes. I was going to ask Tally a question and they were at the front door making out.” I said crying again. Eric looked ready to lose it but instead he pulled me into his arms and held me.

“How could they do this to me? My own brother and my wife...”

“I know...I couldn’t believe it myself. I mean what’s wrong with me? Am I not pretty enough for Conner? Not smart enough? What’s wrong with me that he couldn’t be faithful?”

“Oh god Kira, you’re gorgeous and nothing is wrong with you. He’s an idiot to cheat on you.” Eric said brushing my hair with his hand.

“I think I ended up with the wrong twin.” I said softly as I moved my head towards Eric’s.

“I think I may have picked the wrong girl.” Eric said as he moved towards me. Soon our lips met. So much pain and passion was in that kiss that we couldn’t control it.

“I want you Eric.” I said.

“Are you sure? If we do this...”

“If we do this what? What do we have to lose? Conner and Tally are probably doing the same as we speak. Let’s just go upstairs. I don’t want Anna or Josh coming in.” I said.

“Ok.” Eric agreed. He picked me up and we went to the bed room. He set me on the bed and kissed my neck. I helped him get his shirt off and then took my own off. I needed him so much and the clothes were only in the way. I hastily got the rest of our clothes off and pulled Eric down on me.

“I need you Eric.” I moaned as I felt our bodies join.

“Oh god...Kira...” Eric moaned.

After we both climaxed I pulled myself closer to Eric. I still needed him. My pain was so great that I didn’t want to remember it. I want to stay in this moment with Eric. “More...again.” I moaned breathless.

Eric fought to catch his breath. “Ok.” He said pushing back into me. I was nearing climax when I heard a voice.

“What the hell is going on here?!” Conner cried.

Eric pulled out and covered us with the sheet.

“Finished with Tally already? Figured you’d be over there till dinner.” I said.
“What are you talking about? Eric? How could you do this to me?” Conner asked.
“You tell me.” Eric said.
“Fuck you both.” Conner said running off. I curled into Eric’s arms and cried.

Conner

~~~~~

My brother and my wife...my brother and my wife...

I couldn’t believe it. I started driving towards Tally’s but in the end I couldn’t do it. I kept driving. I could go sleep with Tally and get revenge on them but what would that do? It would cause more hurt. I didn’t love Tally. I loved Kira. I just wish I knew what she was talking about with me being ‘finished with Tally’. Something wasn’t right, I could feel it.

I stopped at Reefside Café. I needed to think about some things. When I was walking in I saw Trent.

“Hey, for what it’s worth I’m sorry.” Trent said  
“What?” I asked  
“Kira didn’t tell you? I would have figured the lawyers would have called you by now.” Trent said.  
“What? Lawyers?” I asked.  
“Yeah. She’s filing for divorce. She’s getting back together with me.”  
“What? Why?”  
“Isn’t it obvious? I can offer her more than you ever could. I have more money than you ever dreamed of. I already had Anna and Josh pick out their rooms. Anna’s is getting a practice area for her band too. I’m getting it soundproofed next week. I’m also working on lining up a tour for Anna.” Trent said.  
“No...you can’t take my family.” I said.  
“They’re my family now Conner. Revenge sucks doesn’t it. You took my family now I’m taking yours.”  
“Fuck you.” I said getting back in my car and taking off.

Savannah

~~~~~

“May I take your order?” I asked a customer. He was new, I hadn’t seen him before.
“It is you isn’t it? Savannah?” he said.
“Do I know you?” I asked.
“No...but you should. I’m your father...your birth father.”
I just about dropped the coffee pot I was holding. “It’s really you? You do know about me?” I asked sitting down.
“Yes. I’ve spent years looking for you. Michelle and I were only together for a brief time and when she found out she was pregnant I told her I’d be happy to take the baby, only you were taking from the hospital before I ever got to see you.”
“Mom kidnapped me?”
“Yes.”
“And Michelle knew?”
“She didn’t care, not as long as you were out of her hair.”
“Oh my god...” I was about to have a break down right there. This was unreal. I finally found my real father.

Jesse

~~~~~

I was fighting off the Bots when I turned around and saw my parents. “No...” I did a double take. “Mom, Dad? But you’re...”  
“Dead? No. Though that was a bit elaborate to get rid of you.” Dad said.  
“If we had been smart we would have done what your aunt did and send you away.” Mom said.

“What? No...” I couldn’t believe what I was hearing.  
“You’re such a pain Jesse, who could possibly want you?” Mom said.  
“The only reason they accept you here is they’re paid.” Dad said.  
“No! No! Stop it!” I screamed.  
“You’re the worst son ever” Dad said.  
“So bad we would rather fake our own deaths than be anywhere near you.” Mom said.  
“No! No! This can’t be real! No!” I screamed.

Chris

~~~~~

“You bots are seriously starting to piss me off.” I said as I fought. It was tiring. If Arissa was trying to wear us down on our own it was working.
“You don’t deserve to be a Ranger.” A voice said.
I turned around and saw Mike, the leader of the gang I had been in. “Mike? Bro, how’s it going? Kinda busy here.” I said.
“You’re a disgrace. Because of you Dave is dead...now so are Anthony, Kiko, Jack, and Gus.”
“But that’s half the gang.”
“You weren’t there to watch our backs. You let the family down. All we ever did was be there for you and you left us to face a territory war.”
“But it wasn’t my choice...they made me come here.”
“You could have gotten out if you wanted. You should have been there, now you think you can be a badass Power Ranger? You don’t deserve it.”
“No....Mike...”
“You’re nothing anymore. Without the family you’re nothing. Go play super heroes with your new posse but just remember how much blood you have on your hands.”

April

~~~~~

I was really worried about how Derek was holding up. He didn’t seem much in a way to be fighting when I left him. I was trying to hurry and get rid of the bots when I saw a face that made my blood curl.  
“Ed?” I asked.  
“Hello Angel.” He said reaching for my face.  
It was my step-father. I pulled back. “Go away! Don’t you ever touch me again! Ever!”  
“But you’re so young and beautiful, how can I stop myself?”  
“You’ve ruined my life enough! Go away!”  
“But you’re my girl. I’ve never done anything but love you.”  
“That wasn’t love! It was rape!”  
“I just wanted to show you how much I love you. Come here...let me show you again.”  
“NO! Stop!” I screamed. I stumbled back and fell to the ground. “Leave me!” I screamed as I curled into a ball.

Arissa

~~~~~

After capturing that Aaron guy I watched the various shows on my viewing screen. It was the best comedy ever. Poor little Rangers facing their troubles. The veteran Rangers were just as funny though, and the effect this had on the Red DinoThunder Ranger’s twin and his wife, pure bonus. I couldn’t have planned that better. The best part? There was no destroying the monsters unless the central shape shifter was destroyed. And I wasn’t stupid. I placed the central monster in charge of the Pink Ranger. That wimp would never gather the inner strength it took to destroy it. Speaking of which, it was time to check up on Miss Pinky.

Tiffany

~~~~~

I wanted out of shuns, of course, but fighting Bots wasn't my perfect idea of how to get out.

"Wild Cat Transform!" I cried. What good were powers if not to help?

"You shouldn't be wearing pink spandex. It makes you look fat." A voice said. I turned.

"Mother?"

"You've turned into a cow since you've been here. You're an embarrassment."

"I've tried, but they make me eat here."

"Your weight is well above what we agreed on. But I suppose pleasing me means nothing to you. You're rather make me be evil when all I want is to provide for you."

"No...that's not it!"

Hunter

~~~~~

I was staring at Rocky, facing my worst nightmare when I got a grip on the situation.

"No...this has to be a trick. You've said yourself there was no way Felicity was yours..." I closed my eyes and tried to find the ninja in me. It knew what to do. I jumped kicked "Rocky" and when he fell back a monster was reveal. "Just as I thought...a shape shifter." I was very pleased I figured that out when it hit me...if I was facing a shape shifter, so were the Rangers! I ran to the house to call the Rangers. When I got there Michelle was facing off with Sara, who was carrying a baby.

"What's going on?" I asked

"You ass! Did you think I wouldn't find out? How could you cheat on me with her?" Michelle asked as tears fell from her eyes.

"Baby...baby...no. This isn't real. I never cheated on you with her. It's a shape shifter, we need to contact the Rangers before they get defeated by their worst fears." I said.

"Shape shifter? You bitch!" Michelle cried attacking "Sara". Sure enough the shape shifter lost it's shape.

Harley

~~~~~

Ok so I was more that shocked when Aaron kissed me. I thought we were way past over.

"Aaron?" Anna asked.

"Why are you doing this to her?" I asked.

"Why does any guy get with you? They expect you to be easy, like your mother. Jay, Nick, me...every guy."

"But I'm not like her." I said.

"Sure you are...you just have to stop fighting it. Come with me." Aaron said.

"No!" I cried.

"Leave her alone you ass. God to think I thought you loved me!" Anna cried.

"I don't believe you Aaron Kay...I don't believe you." I said.

Savannah

~~~~~

I was sitting with my birth father when my mom walked in.

"Who's this?" she asked.

"You should know. Don't you remember? The man you kidnapped me from? My birth father?" I said coldly.

"What? I didn't kidnap you."

"That's not what he said."

"And who is he? He's not your birth father."

"What?"

"She's right, I'm not." The man said turning into a monster and attacking.

"Mom, run!" I cried.

Michelle

~~~~~

I couldn't believe I fell for a shape shifter.

"Rangers, whatever you think you're seeing isn't real. You have to fight it. Be strong." I said.

"No. I can't!" Jesse cried. He sounded like he was in a great deal of pain.

"It's too much to take!" April said.

"I can't." Derek said weakly.

"No..." Chris said.

"Tiffany?" I asked.

No response.

"Oh god..." I said.

Tiffany

~~~~~

"You aren't worthy to be a Jennings." Mother said

"Stop it!" I cried.

"Why do you try to make my life so hard? All you have to do is maintain the weight we discussed. Is that so hard?"

"No! You have no right to say this to me! I'm sick! Don't you care mother? I'm sick!"

"If you're sick you shouldn't be around. We should send you away. Lock you up like the monster you are."

"YES! Please! Send me to Starlight! Anything to get away from you! I'm not worthy to be a Jennings? Fine! I don't want to be! I just want to be me! I want to have control of my own life without cutting! I want to get well!" I screamed.

"Too bad." "Mother" said as she changed into a monster. "I always knew Mother was a monster. Panther Baton! Full Power!" I cried attacking with everything I had. I defeated the monster on my own.

Arissa

~~~~~

"NO!" I screamed. When the Pink Ranger beat the central monster all the others disappeared as well. "This can't be happening. Oh well at least I still have that Aaron." I said turning around to see where I locked him up but he was gone.

"What? No!"

"Looking for me?" he asked stepping out of the shadows.

"How did you get free? Come back here!" I cried.

"Sorry, you obviously didn't get the memo. I'm a Ranger too. Genesis Evolution!" Aaron called as he morphed into a Green Ranger.

"NO! I'm so sick of Rangers! How many of you are there?!" I cried.

"Too many for you to ever beat." Aaron said attacking.

I fought back. I couldn't believe my luck.

"It's been fun but I think I have a girlfriend to make up with." Aaron said taking off.

"NO!" I screamed.

Michelle

~~~~~

After rounding up the Rangers and talking them through what they saw we let them all turn in to their dorms early...I also decided to let Tiffany off shuns. After what she went through she didn't need to be alone.

"I'm sorry Hunter." I said.

"It's ok. I was pretty angry with you when I thought Felicity wasn't mine."

"Oh she's yours. One look in her eyes and you know she's yours."

"She does take after me doesn't she?"

"Yes. She does. Hunter? I love you so much." I said hugging him tightly.

"I love you too." He said holding me.

"Um, excuse me. I hate to barge in but I was wondering if I can stay in the dorms or something for a bit." Conner said coming in.

"Um...why?" I asked.

"Kira...well Kira cheated on me."

"What? Why?" Hunter asked.

"She said something about me and Tally but I don't know what she was talking about."

"Oh no...the shape shifters were messing with former Rangers too, not us and our Wild Cats." I said.

“Shape shifter?” Conner asked.

“Come with me. We need to round up Kira, Eric, Tally, and Savannah.” I said.

We got everyone to meet at Cyberspace and I filled them in.

“So it wasn’t you who I saw kissing Tally?” Kira asked.

“No! I’d never cheat on you Kira. I love you too much. Even after I caught you with Eric and I wanted to cheat for pay back I couldn’t.” Conner said.

“Oh god...what an idiot...I’m so sorry Conner.” Kira said crying.

“We’ll work this out. Somehow. I love you and we will find a way to work through this.” Conner said.

“I’m sorry too Eric.” Tally said softly.

“I think we have bigger problems to fix if we were able to cheat on each other. We have some talking to do.” Eric said.

“So do we...Mom, you know who my birth father is. You pretty much said so when you knew that man wasn’t him.” Savannah said.

I turned pale.

“I...Savannah...” Hayley started.

“My birth mother said she was the only knew who knew, that isn’t true though, is it?” Savannah asked.

“It’s better you don’t know.” Hayley said.

“Would everyone stop telling me what’s best for me?! I want to know who he is!” Savannah cried storming out.

“You should tell her. She has a right to know.” Conner said.

“Trust me, that wouldn’t be good for anyone involved.” Hayley said.

I sighed.

Harley

~~~~~

Anna and I were eating pizza when Aaron walked in.

“So were you one of those shape shifters too or are you just a jerk?” I asked.

“I got captured by that Arissa.” Aaron said.

“You what? Oh god Aaron, I’m so sorry. I should have saved you.” Anna said.

“You didn’t know...and lucky for me I still carry my Morpher...Arissa didn’t know I was a Ranger.” Aaron said.

“So you do love me?” Anna asked.

“More than anything. And Har? I saw what that shape shifter said to you. He was wrong. You’re amazing too and someday you’ll find a great guy.” Aaron said.

I smiled. “Thanks Aaron.”

Derek

~~~~~

We were told we could go to the dorms but I just wanted to be alone. I went and sat in the woods, where I had been earlier.

“She did it to you too didn’t she?” April asked sitting next to me.

“What?” I asked.

“It’s ok...it happened to me too...my step-father...he did it to me too.”

“Do you even know what you’re talking about?” I asked.

“I know...I saw it in your eyes when you heard she was on the phone. She raped you didn’t she?”

“Look at me! I’m the leader of the Power Rangers! The powerful Red Ranger and I can’t even fight off my own mother!”

“It’s not your fault Derek and it doesn’t make you any less of a Ranger or a man.” April said.

“Oh, it doesn’t?”

“No it doesn’t. You should talk to Hunter about this though...he can help you.”

“He’ll have to report her though.”

“Yes he will. But don’t you want her in prison?”

“Yeah, of course...but what if no one believes me.”

“I believe you Derek. Hunter will too. It’ll be ok. You have all of us.” April said as she hugged me.

I wanted to push her away at first but instead I hugged her back and cried freely for the first time.

“You need to tell Hunter and Michelle...they will help you. I’ll even go with you to talk to them.”

I took a deep breath. "Ok." I agreed. "I'll tell them."

PRWC 10- "Destiny"

*"Time is a thing we must accept
The unexpected I sometimes fear.
Just when I feel there's no excuse for what happens,
Things fall into place
I know there is no way to avoid the pain that we must go through
to find the other half that is true
Destiny is what we all seek
Destiny was waiting for you and me"
~"Destiny" Death*

I had told April I'd tell Hunter what happened to me...and I planned on it...I did...but fate stepped in.

I went to the Bradleys' office and knocked.

"Yes?" Hunter called.

"Hunter, do you have a second?" I asked.

"Not now Derek. There's a new student coming in and we're trying to prepare for her." Hunter said.

"But..." I started.

"I said not now. We'll talk later. Does Harley know where you are?" Hunter asked.

"No but..."

"You should go back before she worries."

"Ok...fine...whatever." I said leaving. So much for a willingness to listen. I went to the lodge and plopped next to April, who was doing homework.

"So what happened?" she asked.

"He blew me off. I never ever got to tell him." I said.

"That sucks. I'm sorry."

"Yeah, thanks."

Hunter

~~~~~

I was looking over paper work when Michelle walked in.

"This is bad." She said.

"I know. According to this all the groups are full except the Wildcats. I haven't been assigning any others to them because of their situation but I don't think we have a choice. The students have to come first." I said.

She nodded. "We'll just have to keep an eye on things."

"Agreed."

"When will she be here?"

"Any second now." I said.

"OK." She said sitting at her desk. "What's the background info?"

"Destiny Long. Same as a lot of our kids. Seemingly normal life, one day decides to start cutting. She's ODED 3 times."

"She has an OD history...I thought we weren't supposed to take suicide risks." She said.

"We're not but I couldn't turn her away. I had the lawyers draw up some forms that clear our liability."

"Alright...I hope we can help her."

"So do I Mich." I said as there was a knock on the door. "Come in."

"Mr. and Mrs. Bradley?" a man asked.

"Yes, you can call me Hunter, this is my wife Michelle." I said.

"I'm Jack Long and this is my wife Monica and our daughter Destiny."

"Nice to meet you Destiny." Michelle said.

"Whatever." Destiny said.

"If you'd like to come with me we can get you checked in." Michelle said.

“Whatever.” Destiny said again. Michelle walked out with her.

“Mr. Long, we’re very happy to have Destiny here and we will do everything we can to help her...but you do understand we normally aren’t supposed to take suicide risks. The only way this will work is if you sign this waver releasing Starlight Academy and it’s staff from any liability should your daughter find a way to commit suicide.” I explained.

“I don’t like it but I’ll do what I have to for her. I only hope you can help her.” Jack said signing the paper.

Michelle

~~~~~  
I walked Destiny to the clinic for her physical. After that was done we went to the dorms and I did a check on her things. I found a bottle of sleep aid.

“Sorry, can’t have this here.” I said taking it.

“I need those or I can’t sleep.” Destiny argued.

“You’ll adjust.” I said.

“Whatever.” She said.

After the search I walked her to the lodge. “You’re gonna meet your group now. You’ll be a Wildcat. I’m sure you’ll all get along.” I said as we went in to the lodge.

“Hey guys, we got a new Wildcat.” I said.

“What?” Harley asked.

“This is Destiny Long. Destiny, this is your group leader Harley and these are the Wildcats, Tiffany, Jesse, Derek, April, and Chris.” I said.

“Um...hi.” She said.

“Yeah...hi.” April said.

“Destiny, if you’d like you can go get something to eat from the kitchen, it’s right over there.” I said.

“Oh yes, have to go away so you guys can discuss the new girl. Whatever.” She said going to the kitchen.

“OK. Now how is this going to work?” Harley asked.

“She isn’t a Ranger obviously...as for you guys...when you have to go I’ll try to keep her busy so she doesn’t notice. We have to try our best to make this work. All the other groups are full.” I said.

“So what, don’t let her in then.” April said.

“You know I can’t turn anyone away.” I said.

“Yeah, whatever. This is going to be a mess.” Chris said.

Destiny

~~~~~  
I knew what they were doing. They were talking about their first impression of me. That was fine. Like I cared what they thought of me anyway. I’d make my own first impressions of them soon enough. I grabbed an apple from the kitchen then went back out.

“I’m back, you can stop talking about me.” I said.

“Destiny, I’m going to help Hunter with any paper work he has left. Harley will be in charge. See you later.” Michelle said.

“Whatever.” I said sitting down next to Tiffany.

“So, what are you here for?” Tiffany asked in a perky voice.

“None of your business Princess.” I said.

“See! Tiff is a Princess.” Chris said.

“I like the new girl already.” April said.

“I was just trying to be friendly.” Tiffany said.

“Well then don’t.” I said.

“Fine I won’t be.” Tiffany said.

I looked over and saw this group of hot guys by the kitchen. “Who are they?” I asked.

“That’s Josh McKnight and his twin cousins DJ and Noah McKnight. Josh helps out around here, especially with our group. DJ and Noah just moved to town so Josh has been showing them around, trying to talk them into helping.” April

said.

“How old is Josh?” I asked.

“20...but if you’re crushing on him don’t. He’s got a thing for Harley.” April said.

“But he’s dating someone else.” Tiffany said.

“Only to make Harley jealous. Anyone can see he has the hots for her but she’s seeing DJ.” April said.

“What about Noah?” I asked.

“He’s got a thing for Savannah James. She works at a café in town.” Tiffany said.

I nodded as I saw a girl join the guys. “Who’s she?” I asked.

“That’s Josh’s sister Anna. She doesn’t hang around here much but every once in a while she helps out. Her father, Conner, is the coach here.” April said.

I nodded. “I see...” I said as Harley waved for them to join us.

“Hey!” she said hugging DJ. “Everyone, this is our new Wildcat, Destiny Long. Destiny, this is Anna, Josh, DJ, and Noah McKnight.” Harley said.

“Nice to meet you.” Noah said.

“Yeah.” I said.

“Don’t bother trying to be her friend, she’s rude.” Tiffany said.

“Tiff, she’s new. Be nice.” Anna said.

I smiled. “Thanks.”

“I can’t imagine how hard being new here must be, but if you ever wanna talk and Harley or Josh aren’t around call me.

My cell number is listed in the Wildcats’ phone book.” Anna said.

“Thanks Anna.” I said. I liked her, she was the coolest person I’d met since I got to this dump. I was just starting to forget how angry I was when my parents walked in. “Ugh, you’re still here?”

“We’re just about to leave. We just want you to know we love you very much.” Dad said.

“Bullshit.” I said.

“We’ll see you soon Destiny.” Mom said.

“Hopefully not too soon. Just get gone.” I said. I watched my parents leave.

“You’re entirely too hard on them.” Jesse said.

“You do know how to speak.” I said.

“He only speaks when we’re rude to our parents.” April said.

“He lost both his parents so he thinks everyone should celebrate their parents.” Chris said.

“Whatever. Mine are a curse.” I said as I looked at Derek, “Does he not speak either?”

“Normally he does...Derek what’s up man?” Chris asked.

“Nothing...just leave me alone.” Derek said.

“What’s wrong Derek?” Josh asked.

“I said nothing.” Derek repeated.

“Leave him alone. If he wants to talk he will.” April said.

Derek

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This was all the new girl’s fault. If Destiny hadn’t shown up I would have told Hunter everything and my team wouldn’t be in danger of being found out. I hated her so much.

“I have homework.” I finally said as my excuse to walk away from the group. I went for a walk outside, where I ran into this blonde chick. She was hot. “Hey, may I help you?” I asked.

“Yeah, I’m looking for Michelle Bradley.”

“What you wanna see her for? I can show you much better uses of your time.” I said.

“Does the word jailbait mean anything to you?”

“Oh come on, it’ll be between you and me. What’s your name anyway?”

“Savannah. Now can you tell me where Michelle is?”

“Savannah? As in the Cyberspace chick...oh...she’s in her office, this way.” I said leading her to the office. Had I known she was Savannah I wouldn’t have hit on her. She could report it back to the Bradleys. I knocked on Michelle’s door.

“Come in!” Hunter called.

We went in. “Visitor for Michelle.” I said.

“Oh hey Savannah, come on in. Michelle is in the back putting Felicity down for a nap. She’ll be right back.” Hunter said.

“Oh ok. I’ll wait.” Savannah said.

“Hunter, can we talk now? I have something to tell you. If you tell me no again you can forget ever finding out what my problem is.” I said.

Hunter looked at me. “That’s what you wanted to discuss earlier? I’m sorry Derek.” He said.

“I can come back later.” Savannah said.

“No...let’s go to the house and talk. Felicity would rather sleep there anyway. We’ll let the guys talk here.” Michelle said coming out with Felicity in tow.

“Daddy!” Felicity called.

“One second Derek.” Hunter turned to his youngest daughter. “Have a good nap sweetie.” He said hugging her. She kissed his cheek then he handed her back to Michelle. The girls all left and I was alone with Hunter.

“OK, so you wanted to talk.” Hunter said.

“Yeah...I...” I looked down.

“Derek...something happened to you...you want to tell me what?” Hunter asked.

“Yes...I do...I...it was my mom...she...”

“She what Derek?”

“Nevermind.” I said

“No...tell me. What did your mom do?”

I took a deep breath as the images came rushing back to me. “Don’t let her visit me. I know that’s why she called. I don’t want to ever see her again.” I said as I started to lose control of my tears.

“Derek, I can try but first I have to know what she did.” Hunter said.

“She...” I took another breath. “At night...she’d come in my room. Sometimes when I was already asleep. She’d take off my clothes and...”

“And what Derek?”

“She made me have sex with her.” I said, I was crying by this time.

“She raped you?” Hunter said, I could tell he was fighting to keep the emotion out of his voice.

“Yes.” I said softly.

“I’m so sorry Derek. I know what a horrible feeling that is.” Hunter said.

“How can you know?! Have you ever been raped?! It’s such an invasion!”

“I do know. I was raped too, when I was 13.” Hunter said.

I wasn’t expecting that answer. I took a breath. “You were?”

“Yes. By a teacher. It was right after my parents died. I had this teacher who I would talk to about my grief. He started to take advantage of that and...yes, he raped me on several occasions.” Hunter said.

I didn’t know what to say. Hunter did know how I felt.

“What do you want now? You do know I have to report this...” Hunter said

“I know. April told me that.”

“April knows?”

“Yeah, I told her. She is the one who convinced me to talk to you.”

“It’ll all be ok. I promise that. The abuse will stop. Your mother will never touch you again.” Hunter said hugging me. I hugged him back and cried. I believed him. I knew he’d do whatever he had to to make sure I never went through that hell again.

Michelle

~~~~~

I put Felicity down then sat with Savannah.

“She’s a cute kid.” Savannah said.

“She’s your half sister.” I said.

“Will she ever know that though?” Savannah asked.

I sighed. “This isn’t easy on me either Savannah.”

“Why? Why did you put me up for adoption? You’ve always said because you couldn’t handle a kid back then but there has to be more to it.”

I sighed again. "I couldn't handle it Savannah...you want the whole story? Fine. I was 24 and life wasn't easy then. I thought I'd lost Hunter forever. I was going through a lot and your father was there. I didn't really even like him all that much but we were both hurting. We used sex to comfort each other and didn't use proper protection. By the time I found out you were coming I had managed to get back together with Hunter. I didn't want to lose him again and I didn't want anyone to know I had slept with your father so I had you in secret with the help of your mom and a friend. I wanted to make sure you had a good home so I asked Hayley to adopt you and she agreed. That's all there is." I said.

"Who is my birth father?" Savannah asked.

"We've been over this. I can't tell you that."

"Who else knows who he is? Obviously you lied when you said you were the only one cause my mom knows. Does this mysterious friend who helped you know too?"

"Yes. Only us three though. That's the truth." I said.

"I'll find out who he is...you know if I wanted to be a real bitch I could blackmail you. I could say that if you don't tell me I'll tell Harley everything."

"Please...don't do that" I begged.

"Don't worry. I would never do that to Harley. For some reason she looks up to you. I don't know why Harley and Felicity don't realize what a twisted mother they have." Savannah said getting up.

"Savannah...I'm sorry."

"No, you're not." She said leaving.

## Destiny

~~~~~

That night I went to the dorm and got ready for bed. I had been way more social than I intended on being and it wore me out. Oh yeah, remember I said I'd have my own first impressions of the Wildcats? Well I do. Jesse seems nice but has major issues. As long as he stops his parent preaching we might be friends. Derek was hard to read cause I didn't see him much but I think he might be ok. Tiffany is an annoying stuck up princess who is only here because she is a drama queen. Chris is hot. A bit of a bad boy but I like it. I think we could be very good friends. April rocks. I like her attitude. She commands respect and I love it. Harley is ok I guess. She takes her leader role a little too seriously.

This was going to be an interesting school year...

*"There's no conscience
In charity or shame
The voice deceive me
But believe me its the same
I see the black in white
And the color in the gray*

*I see the scars, I hear the lies
So what's the truth
Why don't you tell me"*
~ "Truth" Def Leppard

I woke up really early because I couldn't sleep. It was every hard to sleep without my sleeping pills. I bet they took them away because they want me to go insane and kick me out. Anyway, I was getting bored so I woke up April, it was like 4 in the morning so she wasn't too happy!

"What?", April mumbled.

"Sorry April, I couldn't sleep and I didn't know what to do. I am so sorry but can you talk to me or something? I don't know...tell me a little about yourself and the school please?"

"Yeah sure I guess...since I am awake now anyway, just let me go to the bathroom", April said

"Man you guys its 4 in the morning why are you awake?" Tiff asked

"Oh be quiet princess, just shut up and get your beauty sleep you really need it" I said

"Oh shut up...man, if you weren't new...ugh, never mind", Tiff said.

"Destiny what's wrong? Why did you wake me up so early?" April asked.

"Because I didn't know what else to do. I'm new remember? I don't know what to do at all...I miss my family, my home, and my bed." I said on the verge of tears.

"Oh Destiny, please don't cry. It's okay, this school isn't that bad, really" April said, "Just go back to bed and everything will be fine in the morning you can talk to Harley or Michelle or something"

"You're right. I just need to get some sleep, I am not used to being in a place like this I have never been away from home and not going home for a while has got me itching, you know?" I rolled over and shut my eyes. I didn't get to sleep again until shortly before Harley came in.

Harley

~~~~~

"Girls wake up! It's time to get up." I called.

"No, not now give me some more time to sleep" April said

"You turning into Chris now?" I asked.

"If it wasn't for Destiny we wouldn't be having a problem, she woke us up at 4 in the morning and now I'm super tired" Tiffany groaned.

"That sucks for you then, come on, up." I said as I sat on Destiny's bed, "Destiny was something wrong last night? If something is bothering you we can talk about it"

"No, it's just being in a new place and I am going to be here for a while and I don't know it kind of bugs me! New place, new people, new everything" Destiny said

"It's perfectly normal to be nervous. You're right, this is all new, but we'll do our best to make sure you are comfortable here...and if you wanna talk about anything I'm here." I said.

"Thanks but I won't need to talk I was just scared that's all" Destiny said

"Well then that's settled I'm gonna go make sure the guys are up" I said walking out of the dorm. I went to the boy's dorm and sure enough Chris and Derek were still in bed. The guy dorm monitors didn't push the guys like I pushed the girls.

"Boys wake up!" I said clapping my hands.

"5 more minutes." Chris groaned.

"No. You've had extra time. Now get up you lazy Cats." I said.

"Why can't we sleep longer? Go bug the girls" Derek said

"The girls are up...so is Jesse," I said.

"Good for him. I want to sleep." Chris said.

"No. Now I want you in the lodge in 10 minutes or you're spending your evenings this week chopping wood." I said.

"Fine whatever" The boys said getting up.

I sighed and headed to the lodge so I could get some breakfast and get myself to class.

Derek

~~~~~

"Harley is such a slave driver!" I cried rolling out of bed.

"Better her than Josh though, he never lets up." Chris said.

"No kidding...well I don't want to chop wood...we should get dressed and get to the lodge." I said grabbing my clothes.

A few minutes later the three of us headed to the lodge. I saw Destiny. Maybe I was unfair to her. I decided to try to talk to her.

"So Destiny how was your first day here?" I asked her

"Well I don't know... you guys are okay...I hate Tiffany but then again who doesn't" Destiny said laughing.

"Hey! Not everyone hates me" Tiffany defending herself

"I do Princess" April said also laughing.

"Tiff isn't that bad. But anyway, do you have a boyfriend back home?" I asked

"No I wasn't really with the whole trusting a guy thing. They lie way too much" Destiny said

"No, you just couldn't get a guy, that's all" Tiffany said

"Tiff, she's not bad looking" Chris said with a smile

"Thank you Chris" Destiny said smiling back at him

"April can I talk to you for a minute alone please" I asked standing up

"Sure" April said following me, "What's up man?"

"Nothing I just wanted to say thank you for listening to me and giving me enough power to go tell Hunter. I found out he does understand and I'm not alone...just knowing that makes things a lot better" I said

"No problem Derek. I know how you feel too...and I knew Hunter would. And he'll keep his promise to protect you, he's kept his promise to me so far." April said giving me a hug as our communicators beeped.

"Oh great we are getting beeped..." Tiff whispered.

I had to think fast here, "Hey Destiny, I just remembered that we had chores to do from yesterday that we were going to finish today. They were assigned before you came though so you don't have to worry about it. We'll be back after while." I said rushing off with the others.

"OK I guess. What do I do till then?" Destiny asked confused.

"Anything" Tiffany said turning around. "That excludes leaving Starlight"

"Get lost Tiff or I might just steak your prince" Destiny said laughing by herself.

We went to the safe place Harley had for us and looked around.

"Ready?" I asked.

"Ready." Everyone said.

"Wild Cat Transform!" we cried.

We got to the location of the disturbance and were promptly attacked by an army of Bots.

"I'm really getting sick of these guys." April said.

"And I'm getting really sick of you Rangers." Arissa said appearing.

"You again? Great." Tiffany said.

"I'll give you one more chance, turn over the Princess and Queen of Saturn now or your planet will be destroyed!" Arissa cried.

"Haven't we been over this?" Chris asked.

"Yes we have and the answer is and always will be no. You're not going to touch Harley or Michelle." I said.

"Have it your way." She said charging at me.

I held up my sword in defense but she was coming at me very quickly. I thought she'd get me for sure when a purple

streak flew in, knocking Arissa back.

"Heard you guys needed some help." Harley said.

"You heard right." Tiffany said.

"Purple Ranger...surrender and I will let your Wild Cats live." Arissa said.

"Surrender? Are you drunk? Not gonna happen. I've been a Ranger for four years, and in case you hadn't noticed I'm still standing, my adversaries aren't." Harley said.

"You've never come face to face with someone of my strength before. You will not defeat me." Arissa said.

"Whatever you say Arissa, just get gone before I unleash my purple wrath on you." Harley scoffed.

"You expect me to retreat now? No way." Arissa said attacking Harley. Harley fought back and we finished off the Bots then watched Harley and Arissa. They matched each other pretty well. They had similar movements and fighting styles. It was weird. Finally Harley got the best of Arissa and Arissa retreated.

"I'll be back Rangers, this is far from over." Arissa said as she disappeared.

"Ok guys, back to the Academy." I said.

Michelle

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After the Wild Cats left I went to check on Destiny.

"Sorry Destiny, the other Wild Cats had to go do those chores and since you weren't here when they were assigned I don't see why you would need to worry about them." I said

"It's fine." She said.

"Would you like me to stay with you?" I asked her

"No I'd rather be alone, I want to look around anyway" Destiny said

"Oh, ok. Josh is over there, maybe he will show you around and show you where everything is" I said

"I guess" Destiny said with a smile

"Josh, please come here. Can you keep an eye on destiny for me? Maybe show her around the place because the other Wildcats are *busy*" I said

Josh nodded knowing exactly what I meant, "Sure why not I love to help"

Destiny

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I watched Josh walk over to me as Michelle went back to her office. He had the most amazing smile, it could make you melt.

"So Josh what do you do around here? They told me yesterday but I was so stunned by your hotness that I forgot " I said looking up at him

"Well thank you...I just help out around here. Anything they need, any group I'm needed in, like now." I said

"Well, I am very glad you're here I didn't really want to be alone right now" I said looking down

"Hey, cheer up. It's not so bad here. Anyway, you should smile, it makes people wonder what you've been doing." Josh said laughing.

I smiled.

"See, there ya go." He said as the others came back.

"Hey guys" Jesse said

"Hey everyone" Josh said "Where's Harley?"

"She went to class." April said

"Oh ok, I should get to class myself anyway. My dad will be here in a second to get you guys to gym." Josh said.

"OK." Derek said.

"How were the chores?" I asked them

"Would have been more fun with a hot chick like you there." Chris said smiling

"Really" I asked

"Yeah, of course." Chris said, he is so cute

"No, it was great because you weren't there helping us" Tiff said

"Oh stuff it like you do your bra" I said, everyone cracked up

"Okay enough guys get to the field." Conner said walking up.

Harley

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"I was walking back to class thinking about Destiny and how we were going to keep this from her. Soon enough she'd realize that we keep leaving for no reason and she always gets left behind. I just hoped she didn't start to feel lonely and then end up wanting to OD again!

After class I went to Cyberspace for lunch. I sat at my normal table and waited for Savannah.

"Hey Har, what do ya want?" Savannah asked.

"The normal." I said.

"Coming right up." She said.

A few minutes later I had my food. Once the lunch rush died down she sat with me.

"So how are things at Starlight?" Savannah asked.

"Pretty good. We got a Wildcat that isn't a Ranger so that's tough." I said.

"Oh man...I bet...I'm sure you guys will work something out though." She said.

"I'm sure...oh hey...sorry about that thing with you and your mom." I said.

"Yeah...thanks. I'm just furious that she'd hide the fact she's known all along who my birth father is."

"Who else knows?"

"According to my birth mother, only her, my mom, and a mysterious friend who helped to deliver me." She said.

"So how to you plan on finding out who he is?"

"I don't know yet, but it's becoming an obsession now since no one will tell me. I have to find out some how."

I nodded. I knew she didn't want me getting involved but I had to help some how...I started to form a plan as Josh, DJ, and Noah walked in.

"Hey guys, the usual?" Savannah asked.

"Yup." Josh answered as they sat down.

"Noah, you're staring at her again." I laughed.

"Sorry...she's so hot." Noah said.

"Ask her out already!" DJ said.

"No, I..." Noah started.

"Ask her or I will." Josh said.

Noah sighed, "Ok, ok."

"So what's up Har?" Josh asked.

"Just trying to figure out a way to help Savannah find out who her birth father is." I said.

"I thought she wanted to do it on her own." DJ said.

"She does, but sometimes people need help even when they don't realize it." I said.

"What did you have in mind?" Josh asked.

"Well, I was thinking that if I could sneak in to catch a glimpse of her adoption records then that might tell me where to start." I said.

"Sounds like a good plan." DJ said.

"You guys interested in helping?" I asked.

"Sure." DJ said.

"I guess so." Josh said.

I nodded as Savannah came back.

"Hey Savannah, my bro has something to ask you." DJ said smirking.

Noah took a deep breath. "Um...well...I...Savannah...would you...I don't know...maybe...like to go out sometime?"

Savannah smiled. "I'd like that Noah, I'd like that very much."

"Great...um...when would be good for you?" Noah asked.

"Tonight after I close?" Savannah asked.

"Sure...pick you up then." Noah said.

Savannah smiled, "OK see you guys later. I need to get back to work."

We all smiled at Noah, "See! Told you!" I cried.

"That was great!" Josh said.

"I knew you could do it." DJ said.

"Thanks guys." Noah said.

"Hey, I have to get going, Josh can you take the Wildcats tonight? DJ keep your cell on incase I need to be bailed out of

trouble.” I said.

“Sure.” Josh said.

“No problem, good luck.” DJ said kissing me as I left. I saw Aaron coming in as I was leaving.

“Hey.” I said.

“Har, hey, where you off to?” he asked.

“Business to tend to. I’ll see you later? Maybe you and Anna could come to the Academy later?” I asked.

“Sure, I’ll see you later.” He said.

I spent the rest of the day planning. When the time came and the adoption offices were closed I picked a lock and snuck in. It was very tricky but I managed to get to the file room. “OK...James...J...” I whispered to myself as I walked to the ‘J’ files. I opened the drawer and started flipping through to find ‘James’. “Ok...Alison James, Ben James, Daniel James, Melissa James, ugh...” I finally found it, “Ah, Savannah James.” I pulled her file and went to the copy machine and made copies of everything then put the copies in my backpack. Before I put the file back I decided to look at it. I was shocked at what I saw.

For the most part I knew what it said. Savannah was adopted at birth by Hayley, then at age 3 Ethan took paternal custody. No natural father was listed. This is where I got a shock. I looked for the name of her natural mother and my eyes grew wide. I knew that name. Savannah’s birth mother that she hated so much was Michelle Morris. Morris was my mom’s maiden name. My mom was Savannah’s mom...Savannah James was my older sister!!!!!!!

*"Let the rain fall down  
And wake my dreams  
Let it wash away  
My sanity  
Cause I wanna feel the thunder  
I wanna scream  
Let the rain fall down  
I'm coming clean"  
~ "Come Clean" Hilary Duff*

Savannah James was my sister....

This was unreal...

I took a deep breath and put the folder back before going out and getting in my car. I sat there for a moment trying to let this sink in. I was trying to decide how to handle this. My thoughts finally became too much and I started my car and sped back to the Academy.

Michelle

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I was in the lodge with Hunter and the Wild Cats. Josh and Conner were helping us out with their group session. "Ok, anyone have anything to share?" Hunter asked. I noticed some headlights outside and figured Harley was back. I thought nothing of it.

"I do..." Jesse said softly.

"Ok, go ahead." Conner said.

"How dare you!!!!" Harley yelled storming in.

Harley

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I was furious. I didn't even know how to react. I ran into the lodge, not caring who was there.

"HOW DARE YOU!!!!" I screamed as I walked over to my mother.

"Harley, what is the matter with you?" Mom asked.

"Would you care to tell me exactly what kind of a slut I have for a mother?!" I cried.

"Harley this is uncalled for, don't speak to your mother like that." Dad said.

"Shut up Dad, you don't know what kind of whore you're married to." I said.

"Harley? What are you taking about?" Dad asked.

"I know Mom, I know everything. Savannah...she's yours. You're her birth mother. When were you going to tell me I wasn't your first born? Were you ever? I have an older sister I never even knew about!" I screamed.

"What? Michelle? Is this true?" Dad asked.

Mom looked down. "Yes."

"But Savannah is 27...27 years ago...we were together...you hid your pregnancy from me then put the baby up for adoption knowing how I feel about that?" Dad asked with more hurt in his voice than I ever heard.

Mom just nodded.

"You know how I felt about being adopted. You know the emptiness I felt...I shared that all with you and you still... how could you?" Dad asked.

"Hunter, try to understand, I didn't want to lose you. I got pregnant before we got back together. Once I had you back I didn't want to lose you again." Mom said.

"Who's the father?" Dad demanded.

I noticed Conner taking a few steps back.

"It's not important." Mom said.

"Damn it Michelle, it is important." Dad said.

"Who's the father?" Conner asked

Mom shook her head.

"Is it me?" Conner asked softly.

Mom started to cry. "Yes."

"Oh my god..." Conner said as he paled. He looked like he was about to pass out.

"Dad? You slept with Harley's mom?" Josh asked.

"We were young and lonely...it never meant anything more." Conner said softly as he turned to Mom, "How could you hide this from me? I have a daughter I never even knew about? I can't believe you'd do this."

"I'm sorry Conner, I never meant to hurt anyone...I just...I was so scared of what would happen if I ever told anyone." Mom said.

"Who knew before now?" Dad asked.

"Does it matter?" Mom asked.

"Yes." Dad said.

"Aside from myself just Hayley and Dusty."

"Dustin knew? And he never told me?"

"He's one of my best friends Hunter, you really think he'd betray me?"

"I can't believe this is happening. First I find out you lied about my father, then the whole princess thing, now this! What's next? You gonna tell me Felicity is really Rocky's?!" I cried.

"I'm almost expecting that now." Dad said angrily.

"No...I...I'm sorry." Mom said crying.

"Wildcats, why don't we get you guys to the dorms?" Julia said walking in.

"But it's just getting good." Chris said.

"Now." Julia said rounding them up and taking off with them.

"Um, Dad?" Josh asked.

"What?" Conner asked.

Josh kind of stood there in a state of shock. "Savannah is my sister too then right?" he finally said.

"Yes." Conner said.

"That would make Noah and DJ her cousins?"

"Yes"

"Noah is on a date with Savannah right now." Josh said.

"What? No...oh god..." Mom said.

"You just can't stay out of trouble can you? You always have to make trouble for people. Damn it Mich." Dad said.

"I know I fucked up ok? There's nothing I can do to change it now." Mom said.

"You're right. What's done is done." Dad said turning for the door.

"Hunter? Where are you going?" Mom asked.

"I'm going to take Felicity and go to a hotel tonight. I need to think about some things."

"Like if we should be together..."

"Among other things."

"Please don't take my baby..."

"Oh god Mich, like you care about being a mother. You gave up Savannah and lied to Harley...I'll be damned if I let you play mind games with Felicity too." Dad said storming off.

"Hunter! No!" Mom cried as he walked away.

"How are you going to tell Mom about this?" Josh asked.

"Good question." Conner said.

"I can't believe you mother...I guess I shouldn't be surprised but this is big, even for you." I said turning to leave.

"Harley...where are you going?" Mom asked.

"None of your business." I said.

"Harley wait...I'm coming with you." Josh said.

"No. I need to be alone." I said taking off.

Michelle

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I sat down in a chair and started to cry.

“Damn you Shell! How in the hell could you hide something like this?” Conner asked.

“Conner, try to understand, I never should have slept with you in the first place and then when I found out I was pregnant...I got scared. You were barely 18 and not even out of high school yet, I had just got Hunter back and we were working through things...I didn’t know what to do. I guess I was afraid I’d lose Hunter...and really, do you think you could have been a father at 18?”

“We’ll never know now will we?”

“Conner...I’m sorry. I know that doesn’t cut it but what else can I do? I can’t change history.”

“So you were pregnant before we defeated Mesogog...that means you fought while you were pregnant?”

“Yeah, I knew if I stepped out of battle I’d be questioned.”

“You put your unborn child in danger to keep her a secret then you went off and had her in secret and let Hayley adopt her without even telling me I had a daughter? Of all the insane, irresponsible things you’ve done this takes the cake, and considering this is you that’s saying something.” Conner said.

I sighed, he was right, “What are you going to do? Are you going to tell Savannah?”

“Yes. She has a right to know. As for Kira and the rest of my family, I’ll just have to hope everyone understands...especially Kira.” He said.

I nodded.

“Josh, you coming?” Conner asked.

“Yeah, I think we should all be together when Mom finds out about this.” Josh said walking out with his dad, not another word was said to me.

I went back to the house and saw Hunter had taken quite a few of his and Felicity’s things and left. I fell on the sofa and cried. I knew I messed up again and I didn’t really know what to do. I couldn’t fix this. After everything I went through to get Hunter...damn to lose him again...I wasn’t sure I’d survive it. All over a mistake I made 27 years ago...and I was sure that Conner, Hunter, Harley, and Kira weren’t the only ones who would be mad at me. Tommy would be furious when he found out about this. This discredited me greatly as a trainer. And poor Noah...I couldn’t believe it...not to mention how pissed Savannah would be when she found out the truth...God, what have I done?

April

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Ok, talk about family issues. I know the Bradleys try to act like the perfect family but I guess when Michelle Morris-Bradley is involved nothing is ever perfect. I couldn’t believe she was Savannah’s mother and lied about it...this was all very...intense.

“I guess Michelle really is a ho.” Destiny said.

“Takes one to know one.” Tiffany said.

“Stuff it both of you. Michelle isn’t a ho, trust me I’ve met some.” I said.

“You were one.” Tiffany countered.

“I said stuff it.” I said.

“Enough.” Julia said.

“I know Michelle was wrong but she really loves Hunter. I hope they work this out.” Jesse said.

“How can they? She has a kid from another man and lied about it.” Chris said.

“Not to mention the fact Michelle knew how strongly Hunter was against adoption.” Derek said.

“But why? He was adopted.” Tiffany said.

“It’s not that he’s against adoption, it’s that he has zero respect for anyone who can give up their child.” I said.

“If Michelle knew that then thought she wouldn’t get caught she’s just stupid.” Destiny said.

“Hey, chill, Michelle is a nice person...we all make mistakes or we wouldn’t be here.” I said.

“I guess...whatever.” Destiny said.

“Derek, you’ve been quiet, how is all of this making you feel?” Julia asked.

“I guess I don’t see the big deal. So what if Michelle lied...at least she never touched any of her kids.” Derek said.

“He makes a point.” I said.

“She still hurt Savannah, there’s more than physical stuff that can hurt a kid.” Tiffany said.

“Princess is right for once. Michelle could have done major mental damage to Harley and Savannah here.” Chris said.

“What about you Julia? How do you feel about this?” I challenged.

"I don't know honestly. I guess I'm shocked. I have to say I love Michelle and she's been really great to me but I didn't know so much trouble could follow one woman." Julia said.

"Poor Hunter...I feel bad for him." Tiffany said.

"Hunter has had his own share of trouble follow him around. Michelle and Hunter are definitely a match...sometimes I think they match too well." Julia said.

"Yeah, I've heard about Michelle and Hunter's past misadventures. The person I really feel sorry for is Harley. Her mom kept this from her for years. It's crazy." Chris said.

Destiny sighed, "Yeah, her mom seems to have kept a lot of stuff from her...what princess thing was she talking about though?"

"Um...it's just a family thing. Not really important." I said

Destiny sighed, "Ok...I guess I'm kinda worried about Harley too..."

"So am I. She's very emotional, who knows what she'll do..." I said.

Conner

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"Ok, I want to tell your mother this alone. You can tell Anna while I talk to Kira." I said.

"Ok." Josh agreed.

Josh and I went in the house and saw Kira and Anna sitting in the living room watching a movie.

"Hey guys." I said.

"Dad, hey." Anna said.

"We need to talk Kira." I said.

"Ok..." she said following me to the bedroom. We sat on the bed. "What's wrong?"

I took a breath, "I found out something today and I should tell you before you find out some other way."

"What? Conner what is it? You're scaring me."

"I..." I took another deep breath. "While I was at work today Harley came in furious at Michelle for hiding a huge secret."

"Not surprising, what secret?"

"Michelle is Savannah's birth mother."

"What? For real? That's insane. Wait a second...Savannah is 27...that means she was pregnant towards the end of our Ranger days..."

"Right..."

"And I assume the father isn't Hunter..."

"Right..."

"Ryan?"

"No."

"Ok...so how does this affect us?"

I took another deep breath, "I'm Savannah's birth father."

Kira went pale. "You? But how? You guys never..."

"Yes we did. We had a secret thing going on behind everyone's backs. No one knew about it."

"Did you love her?"

"No...never. It was purely sex based...nothing more."

"And you never had a clue about Savannah being yours?"

"No, I never had a clue about Savannah being Michelle's."

Kira took a breath. "Ok...anything else you would like to tell me?"

"No."

"Ok...then can you leave me alone please? I need some time to let this process."

"Ok. I'll be downstairs." I said.

Josh

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"I wonder what that was about." Anna said as our parents walked away.

"Actually I need to tell you. Dad wanted to tell Mom alone though." I said.

"Oh? What is going on?" Anna asked.

“Well...Harley found out who Savannah’s birth mother is.”

“Who?”

“Michelle.”

“You’re kidding!”

“No...so Harley went off at Michelle and Michelle finally fessed up to who Savannah’s birth father is?”

“Who? Hunter?”

“No of course not, she wouldn’t hide that.”

“Then who?”

“Dad.”

“Dad? Our Dad?” Anna asked in shock.

“Yes, our Dad. Savannah is our half sister.”

“Like Stace?”

“Exactly.”

“Oh god...I can’t believe Michelle would hide this from Dad...wait...Dad is 45...that means...he was 18 when Michelle had Savannah...”

“Yeah. Exactly.”

“Oh my god...how old was Michelle?”

“Um...she’s 51 now...so...24.”

“She was sleeping with an 18 year old when she was 24?” Anna asked.

“Actually I think Dad was 17 when they started.”

“Eww, sick...wait Michelle is 51? She doesn’t look that old.”

“Yeah...she’s Sataurian remember? Different aging rate. Michelle will look 25 until she’s 75 or something. The same will go for Harley, Felicity, and I guess Savannah too.” I said.

“This is all insane.” Anna said.

“No kidding.” I agreed as Dad came downstairs.

“Josh, did you fill Anna in?” Dad asked.

“Yes sir.”

“Ok. Any questions Anna?”

“Um...why were you sleeping with a 24 year old when you were 17 and why were you not protected when you always tell us to be?” Anna asked.

“OK...fair enough. I slept with Michelle because I was lonely. I loved your mother but she loved Trent. I turned to Michelle for comfort, who was also lonely at the time because she thought she would never see Hunter again. Age and status wasn’t really a thought, we just needed something. As for protection, it was stupid not to...all I can say is I let myself get lost in the heat of the moment and didn’t think about it.” Dad explained.

“How did Mom take this?” I asked.

“As well as can be expected.” Dad said.

“I hope Harley is ok...she gets a little crazy when it comes to her mom sometimes.” I said softly.

Harley

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I sped to Cyberspace and saw Savannah and Noah sitting on the sofa talking when I busted in.

“Savannah, we need to talk...now!” I commanded.

“Um...ok...be right back Noah.” Savannah said leading me outside. “What’s wrong?”

“How come you never told me you were my sister?” I demanded.

“What? You know?”

“Yes I know. I knew everything. I know more than you do. I know you’ve been bashing our mom without telling me who she is...why? Why didn’t you tell me? I trusted you as a friend and all this time you knew I was your little sister!” I cried.

“I’m sorry Harley...I didn’t feel it was my place to say anything. I wanted to so bad but I couldn’t...it just wouldn’t have been right. It was your mother’s place, not mine, to tell you the truth.”

“Bullshit. Like I’d believe a word you say to me now. Why does everyone keep fucking secrets from me? I’m so sick of it. I’m not even the true heiress to the Purple Ranger powers or the Sataurian throne. It’s you! Well you know what that’s fine. I’m gonna do what I should have done a long time ago and leave.” I took off my Morpher and threw it at her,

“Here you go, you’re the true Purple Ranger. You go deal with Arissa, you’re the one she really wants anyway.”

“Harley stop.” Savannah said grabbing my wrist.” I don’t want your power. I’m only Michelle’s daughter in blood, nothing more. I don’t consider her my mother. You’re the true inheritor”

“Let me go.” I said pushing her away.

“Harley just listen.” Savannah said reaching for me again.

I pushed her back. “I don’t want to listen.

“Damn it Harley! Just listen to me! Nothing has to change. I still want to be your friend.” She said pulling me by the wrist again.

“Everything’s changed! I can trust anyone around me anymore! As for you, you’re not my friend or sister or anything! You’re just a lying nothing! You’re nothing to me!” I screamed.

“Fine! Then just go the hell away.” She said releasing my wrists in a throwing motion that made me stumble backwards. I fell back into the street and before I could move I saw headlights, then.....

*"Truth be told I've tried my best
But somewhere along the way
I got caught up in all there was to offer
And the cost was so much more than I could bear*

*Though I've tried, I've fallen
I have sunk so low
I'm messed up
Better I should know
So don't come round here
And tell me I told you so"*
~ "Fallen" Sarah McLachlan

"HARLEY NO!!!" I screamed as I watched my sister fall in front of an on coming car. It was coming very fast. It hit her and kept going. "HARLEY!!!" I screamed. I ran back in to the café. "Noah, call 911!" I screamed.

"What happened?" Noah asked running to my side.

"Harley...she was hit by a car." I cried.

"Harley...no...ok" Noah picked up the phone and called 911. We waited for the EMS to show up.

"God, this is all my fault." I cried as they loaded her into the truck and sped towards the hospital.

"What happened exactly?" Noah asked.

"We were arguing and she kept trying to walk away. I grabbed her wrist and she said I was nothing to her so I released her and she stumbled backwards and fell in front of the car." I explained.

"What were you arguing about?"

"She found out she's my sister. Michelle is my birth mother and she was pissed I never told her." I said crying.

"Oh god...I'm so sorry Savannah." Noah said holding me.

"We should call Michelle and Hunter." I said.

"I'll do it. You sit down." Noah said.

"No, let me do it." I said taking a deep breath and picking up the phone. I dialed and waited for someone to pick up.

"Hello?"

"Michelle? It's Savannah." I said

"Savannah? What's wrong?" Michelle asked.

"It's Harley...she...she was hit by a car."

"What?"

"The EMS took her to Reefside General Hospital." I said

"I'll be right there." Michelle said hanging up.

"Do you want to go to the hospital too?" Noah asked.

I nodded. "Yes I do."

"I'll drive you." Noah said.

"Thank you." I said kissing him. He was such a great guy.

Michelle

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I called Hunter on the way to the ER and we met there.

"How did this happen?" Hunter asked when he saw me.

"I don't know. I don't even know what happened. Savannah called and told me about this." I said looking for a doctor. Finally we found one. They told us they would let us know when they knew something. All they knew was she suffer severe trauma to the head and spine.

"You should go call Rocky and let him know." Hunter said.

“Ok...can you call Tommy and Blake then?” I asked.

“Ok.” Hunter agreed.

I went outside and used my cell to call Rocky.

“Hello?” he answered.

“Rocky? It’s Michelle.” I said crying.

“Michelle? What’s wrong?”

“Harley was in an accident. She’s in the hospital.” I said.

“What happened?”

“I’m not entirely sure yet and the doctors don’t know how bad it is.”

“I’ll be there as fast as I can.”

“Ok. She’s at Reefsides General.”

“Got it. Bye.” Rocky said hanging up. After that I decided to call Conner.

“McKnight Residence, Josh speaking.”

“Josh? Hi, it’s Michelle.”

“Michelle? What’s the matter?”

“Harley was in an accident. She’s at the hospital. Can you let your parents and sister know...oh Aaron too. He might want to call the other Genesis Rangers.” I said.

“Oh god...of course...which hospital is she at?”

“Reefsides General.”

“I’ll be right there.” Josh said hanging up.

I went back in the hospital and sat with Hunter.

“Rocky is on his way.” I said.

“So are Blake, Tori, Tommy, Kim, Dustin, Marah, Lindsey, and Nick.” Hunter said.

We sat there quietly until Savannah and Noah walked in. Conner, Kira, Josh, Anna, and Aaron were right behind them.

“How is she?” Aaron asked.

“We don’t know yet.” Hunter said.

“What happened exactly?” Conner asked.

“I don’t know...Savannah? Do you know?” I asked.

“Yeah...she came to see me...she was mad that I never told her I was her sister...anyway she tried to walk away and I pulled her back and she said some things to me so I let her go but she stumbled back and fell in the street. There was a car speeding past and...that’s what happened.” she explained.

“So this is all your fault then.” Hunter said staring at me.

“Me?! How is this my fault? My daughter is in the ER and this is my fault?” I cried.

“Damn you Michelle! If you hadn’t been dishonest about this whole thing it never would have happened! God damn it Michelle!” Hunter screamed at me.

I started to cry hard.

“I’m sorry about you and Noah.” Anna said to Savannah.

“What? Why?”

“With you guys being cousins and all.”

“Cousins?”

“Didn’t Harley tell you? Michelle told her who your birth father is.”

“What?!”

“My dad is your dad...we’re sisters too.” Anna said.

Savannah turned to Conner. “Is it true?”

“Apparently so.” Conner said.

“You never knew?”

“Not until today.”

“Oh god...” Savannah said looking at Noah.

“Oh god...” Noah echoed.

“I need some air.” Savannah said rushing off.

“You just can’t help but cause chaos can you Michelle?” Hunter asked.

“God, lay off!” I cried.

I sat there silently crying until Dustin walked in with his family, followed by Blake with his family, Jason and his family, and Tommy and Kim

“Dusty!” I cried running to him and falling into his arms and crying.

“Mich...it’s ok...shh.” He said holding me.

“Yeah, run right back to him. Why didn’t you just marry Dustin? He knows you better than anyone else could.” Hunter said.

“What?” Dustin asked.

“He knows about Savannah...everyone does.” I said.

“How could you keep this a secret from everyone?” Hunter asked Dustin.

“Because she needed help and she trusted me. I couldn’t betray her!” Dustin said still holding me.

“What secret?” Marah asked.

“Michelle is Savannah birth mother.” Hunter said.

“What?!” Tommy asked.

“It’s true ok?!” I cried.

“Wait, who’s the father?” Tommy asked.

“I am.” Conner said softly.

“You’ve got to be kidding me. Michelle, you slept with Conner while he was a Ranger?”

“Yes.”

“That means...damn it Michelle! You...god I can’t even find the words!” Tommy cried.

“Just calm down Tommy, we have to focus on Harley right now. She’s what’s important.” Kim said.

“She’s right, we can worry about this later.” Kat agreed.

“What time are Tony and Mel getting in?” Tommy asked.

“I don’t know. They said they were taking the first flight out.” Alex said as Aaron walked over.

“Hey man.” Aaron said.

“Hey. Did you call Ally and Logan?” Alex asked.

“Yeah, they’re not coming.” Aaron said.

“Why?” Cali asked.

“Ally and Harley were never exactly best friends.” Aaron said.

“Doesn’t matter. We’re still team mates.” Nick said.

“Yeah, we all are supposed to be there for each other.” Lindsey agreed as Rocky walked in with Aisha.

I walked over.

“Hi.” I said.

“How is she?” Rocky asked.

“I don’t know yet.”

“How did this happen?”

I told him everything.

“Damn it Michelle, why is it that you can’t just tell men the truth when they father a kid with you? You are so fucking screwed up! I should have taken custody of Harley when I had the chance!” Rocky screamed.

“That’s exactly why I’m making sure I get custody of Felicity. I won’t have you mess with her too.” Hunter said walking up.

“What? You talk like you’re leaving me.” I said.

“I am. I’m sick of these games Michelle. Felicity will be better off without you in her life and I’ll make sure you do stay out of her life.” Hunter said.

“What? Hunter no!” I screamed.

A few hours later we got word Harley was in a coma, but if she came out of that in the next 48 hours she should make a full recovery. I refused to leave the hospital but I had Josh take the Genesis Rangers (including Mel and Tony who had arrived a couple of hours prior) to the Academy so they would have a place to stay. After they were gone Dusty sat with me. He was the only one I had on my side it seemed.

Tony

~~~~~  
I couldn't believe this was happening. My cousin was in the hospital. Aunt Michelle finally made the team leave. Harley's friend Josh took us to the Academy and showed us to some guest dorms to sleep in.

"If you're hungry I can show you to the lodge. We have a kitchen in there." Josh said.

"I'm a little hungry." Cali said.

"And we should all eat anyway." Alex said.

We followed Josh to the lodge. 6 kids sat in a sitting area with a girl that looked to be in her early 20s.

"How is she?" a girl in pink asked.

"She's in a coma. The next 48 hours will tell if she'll be ok." Josh said.

"Who are they?" a girl in yellow asked.

"Oh...sorry. Wild Cats, these are Harley's friends, Tony, Mel, Lindsey, Nick, Alex, Cali, and you all know Aaron.

Guys, this is Harley's group, the Wild Cats, Tiffany, April, Derek, Chris, Destiny, and Jesse and that is Julia, another group leader." Josh said.

"Nice to meet you." I said.

"Likewise." Derek said.

"Julia, will you please take Destiny to sleep? I know you're worried Destiny but we have to work on your sleep habits." Josh said.

"Fine, whatever." Destiny said following Julia out.

"OK...now for the real introductions. Wild Cats, meet the Power Rangers Genesis...Genesis Ranger meet the newest teams of Rangers, the Wild Cats." Josh said.

"You guys are Rangers?" Mel asked.

"Yeah." April said.

"That's cool!" Tiffany said.

"Who's the leader of this team?" I asked.

"I am." Derek said.

"What's your color?" I asked.

"Red. You?"

"White."

"I'm pink." Tiffany offered.

"Me too." Mel said.

"Great, two princesses. Where's your Yellow Ranger?" April asked.

"She isn't here." Alex said.

"My sister Allison was our yellow though." Aaron said.

"Black?" Chris asked.

"I am." Nick said.

"Is there another Blue Ranger in the house?" Lindsey asked.

"Me." Jesse said softly.

"Sweet!" Lindsey said.

"What about the rest of you?" Derek asked.

"I'm Gold, Cali is Silver, and Aaron is Green. Logan is our Red Ranger, but he couldn't make it." Alex said.

"Don't forget Jay, he's our Samurai Ranger." Lindsey said.

"Yeah, and major backstabber." Mel said angry.

"What happened? I must have missed something." Alex said.

"Jay cheated on Harley with my cousin and then tried to force Harley into sleeping with him." Mel explained.

"That rat! I knew we could never trust him. He was never one of us." Alex said.

"So is Harley seeing anyone now?" Cali asked.

"Yeah, DJ McKnight." Tiffany said.

"McKnight?" Mel, Alex, Lindsey, and I asked together.

"Yeah, Eric McKnight's son." April said.

"Wow...never would have seen that one coming." Mel said.

"Harley will be ok right?" Jesse asked.

"Of course. She's been through worse." Mel said.

"Yeah, she survived almost being killed by Raven's rats, almost killing herself, turning into living ice, and finding out the truth about her fathers. She'll pull through." I said.

“She’s tough...trust me, no matter how I tried to kill that girl she wouldn’t die.” Nick said.
“What?” Derek and April asked confused.
“Long story.” Lindsey said.
“We have time.” April said.
“Yeah, tell us about some of your battles.” Tiffany said.
“Ok fine, only if you fill us in on this Arissa chick.” Mel said.

Michelle

~~~~~  
I was leaning on Dustin when Rocky walked over.  
“How could you do it?” Rocky asked.  
“What?” I asked.  
“Keep this a secret. When the truth came out about Harley why didn’t you just fess up about everything?”  
“Because I thought it was the right thing. Conner had a family and a life. I didn’t want to spring Savannah on him. She’s an adult. It wouldn’t have been fair.”  
“You mean how you sprung Harley on Hunter?”  
“I only did that because I had to.”  
“Yeah and she almost died because of your secret then...this is the same thing. You keep a secret Harley gets hurt. Don’t you see that?”  
“Just stop it. I know this is my fault ok?!” I screamed.  
“God you’re a slut. What on Earth did I ever see in you?” Rocky said.  
“Fuck you.” I said.  
“Been there, done that. No thanks. Come to think of it who hasn’t been there with you?”  
“You asshole!” I cried.  
“Enough. Rocky leave her alone. What’s done is done. Blaming her won’t help Harley recover.” Dustin said holding me tighter.  
“Fine.” Rocky said walking away.  
“Thanks.” I whispered as I cried.  
“It’s fine.” Dustin said rocking me.  
“I feel like you’re the only one I have right now Dusty. Rocky hates me. Tommy and Jason are beyond disappointed. And Hunter is leaving me...god...”  
“Oh Mich...Hunter won’t really leave you. He’s tried before but you guys always find your way back to each other. You’re his soul mate and he’s yours. It’ll all be ok. Everyone is just on edge right now.” Dustin said.  
I looked over and saw Rocky and Aisha holding each other. “I wonder what’s up with them.” I wondered aloud.  
“You didn’t hear? They’re engaged.” Kat said sitting next to Dustin and I.  
“What? You’re kidding.” I said wiping my eyes.  
“Nope. Just happened. Rocky was trying to find the right time to tell Harley.” Kat said.  
“Oh wow...” I said.  
“And just so you know Kim, Tori, and I understand why you did what you did with Savannah. Sleeping with Conner wasn’t right but you’re human and this, unlike the situation with Harley, was a very human mistake.” Kat said.  
I nodded, “Thanks.”

Hunter

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I couldn’t take it in the hospital anymore. I stood outside glaring at the sky. “Damn you! You give me everything I want then take it all away! Am I not meant to have long term happiness?”
“I don’t think God is out to get you.” Blake said walking up behind me.
“You’re assuming there is a God, which I don’t know about right now.”
“I know you’re mad, and what Michelle did was wrong but is it worth leaving her over?”
“What else am I supposed to do?”
“Be there for her.”
“How? I thought she was changing...maturing...I was wrong.” I said.

“No you weren’t. She is maturing and changing...but Hunter, changing doesn’t mean coming clean with every secret you’ve ever kept. She hid this 27 years ago. She’s been hiding this all that time. What if she had told you this before you got married, would you have still married her?”

“Yeah, probably. I guess.”

“Ok then, there’s your answer.”

“But I didn’t have Felicity to consider then.”

“I know, but Michelle is a good mom...didn’t used to be but since Liss has come along she’s been doing pretty good.”

Blake pointed out.

“I just...”

“You’re pissed. I know. She put a baby up for adoption right under your nose. I’m pissed at her for that too. I know how you feel about people who can give up their children and so does she. That’s not the point. The point is you won’t be pissed forever and if you walk away now you’ll regret it when you calm down.” Blake said.

“When did you get so smart little brother?”

“I had a smart brother to look up to.”

“Thanks man.” I said hugging my brother. It was then I started to cry. “I can’t lose Harley.”

“You won’t. She’ll pull through. She will. Harley is a tough kid. Look at her parents. Between you and Michelle that kid has some strong genes in her. She’s been through worse, she’ll be fine now.”

“Yeah...that’s what I’m counting on.”

*"I've lost loved ones in my life
Who never knew how much I loved them
Now I live with the regret
That my true feelings for them never were revealed
So I made a promise to myself
To say each day how much she means to me
And avoid that circumstance
Where there's no second chance to tell her how I feel"
~ "If Tomorrow Never Comes" Garth Brooks*

Darkness. That's all I could see was darkness.

"Where am I?" I called out.

No response.

"HELLO? Is anyone there? Where am I?" I called out again.

"You are here." A voice said.

"Ok. Where is here?" I asked.

"Here is here." The voice said again.

"Who are you? Show yourself!" I commanded.

A woman stepped out of the shadows. She was very pretty and looked kind of familiar.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"My name is Helen Bradley. I'm your grandmother."

I gasped, "Dad and Uncle Blake's mom...but you're de...am I dead too?" I asked.

"Not yet. Harley, you are at an in between world. You get a rare choice. You get to decide if you go on living or die. It is your choice but you don't have a lot of time to make it." Helen said.

"What's the point of living? Everyone would be better off without me anyway." I said.

"You really think so? Ok. As a gift to you my dear granddaughter I'm going to show you what the world would be like in 10 years if Harley Bradley were to die." Helen said.

"Ok, take it away." I said.

"Any requests on who you'd like to see first?"

"Sure, show me the Academy."

We got to the Academy and it was run down and empty.

"What happened?" I asked.

"After your death your parents closed up the Academy. They didn't have the will to work with all the troubled kids when they couldn't even save their own child."

"Oh god...but I'm sure they moved on to better things. Where's my Dad?"

"Which one?"

"Hunter."

"Let's take a look at that son of mine."

We appeared at an apartment. I looked around. It was small and was very messy.

"Where are we?" I asked.

"Hunter's apartment." Helen said.

"It's small. How can Mom stand it?"

"Michelle doesn't live here."

"What?"

"Hunter blamed Michelle for your death and he divorced her and never looked back. He tried to get Cam back but he was happy with LeAnn so Hunter took Felicity and got a job as a mechanic to support them. Watch." Helen said as we looked on. Felicity walked in the house. She was about 13, pretty girl...but she was dressed very slutty. Black tube top

and matching mini skirt and jacket.

"Felicity Elizabeth Bradley it's way past your curfew." Dad said.

"You act like I care." Felicity said.

"Where were you?"

"With Snake."

"He's 25! You're 13! I told you that you weren't to see him anymore!" Dad screamed.

"Bite me. Be happy I came home at all." Felicity said.

"You want to end up a slut like your mother? That's exactly what's happening."

"So what? You know I'm sick of listening to you. Forget this. I'm out of here."

"Felicity get back here."

"Fuck you." Felicity said walking out.

"That brat!" I cried.

"She didn't have a big sister to guide her and she came from a broken home. Once Hunter was working he wasn't home enough to instill the proper values in her." Helen said.

"I've seen enough of this. I don't care where we go but take me somewhere else." I said.

"As you wish." Helen said. We appeared somewhere else.

"Where are we?" I asked.

"Watch and see."

I watched as Josh walked into the room. I guessed we were at his apartment. I watched as he went to his fridge and pulled out a six pack. He plopped on the sofa and started drinking it.

"Since when is Josh a heavy drinker?" I asked.

"Since you died. He dropped out of school and is working at Storm Chargers. He is very unhappy and that's how he drowns it."

"But doesn't he have a girlfriend or something?"

"After he lost you he could never bring himself to love another person."

"Oh god...I don't want to see this."

"Ok let's go see what Melody and Tony are up to."

We appeared in a house.

"Harley!" Mel called.

"Yes Mommy?" a 3 year old girl said.

"Dinner is ready."

"Where's Daddy?"

"He'll be here in a bit."

"They look happy. She even named her daughter after me." I said.

"Look in her eyes." Helen said.

"What am I looking for?"

"Emptiness. Even though she has everything a part of her is missing. You're missing. You're a part of her."

"But she'll still be fine without me. Who else are you gonna show me?"

"Well let's take a look at Savannah."

"Yes, let's. I know she'll be happier without me."

"You think so?"

We appeared in a small dark room. I saw Savannah sitting in a corner.

"Where are we?" I asked.

"Reefside General Mental Wing." Helen said.

"A mental hospital? Why is Savannah here?"

"She blamed herself for your death so much that she eventually drove herself insane."

"No...ok fine. Where's my other dad?"

"Glad you asked." Helen said.

We appeared at a dojo.

“Where are we now?” I asked

“Rocky’s dojo.”

“Why?”

“Look in the office.”

“He’s working.”

“Exactly...”

“So?”

“Look at the clock.”

“10:30 pm? Why is he working so late?”

“He works all hours of the night. This dojo is all he has. After your death he was so distraught he never could get remarried and never had any other kids.”

“So he just works and sleeps?”

“Pretty much.”

“Oh god...Daddy...that’s no life. I want to see someone else.”

“How about we pop in on those crazy McKnights?”

“Ok.”

We appeared at a house. I looked around.

“Kira and Conner look happy.”

“Except that isn’t Conner.”

“What?”

“That’s Kira and Eric McKnight. Conner spent so much time with Savannah trying to comfort her after your death that Kira turned to Eric. They eventually married. Anna, DJ, and Beth never forgave their parents and haven’t been to Reefside in 8 years.”

“That’s horrible. What happened to Tally and Conner?”

“Conner was devastated when Kira married his brother so he turned to Tally. They married but soon after divorced because they weren’t happy as a couple.”

“What about now?”

“Conner is coaching for the US Men’s soccer team and Tally is working as a therapist for the US Women’s soccer team.”

“That sounds good.”

“Except for loneliness I guess it would be pretty great.”

“What about DJ, what happened to him?”

“He ended up marrying Julia. They were there for each other after your death.”

“Ok I’ve seen enough.”

“Don’t you even wanna know what happened to your Wildcats with the end of the school?”

“Ok fine. But tell me, don’t show me.”

“Well they defeated Arissa in your honor but then were forced back to their former lives. Destiny eventually did come out of her depression after a couple more suicide attempts. Tiffany was forced to accept her parent’s lifestyle and she would go on to follow in their footsteps as a successful businesswoman just like they always wanted. Derek never could find the guts to actually take action against his mom so he took off after high school and never looked back. He ended up opening a school similar to Starlight. Jesse always had abandonment issues and stayed to himself for the rest of his life. April eventually became a drug counselor.”

“And Chris?”

“Chris was killed in a gang fight shortly after his return home.”

“No!”

“I’m sorry.”

“And where was my mother when all this was happening? She is the root of all of this!”

“I thought you’d never ask.”

We appeared in a library.

“Why are we here?”

“Look up your mother’s name in the new index.”

“Ok.” I did as I was told.

“Ok read the last new story out loud.

“OK. ‘Starlet Commits Suicide- Last night 52 year old superstar Michelle Morris-Bradley killed herself through large dose of sleeping pills. At press time it was believed that the reason behind the suicide was the recent death of her daughter, Harlyn Bradley, and the pending divorce from husband Hunter Bradley...’ I’m not reading anymore.” I said crying.

“It’s time Harley. You have to make a choice.” Helen said.

“I don’t want everyone to suffer because of me! I wanna live! Let me go back!” I screamed.

“I knew you’d make the right choice. Just so you know I love you very much...tell your father, sister, uncle, cousin, aunt, and mother the same. I know Michelle causes trouble but she’s good for Hunter and I’m very happy that Blake has Tori.”

“I’ll tell them all.”

“Thank you. Goodbye.”

“Goodbye.” I said hugging my grandmother.

Hunter

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After talking to Blake I went back inside.

“Mich, we need to talk.” I said.

“I think you’ve said everything there is to say. Have your lawyer call mine.” She said through her tears.

“Michelle...”

“Just leave her alone Hunter.” Dustin said holding her protectively.

“You stay out of this, you’ve done enough. Mich, please.”

She sighed, “It’s ok Dusty, I’ll go talk to him. I’ll be right back.”

We stepped off to the side.

“What?” she asked.

“I’m sorry if I over reacted. I just don’t want anything to happen to my daughters. I shouldn’t have entirely blamed this on you. We also have to consider that Harley was emotional and so was Savannah...and that driver...we need to find out who was driving the car who hit her.”

“Does this mean you’re not leaving me?”

“I didn’t say that. I don’t know yet but I think I may have rushed my decision.”

“So how do we find that driver?”

“We ask the only other witness.” I said leading Michelle over to where Savannah sat. “Savannah, I know this is a lot to ask but do you remember what the car that hit Harley looked like?”

“It happened to fast. I’m sorry, I don’t.”

“Savannah, the Café has security cameras doesn’t it?” Jason asked walking over.

“Yes sir.” Savannah said.

“Is it possible one of them caught the accident?” Jason asked.

“Maybe.” Savannah said.

“Ok, I need to see those tapes.” Jason said.

“Thanks Jase.” Michelle said.

“You’re still my sister no matter what...Tommy feels the same you know, he’s just very angry and disappointed.” Jason said.

“I know. He hasn’t spoken to me in hours.” Michelle said.

“He’ll come around. Now if you’ll excuse me I have a hit and run case to solve.” Jason said walking away.

Michelle let out a half giggle, “Once a detective always a detective.” Then her giggle turned to tears. “I’m so sorry all this happened when we were finally happy”

I paused. My first instinct was to pull her into my arms, but part of me was still furious. I pushed that part back and held her close. “I know sweetie.” I said kissing her head and brushing her hair with my fingers. Despite every mistake she ever made and every screw up she caused I still loved her more than I had ever loved anyone else on Earth, the only exception being my children. I silently prayed that Harley would make it.

Tony

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We talked to the Wildcats awhile before Josh sent them to bed. We decided to go to our own dorm.

“Have you guys considered what we do if Harley doesn’t make it?” Cali asked.

“What do you mean? Of course she’ll make it.” I said.

“I know...but if she doesn’t. How will we go on? We won’t be a full unit anymore.” Cali said.

“She has to make it Cal. She knows we need her. Harley wouldn’t leave us.” Mel said crying. I moved to Mel’s bed and put my arms around her.

“Of course she’ll make it sweetie.” I said.

“I can’t believe Ally and Logan aren’t here.” Lindsey said.

“And Jay...that rat owes it to her to be here.” Nick said.

“He might be afraid to show his face after the crap he pulled with her.” Mel said angrily.

“He has a right to be. Next time I see that traitor he’s toast.” Alex said.

“I’m with you.” Nick said.

“And what if Harley does make it and can’t walk...or needs some sort of help...maybe one of us should stay here so she isn’t so alone...” Lindsey said.

“But who?” I asked.

“I will be here for awhile. I’ll do anything I can for her.” Aaron said.

“You’ve been awfully quiet through all of this. Are you ok Aaron?” Mel asked.

“I’m furious.” Aaron said.

“At who?” Mel asked.

“Jay for hurting her after he promised he wouldn’t, at whoever was driving that car, at Michelle for hiding something else from Har, at Savannah for not being more careful, and at Harley for snooping around in the first place.” Aaron said.

“Understandable.” Mel said.

“It is...but being angry isn’t gonna help anything. There’s enough anger going around.” I said.

“Yeah...I’m gonna get some sleep. Goodnight.” Aaron said.

April

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Truth be told, I was more than a little worried. Harley had become like a sister to me, even if I’d never admit that to anyone. When we were finally sent to bed I couldn’t sleep. A few minutes after we got in bed I heard my name.

“April?” Tiffany asked.

“What is it Princess?” I asked.

“You think Harley will be ok?” she asked.

“Do I look psychic to you? I don’t know.” I said.

“I’m sorry. I’m just worried.”

I sighed, “So am I.”

“Destiny doesn’t seem to be.”

“Destiny doesn’t know Harley that well.”

“I’m more worried than you think so stop pretending to know me Princess.” Destiny said.

“I didn’t know you were awake.” Tiffany said.

“Obviously.”

I sighed and wondered how the guys were handling things.

Derek

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“I wish I could get my hands on the person driving that car. I’d kill ‘em” Chris said.

“Yeah...they deserve to suffer the way this is making all of us suffer.” I said.

“But Harley will come out of this right? I mean she’s been through worse according to the others.” Jesse said.

“She better come out of this. We need her. If anything happens to her who knows what will happen to the school. I can’t go home.” I said.

“I can’t either.” Jesse said softly.

“There ya go, Harley has to make it. We all need her and she wouldn’t just leave us. Besides we still have to take Arissa down.”

Josh

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I sat in my room alone thinking of Harley. I had already told my family I wanted to be alone and they were respecting that. I looked at a picture of Har and I. God I was stupid. I had never told her how I felt. I held back and now I might never get the chance. I made a promise right then, if she ever woke up, DJ or no, I would tell her exactly how much I loved her.

Michelle

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I was sitting curled up in Hunter’s arms when a doctor came out and said those glorious words.

“Mr. and Mrs. Bradley? Harlyn is awake.”

*"Sometimes I'm clueless and I'm clumsy
But I've got friends that love me
And they know just where I stand
It's all a part of me
And that's who I am "*
~ "Who I Am" Jessica Andrews

"She's awake?" I asked.

"Yes Mrs. Bradley." The doctor said.

"Oh thank God." I said.

"Can we see her?" Hunter asked.

"Yes sir, but there is something you should know before you go in there." The doctor said.

"What is it?" Hunter asked.

"Harlyn is awake, yes...but I'm afraid she has amnesia. She doesn't know who she is or have any recollection of her life. This may be from the head trauma but it may also stem from a traumatic event that happened shortly before the accident." The doctor explained.

I looked down.

"Let us see her." Rocky said.

"Um, only the parents can go in right now." The doctor said.

"I'm her father." Rocky said.

"I thought Mr. Bradley was."

"I am." Hunter said.

"They are both her fathers and I am her mother. She has three parents." I said.

"Very well, this way." The doctor said leading us to Harley's room, "Remember, she won't know any of you."

We all entered her room.

"Harley? Sweetie?" I asked.

"Harley? That's me right? That's what the nurse keeps calling me." She said.

"Yes, you are Harley Bradley and I'm your mother, Michelle Bradley." I said.

"Which one of you is my father?" Harley asked looking from Rocky to Hunter.

"We both are Princess." Rocky said.

"I have two fathers? Why?" Harley asked.

"It's a long story." Hunter said.

"What's important is you're ok." Rocky said.

"What are your names?" Harley asked.

"I'm Hunter Bradley and that is Rocky DeSantos." Hunter said.

"OK...is it ok if I call you Hunter, Rocky, and Michelle for awhile until I can remember more about you?" Harley asked.

Rocky and Hunter looked pained so I responded. "Of course Har, whatever makes you feel comfortable."

"Thanks...I hate to be rude but I'm kind of sleepy, I know I can't sleep but I would like to rest." Harley said.

"OK. If you need any of us we'll be around." Hunter said.

"Thanks. Bye." Harley said laying down.

We went back to the lobby.

"How is she?" Tommy asked.

"Doesn't remember anything." Hunter said.

"She'll remember, just give her time." Kat said.

"What about the Purple Ranger?" Kim whispered.

"She can't be a Ranger if she doesn't remember anything, she'll be too vulnerable to Arissa." Blake said.

"I know...but we need the Purple Ranger to complete the team...Savannah you have to reclaim the Purple Power." I whispered.

“Oh no. Not a chance. I’m done with that. I told you it was a one time thing with SPD. No, never again.” Savannah said.
“Come on Savannah you have to.” I said.
“The team needs you and you’re the only one who can do it. You need to step up and accept the powers.” Tommy said.
Savannah sighed. “Fine.”

Tiffany

~~~~~  
I was helping the other Wildcats get breakfast ready when Josh walked in the kitchen.  
“Tiffany, your mother is here.” He said.  
“My...mother?” I swallowed hard.  
“Yes.”  
“Ok...um...Josh? Any word on Harley yet?” I asked as I looked myself over.  
“Yeah, Michelle just called. I was coming to tell you all that too. Harley is awake but she has severe amnesia.”  
“Wait a second...if she has amnesia she can’t train us.” April whispered where Destiny couldn’t hear.  
“We have that covered.” Josh whispered back before speaking normally, “Obviously Harley can’t be a group leader right now so I’m taking over for her for the time being.”  
“Have you told the G...Harley’s friends about this?” I asked.  
“Yes, now go Tiff, your mom is waiting.” Josh said.  
I sighed, “OK, OK!”

I went to the lobby and found her.  
“Hello Mother.” I said.  
“Tiffany. Good to see you. Have you been watching your weight?”  
“Of course.”  
“Doesn’t look like it. Tiffany you must have gained at least 4 pounds since I last saw you.”  
“I’m sorry Mother. I’ll watch it.”  
“You better. Anyway Mrs. Bradley informed me that you tried to run away. Is this true?”  
“Yes, when I heard you were coming I got scared I would disappoint you so I ran.”  
“We pay a lot of money for this school. If you run away again we’ll pull you out of here and bring you home. We can’t be wasting our money.”  
“I’m sorry Mother.”  
“Mrs. Bradley also informed me you were cutting. What did I tell you about that? It looks very bad on us. As a Jennings you have got to watch what you do, or at least what you get caught doing.”  
“I’m sorry Mother.” I said again.  
“Very well, would you like to go have lunch?”  
“I guess so.” I said.  
“Ok, I’ve already signed you out. Let’s go.”

Tony

~~~~~  
“She doesn’t remember anything?” I asked my dad. We had all gone back to the hospital.
“Nothing.” Dad said.
“Can we see her?” Mel asked.
“Not all of you can...I can try to get some of you in though.” Aunt Michelle said.
“Ok. Who first?” I asked.
“You and Mel...I think you two will need each other here.” Aunt Michelle said.
“Ok.” I said as we followed her into the room.
“Harley? I’d like you to meet some people. This is your cousin Tony Oliver and his fiancée Melody Grayson. They are your friends.” Aunt Michelle said.
“Oh...ok.” Harley said.
“I’ll be out there if you need me.” Aunt Michelle said leaving us.
“Hey Har, you gave us quite a scare.” I said.

“Totally. But I knew you’d pull through.” Mel said.

“Are we good friends?” Harley asked.

“We’re best friends. Have been since we were kids.” Mel said.

“And you’re like my sister.” I said.

“Oh...ok.” Harley said.

“You don’t know us do you?” Mel asked.

“I’m sorry...I don’t...” Harley said.

I sighed, “It’ll come back Har, just give it time.”

“What if it doesn’t? What if I never remember? Will I always be lost?” Harley asked.

“Of course not. You’ll make new memories.” Mel said.

“She’s right. Anyway the harder you try to remember the more difficult it will be. Don’t push yourself.” I said.

“Throughout the day other friends of yours will be coming in. Maybe something will click.” Mel said.

“Who’s coming in next?” Harley asked.

“Probably your cousin Lindsey and her boyfriend Nick.” I said.

“They are my friends too?” Harley asked.

“Yes, they are our friends as well. There’s a big group of us that are all good friends.” Mel said.

Harley nodded. “Ok, got it.”

“We should get going now...we’ll come back later.” I said.

“Ok. Bye.” Harley said.

We walked out and as soon as we were out of Harley’s sight Mel started to cry. I wrapped her in my arms and held her.

“It’s ok baby. She’ll be fine.”

“You really think so? She can’t even remember who she is.” Mel said holding on to me.

“It’s just the trauma of everything. She’ll remember soon enough.” I said

Tiffany

~~~~~

At lunch with my parents, which I really didn’t want to be at, they had me so self-conscious about my weight that I could barely eat.

“Will you be attending the dinner party with us tonight?” Dad asked.

“Of course she will. The school must let us take her, we pay them enough they should do what we say. Besides as sole heir to the Jennings fortune she must attend.” Mom said.

“Of course, I wouldn’t miss it.” I said.

“Excuse me?” Mom asked.

“I’m sorry. I mean, it would be quite dreadful to miss such an event. I would be delighted to attend.” I corrected myself.

“I don’t think I approve of the way this school is affecting your social skills Tiffany.” Mom said.

“But I like it there.” I said. I was scared she’d take me out of Starlight. I wasn’t ready to go home...not yet.

“Clare, perhaps Starlight Academy is best for Tiffany at this moment. She certainly seems happier.” Dad said.

“Fine, I suppose she can finish the rest of the year there then we will discuss it further.” Mom said.

“Do you have anything to wear tonight?” Dad asked.

“Probably not, look at the way she’s dressed now and with all the weight she’s gained she won’t fit in to any of her old dresses. We’ll have to buy her something.” Mom said.

“Fine, you two can go shopping after lunch.” Dad said.

“I already have my dress.” Mom said.

“Then Tiffany can go alone. We just won’t tell the Academy Staff she went on her own. We can trust you not to run away right?” Dad asked.

“Yes sir.” I promised.

“Very well. Here is the credit card, we’ll meet you in front of the mall in 2 hours.” Dad said.

“Yes sir.” I said before running across the street to the mall. It didn’t take me long. I found a pink ankle length sundress and matching sandals. It was very pretty. After I got my dress I walked around the mall thinking. I hated my mom so much. Michelle and Hunter, despite Michelle’s mistakes, were better parent figures to me by far. Harley was like a sister to me...poor Harley...I was at the mall shopping while she was trying to remember who she was. I needed to see her. I took off to the hospital and snuck in. I snooped around till I saw Nick and Lindsey leaving a room. I figured that had to be Harley’s so I went in.

“Hey.” I said.

“Oh, I told the last two I didn’t want anymore visitors.” Harley said.

“Oh, I’m not with them. I’m one of your students...I really shouldn’t even be here so please don’t tell anyone I am. I just had to see you were ok.” I said.

“My student?”

“Yes, you’re on staff at Starlight Academy. It’s a school for troubled teens. We all have groups and you’re the group leader of the Wild Cats. I’m Tiffany Jennings, I’m in your group.” I said.

“Tiffany...oh ok.” Harley said.

I sighed, “I know you don’t remember but you’re like an older sister to me. Whenever I have parents problems you’re always there, even if I don’t wanna talk. Well I kinda needed that now and if you don’t mind...well can I still talk to you? I know you’re confused and everything but...”

“It’s ok...go ahead, maybe hearing someone else’s problems will take my mind off my own.”

I nodded, “OK...so my mom and dad are in town and they want me to go to this dinner party with them and my mom is already telling me I’m too fat and I’ve gained too much weight.”

“Is she whack? You’re a sting bean. You are so not fat. You should tell you mom to stick it.” Harley said.

I giggled, that was certainly something Harley never would have said before. I did feel better though.

Josh

~~~~~

“Wild Cats, go over there with Josh...um except Destiny, I need to see you.” Dad said. He was running Starlight for the Bradleys while they dealt with Harley.

“Ok, so this is Ranger business right?” Derek asked when I was alone with them.

“Yeah.” I said.

“Ok, what’s the deal?” April asked.

“I wanted to tell you all but I guess you guys can fill Tiffany in when she gets back. Ok...as you know Harley is having memory issues that prevent her from being a viable Ranger. However, Arissa won’t let up, we know that.” I started.

“Your point?” Chris asked.

“My point is you’ll need another Purple Ranger and as we all know not just anyone can hold that power...in fact other than Harley, Michelle, and Felicity, who is still too young of course, there is only one...Savannah James will be joining you as your new Purple Ranger.” I finished.

“No way.” April said.

“Not a chance.” Chris said.

“Not on my team.” Derek said.

“Guys listen, you really don’t have a choice here.” I said.

“Savannah is the reason this happened to Harley in the first place. I don’t want her on my team.” Derek said.

“Derek, she’s a great Ranger. She’s experienced and she is the only one who can do it.” I said.

“She’s experienced?” April asked.

“Yes, she was the Purple SPD Ranger years ago.” I said.

Derek sighed, “Fine. I guess we don’t have much choice. But she isn’t one of us, even if she is a Ranger.”

“Fine, work as a team on the battle field, that’s all you have to do.” I said.

“Fine.” Derek growled.

Michelle

~~~~~

I was sitting in the waiting room with Hunter and Dusty.

“Hunter...I’m so sorry about everything.” I said.

“I know you are Mich, but sometimes ‘sorry’ doesn’t cut it...don’t you get that?” Hunter replied.

“Yeah, I get that. But you still love me right?”

“Of course I do...I could never stop loving you. You’re part of my soul Mich.”

“And you’re part of mine...please Hunter, I need you with me...I know I messed up again but please...don’t leave.” I said crying. I was so scared of him leaving me.

Hunter pulled me into his arms and I could tell he was crying too. “I’m not leaving you...but sweetheart, I need some

space for all this to process. I need time alone. I will come home...just not yet.”

“That I can deal with...I just can’t handle the thought of you never coming home.” I said holding on to him as if he were a life raft.

“I love you so much Michelle.” He said.

“I love you too.” I said.

“About time you guys worked this out.” Dustin said.

I laughed, “Thanks Dusty.”

“So you two have any other secrets I should know about?” Hunter asked.

“Naw dude, just the one.” Dustin said.

“Dustin...I’m sorry I went off on you...I understand why you kept Michelle’s secret. I shouldn’t have taken it out on you.” Hunter said.

“It’s ok dude, I understand why you were mad. It was a tough situation for everyone.” Dustin said.

“No lie.” Hunter said.

“So we’re cool?” Dustin asked.

“Yeah. We’re cool.”

## Tiffany

~~~~~

It was time for the dinner party. I was dressed and prepared to be the perfect little Jennings. My mother warned me about eating too much so I also had to be ready to watch that. We went into the ball/dining room and started to mingle. I followed my parents.

“Mr. Ball, this is our daughter Tiffany.” Mom said.

“So nice to meet you Tiffany.”

“Likewise Mr. Ball.” I said.

“You look beautiful.”

“Thank you sir.”

“How old are you?”

“14.”

“Do you go to private school?”

“Yes she does.” Mom said.

“Yeah, sort of. I actually go to Starlight Academy here in town.” I said as I got a glare from my mother.

“Isn’t that a school for troubled teens?” Mr. Ball asked.

“Yes sir. I’m there for cutting and purging, and if you will excuse me I’m late getting back.” I said walking out. I was suddenly very sick of pretending to be something I wasn’t.

“Tiffany Ann Jennings!” Mom cried after me.

“Mom, please don’t even start. Just take me back to the school and leave me there till you can accept me as is.” I said.

“Oh I’ll take you back, you bet I will.” She said as we got in the car.

Michelle

~~~~~

I was curled up in Hunter’s arms when Jason walked in.

“Was the car on the tapes?” I asked.

“Yes.” Jason said.

“What did you find out?” Hunter asked.

“I know who hit Har.” Jason said.

“Who?” I asked.

“Well the car that hit her was registered to Trent Fernandez.”

*"I'm livin' in the real world  
Everything's written in black and white  
Livin' in the real world  
Where you don't get nothin' unless you fight"  
~ "Real World" Richard Marx*

"Trent Fernandez?" I asked.

"Yes." Jason said.

"It can't be...is it the same Trent?" Hunter asked.

"Yes. Our friend Trent Fernandez." Jason said.

"Well, former friend anyway." I said.

"Oh god...what do we do now?" Rocky asked.

"Since Harley isn't capable of making choices for herself right now it's up to you three if charges are pressed or not." Jason said.

"Yes." Hunter said.

"Definitely." Rocky said.

"I..." I started.

"Mich? You can't seriously be thinking about letting him go." Hunter said.

"It's just...well he was my team mate..." I said.

"Yeah and he almost killed your daughter." Rocky said.

I nodded, "You're right...ok, do whatever needs to be done."

"Ok...I'll talk to the Reefside PD and see about getting an arrest warrant issued." Jason said.

"I'm going with you, partner." Tommy said walking up.

"Are you sure?" Jason asked.

"Yes. I want to be there." Tommy said.

Jason

~~~~~  
I was very lucky the Reefside PD was being so nice about me working on this case. It wasn't really my business but they were pretty cool about it. Anyway, after I had the OK from Michelle, Hunter, and Rocky Tommy and I went back to the police station and got to work on getting that warrant. It didn't take long considering we had it all on tape. After all the paperwork was done I went with some RPD officers to Fernandez Manor. This was not going to be fun. I never had to arrest a former Ranger before. I rang the bell and the maid answered.

"Reefside PD, we need to see Mr. Fernandez." I said.

"What is it?" Trent said coming to the door, "Oh hey Jason, Tommy, what's up?"

"Trent Fernandez you are under arrest for reckless driving in the hit and run case resulting in the injury of Harlyn Bradley. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney, if you can not afford one then one will be provided for you. Do you understand these rights?" I asked as I cuffed him.

"Jason, you can't be serious." Trent said.

"Do you understand these rights?" I asked again.

"Yes, ok? Yes. Now tell me what is going on here." Trent said.

"We have you on tape hitting Harley with your car." Tommy said.

"What? Tommy...you can't be serious..." Trent said.

"I'm sorry Trent." Tommy said as we put him in the car.

Savannah

~~~~~  
I had been forced out of the hospital and over to the Academy to talk to my new team by the recommendation of my parents.

"Listen, I know you guys don't want me on this team any more than I want to be on this team but Harley can't do it and you guys need a Purple Ranger so we're stuck with each other." I said.

"Great pep talk." April said.

"Yeah, very motivational." Chris said.

"Guys...I..." I started as the alarm sounded. "It's go time guys, there's Bots downtown."

"Let's do it." Derek said.

We went downtown and started to fight the Bots when Arissa showed up.

"Hello again Rangers, where is my favorite little Purple Ranger?" she asked.

"She couldn't make it, I'm subbing for her today. Ready guys?" I asked.

"Ready." They replied.

"Wild Cat Transformation!" we cried.

"A new Purple Ranger? But how?" Arissa asked confused.

"You're smart Arissa, you figure it out." I said.

"Don't worry, I will...and when I figure out where you guys are hiding Harley you all are toast." Arissa said.

"Big talk Arissa. You know for an evil alien being you sure don't have much action to back up that mouth." Derek said.

"Don't assume Red Ranger, you have no idea what I'm capable of." Arissa said disappearing.

"OK, good job guys." I said.

"Yeah...you're not the leader so don't pretend to be." April said as the Wildcats took off.

I sighed. This wouldn't be easy.

Josh

~~~~~

I was sitting outside Cyberspace when I saw Marissa walk up.

"Hey you, long time no see." She said sitting next to me and kissing me.

"Hey...sorry, life has been hectic." I said kissing her back.

"What's going on?" she asked.

"Remember I told you about my friend Harley? Well she was in an accident." I said

"Oh my god, that's horrible. I'm so sorry. Is she ok?"

"Well...physically she'll recover but she has amnesia." I said.

"How bad?"

"She doesn't remember who she is...who her family is...nothing."

"Oh god..."

"Yeah...so like I said, things have been hectic. I'm having to take over some of her work at the school and stuff." I said.

"I understand...I'm so sorry."

"Thanks."

I sighed. I really needed to tell Marissa I couldn't see her anymore. It wasn't fair to her when my heart was with Harley. I couldn't handle a break up right now though...it could wait a little longer.

"Hey...I just remembered something I need to do. See you later?" she asked.

"Sure. Later." I said.

Arissa

~~~~~

This was better than anything I could have hoped for. Harley had amnesia which meant I could convince Harley she was on my side or even just kill her while she was out of it...or both! I was so excited! So much planning so little time!

Tony

~~~~~

"What do we do Tony? We can't leave Harley but we can't miss any more school." Cali said.

"I hate the idea of leaving her too but really what can we do here? Harley has her family...we can come visit when possible but we really need to think about getting home." I said.

"I don't wanna leave either but Tony is right." Mel said.

"I know my dad is staying here awhile to work on the criminal case." Alex said.

"I think mine is too." I said.

"And I'm pretty sure my dad won't leave Michelle until he's sure she's ok. According to my mom he's always been protective of her." Nick said.

"See, Harley will be surrounded by people who love her." Lindsey said.

"And I'm staying for another week or so anyway." Aaron said.

"OK then, we need to book a flight then." I said to Mel.

"I'll call the airport." Mel said going to the phone.

"And we can all drive back in the morning." Alex said to the others.

"Sounds good." Nick agreed.

Anna

~~~~~

I was at home watching TV when the phone rang. I reached over and picked it up.

"Hello?"

"Hello? Anna?"

"Stacy? Oh my god! Hey!" I cried.

"Is Mom around?" Stacy asked, she sounded very upset.

"No, she's out right now. Why? What's wrong Stace?" I asked.

"I'm coming to Reefside and I need a place to stay."

"Well you can stay here of course. Why are you coming to Reefside?"

"You didn't hear? My father was arrested for driving the car that hit Harley."

"WHAT?! Oh my god...Stace, I'm so sorry." I said.

"Yeah...anyway I'll be there in a few hours." She said.

"Ok...I'll see you then."

"Alright, just let Mom and Conner know I'm coming."

"Not a problem. I love you."

"Love you too. Bye."

"Bye." I said hanging up.

I couldn't believe it. I never liked Trent but I couldn't believe he caused Harley's accident. I was lost in thought when Mom and Dad walked in.

"Hey guys." I said.

"Hey." Mom said.

"Did you guys hear about Trent getting arrested?" I asked.

"Yeah, just a few minutes ago. How did you know?" Mom asked.

"Stacy called. She's on her way here and she said she needed a place to stay." I said.

"You told her she was welcome here right?" Mom asked.

"No, I turned her away." I said sarcastically, "Of course I invited her here!"

"When is she getting here?" Dad asked.

"A few hours." I said.

"Alright. I'm gonna go get her room ready." Mom said going upstairs. When Dad and I were alone I looked at him.

"How is she really taking this?" I asked.

"Hard. Part of her will always care about Trent even if she doesn't like admitting it." Dad said.

I nodded, "I still don't believe all of this."

"I know...neither can I." Dad said.

"How's the school?" I asked.

"I'm so over being acting head master. I know Hunter and Michelle need time to take care of Harley but I'll be glad when they can come back." He said.

I nodded.

Stacy

~~~~~

I was in total shock. My father had been arrested for nearly killing Harley. It was unreal. When I got to Reefside I rushed to the police station. My stepmother, Nikki, was already there. I had never really gotten along with Nikki. She was a stuck up actress who I know didn't like me at all. Anyway when I saw her she had on sunglasses and was acting like a very distraught wife, which I knew was an act because I knew she didn't love my father...she love his money.

"Hello Nikki." I said.

"Stacy, I'm so glad you could make it. Your father will be happy to see you too." She said hugging me.

I rolled my eyes, "I bet."

"Stacy...hi." Tommy said walking over.

"Hi...how did this happen?" I asked.

"I don't know...but it's all on tape. If you'll follow me I'll let you see your father." Tommy said.

"OK, thanks." I said following him.

I followed Tommy to a large room where my father sat alone.

"Hi Dad." I said hugging him.

"Stacy, I'm so glad to see you." Dad said hugging me.

"What happened? How did all this happen?" I asked sitting across from him.

Dad looked around and when he was sure we were alone he leaned close to me. "It wasn't me who hit Harley...it was Nikki."

"WHAT?! Dad, you have to tell Tommy!" I cried.

"No. I can't. Nikki is my wife and I have to protect her."

"You can't! Not at the cost of your freedom!"

"I have to. I love Nikki...I already lost your mother, I don't want to lose Nikki too."

"Dad, you will go to jail, do you not get that?!"

"I can't let anything happen to Nikki."

I sighed, "Fine...what can I do to help you then?"

"You can find a way to bail me out of here."

"Ok, I'll talk to Tommy. Anything else?"

"No...not right now."

"Ok, I'll go talk to Tommy then...I love you Dad."

"I love you too Stace." He said hugging me before I left the room to go talk to Tommy.

Michelle

~~~~~

The next day the Genesis Rangers, minus Aaron, left Reefside. I could tell it was hard for them to leave Harley like that but they knew they had to and I promised I'd keep them up to date on everything happening with Harley's condition. Shortly after they left the doctor told us we could take Harley home. She would need to be watched 24/7 for awhile but Jason, Tommy, Kim, Kat, Blake, Dustin, and of course Rocky and Aisha were staying to help. Marah and Tori decided to go home with Nick and Lindsey.

Being as Harley wasn't exactly up for being a dorm monitor right now Hunter and I decided it would be best if she moved in to our house and out of the dorms. Blake, Dustin, Kat, and Jason were staying in the guest dorms and Tommy and Kim were staying at Conner's. As for Rocky and Aisha, they were staying in our guest apartment. Yes, I was living a few feet away from my ex-husband. This would be so fun! Not.

When we got Harley back to the Academy we got her settled in her new room, which we had set up to look as much like her old room in Angel Grove as possible.

"Welcome home Princess." Rocky said.

"Thanks Rocky." Harley said.

"I bet you're tired aren't you?" I asked.

"Actually...yeah."

"OK then, get some sleep." I said as we all left her alone.

"I'll come check on her in the morning." Hunter said heading for the front door.  
"You don't have to go..." I said.  
"Yes Mich, I do. I'm going to check on the Wildcats then I'm going back to the hotel." Hunter said.  
I sighed, "Fine...see you tomorrow."  
"Bye." He said leaving.  
"Thanks for letting us stay here Mich." Rocky said.  
"No problem...you're her father, she needs you right now." I said.  
"Rocky...I think we should have Tamara come stay with us. We don't know how long we'll be here." Aisha said.  
"Tamara?" I asked.  
"My daughter. She's 16." Aisha said.  
"Oh...right." I said.  
"You really think that's a good idea, having her out of school that long?" Rocky asked.  
"No, I was thinking...maybe she could enroll at Reefside High..." Aisha said.  
"Are you sure?" Rocky asked.  
"Listen, Harley is your daughter and she needs you now, probably long term. I think spending the rest of the school year here is a good idea." Aisha said.  
Rocky smiled, "Thanks baby."  
"I'll go to the guest house and call Tamara." Aisha said leaving.

When we were alone Rocky turned to me.  
"Hey...Mich...for the record, I'm sorry I went off on you."  
I nodded, "You were mad...I understand that."  
"I was mad but that's no excuse...and I'm glad I can stay so close to Harley...but I promise we'll find an apartment soon."  
"You don't have to do that. You can stay there long as you want...oh and I don't know if she'd be interested but we do need another dorm monitor since Harley can't do it anymore...if Tamara wants she can room with Julia and be the second monitor. She wouldn't have to worry about being a group leader or anything because Josh is taking over that." I said.  
Rocky nodded, "I'll talk to Aisha and Tamara about it."  
"Ok...I didn't even know Aisha had a daughter." I said.  
"She had her in Africa. She met a man there and got married. He died 8 years ago and Aisha moved back to California. We ran into each other one day after I moved to Blue Bay Harbor and caught up. It just went from there." Rocky explained.  
"Do you and Tamara get along?" I asked.  
"Yes, very well actually. She is starting to consider me a father figure of sorts."  
"That's good."  
"Yeah..."  
"Are you happy...you know, with everything?" I asked.  
Rocky seemed to consider the question, "Yeah...I am. I mean it hurt a lot when I lost you but I'm finally getting everything back together. I am happy now. Are you? Would you go back and change anything?"  
"No. I do love you...even now...but my heart and soul is with Hunter...it always has and always will be...I should have figured that out sooner." I said.  
"Would have saved us a lot of trouble."  
"I know...I'm sorry."  
"Listen, I better go...I'll come by later."  
"Ok...bye." I said letting Rocky out. I went into Felicity's room and looked around. I missed her. Hunter was right though, she was better off with him.

Hunter

~~~~~

I went in to the lodge to check on the Wildcats.
"Hey guys!" I said.

“Hunter!” Tiffany cried running up and hugging me.

I laughed, “Good to see you too.”

“So how’s Harley?” Derek asked.

“She’ll be ok...she just needs to remember but it will come with time.” I said.

April looked around to make sure Destiny, who was doing homework a few feet away, couldn’t hear, “How long are we stuck with Savannah?”

I sighed, “She’s a good Ranger April. Just give her a chance, you might actually find you like her”

“Not likely.” Chris mumbled.

“Tiffany, I hear your mom came for a visit, how did that go?” I asked.

“It was fine.” Tiffany said.

“Derek, I got a message your parents are coming later this week...we need to talk later about how we’re gonna handle it.” I said.

“They are coming here? No.” Derek said.

“It’ll be ok...we’ll handle it...I won’t break my promise.” I said.

Derek nodded, “Fine.”

“Anyway, I need to go pick up Felicity and get back to my hotel.” I said.

“Are you leaving Michelle?” Jesse asked.

“No. I just need some time away from her to think about things.” I said.

“That’s understandable.” Jesse agreed.

“I’ll see you guys later.” I said heading out.

Stacy

~~~~~

I had managed to get my dad bailed out of jail. I took him home but I was still staying with my mom and Conner. Everything got to be too much so I went to Cyberspace to see Savannah, we were old friends.

“Hey.” I said.

“Stace! Hey!” Savannah said hugging me.

“How’s it going?” I asked.

“It’s going.”

“Sorry about...your sister.”

“Yeah...”

“Weird huh? I mean how you ended up with two sisters so suddenly.”

“Yeah...sorry about your dad”

“No you’re not...I am though. I’m sorry this all happened.”

“I know you are...it’s not your fault.” She said.

“Still...I hear you’re taking over for Harley on the team.”

“Yep, I’m back in uniform again.”

“You know what Tommy says, once a Ranger...”

“Yeah, I know...always a Ranger.” I said.

“So you ready to take out Arissa?”

“Oh yeah...the hard part is protecting Michelle since that’s who she’s after.”

“Michelle isn’t that bad is she?”

“I suppose not...I just can’t stand her.”

I hugged her. “I know...but it’ll all work out...for both of us.”

*"You thought you could keep me from loving  
You thought you could feed on my soul  
But while you were busy destroying my life  
What was half in me has become whole*

*While you were looking the other way  
While you had your eyes closed  
While you were licking your lips  
'Cause I was miserable  
While you were selling your soul  
While you were tearing a hole in me*

*I was taking control  
Now I have taken control"  
~ "Control" Poe*

I took a deep breath and entered Hunter's office. My parents were coming for a visit later and I had to prepare how I was going to handle it.

"Hi Derek." Hunter said.

"Hey Hunter." I said sitting down.

"Ok, you know I have to report what you told me to the proper authorities right?" Hunter asked.

"Yeah, I know...it's just a matter of when and I'm ready. I want my mother to rot in jail for what she did to me. Have the cops waiting for her when she gets here." I said.

"Are you sure?"

"Positive. I'm not going to let her get away with what she did."

"OK then, I'll make the call."

"Thank you."

"You should go prepare the rest of the Wildcats. The appearance of cops around here might be a bit much for some of them."

"Ok, I'll take care of it." I said getting up.

"Derek...wait...listen, I'm always here if you need to talk."

"No you're not. You're at the hotel across town."

Hunter sighed, "You're right, but you have my cell number. If you need me anytime I can be here in 10 minutes."

I nodded, "Yeah, thanks."

I left the office and went back to the lodge.

"Hey guys." I said.

"Hey Derek." April said

"Listen, just so you guys know my parents are coming here today...when they get here there will be cops waiting to arrest my mom." I explained.

"Why?" Tiffany asked.

I looked at April.

"You have to tell them." April said.

I nodded, "Because...my mother raped me and I'm pressing charges."

"Oh god...Derek...I had no idea." Tiffany said.

"I know...I tried to hide it." I said.

"That's horrible." Destiny said.

"Yeah man, I'm really sorry." Chris said.

"Me too." Jesse said.

"Thanks guys." I said.

"Listen, don't worry. We're all behind you no matter what happens." April said.

“Fully.” Tiffany agreed.  
“Thanks, I’ll need all the support I can get.” I said as Conner came in.  
“Hey guys, it’s soccer time.” He said.  
“OK, let’s do it Wild Cats.” I said.  
We all headed for the field and split into two teams and played a game of soccer.

Arissa

~~~~~

I was walking around town when I saw Harley with Josh. I walked over to them.
“Hey Josh.” I said kissing him.
“Hey Marissa.” Josh said, “Marissa, this is my friend I was telling you about, Harley Bradley. Harley this is my girlfriend Marissa.”
“It’s very nice to meet you Harley.” I said.
“Likewise.” Harley said.
“What are you guys up to?” I asked.
“Well I was just trying to convince Harley to let me take her home. If we don’t hurry I’ll be late for class.” Josh said.
I smiled, this was perfect. “Listen, there’s no need for that. If Harley wants to stay out longer I can show her around town then take her back to the Academy when she’s ready.”
“Are you sure?” Josh asked.
“Totally.” I said.
“Are you ok with that Har?” Josh asked.
“Sure. Why not?” Harley said.
“OK then, you girls have fun. See ya.” Josh said taking off.
“So where to?” I asked Harley.
“I’m not sure what’s around.” Harley said.
“How about we go to Reefside Café? Have you had lunch yet?”
“No not yet.”
“Ok then, let’s go.” I said.

Stacy

~~~~~

“I can’t believe this is happening.” I said.  
“I know sweetie...honestly neither can I.” Mom said.  
“You know he didn’t do it.” I said.  
“He did sweetheart. It’s on tape.”  
“But he didn’t...you can’t tell anyone this but it wasn’t Dad driving. It was Nikki. Dad’s taking the wrap for her.”  
“Are you serious?”  
“Yeah. Dad is innocent but he’s protecting Nikki. He said he already lost you, he won’t lose her.”  
“So Trent has a heart in there after all.”  
“Mom...”  
“I’m sorry.”  
“There’s got to be a way to get these charges dropped.”  
“Not unless the Bradleys decide not to press charges. Honestly I can’t say I blame them for pressing charges though, I would if I were them.”  
I sighed, “You’re right...so would I...but Dad didn’t do it. It should be Nikki in jail.”  
“It’s your dad’s choice to be honest...if he won’t deny the charges then there’s nothing you can do.”  
“We’ll see about that. Nikki will spend the rest of her life paying when I’m done with her.” I said storming out of the house.

Derek

~~~~~

We just finished a game of soccer when our communicators went off.

“Conner, we have business.” I whispered.

“Wildcats, dismissed.” Conner said.

“Thanks.” I said.

“Destiny, can you help me clean up?” Conner asked.

“Actually, I have homework...I’ll catch up with you guys later.” She said.

When she was gone we took off. Turns out there were some Bots downtown with a monster. We morphed and met up with Savannah.

Destiny

~~~~~

I was getting really sick of being left out of the Wildcats. I knew they were up to something, I just didn’t know what. I pretended to go do homework but I followed them. They headed off campus and into town, then I lost them. I was searching around the square when I was grabbed from behind.

Derek

~~~~~

“Where does Arissa get these losers?” Chris asked attacking a giant lion that called himself Lionel.

“Monsters like this give lions a bad name.” Savannah said attacking.

“I’m not such a loser...as a matter of fact I have someone that I think you might know. Does the name Destiny ring a bell?” Lionel asked as he brought Destiny forward. She was tied up.

“Destiny!” we cried.

“Back off Rangers or your friend is toast.” Lionel said.

“What do we do?” Tiffany asked.

“We do what he says...for now.” I said.

“We don’t have a choice.” Savannah agreed as we dropped our weapons.

“I knew you’d see it my way Rangers. See you soon.” Lionel said disappearing with Destiny.

“NO!” Chris cried.

We went back to the Academy and met up at Michelle’s house.

“He got Destiny? This is bad.” Michelle said.

“How do we get her back?” I asked.

“We don’t even know where he took her.” Savannah said.

“I’m working on tracking her. When I find her you guys have to go in and get her out.” Michelle said.

“What a day this is turning out to be.” I said.

Arissa

~~~~~

Harley and I had lunch and did some shopping. I was starting to gain her trust. Soon I could proceed with my plan. I would use her to take out the Rangers then I’d get rid of her once and for all.

“I guess I should get you home.” I said.

“Do we have to go back?” she asked.

“You don’t like it at home?” I asked.

“It’s not that. I have a great home...it’s just...I feel bad because everyone around there keeps hoping I remember...with you I don’t have the pressure because we’ve never met before...have we?”

“No, not till today.”

“See...that’s why I’m having so much fun.”

“I’m sure your family is missing you though. How about we meet tomorrow and hang out again?”

“OK, that sounds great.” Harley said. I took her back to the Academy, taking care not to be seen, then I went home. I was very pleased when I discovered my Lionel had managed to kidnap that Destiny chick.

Stacy

~~~~~

“Dad, you have to tell the truth.” I said. I had gone to my dad’s house and was sitting with him in his office.
“I told you, I can’t put Nikki through that.” He said.
“You’re going to go to jail if you lie for her. Dad, I don’t want to lose you.”
“You won’t, you can still visit me...I won’t let Nikki go to jail.”
“She doesn’t even love you! How can you do this to yourself? To me?” I asked.
“I love Nikki...that’s all that matters.”
“Glad to know Nikki means more to you than I do. Thanks a lot Dad.” I said taking off.

I went to the park to be alone and I broke down into tears.

“Are you ok?” Noah asked sitting next to me.
“Oh, hi Noah...I didn’t see you walking by.” I said wiping my eyes.
“It’s ok to cry you know. I know we don’t really know each other but if you wanna talk I’m here.” Noah said.
“It’s just...my father. I don’t want to see him go to jail.”
“I know...it can’t be easy for you to see all this happen. I’m sorry.” Noah said hugging me.
“Thanks.” I said resting in his arms.

Derek

~~~~~

“I’ve got a lock on her. She’s in a cave right outside Reefsides.” Michelle said.  
“Let’s move out then.” I said.  
“We have another problem. Arissa has two armies of Bots attacking different parts of the city. You guys will need to split up.” Michelle said.  
“Ok...Tiffany you’re with me, April and Jesse you guys take the other group of Bots and Chris and Savannah, go save Destiny.” I said.  
“Got it.” Everyone agreed as we moved out.

Tiffany and I got to the battle site and drew our weapons and fought off the army of Bots.

Chris

~~~~~

“OK, according to Michelle the cave should be just up ahead.” Savannah said.
I nodded as we came up to the cave. “She’s in there.” I said.
“Let’s do it.” Savannah said as we ran in the cave. We were greeted by Lionel.
“Did you Rangers come to save your little friend? How sweet. You’re gonna have to get by me first.” Lionel said.
“Not a problem.” I said attacking.
Savannah and I fought off Lionel for awhile before I ended up getting thrown against a wall. I de-morphed a few feet away from Destiny. Through the fog she couldn’t see me at first.
“Black Ranger!” she cried moving closer to me, then she saw me. “Chris?!”
I sighed.
“But how?”
I noticed Savannah was keeping Lionel busy. “Can we talk about this later? Right now would be a good time to run for our lives.” I said freeing Destiny and slipping out the side of the cave.

I got Destiny back to the Academy and we were met by the others. Savannah managed to finish off Lionel and met up with us too. I told the others Destiny saw me un-morph so we told her the truth.

“You guys are Power Rangers? That’s wild...but it explains so much.” Destiny said.
“You can’t tell anyone about this. It’s very important our identities stay secret.” Derek said.
“I promise, not a word to anyone.” Destiny agreed, “Who all knows already though?”
“Conner, Michelle, Hunter, Josh, and Anna. That’s it.” April said.

“Not really. Anyone with the last name McKnight knows. Rocky, Aisha, Dustin, Tommy, Jason, and Kat all know. Even my parents know.” Savannah pointed out.
“Just don’t discuss it. You’ll be safe that way.” I said.
Destiny nodded. “This is such a trip.”
“Tell me about it.” April agreed.
“I’d love to stay and chat but my mom is here. It’s show time.” Derek said.
“Good luck man.” I said patting him on the back. I really felt back for Derek. No mother should ever touch her son in a sexual way. That was incredibly sick and I really did hope Derek got his mom locked up for good.

Derek

~~~~~

I went to Hunter’s office and was in there with two cops when my parents walked in.  
“Derek? What’s going on?” Mom asked.  
“Tara Hall, you are under arrest for the rape of a minor. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law...” the officer said.  
“I don’t understand...what’s happening?” Mom asked.  
“It’s over Mother. You’ve touched me for the last time. All those nights you gave me nightmares...all the tears I would cry because of my pain and shame...it’s over. You’ll never make me feel small again. You’ll never touch me again. This time I’m taking charge. I’m taking control and you won’t get away.” I said.  
“All I ever did was love you.” Mom said.  
“You don’t know the meaning of the word. Get her out of her.” I said as the officer took her away.  
“What is going on here?” Dad asked.  
“I’m sorry Dad...I had to do this.” I said.  
“What is going on?” Dad asked again.  
“When I was growing up...and even still recently...Mom raped me Dad...I’m sorry but it’s true.”  
“You liar! How dare you make such horrible accusation against your own mother!” Dad screamed.  
“I’m telling the truth! Mom raped me!” I cried.  
“What kind of school are you running here? Are you filling my sons head with this nonsense?” Dad screamed at Hunter.  
“Sir, please calm down. Derek came to me with this. He told me everything and I believe him. As such I had to report this to the proper authorities.” Hunter said.  
“You sorry excuse for a son. I hope you like it here because you are never coming home! You hear me? Never!” Dad screamed as he left the office.  
“Are you ok Derek?” Hunter asked hugging me.  
I started to cry. “I don’t have a family anymore do I?”  
“You have us...and you always will.” Hunter promised.

Arissa

~~~~~

I was furious. I had been beaten by those Power Brats again! I pulled out Picta-phone and called my aunt.
“I’m sick of being defeated! There must be a way to destroy those Power Rangers!” I cried.
“Be patient and keep trying. You get a little closer with each battle.”
“I’m tired of waiting. Next time I see Harley I will kill her.”
“NO!”
“What? Why? I thought we wanted her dead.”
“No, not Harley. Just Michelle. You are only to kill Michelle.”
“But why? Savannah, Felicity, and Harley are her daughters. They must be destroyed too.” I said.
“No. Do what you will with Felicity and Savannah but do not kill Harley.”
“But why?”
“Please Arissa, trust me on this. We are only trying to avenge your mother’s death...we are not inherently evil.”
“But I still don’t understand...why can’t I kill Harley?”
“Arissa, just trust me. I can not tell you that now but don’t kill Harley.”
“Ok fine...I won’t touch Harley then...” I said hanging up the picta-phone. “But I will use her to get her older sister

where I want her.” I laughed. Despite my aunt sudden odd behavior I was hopeful that my new plan would work perfectly.

*“So I'll cry just a little bit longer
and I'll stay two seconds more
and I'll try to be stronger
and I'll see if you catch my fall”
~ “Catch My Fall” Katy Rose*

“Hey Marissa!” Harley said getting in my car. I had set it up so we would be able to spend the day together...I needed to gain her trust.

“Hey Har...you ready?” I asked.

“Sure am. Where we going?” she asked.

“How about Reefside Pizza? I’m starved.” I said.

“Sounds great!” Harley said.

We pulled into Reefside Pizza and got a table.

“So what kind of pizza do you like? You do remember that don’t you?” I teased.

“Yes, that I do remember...Hawaiian pizza.” Harley said.

I looked at her, “You’re kidding, that’s my favorite!” It seriously was...who would have thought I had anything in common with a Ranger?

We got our pizza and started eating.

“So...tell me about yourself Marissa...where did you grow up? What are you parents like?” Harley asked.

I looked down and sighed. “My mom was killed when I was only a few months old and I don’t know who my father is. I was raised by my aunt.”

“Oh god, I’m sorry...I didn’t mean to bring up bad memories.” Harley said.

“It’s ok. I mean it’s just the way it is. It would have been great to have a father...and I do wonder who he is sometimes...like...would he like me? Would we get along? Would he be proud of me? Did he love my mom? I don’t think he even knows about me though.” I said.

“From what I hear I have two dads...you can borrow one.” Harley said trying to lighten the mood.

I forced a smile. “You’re lucky...I wish I had just one dad...I used to sit in my room when I was a kid and dream about him finding me...of course that was silly...it never happened.”

“It’s not silly...it’s human.” Harley said.

I sighed. What was I doing opening up to a Ranger like this?!

Chris

~~~~~

“Will you guys hurry it up? I’d like to finish chores this century.” I said.

“Chill man, we’re going as fast as we can.” Derek said.

“Besides I don’t see you moving at a rabbit’s pace.” April said.

“Why do we have to do all this cleaning anyway?” Destiny complained.

“To teach us team work and work ethic.” Tiffany said.

“You know it’s not so bad if you’d stop complaining.” Jesse said.

“He speaks!” April said.

“Every time Jesse says a word it’s an event.” Destiny said.

“Because it happens so infrequently.” Derek said.

“Lay off.” Jesse said.

“Oh boy I’m scared.” I said.

“Hey girls...huddle up.” Michelle said walking in with a girl.

“No fair.” I said.

“Later boys.” Destiny laughed.

“I say we check this out too.” I said.

“With you bro.” Derek said.

We went to listen in on what Michelle was saying.

“Girls, with Harley unable to fill her duties as dorm monitor I’ve asked Tamara to fill in. She the daughter of a friend of mine.” Michelle explained.

“But she can’t be much older than us!” April argued.

“She isn’t, but Julia can’t be expected to handle the whole dorm on her own and Harley will be back with time. This is our temporary solution.” Michelle said.

“It’s very nice to meet you Tamara.” Tiffany said.

“It’s nice to meet all of you...I hope we can find a way to get along.” Tamara said.

“She hot.” I said.

“You don’t stand a chance with her.” Derek said.

“Besides, I thought you were sweet on Destiny.” Jesse said.

“Destiny is cute...but she doesn’t know I exist...besides, what would two classy girls like that want with a boy from the hood?” I asked walking away.

I went down to the lake and sat down. The longer I was at Starlight the more I started to see where I had been wrong. At the time I felt the gang was my only option...I was starting to see that while that may have been true at the time, there were other ways...of course being a Ranger had also given me new views on justice and taught me a sense of right and wrong.

Now I was in such a mess. Destiny, while she had her problems, was a high class girl. Her parents did love her, despite what she thought, and she was given a good life. She was here because her parents were trying to help her, not because it was an alternative to juvie. She was a typical “All-American Girl”. What would she ever want with me? She could have anyone...someone so much better.

As far as Tamara, she was Aisha’s daughter and her soon to be step dad was Rocky. That was a girl that had it all. She had the world at her feet and could have anything she wanted...or anyone she wanted...

I really wished I could go undo my past...

Tamara

~~~~~

“So what do you think?” Mom asked.

“I guess it’ll be ok.” I said.

“I know you miss home sweetie but it’s important we’re here for Rocky.” Mom said.

“I know...I understand and I am glad we’re here.” I said.

Rocky hugged me. “It means a lot to me to have both of you here. Thank you Tamara.”

I hugged him back, “You’ve been there for me since the day we met, this is the least I can do.”

“Have you met Harley yet?” Mom asked.

“Not yet...I went to go talk to her but Michelle said she went out with a friend.” I said.

“Yeah, she’s made friends with Josh’s girlfriend Marissa. I think she likes the fact Marissa didn’t know her before the accident and doesn’t have pressure to remember.” Rocky said.

“How’s the case going against Trent?” I asked.

“He confessed to everything so there’s no need for a trial. The DA is working on sentencing.” Rocky said.

“I hope he rots in jail for what he did...he could have killed Harley.” I said.

Rocky smiled, “You don’t even know Harley.”

“Yeah, but she’ll be my sister soon!” I said.

Rocky hugged me again. “You’re such a great kid.”

Stacy

~~~~~

“Is Victoria Hanson in?” I asked the lady on the phone.

“Yes she is, may I ask who’s calling?”

“Stacy Fernandez.”

“Please hold.”

There were three rings before there was an answer.

“Victoria Hanson speaking.”

“Tori! Hey, it’s Stacy. I really need your help.” I said.

“Stacy? Hey. I heard about your dad. I’m sorry.”

“Yeah, thanks. He’s innocent though...he’s covering for Nikki, his wife. I tried to get him to tell the truth but he won’t. Do you think you might be able to convince this DA go easy on him?” I asked.

“I don’t know Stace...Michelle and Hunter are very prominent members of the Reefside community. Harley is their daughter...the DA will go hard on him.”

“But Dad is a prominent member of the community too!” I cried.

“True, but I’ll be honest...the DA has been trying to get something on Trent for awhile...they’re convinced his business isn’t fully legit.”

“What? So this is a manhunt for my dad? God! Tori, I have to get him out of this somehow.”

“I’m sorry Stace, I wish I could help but unless your dad turns Nikki in there isn’t anything anyone can do.”

“Thanks anyway Tori. Bye.” I said hanging up.

I went into the living room and plopped on the sofa.

“I hate seeing you so upset Stace.” Conner said.

“I just can’t stand that this is happening. My dad is innocent for once and no one believes him.” I said.

“Come here.” Conner said.

I went and sat next to Conner. He put his arm around me and I leaned on him, resting my head on his shoulder.

“It’ll all work out somehow.” Conner said.

“Conner, I don’t think I tell you enough how glad I am you’re my stepdad...I love you.”

“I love you too Stace.”

I felt safe with Conner. He really was more of a ‘dad’ than my dad was. I closed my eyes and ended up falling asleep.

Arissa

~~~~~

After we finished eating Harley and I went to the beach and sat around.

“So you don’t remember any of your childhood?” I asked.

“No. Not except what I’ve been told. I know I have a lot of friends and two dads. That’s about it. Tell me more about you though...” Harley said.

“What do you want to know?” I asked.

“Well, what kind of stuff were you into? What’s your aunt like? Stuff like that...”

I gave this some thought and remembered being a kid...

I couldn’t have been more than 17 (that would be about 13 or 14 based on Earth aging). It was Father’s Day at school and everyone was having their father come eat lunch with them. I faked being sick that day. Aunt Aria knew I was faking but she let me get away with it. I think she understood what I was doing. Anyway, I tried to keep my mind of my father all day. That night I went and sat on my balcony and looked up at the sky and started to write:

I wonder why it always feels like rain

My life is like some cheap champagne

The answers don’t always seem to fit

My glass is full, but it tastes like shit

I need a quick decision

and a cheap reward

I’m in my last revision

hey- hey-hey-hey

So I'll cry just a little bit longer
and I'll stay two seconds more
and I'll try to be stronger
and I'll see if you catch my fall

I started to cry. I had no parents...at least I know I had a mother though...I had pictures and I knew she had loved me. I didn't even know if my father knew he was my father...I had no clue who he was. He could be anyone in the universe. If I only knew who he was...I was sure he'd love me and I would have a real family. I ended up crying myself to sleep that night. The nights that went like that were countless. One day I decided I was tired of crying. Maybe I'd never know who my father was...but I could avenge my mother's death.

"There's not much to tell. My aunt was really great and has been like a mother to me." I said.
"I'm sorry...I keep asking about your childhood...I bet it was painful for you." Harley said.
"It's fine. But it's getting late. I should get you back." I said.

Michelle

~~~~~  
I was feeding Felicity dinner because Hunter said he had some errands to run. Aisha was sitting with us.  
"She's adorable." Aisha said.  
"She looks like her father." I said putting a bowl of Spaghetti Os in front of Liss.  
"She looked like a mix of both of you."  
We were quiet for a bit.  
"You aren't upset about Rocky and I getting married are you?" Aisha asked.  
I shook my head. "Of course not. He deserves to be happy. I have hurt him so much in the past. I'm glad he's finally found someone."  
"Who would have ever thought? Rocky and I getting married..."  
"What does Adam think about it?"  
"He's kinda tripping out about the whole thing...of course he happy for us and everything, he just never expected his two childhood friends to get married."  
"Yeah...I bet." I said as I got a wet towel to keep Liss clean.  
"Are you sure you're ok?"  
"I'm worried about Harley. I'm glad she's having fun but with her memory like it is I worry about her being gone too long...and on top of everything else I miss Hunter." I said, as if on cue Hunter walked in. "Hi..."  
"Mich...can we talk for a second?" he asked.  
"Sure...Aisha can you watch her?" I asked.  
"Of course." She said.

I walked into the other room with Hunter.  
"What's in the bag?" I asked looking at the duffle bag he was carrying.  
"My things. I want to move back in if you'll have me." Hunter said.  
"Of course!" I cried, "What changed your mind?"  
"I figured out how much I love you...nothing could change that...besides, waking up alone was...lonely. I've missed being with you so much."  
I smiled. "I've missed you too. I love you Hunter...god I love you."  
He pulled me into his arms and held me tight. "I love you too baby."  
I held on to him like a life raft. "I'm so sorry about everything."  
"What is is...don't worry about it anymore. We'll deal with it all and everything will be ok."  
"It will be now that I have you back." I said still hanging on to him.

Stacy

~~~~~  
After my nap Conner took me to go eat lunch then we went home. Conner headed to the school to do some paper work

and I sat in the kitchen reading, trying to get my mind off things. I was in the middle of a book when my brother walked in.

“Hey Stace.” Josh said.

“Hey, how was class?” I asked.

“Ok. Has Marissa called?”

“No...why?”

“I went looking for her and couldn’t find her.”

“Maybe she’s out with Harley again...how is Harley anyway?”

“She still can’t remember anything...aside from that she’s great.”

“I hate that this happened to her...”

“Well your father will pay for it.”

“He’s innocent! He didn’t do it! Nikki did! Nikki’s guilty! She was driving my dad’s car! He didn’t do it!” I cried as I broke down.

“Whoa...Stace...what are you talking about?” Josh asked as he hugged me.

I realized I spilt everything...I hadn’t meant to tell anyone but my parents...and of course Tori. “He didn’t do it. He’s covering for Nikki.” I whispered through my tears.

“Are you sure?”

“Positive. I know everyone hates my father but he’s not a bad man. He’s covering for his wife.”

“Not everyone hates Trent...he just hasn’t made a lot of friends...but seriously Stace...can you blame people for not liking him? He walks all over everyone and doesn’t care who he hurts for a profit.”

“He’s not that bad Josh.”

“He is Stace...just look at the way he’s treated Mom.”

“I know...I know he’s not perfect but...he’s still my father and I still love him.”

“I know you do Stace...I know.”

I sighed and pulled away from Josh. “I’m gonna go for a walk. I hope you find Marissa.” I said walking out of the house.

Arisa

~~~~~

After my day with Harley I knew I was starting to get too soft. I had to act fast before everything was messed up. I needed to take care of the Rangers and get to Michelle and I had to do it now. I picked up my picta-phone and called my aunt.

“Aunt Aria, hi.”

“Arisa, how are things on Earth?”

“I’m still working on it. I have to act fast though. Tomorrow I will make my move.”

“Very good.”

“Aunt Aria?”

“Yes?”

“If you don’t want me to kill Harley why am I after her?”

“I suppose I should have explained this sooner. Queen Michelle and her other children can be killed. I do not care. Harley is...she’s a great warrior. You must find a way to convince her to join us.”

“But why?”

“That I can not tell you Arissa. Just trust me.”

“Of course. I’ll call you tomorrow with an update.”

“Very well.”

I hung up and got in bed. There was something big Aunt Aria wasn’t telling me. I knew it. I hated it. What could I do though?

The next morning I was ready. I called Harley and she agreed to meet me for breakfast. It was perfect. Everything was all ready when Josh walked in the restaurant.

“Hey, there you are. I’ve been looking for you.” Josh said.

I sighed, he had such bad timing. “Oh? Why?” I asked.

“I’ve missed you.”

I smiled. He missed me? He actually cared? What was wrong with me? Why was I smiling? Was I falling in love? Crap! I was! “I’ve missed you too.”

He kissed me. I felt like I’d melt. Yes this was love...this was bad. I had to remember my mission...I had to remember the pain Michelle inflicted on my mother. The thought of it made me furious and set me back on track.

“Would you like to join us for breakfast?” Harley asked Josh.

“I would love to but I’m gonna be late for class. I just came to get a cup of coffee. I’ll see you girls later. Have fun.”

Josh said kissing me goodbye.

“Have a nice day.” I said pulling Harley’s juice cup to me. I put in some sleep medication while she hugged Josh then I put the glass back.

After breakfast we were walking around town when Harley said she started to feel weak. Seconds later she passed out. I took her to my lair and tied her up. It was time for phase two.

Hunter

~~~~~

I was sitting in the office with Michelle when suddenly a brick came crashing through the window. I got up quickly to shield Michelle from the flying glass.

“What the hell was that?” I asked when it was over.

“I don’t know...are you ok?” Michelle asked.

“I’m fine...just minor cuts.” I said.

“Look, there’s a note attached to the brick.” Michelle said getting up and getting the note.

“What does it say?” I asked.

“It says...‘Attention Power Rangers and Bradleys, if you ever want to see Harley again meet me at Reefside Tower at midnight to turn over Michelle, otherwise Harley will pay with her life. Arissa’” Michelle read.

“Oh god...Harley...” I said.

“That settles it.”

“What?”

Michelle sighed. “I’m surrendering to Arissa.”

*"How does one reconcile what they regret?
After all is said and done the parties done the dust sets
In time I know things work out
I'm sorry so sorry I know I let you down
I let you down..."*

*And I never wanna make that mistake again...
True friendship is a bond you never wanna break
But I can't take it back I can only...
Make it up to you!"*
~ "Realization and Reconciliation" The Code

"You're not turning yourself in." I said.

"Yes I am. End of discussion." Michelle said.

"Hunter's right, we'll get Harley out of there somehow but you can't turn yourself over. We won't let it come to that." Derek said.

We had gotten a note from Arissa informing us she had Harley and would only release her in exchange for Michelle. There was no way I was turning my wife over though. I had called in the Wild Cats and we were having a meeting.

"Savannah, talk some sense into them." Michelle said.

"Listen, I'm the last one to want to protect you but they're right. If we turn you over and Arissa gets a hold of your Amethyst the world as we know it is over." Savannah said.

"That settles it then. We formulate a plan and get Harley back and get rid of Arissa once and for all." April said.

"Sounds good to me. I'm sick of fighting her." Chris said.

"Then let's make a plan...where do we start?" Tiffany asked looking at Savannah.

"Well, for starters why Reefsides Tower? It's been abandoned for years." Savannah said.

"Maybe it's her hideout." Jesse suggested.

"That makes sense." Derek said.

"I have an idea..." Savannah started.

Stacy

~~~~~

"Dad, you understand what you've done? The DA is trying to give you 30 years in prison!" I cried.

"Better me than Nikki." Dad said.

"NO! Sentencing is next week! If you don't tell Jason the truth in 48 hours I'm going back to Turtle Cove and I'm never coming back." I said.

"Stacy, don't do that."

"I'm not gonna stand by and watch you throw your life away for her. This is it Dad. Your last chance to salvage a relationship with me. It's me or her. Take your pick." I said turning and walking out.

I went back to my mom's house and picked up the phone. I dialed my friend, Steven's, number and waited for someone to pick up.

"Hello?" a female said.

"Hey Aurora, is Steven around?" I asked.

"Stacy, hey...sure hold on." She said.

"Hello?" Steven said.

"Hey, long time no talk."

"Stacy...I heard about your dad, I'm sorry."

“It’s ok. He’s doing this to himself.”  
“So what’s going on?”  
“I just needed to talk to a friend...Reefside just isn’t home anymore.”  
“You miss Turtle Cove?”  
“More than I ever thought I could.” I said.  
“When are you coming back?”  
“That’s up to my dad...soon probably.”  
“It’ll be ok Stace...everything will work out.”  
“Now how could you tell I needed to hear that?” I asked.  
“I could hear it in your voice.”  
“You know me too well.”  
“What are friends for?”  
I laughed, “I can’t wait to get home.”

Arissa

~~~~~

I looked around my ‘home’. I was ready for the trade. I went in to check on Harley. She was waking up.
“Where am I? What’s going on?” she asked. Then she looked over at me and her eyes flew open wide. “You’re not Marissa! You’re Arissa!”
“You remember?” I asked.
“It’s all coming back...I remember everything! Let me go Arissa!” Harley cried.
“You really think that’s gonna work? In case you hadn’t noticed you’re powerless and chain up and I’m the one with the key.” I said laughing.
“The Wild Cats will save me.”
“That’s what I’m counting on.”
“It’s a trap?”
“Uh-duh! You’re finally catching on.”
“They’ll never fall for it. My parents are too smart to fall for a trap.”
“They’d do anything to save you...anything.”

DJ

~~~~~

“Honey, can you go get your sister? The phone’s for her.” Mom said.  
“Yeah, whatever.” I said, “BETH!”  
“I could have done that. I said to go get her.” Mom said as Beth came running downstairs.  
“You can’t tell me what to do. I don’t live her.” I said.  
“Maybe not, but you eat here, do laundry here, watch the satellite here...you do everything but sleep here. Beth, phone.” Mom said.  
“So?” I asked.  
“Thanks.” Beth said getting the phone.  
“So, you better learn some respect.” Mom said.  
“Respect? Why should I respect you or Dad? You guys cheated on each other...since then you have hardly said anything to each other.” I said.  
“We’re working on things, but these things take time.”  
“Yeah...whatever.” I said walking out. I drove back to the apartment I shared with my brother. He was in the living room working on homework. “Hey Noah.”  
“Hey DeeJ.” He said.  
I plopped in the chair next to him.  
“Are you ok bro?” he asked.  
“Fine.”  
“What are you doing home then? You fight with Mom?”

“Yes. I wish she would just work things out with Dad already. At this rate they’ll get a divorce.”  
“Maybe...but what can we do? If they divorce then they divorce.”  
“How can you be so cool about this?”  
“Why worry about things we can’t fix?”  
“Why do I get the feeling this has less to do with Mom and Dad and more to do with you and Savannah?” I asked.  
Noah sighed, “She’s my cousin and I kissed her...I thought I was falling in love with her.”  
“You didn’t know she was Uncle Conner’s daughter at the time though.”  
“So? I still fell for her and now nothing can happen. But I can’t do anything about it so why worry?”  
“It’s all kinda weird though.” I said.  
“What do you mean?” Noah asked.  
“I just mean Savannah links the Bradleys and McKnights...my girlfriend’s sister is my cousin...it’s just a weird link.”  
“But you’re not directly related to Harley.”  
“I’m really sorry about this bro...”  
“Yeah...thanks.”  
I sighed, “Come on, let’s go out.”  
“Out? Out where?”  
“Clubbing.”  
“You know I hate clubbing.” Noah said.  
“Oh bah, come on dude, you need to get out. Get your mind off her.” I said.  
“Fine, I guess.”

Tally

~~~~~

I sighed after DJ left. I didn’t know how to fix things with him. I needed to focus on fixing things with Eric. I was lost in thought when I heard Beth slam down the phone and come back in the room.
“I’m changing my last name!” she cried.
“What happened now?” I asked.
“Anna happened! She’s a freak and because I share her last name Cathy Williams, head cheerleader, doesn’t want me on the squad. She said that she didn’t want to be associated with a McKnight!” Beth cried.
“But Cathy doesn’t decide if you make the squad. The coach does.”
“I know, but Cathy can make my life hell for the rest of the year!”
“Stop it. Anna is your cousin and I expect you to try and get along with her better.”
“Whatever...I have to call Cathy and find a way to get around this name thing.”
“Wasn’t that Cathy on the phone?”
“No, that was Jessica. Kelly told Heather who told Jenna who told Eliza who told Jessica what Cathy said.”
“Of course.”
“Anyways I need to call Cathy.” Beth said running up to her room.

I sat down in the living room and was still sitting there when Eric walked in a few minutes later. He and I really needed to figure things out. I still loved him a great deal but knowing he slept with Kira...it hurt me so much.

“Hi.” I said.
“Hi.” He said.
“How was work?”
“Fine.”
“Good.”
“How was your day?”
“Fine.”
“Good.” He said.
“Eric? We need to decide if this is going to work...”
“I know. Do you want it to work?”
“Of course. I love you Eric.”
“I love you too Tally.”
“Do you? Or do you love Kira? Have you always seen her when you looked at me? I know you care about her.”

“Tally...that’s not fair...I’m not the only one at fault...you’ve always had a thing for Conner.”

“A crush maybe, but I’ve never been in love with Conner. I’ve always been in love with you.”

“It was the same with Kira and I.”

“No it wasn’t! You loved Kira...maybe you still do...”

“I think Kira is a great girl, but I’m in love with you.”

“Then why did you go sleep with her without confronting me first? Why was your first reaction to hop into bed with her?” I asked.

Eric froze. “Ok fine, maybe I do love Kira, but I can’t have her, Conner beat me to that. Happy now?” he screamed before storming out of the house.

I put my head in my hands and cried.

Hunter

~~~~~

“OK, we’ll take Savannah in as a decoy. Once we get Harley Savannah will use her staff to take out Arissa and then we’ll finish her off. That about cover it?” Derek asked.

“Exactly.” I said.

“Be prepared for anything though. Arissa isn’t stupid...she’s got to know we have a plan.” Michelle said.

“Harley is depending on us. We won’t let her down.” April said.

“Oh boy...I think we have bigger problems. Arissa has sent a monster downtown.” Savannah said.

“Great...we have to save the civilians.” Derek said.

“We have to save Harley.” Tiffany said.

“Civilians first. Savannah you stay with Hunter and Michelle and try to figure something out. We’ll handle Arissa’s friend.” Derek said.

“Let’s do it then.” Chris said.

“Wild Cat Transformation!” the Wild Cats called before taking off.

I turned to walk out.

“Where are you going?” Michelle asked.

“My daughter is in trouble. I won’t let Arissa kill her. I’m Harley’s father, I have to protect her.” I said.

“I’m coming with you.” Michelle said.

“No, it’s too dangerous.” I said.

“She’s my daughter too.” Michelle said.

“There’s three of us. We should all go. Keep the plan as it was. I’ll be a Michelle decoy, in the meantime Michelle can go in and get Harley.” Savannah said.

I sighed, “Fine. We don’t have any other option right now.”

We headed out to Reefsides Tower and went inside.

“Arissa? We’re here! Show yourself!” I called.

“I knew you’d see things my way. Hand over the Queen and you’ll get the Princess.” Arissa said from the shadows.

“You think I trust an evil being like you? Release Harley first then I’ll give you Michelle.” I said.

“Not a chance. I don’t trust you either.” Arissa said.

“Then we have a problem.”

“I’d say we do. Ok, fine...on the count of three?”

“I still don’t trust you.”

“You have to if you want to see Harley alive again.”

“Where is she?”

“Behind me.”

“Have her say something.”

“No.”

“No deal.” I said.

“Fine.” Arissa said stepping out of the shadows. She turned a light on Harley, who was chained to a chair and gagged.

“Now hand over the Queen.”

“Fine.” I said as Savannah started towards her.

“At last...I will have my revenge!” Arissa grabbing Savannah’s wrist, “Goodbye Michelle!” She looked at Savannah and caught a glimpse of her face. “You thought you could trick me?! You will pay! Or better yet Harley will pay!” she cried grabbing a spear and going directly at Harley.  
“NO!” I screamed jumping at her.  
“Stop!” Michelle cried coming out of her hiding place.  
“There you are Queenie...come quietly or the Princess dies!” Arissa cried.

Eric

~~~~~

I was furious with Tally for pushing me so far. Did I actually love Kira? I did...there was a time I really did...but I loved Tally now and I didn’t want to let her go. I decided if I let this go any further I’d lose her forever.

I drove home and went inside. I saw Tally crying. I pulled her up off the sofa and pulled her into my arms.
“I’m sorry. I love you and only you now. You’re it and I won’t lose you. I’ll do whatever it takes but we will work this out.” I said.
She hugged me tightly. “I’m sorry too...Eric I don’t want to lose you...I don’t want to lose us...we have to work this out.”
“We will sweetie, somehow we will.” I said as Beth came running downstairs.
“Eww, stop you guys, no PDAs around me...anyway can I go to the mall and eat dinner with Cathy?” Beth asked.
“I thought you didn’t like Cathy.” Tally said.
“I do, besides we have cheer business to discuss.” Beth said.
“I guess you can go.” Tally said.
“Daddy, can I have some money?” Beth asked.
I sighed, I was such a push over, “Here you go.” I said handing her 20 dollars.
“Thank you Daddy, I love you.” She said running out of the house.
“Her life is so dramatic.” Tally said.
I laughed, “Yes, it is.”

Harley

~~~~~

It felt so good to remember everything...however, this whole being kidnapped by Arissa thing was putting a damper on my celebration. She was trying to get my mom to turn herself over and being as I was gagged I couldn’t speak.  
“Michelle don’t!” Dad cried.  
“I have to Hunter, she’s my daughter.” Mom said.  
“I know...she’s my daughter too...damn you Arissa!” Dad cried ready to attack.  
“One more step and Harley dies!” Arissa cried.  
“Let her go!” Mom begged.  
“Why would I do a stupid thing like that? You know what I’ve had enough of these games. I’m killing Harley then I’m killing the rest of you too, Hunter included.” Arissa said.  
“What does Hunter have to do with this?” Mom asked.  
“Nothing but I’m sick of all of you!” Arissa said about to stick a spear through me. Suddenly red lighting lit up the room.  
“Arissa stop it!” a voice boomed.  
“Aunt Aria?” Arissa asked.  
“Yes, I told you do not kill Harley...and do not kill Hunter.” The voice said as a woman appeared with it.  
“But why?” Arissa asked.  
“Because you do not know everything...when you know then you can decide if you really want them dead.” Aria said.  
“What do I need to know? Tell me!” Arissa demanded.  
“Alright, the time is right I suppose. Harley is your sister Arissa.” Aria said.  
“But...how?” Arissa asked.  
Aria looked at Dad then back at Arissa, “Because Hunter is your father...”

Oh great...another sister...

## PRWC 20- "Falling Down"

*"Suddenly your world comes falling down  
All around you  
And though it seems so tragic  
Even when there's no one else around  
You hear the sound  
Of another world that's falling down"  
~Peter Cetera "World Falling Down"*

"No way..." Harley said.

"Hunter?" Michelle asked.

"That's not possible...how am I her father?" I asked Aria.

"Everyone, put the fighting to rest for 15 minutes and I will tell you, though understand this does not end our quest for revenge...it just stalls it." Aria said.

"Fine, tell me what the hell is going on." Arissa said.

"Hunter, think back 28 years...you were dating a Sandra or Sara or Selma...something like that....anyway you took her home and met someone named Lily...do you remember that?" Aria asked.

I thought really hard...

*I had been out with Sara and she was pushing to get me in bed with her.*

*"Come on Hunter, what will it hurt?" Sara asked.*

*"No Sara, I am in love with Michelle." I said.*

*"What about us?" she asked.*

*"What about us? You dumped me for status reasons and we both know my status as Michelle Morris' boyfriend is the only reason you want me back."*

*"That isn't true. I realize I was a fool to let you go. I love you Hunter, and I know you love me."*

*"I thought I loved you once. I was a fool. Goodnight Sara." I said walking away.*

*On my way back to my apartment I accidentally bumped into a girl and knocked her down. She spilt a coffee cup she was holding.*

*"I'm so sorry. I wasn't watching." I said helping her up.*

*"It's ok, really." The girl said.*

*"No it's not...there's a coffee shop across the street, let me buy you a cup of coffee?"*

*She nodded, "OK sure...by the way my name is Lily."*

*"I'm Hunter, nice to meet you." I said.*

*We went into the coffee house and got two cups of coffee...next thing I knew I wasn't feeling quite right and after that I don't remember a thing until the next morning when I woke up next to Lily. I knew it was a mistake so I apologized and hauled ass out of there.*

"You do remember don't you?" Aria asked.

"Hunter? Blake did say you never went home that night you were with Sara...I remember that." Michelle said.

I nodded, "Yeah, I remember Lily."

"That was my sister...Lilianna. She spiked your drink. Her goal was to use you as revenge on Michelle...make her suffer knowing the love of her life slept with her worst enemy." Aria said.

"Then why didn't she ever tell me?" Michelle asked.

"Because of Arissa. When she discovered she was pregnant from the whole thing she decided she couldn't use her baby like that. She went on planning other ways to seek revenge." Aria said.

"So Hunter really is my father?" Arissa asked.

"Yes. I'm sorry I didn't tell you sooner, I didn't know if I should." Aria said.

"I don't believe this..." Harley said.

"Damn Har, you just have sisters coming at you left and right." Savannah said.

“That’s why you wouldn’t let me kill Harley?” Arissa asked.

“I couldn’t let you kill someone in your family until you knew the truth...now that it’s all out in the open it’s your choice. You can kill Harley and Hunter if you wish, but it is your call.” Aria said.

Anna

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“Do you have to go?” I asked.

“I’m sorry sweetie...classes resume Monday. I have to be there.” Aaron said.

I sighed. “But it’s been so great having you here...besides, what about Harley?”

“Harley has her family and friends here...she’ll be fine.”

I nodded. “OK, I understand.” I said as we heard a loud explosion outside.

“What was that?” Aaron asked.

“Bet anything Arissa was behind it.” I said.

“Let’s go check it out. The Wild Cats might need our help.” Aaron said.

I laughed, “Can’t stay out of the action can you?”

“Like you can?” he asked as we ran out the door.

We got to the scene of the battle. The five Wild Cats were there but no Purple Ranger.

“Where’s Savannah?” I asked.

“Trying to rescue Harley.” Derek said.

“Harley? She’s in trouble?” Aaron asked.

“Arissa got a hold of her and is holding her captive.” April said.

“Oh god...where?” Aaron asked.

“Reefside Tower.” Tiffany said.

“But don’t go there, Hunter and Savannah have it covered.” Jesse said.

“But I have to help her.” Aaron said.

“Sweetie, trust the Rangers.” I said.

“Fine.” Aaron said.

“We could use some help though.” Tiffany said.

“That we can do. Neo Change!” I cried.

“Genesis Evolution!” Aaron called.

I looked at the monster we were facing. It was nothing more than a large turtle.

“What’s up with the mutant turtle?” Aaron asked.

“Let’s cut him down to size.” I said. I had never fought side by side with Aaron before...I really liked it.

“You heard the veterans, let’s do this.” Derek said.

We attacked with our weapons but all the attacks were blocked.

“This guy is tough.” Chris said.

“No lie...any ideas oh fearless vets?” April asked.

“Aaron?” I asked.

He nodded. “I think I might have an idea...”

Arissa

~~~~~

My entire life I had wanted a father and it turns out that he was married to the woman who killed my mother. Talk about irony. Now I had to decide if I wanted my father and sister dead.

“As long as they protect Michelle they can not live.” I said preparing to attack.

“Don’t do this Arissa, we can talk about this.” Hunter said.

“No...we can’t. She killed my mother and she will pay for it.” I said.

“Sorry, can’t let you do that.” Savannah said stepping forward.

“Step aside Purple Ranger.” Arissa said.

“I don’t think that’s gonna happen.” Savannah said pulling her staff.

“Fine, have it your way.” I said attacking Savannah. She fought back. The longer we fought the more time I had to let the fact Hunter was my father to sink in. The more I thought about that the angrier I got. Finally I couldn’t take the emotions I was feeling and I backed off. “You win for now but I will be back...I will have my revenge, you can count on that!”

I retreated to the roof of the tower.

“Arisa? Are you ok?” Aunt Aria asked following me.

“No I’m not. My whole life all I’ve ever wanted was to get revenge on Michelle and have a father...I never dreamed those two things would overlap.” I said.

“I know...but they do. Hunter is your father, there’s no way around that.”

“I just wish you would have told me sooner.”

“Would it have changed anything?”

“It may have changed everything.”

Anna

~~~~~

“Ok I really hope this works.” I said.

“It will, just be ready.” Aaron said. “Galaxy Glider, Hang Ten!” he called. He mounted the glider and got the turtle’s attention while the Wild Cats Rangers formed their blaster.

“Now!” I called.

“Fire!” the Rangers commanded.

“And that turtle is toast!” Tiffany cried happily.

“Um, doesn’t he usually grow about now?” April asked.

“Maybe Arissa is busy with Harley.” Jesse said.

“Either way I don’t think this monster is gonna grow. Let’s get back to the Academy.” Derek said.

“I have to get Aaron to the airport. I’ll see you guys later.” I said.

“Oh ok. It was great meeting you Aaron...thanks for your help.” Derek said.

“Yeah, come see us again.” Jesse said.

“Oh I will. Soon as I can.” Aaron said putting his arm around me.

“Bye guys, see you later.” I said as Aaron and I took off.

“This totally sucks.” I said as we got to the airport.

“I know...but I’ll call you the second I get back. It’ll be fine.” Aaron said.

“I know. I love you.”

“I love you too. Talk to you soon.” Aaron said kissing me before he headed inside.

When he was out of sight I headed for home.

Hunter

~~~~~

“Harley, are you ok?” I asked as I ran over and untied Harley.

“I’m fine...all things considered.” She said.

“Let’s get you home.” Michelle said.

“Sounds good to me.” Harley said.

We got back to the academy and sat in the living room.

“You’re really Arissa’s father aren’t you?” Michelle asked.

I sighed. “Looks that way.” I really couldn’t believe it myself. I loved my children more than life and turns out one of them was evil...yet she was still my daughter...I wasn’t sure how I should feel.

“So Arissa is my sister...and she’s Marissa! I have to warn Josh!” Harley cried.

“Calm down sweetie, he’s probably in the lodge. I’ll call down there and see if he can come over here. You need to rest...wait a second...you remember don’t you?” Michelle asked.

Harley nodded. “I remember everything. I don’t know what Arissa did to me but whatever it was made the fog over my

brain lift.”

“That’s great!” I cried hugging her.

“Now can you please get Josh over here?” she asked.

“Oh, right.” Michelle said picking up the phone.

Josh was over 2 minutes later.

“You remember?” Josh asked.

“Everything, but that’s not what I need to tell you...Arisa kidnapped me.” Harley said.

“I heard. Are you ok?”

“I’m fine...but there’s something you should know...Marissa is really Arissa in disguise.”

“Are you serious?”

“She’s telling the truth. Arissa was probably using you to get closer to Harley.” I said.

“Oh god...” Josh said.

“And there’s more...Arisa is my sister.” Harley said.

“What?”

“We just found out tonight. Hunter is evidently both Harley and Arissa’s father.” Michelle said softly.

“The Wild Cats need to know all this.” Josh said.

“He’s right, I’ll go tell them.” Savannah said.

“No, I will tell them, they are still *my* team.” Harley said defensively.

“They’ve been doing pretty good with me.” Savannah said.

“Only because I couldn’t remember anything. Now I’m back and I want my powers back.” Harley said.

“Hey girls, stop this. Harley, Savannah needs to hold your powers until you’re completely well, Savannah, when the time comes Harley will need her powers back. In the meantime both of you go talk to the Wild Cats, I need to talk to Hunter alone.” Michelle said.

“Yes ma’am.” Both girls said before leaving with Josh.

When Michelle and I were alone I turned to her.

“Are you ok with all this?”

“I don’t know Hunter.”

“It’s not like I’m the only one with a kid popping out of nowhere.”

“Yeah, but I didn’t cheat on you when I slept with Conner. Technically you did cheat on me with Lilianna.”

“Yeah but I didn’t lie about Arissa’s existence, I didn’t know about her being mine.”

“Are you trying to say we’re even?” Michelle asked.

“No...it’s just...wait, are you trying to say what I did was worse?” I asked

“I’m trying to say...I think I’m the one who need to think about things now. Only, I wouldn’t take Felicity from you while I do it.” She said turning for the door.

“Where are you going?”

“For a walk. I’ll be back before bed.” She said walking out.

Harley

~~~~~

“Har, I have something to do. I’ll catch you later.” Josh said as we got close to the lodge.

“Oh...o...k” I said but he was gone. Savannah and I went in the lodge.

“Hey Wild Cats! Guess who’s back!” I cried.

“Har? You remember?” Derek asked.

“You bet!” I said.

“About time.” April said.

“We missed you so much.” Tiffany said.

“I missed you guys too.” I said hugging Tiff.

“So does this mean you’re with us again?” Jesse asked.

“Afraid not. Mom said I still need rest so you’re stuck with Savannah for now, however we need to talk. When Arissa kidnapped me I learned some things.” I said.

“Such as?” Chris asked.

“Such as she has been pretending to be Marissa...the girl Josh was seeing, to get inside info on us, we also found out she is my sister. Evidently Hunter is her father too...no one but Arissa’s aunt knew that until tonight.” I explained.

“Hunter didn’t know?” Tiffany asked.

“Of course not.” I said.

“Ok, this is surprising.” April said.

“No lie.” Derek agreed.

“However, sister or not we have to fight her the same as we have been. We can’t let up. The world depends on it...and we can’t fall for her attempts to get close to us using the ‘family’ card. She’s evil and that isn’t going to change. We have to remember that.” I said.

“Not a problem.” Derek said.

“But is Hunter ok with that?” Jesse asked.

“It doesn’t much matter. We’re Rangers, we have to protect the world.” I said.

“But she’s your sister.” Tiffany said.

“As far as I’m concerned Felicity is the only sister I have.” I said looking at Savannah.

Josh

~~~~~

I went to town and went looking for Mar...Arissa. I was furious that she used me. Just when I was beginning to actually care about her too. I felt so betrayed.

“Josh!” I heard her call.

I turned around. “You...”

“I take it you’ve spoken with Harley.”

“You mean your sister?”

“Yup, you talked to her.”

“How could you use me like that?”

“Just listen...I mean...ok so maybe I started out using you but...well...as time went on I realized what a great guy you are. I really care about you now.” She said.

“That’s why you spend your free time trying to kill my friends.”

“That has nothing to do with you. They’re protecting Michelle and she is the person who killed my mother.”

“She’s also the person whom your father is in love with, you don’t seem to care about that.”

“If he protects her he’s going down too. I will see to it.”

“See, you don’t care about me because you can’t care about anyone. You have no heart.”

“That’s not true...I’m just trying to do the right thing.”

“If you were trying to do the right thing you would see that your mother was evil and that’s why Michelle killed her. You would see you have a chance at a real future by accepting Hunter. He’s an amazing father, I’ve seen him with Harley and Felicity, he’d accept you if you let him. And if you took the time to get to know Michelle you’d find she’d make a pretty great stepmother.” I said.

“How can you defend her?”

“Because for all the mistakes she’s made she’s still a pretty good person...which is more than I can say about you. Goodbye Mar...I mean Arissa.” I said turning to walk away.

“Josh no! Please wait!” she begged but I kept walking.

I headed home. When I got there Stacy was packing her bags and Anna was sulking in the living room.

“What’s wrong with you?” Stacy asked.

“I found out my girlfriend Marissa is really Arissa and that she is Harley’s sister.” I said.

“What?” Anna asked.

I explained everything to them.

“Oh wow...those Bradleys sure cause a lot of drama.” Stacy said.

“No lie...Harley’s discovered two new sisters in the last month.” Anna said.

“But on the bright side she got her memory back.” I said.

“She remembers? You think she remembers anything about the accident...I mean could she have seen the driver?” Stacy asked.

"I'm not sure Stace, you can go ask her if you want." I said.  
"I think I will." Stacy said.

DJ

~~~~~

I was watching TV at home when there was a knock on the door. I went and opened it.

"Hey Beth." I said letting her in.

"Deej, just the twin I wanted to see." She said.

"Oh? What's up?" I asked as we sat down.

"Well...I know making it in life is about who you know and who knows you...but what if the people that can get you where you want to be want you to do something...not so nice to someone you kinda care about?" Beth asked.

I gave this some thought, "Well it depends on who the person is and what the something you're planning on doing is."
"Just a prank."

"If a prank can get you ahead I say go for it. If it's all a joke no one gets hurt right? Do what you gotta do."

Beth nodded, "You're right. I gotta do what I gotta do. Thanks bro."

"Anytime. You wanna stay and watch a movie?"

"Nah, thanks. I need to get going. Mom needed me to stop at the store for her on the way home."

"How are Mom and Dad doing anyway?"

"Much better. They pretty much worked things out...it was rough but I think it's gonna be ok."

"That's great. I'll see you later?"

"Ok...love you."

"Love you too." I said hugging my sister as she left. I really hoped I had given her the right advice.

Hunter

~~~~~

I fed Harley and Felicity dinner and then convinced Harley she needed to rest some. Once both my girls were tucked in their beds I went in the bedroom and got in bed myself. I sat in bed reading...or rather pretending to read. I was really lost in my thoughts.

Ever since I lost my parents I had known someday I wanted to be a father. It was a dream I always had but the longer I was with Cam the more I began to think it would never happen, then out of nowhere I got that call from Michelle that Harley was mine and I had been a father for 15 years and never known it. That was the happiest and saddest day of my life. Happiest for obvious reason and saddest because I knew I missed out on 15 years of Harley's life I could never get back. Then Michelle and I had Felicity and I felt like I had a chance to make up for what I missed with Harley. I had everything I ever wanted. My children and wife became everything to me and I was just fine with that. Nothing mattered more than them. Now I find out Arissa is my daughter and had no intention of stopping her 'mission'. She still planned to take out Michelle and Harley, two of the most important people in my life. Harley was a Ranger, how could I ask her to take it easy on the person who was out to take over two world? But how could I tell one daughter it was ok to kill the other? This was a nightmare.

I was pulled from my thoughts when Michelle walked in.

"Hey babe. You ok?" I asked.

"Fine." She said climbing in bed next to me. She settled in my arms and I held her close. I had missed holding her so much when I left for those few days. I truly felt Michelle was the other half of my soul. I loved her so much.

"Are you sure?" I asked.

"Yes. I'm just tired. It's been a long day. Goodnight." She said.

"Goodnight." I said turning out the light and going to sleep.

The next morning when I woke up Michelle wasn't in bed. I went to see if she was in the kitchen but she wasn't there. She wasn't in the living room or in Felicity's room or anywhere in the house. I went to check the lodge...no Michelle. Finally I went to the office and I found a note.

~Hunter,

*It's my turn to get away. Don't worry, I'll be fine. Give the girls my love. I'm not sure when, or if, I'll be back.*

Michelle~

I fell into my chair and ran my fingers through my hair. I couldn't believe this. My wife had 'run away' from home.

*"No respect for who you are  
You've tried so hard, so hard to be the best  
Stand tall and hold fast  
By your actions show who you are  
Dedication, discipline  
Stand firm in the face of injustice  
Your silence speaks louder, louder than their angry words  
Use your mind, not your fist  
Stand firm in the face of injustice  
Injustice"  
~ "Injustice" Point Of Recognition*

"What do you mean Mom is gone?" I asked.

"She's gone. Here." Dad handed me the note she left.

"Oh...she's gone..." I said.

"She just left Felicity and Harley like that...yeah great mother, I sure missed out." Savannah said sarcastically.

"Make a comment about my mom like that ever again I'll take you out." I said.

"Don't start you two. I have to figure out where Michelle went and talk to her." Dad said.

"Try talking to Dustin. He knows Mom pretty well." I said.

"You're right...have you seen Rocky since you've been better?" Dad asked.

"No, I keep missing him."

"Go talk to him. I'll try to track down your mother."

"Oh ok...bye."

I went to the guest house and knocked on the door. My other Dad answered. This two Dad thing was confusing, but at least I didn't have to share this Dad.

"Harley! Sweetie, how are you feeling Princess?"

"I'm much better. Dad...my other Dad said you wanted to see me?"

"Yeah, come here...we need to talk."

"Oh ok..."

"Well first of all I'm so glad you're well."

"Yeah, me too."

"Now, I have some news..."

"News?"

"Yes...you remember Aisha?"

"Yeah, she's a friend of you and Mom."

"Right...well I've been spending a lot of time with her lately and...I've asked her to marry me and she's accepted." Dad said.

"Are you serious?" I asked.

"Yes...there's more though."

"Oh?"

"She has a daughter, Tamara..."

"Oh right, the Wild Cats mentioned her."

"Right...well, I've agreed to adopt her."

I felt like the air was knocked out of me. I was getting another sister...ANOTHER one! Three sisters in three weeks! This was unreal.

"Princess? Are you ok?" Dad asked.

"Fine...congrats...I gotta go...do...something...congrats...bye." I said taking off.

I ran down to the lake and started throwing random objects into the water and screaming as I did.  
“Dude, you’re gonna pollute the river.” Josh said walking up.  
“Oh...hi.” I said sitting down.  
“What’s wrong?”  
“I’m getting another sister.”  
“What?”  
“My Dad...Rocky...is adopting another daughter...he’s getting married and...anyway how many sisters can I possibly acquire?” I asked.  
“At least Tamara isn’t an evil alien.”  
“Oh...I’m sorry about the whole Marissa thing.”  
“It’s ok...I’m just glad I found out before she could get some real damaging information from me.”  
“You know, this sister thing doesn’t matter. Felicity is the only sister I have. I refuse to accept these others.” I said.  
Josh laughed, “Whatever makes you happy.”  
I sighed, “When did life get some complicated?”  
“The day you moved to Reefside.”  
I laughed, “More like the day I found out I had two fathers...that started this all.”  
“What do ya want? You’re Michelle Morris-Bradley’s daughter, life can’t be simple.”  
“Point. Did you hear she ran away?”  
“Who?”  
“Mom.”  
“Michelle ran away?”  
“Yeah, Dad...Hunter...is trying to figure out where she went now.”

Hunter

~~~~~  
I went to find Dustin and I explained everything to him.
“Any clue where she went?” I asked.
“Yup.” He said.
“Great. Tell me.”
“Nope.”
“Why?!” I asked.
“She doesn’t wanna be found.”
“I need to talk to her.”
“She’ll come back when she’s ready.” Dustin said.
I sighed, “Dustin please, I need to talk to her.”
“OK fine...what if I go after her and try to convince her to come home? Will that make you happy?”
“I guess so...just tell me where she is...”
“Promise to let me be the one to get her home?”
“Fine, I promise, I’ll stay in Reefside.”
“OK...this is Michelle...she’s hurt and upset and angry. She needed to feel ‘home’. She’s in Sydney.”
“Australia?” I asked.
“Yup. Her beach house.”
“I thought she sold it.”
“She couldn’t. She kept it so she’d have some place to run to when she needed to run. She knows herself and she knows running is normally her answer to hard times.”
“You’re going to Australia?”
“Yup...just gotta tell Marah. I’ll bring her back dude, don’t worry.”
“Ok, thanks.” I said as Felicity walked in.
“Daddy.”
“What is it sweetie?” I asked picking her up.
“Spasetti.”
“You want some spaghetti?”
“At’s ut I said.”

I laughed, "Of course sweetness."

I took Felicity to the kitchen to get some 'spasetti' and in the process I saw April.

"Hey." I said.

"Hi."

"Are you ok?"

"Yeah."

"You don't look it."

"I'm fine." April insisted.

"Are you sure? You know I'll keep pushing."

"Fine, no I'm not ok. I don't wanna see Derek's mom get off like my step dad did."

"Your step dad didn't get off, he never went to trial."

"Only because it was my word against his and somehow runaways aren't creditable witnesses...never mind the fact I was running from him."

"Don't worry April, I'll make sure the same thing doesn't happen to Derek."

"Good...he's a good guy...he doesn't deserve to go through what I went through." April said walking out of the kitchen. I sighed, that girl had issues that ran so deep I didn't know how I'd ever get through it all with her.

Beth

~~~~~

"You're sure about this?" I asked.

"Yes, just do it Beth...if you wanna be on the squad that is." Cathy said.

"Of course I do." I said.

"The prove you're only a McKnight in name and not like that freak Anna."

"Ok...fine." I said as I snuck over to Anna's locker. Cathy had gotten the combination for me. I opened it and slipped the bag into it and took off before I could get caught. "What was in that bag?" I asked.

"Nothing important...just part of the game. What matters is you're in. You're one of us now." Cathy said.

I smiled. Finally, I had a chance to fit in here.

April

~~~~~

"Hey, are you ok?" Destiny asked.

I looked around, we were alone. "No I'm not. Seeing everything with Derek is a reminder of what happened to me...the justice I'll never see."

"There has to be a way to convict him." She said.

I shook my head. "No...and it isn't fair. He should be in jail facing the same thing he did to me...but he's free...I just want to kill him...seriously, if I wasn't here, if I were still at home, he'd be dead. I want to kill him so much."

"That's not the answer."

"I know...every time I morph though...every time I face one of Arissa's space freaks, I just wanna go home and use my daggers on Ed...he deserves it so much." I said crying now.

"I know...I know." Destiny said hugging me.

Harley

~~~~~

Josh and I were sitting by the lake. I had my head on his shoulder and he had his arm around me.

"I have such an attentive boyfriend. DJ hasn't even been around since the accident." I said.

"That's DJ for ya, he's around as long as things are good. When times are hard he disappears." Josh said.

"Yeah...well that doesn't work for me."

"What are you gonna do? Break it off?"

"Exactly. I think being single for a while might be good for me anyway."

"Maybe you're right...maybe it'll be good for me to be single too."

“Yup...I think so...hey you wanna get a pizza?”

“Can you leave campus?”

“Who’s gonna stop me? I have a missing mom, a dad looking for the said mom, and another dad who has a fiancée and new daughter to worry about...Savannah is still the Purple Ranger and Tamara is dorm monitor...who will miss me?” I asked.

Josh laughed, “You’re forgetting, I’m group leader.”

“The Wild Cats can survive without you for a little while. Come on.”

“OK fine...we’ll get pizza...Hawaiian?”

“You read my mind.”

“OK...I guess I can suffer with pineapple on my pizza this once.”

I jumped on Josh’s back. “You’re the best...let’s go.”

“Yes ma’am.” He said carrying me to the car.

Anna

~~~~~

“Anna McKnight please report to the principal’s office.” A voice on the intercom said.

I sighed, “What did I do?” I asked myself as the class made ‘ohhh’ noises.

I walked into the principal’s office and saw two cops there.

“What’s going on?” I asked.

“Anna McKnight, you are under arrest for possession of illegal drugs.” One of the officers said.

“I can’t believe this Anna, I always thought you were such a good student.” The principal said.

“Drugs? I don’t even do drugs!” I cried as the handcuffed me.

“You have the right to remain silent...” the officer continued.

“I don’t want to remain silent! I don’t have drugs!” I cried.

“We found this in your locker during a drug search.” The principal said holding up a bag.

“That isn’t mine!” I cried.

“Anything you say can and will be used against you...” the officer continued.

“Ok I get it...but I didn’t do it!” I cried as they walked me out to a police car.

When we got to the police station I saw Jason and Tommy working, they were still finishing up Trent’s case.

“Tommy!” I cried.

“Anna? What’s going on?” Tommy asked running over.

“The sniffer dogs found drugs in my locker but I don’t do drugs, whatever they found wasn’t mine, someone planted it there. You have to believe me!” I cried.

“Whoa, slow down, of course I believe you. Not only do I trust you but you don’t even have any of the symptoms of a drug user...I’ll call your parents then see what I can do about getting you out of here.” Tommy said.

“Thank you!” I cried hugging him.

Savannah

~~~~~

I walked in to Cyberspace and started cleaning up.

“You look agitated.” Mom said walking up behind me.

“I am!” I cried as I started scrubbing the counter.

“At whom?”

“Harley Bradley.”

“Your new sister...”

“She’s a pain in the ass Mom!”

Mom laughed, “I take it you’re not enjoying being a big sister?”

“I’m not her sister, her ‘only sister is Felicity’.”

“She won’t recognize you as her sister?”

“Exactly. And when Michelle went missing I made a comment and she threatened me.”

“What? Ok first of all, Michelle is missing?”

“Yeah. She took off to ‘think’.”

“Typical. 20 bucks says she went to Australia. Anyway, second of all, you made a comment about Michelle to Harley? Sweetie, that’s not very smart. Michelle may only be your birth mother but she’s all Harley has. How would you feel if Harley made a comment about me?” Mom asked.

“You’d never take off at random.”

“That’s not the point.”

I sighed, “OK fine, I won’t put down Michelle in front of Harley anymore.”

“Good idea.”

“Where’s Dad?” I asked.

“I think he went to go talk to Conner. They haven’t really had a chance to talk about this situation since the truth about Conner being your birth father came out.”

“Is Dad ok with it?”

“I think so, he just wants some answers.”

Conner

~~~~~

I had the day off work so I was enjoying a day in front of the TV watching Sports Center, wearing my most comfortable boxers, and eating my favorite chips. I was really starting to get into the whole relaxing thing when there was a knock at the door. “Oh great.” I said looking around for a shirt. Finally I gave up. “Who is it?” I called.

“Ethan!”

“Oh...ok.” I opened the door, “Come on in, I’ll be right with you.” I ran upstairs I put a shirt on then went back downstairs. “Ok sorry about that, what’s up?” I asked sitting down.

“It’s just...well we haven’t talked about this thing with Savannah because of Harley’s accident and everything and I thought we should.” Ethan said.

“Oh? Ok. What is there to talk about?”

“Well, for starters, you and Michelle obviously...well ya know...how did that all come about? I mean I always knew Michelle was Savannah’s mother but finding out you’re her father is shocking...I thought you and Michelle hated each other.”

“We do...did...do...whatever. It wasn’t like we dated or anything. We needed something physical and we were able to please each other in bed so we made the most of that. We knew we had to hide it from everyone else, including the team, for obvious reason. It all happened about 3 or 4 months before we defeated Mesogog.” I explained.

“Is that why you went after her in Australia that one time? You wanted to get laid?”

“No...by then I cared about her but only as a friend and I had seen her at her worst. I was afraid she’d try to kill herself, and if you remember she did try after I got her home. It would have been worse if she was where no one could find her.”

“And you never knew Savannah was yours?” Ethan asked.

“I never knew Savannah was Michelle’s. I was totally taken by surprise. I really hope this doesn’t affect our friendship or anything.”

“Of course it doesn’t, I’m just having a hard time wrapping my mind around the fact my daughter is yours biologically.”

“I know, me too.” I said as the phone rang. “Just a second.” I said picking up the phone.

“Hello?”

“Conner, it’s Tommy. We have a problem.”

“What is it?”

“Anna. She was arrested for drug possession. I think it was a mistake, I think the drugs were planted in her locker but I have to find a way to prove it, either way you need to get down here.” Tommy said.

“Oh my god...I’m on my way.” I said hanging up.

“What’s wrong?” Ethan asked.

“Anna was arrested for drug possession. Tommy says he thinks they were planted on her and it’s a mistake but he can’t prove it yet. I need to get down there.” I said.

“Oh, man. I’m sorry. Go.”

“Ok. We’re cool right?”

“Of course. We’re cool.”

“Ok.”

“Good luck.”

“Thanks.” I said running upstairs. I got dressed then rushed to the police station.

Derek

~~~~~

“Where’s April?” I asked when I walked into the lodge.

“Haven’t seen her.” Chris said.

“Oh ok...I’ll look somewhere else.” I said. I knew where she was, I had looked everywhere else. I went into the woods and found her sitting next to a tree. “What’s wrong?”

“Don’t let her get away. Someone needs to have justice.” April said. I could tell she had been crying.

I wrapped my arms around her. “April...where’s this coming from?”

“When I found out Ed was going to get away with what he did I just wanted to die. He violated me and nothing was being done. I don’t want the same thing to happen to you.”

“Where is this coming from? Why are you bringing this up now?” I asked.

“It’s nothing”

“You were crying, why?”

“No reason. I just feel like crying.”

“April, there is a reason, talk to me.”

She started crying, “I got a call from my mom...she and Ed are coming to visit...they’re considering taking me home...home...that’s funny...I don’t have a home...not really.”

“Oh my god...April.” I said holding her tighter, she started to cry harder.

“If I go back he’ll do it again...the abuse...the forced sex...it’ll happen again. He won’t stop. I’m so scared Derek.”

“I won’t let that happen...he won’t touch you. I promise.”

“How can you promise something like that Derek?”

“Do you trust me?”

“Of course I do...you’re my leader.”

“I mean as more than a Ranger, I mean do you trust me as a friend?” I asked.

She nodded. “Yeah, I do.”

“Then trust me on this. Ed will never touch you again.

“And if he does?”

“He won’t, cause if he tries I’ll take him out personally.”

“At least there’d be some justice.” April said.

I brushed her hair with my hand as she continued to cry, “There will be justice...somehow I promise you, there will be justice.”

*"All that I know in my life,  
I have learned on the street  
No magic carpet, no genie, no shoes on my feet  
Will I wake up from this nightmare?  
A fear that chills me to the bone  
Though I may be one of many  
I feel so all alone*

*Left by my father with only this scar on my face  
Told by my mother that,  
"No, you were just a mistake"  
I have tasted my own hunger  
Sold my body to survive  
Some have paid to scratch the surface  
But they can't touch what's inside*

*We are the children of the night  
We won't go down without a fight  
Our voice is strong, our future's bright  
And thanks to what we learned from you  
We've grown into the children of the night"  
~ "Children of the Night" Richard Marx*

"How can we prove who planted that stuff in my locker?" I asked.

"I don't know Anna...I'll think of something though." Tommy said.

"And you're positive it wasn't you?" Dad asked.

"Dad! I wouldn't do drugs ever! They weren't mine!" I cried.

"I believe her Conner. We need to focus on finding the person who did this." Mom said.

"You're right, I'm sorry Anna. I know you wouldn't do drugs...but who do you know that would want to get you in trouble?" Dad asked.

"I didn't know anyone hated me that much...I really don't know who did it." I said.

"We'll figure something out...I'll be back, I'm going to try and call Josh again." Mom said.

"OK thanks...god I don't believe this..." I sighed.

"I'm going to work on getting you out on bail until I can come up with another idea." Tommy said.

"Thanks Tommy, for everything." I said.

"Don't mention it. Jase and I will clear you of this...somehow."

Beth

~~~~~

"What are we waiting for?" I asked.

"Your brothers. We need to have a family meeting." Mom said.

"About?" I asked.

"You'll find out when they get here." Mom said.

Just then DJ and Noah walked in.

"Have a seat." Dad said.

"OK...what's up?" Noah asked.

"I got a call from your Uncle Conner...Anna was arrested earlier." Dad said.

"What? Why?" DJ asked.

"Possession of drugs." Dad said.

"What? Anna was doing drugs?" Noah asked.

“No. She says she doesn’t know where the drugs came from. Tommy thinks they were planted on her.” Mom said.
“Who would plant drugs on Anna?” DJ asked.
I looked down. ‘So that’s what was in the bag...oh god...please don’t let them find out it was me.’ I thought to myself.
“Beth? Are you ok?” Mom asked.
I snapped to attention. “What? Yes? I’m fine.”

Hunter

~~~~~

I was sitting in my office working on paperwork, Blake was keeping me company.  
“Bro, you look wiped.” Blake said.  
I sighed, “I am...I’m worried about Michelle. I can’t believe she took off to Australia.”  
“Can you blame her? I mean the news about you being Arissa’s father must have been quite a lot to take. She’ll come back when she comes to terms with it.”  
“I hope you’re right...I really miss her...and honestly, I’m kind of freaked by the Arissa news too.”  
“No lie...it’s crazy...you did always say you wanted a bunch of kids some day.”  
“This isn’t exactly what I meant...besides I also said I wanted a son.”  
“I’d watch it, the next psycho villain to show up might be your son.” Blake teased.  
“Oh hush.” I said throwing a mini-ball at him.  
“How’s Derek holding up?”  
“Actually pretty well. It’s April I’m worried about.”  
“April?”  
“Yeah, all of this is bringing back bad memories for her...she’s having a rough time.”  
“Her step-dad just got away with it?”  
“Yeah.”  
“I think I know someone who might be able to help her get through it.”  
“Who?”  
“A friend of Auggie’s.” Blake said.  
“Oh, your other brother.” I said.  
“Yeah...at Horizon he met a lot of people. He told me about one that went through something similar to April.”

Harley

~~~~~

I was lying on Josh’s stomach and Josh was lying on the grass by the lake.
“That pizza was good.” I said.
“If you like pineapple on your pizza.” Josh said making a face.
“Oh stop being a baby.”
We were quiet for a few minutes.
“Life sucks.” I said.
“Sometimes.” Josh agreed as his cell phone rang. It had rung a couple of times already and he ignored it.
“You should see who’s calling at least.” I said sitting up so he could reach his phone.
“Fine.” He agreed. “Oh, it’s my mom.” He said looking at Caller ID. He flipped open the phone. “Hello?...hey Mom...sorry I’m at the lake with Harley...oh?...Anna what?!...Is she ok?...Ok. I’ll be right there.” He hung up.
“What’s wrong with Anna?” I asked.
“Someone planted drugs on her and she was arrested. Your uncle is trying to get her cleared but so far they haven’t. I need to get to the police station.” Josh said.
“Oh my god...I’ll come with you.” I said.
“Are you sure?”
“Yes, let’s go.”

We got to the police station and I saw Uncle Tommy.
“Hey.” I said.
“Har, hey, what are you doing here?” he asked.

"I came with Josh to see Anna. How are you gonna prove she's innocent?" I asked.

Uncle Tommy sighed, "I don't know. I'm working on getting the surveillance tape from the school. Hopefully that will tell me something."

"I hope so. There's no way Anna is guilty."

"I know Har...I'll get her off. I promise."

April

~~~~~

I was in the lodge working on homework when Hunter walked in with some other people.

"April, there's some people I want you to meet." Hunter said.

"Ok." I said looking up.

"You know my brother Blake, this is his sister-in-law and twin, Juliette and Auggie Ciceros and their friend Shelby Merrick-Lane." Hunter said.

"Nice to meet you." I said.

"Nice to meet you too April...guys, mind if I talk to April alone?" Shelby asked.

"Sure...go ahead." Hunter said leaving with the others.

"So, what's up?" I asked.

"Hunter told me he's worried about you." Shelby said.

"Me? Why?" I asked.

"Maybe because you won't tell him what's wrong."

"So?"

"You know I went to a school like this in high school. It was called Mount Horizon High School."

"What were you there for?" I asked. I didn't actually care but I figured I may as well get this talk over with, Hunter wouldn't let up till I did.

"I had run away from home several times, I started turning tricks to survive...Horizon was really my last hope."

My eyes flew open wide, she did the same thing as me, "Why did you run?"

"My step-father raped me."

I started to cry.

"Same thing happened to you?" she asked.

I nodded.

"Does Hunter know that?"

"Yeah."

"Then what's wrong April? You can talk to me. I understand."

"He's free. He's free Shelby, he got off the charges. Now my mom wants to take me out of here...she expects me to live in the same house as that monster again." I said crying.

Shelby hugged me. "I know what that's like too. My mom took me out of Horizon but that's when I truly got tough, I called the cops and made my mom tell them about what he did. He ended up dying all alone in prison."

"But he already got away with it."

"He will if you feel like that...you have to keep fighting, don't give up."

"I just...it's over...I just hope Derek's mom doesn't get away with it."

Shelby looked at me. "Derek?"

"My friend." I said pointing to where Derek stood across the room.

Shelby smiled, "Reminds me of my friend Scott. His stepmother got away with raping him. She never did pay but Scott finally came to terms with it."

"Derek's mom raped him...he's pressing charges...I hope she pays."

"I'm sure she will...it'll work out April, you just have to keep fighting...you can't lay back and give up...you have to keep hope...sometimes that's the only thing you have."

I nodded. Shelby was making a lot of sense. For the first time I felt like someone really understood.

Hunter

~~~~~

"And here we are back at the office." I said. I had been giving Auggie and Juliette a tour of Starlight.

“It’s amazing here.” Juliette said.
“Yeah it is...very nice job man.” Auggie said.
“Reminds me a lot of Horizon.” Juliette said.
“Yeah, it does.” Auggie agreed.
“So how are the kids?” Blake asked.
“Auggie Jr. just turned 12 and Carrie is about to be 9. They’re both fine, very active.” Juliette laughed.
“They’re in Oakland with Ma and Pa right now.” Auggie said.
“How are they?” Blake asked.
“Doing fine. Ma just went to the doctor, everything came back fine.” Auggie said.
“That’s great.” Blake said.
“So, where’s Michelle?” Juliette asked.
“She’s in Australia right now...personal business.” I said softly.
“Oh...ok.” Juliette said.
“Excuse me. I need to check on Felicity.” I said. I went to the back and found Felicity playing with her dolls. I picked her up. “Oh sweetie...what am I gonna do without your mommy?”

Dustin

~~~~~

“No. Dustin, no.” Marah said.  
“Sweetheart I have to go. Michelle needs me.” I said.  
“Why is it whenever she needs help you go running?”  
“She’s my friend.”  
“Exactly. She’s your friend, not your wife. I don’t want you running to Australia after her. I want you home.”  
“I’m sorry Marah, I have to go after her.”  
“Fine. Go. But I can’t promise I’ll be here when you get back.”  
“Marah, don’t do this...I promise you, as soon as I get Michelle back to Hunter I’ll be home.”  
“I’m tired of coming in second to her Dustin, I’m your wife. I should come before her.”  
“You do! If you needed me I’d be there in a flash, but she needs me now.”  
“I need you now. Maybe not at a savior but I need you here. I need my husband back.”  
“Marah, try to understand...”  
Marah sighed, “Fine, I’ll give you a week...seven days, then I’m filing for divorce.”  
I gasped. I couldn’t believe she was serious. “Ok...fine.” I agreed. I didn’t have much of a choice. “I love you.”  
“I hope that’s true.” Marah said hanging up.

I sighed and hung up. I had to find Michelle fast.

April

~~~~~

After Shelby and I finished talking her friends came back for her.
“It was great meeting you. Thank you so much.” I said.
“Anytime. I gave Hunter my number, if you need me, day or night, just call.” Shelby said.
“Thank you.” I said hugging her.

After she left with her friends I went and sat next to Derek.
“Who was that?” Derek asked.
“That was who I want to be in 30 years.” I said smiling. Shelby had given me hope.

Stacy

~~~~~

Ok, my father’s sentencing was coming up, my step-monster was walking free, and my sister was in jail for something she didn’t do. Life was sweet.

I decided if I couldn't get my dad to confess the truth I'll get Nikki to do it. I went in my dad's house and heard Nikki talking on the phone. I hid around the corner to listen in.

"Soon...yeah, he'll be in prison soon..." she said, "...as his wife I'm next of kin...I'll get everything...yeah...yeah, the money, the house, the cars, the business...not that the business matters, it's sinking anyway...how do you think I got him to take the fall for me? With everything I found out about the business I'd take down Fernandez Industries and he'd end up in prison for life. This way he goes to prison but the company survives. He still thinks he'll get out of jail after a few years...no, no one can mess this up for me...the daughter? No, she's snooping around but she doesn't know anything, and she won't find out. She's a pain anyway, I'll be glad when Trent is put away because she'll be gone too..."

I heard enough so I walked away.

So that was why Dad was covering for Nikki! He was involved in some illegal business practices Nikki knew about and she was threatening to take down the company. It all made sense now. I drove to Fernandez Industries and went in. I saw my dad's secretary.

"Hey Angie, I need to get something out of my dad's office, do you have a key?" I asked.

"Oh sure Stace, come on, I'll let you in." she said.

"Thanks, you're the best." I said. She let me in the office and I closed the door behind me. When I was alone I sat at the computer and started to look at files. I had to find out exactly what my dad was into.

Chris

~~~~~

I finished my chores and went in to the lodge to get some water. I saw Destiny working on a puzzle.

"Hey." I said sitting with her.

"Oh, hey Chris." She said.

"Having fun?"

"Oh yeah, tons...by the way, thanks for saving me from that lion monster."

I smiled, "Don't mention it. Anytime."

"I still can't believe you guys are...what you are."

"I know, sometimes I don't believe it myself."

"Well it is pretty unreal."

"Tell me about it...anyway, how are you adjusting to Starlight?"

"I'm adjusting. My grades are up since I got here so that's good...I still don't want to see my parents."

"You don't know how lucky you are. You have pretty good parents compared to most of us."

"I guess." Destiny said as Tiffany sat with us.

"Hey." Tiffany said.

"Oh look, it's the Princess." Destiny said.

"You're worse than April. I didn't think that was possible." Tiffany said.

"How are you Tiff?" I asked trying to change the topic.

"Pretty good." She said.

"Did you eat already?" I asked.

"Yeah, I did. Jesse saw me."

"Good, I worry about you sometimes Tiff."

"Aww, Chris, you do have a heart in there don't you?" she teased.

I smiled and hit her playfully, "Yes I do as it happens."

"I knew you weren't as hard as you let on." Tiffany said laughing as she pushed me playfully.

"God, will you two stop flirting? Some of us are trying to focus here." Destiny said getting up and walking away.

"What's her problem?" Tiffany asked.

I shrugged. "I don't know. Maybe she had a bad day."

"She has a bad say everyday."

"Tiff, can I ask you a question?"

"Sure."

“Ok...well you’re a classy chick...you know you kinda have it made, would you ever date a loser like me?”

“Oh, Chris, you’re not a loser...but why? Some girl you have a crush on?”

“Yeah, and she is quite similar to you in some ways.”

“Well, a few months ago I would have said I wouldn’t date someone out of my social class but since I’ve been here I see that it doesn’t matter. You’re a good guy Chris, if I found someone like you I’d never let go.” Tiff said.

I smiled, “Thanks Tiff, I needed to hear that.”

“Anytime.” She said hugging me.

Arisa

~~~~~

I was sitting with my aunt in our hideout, she had decided to hang around and help me out with my quest for revenge.

“So what’s the plan?” I asked.

“Well, Michelle isn’t afraid of too many people but after some research I found someone who she is deathly scared of.”

“Who?”

“James Calloway.”

“Who?”

“James Calloway. He’s currently in prison for stalking Michelle and raping her. It happened about 25 years ago or so.”

“But he’s a human Aunt Aria, how can he help us?”

“I’m gonna get him out of prison then I’m going to give him some Formula TK.”

“But it’s never been tested on humans.” I said.

“No it hasn’t, but it’s predicted it will act as a de-aging agent and provide basic alien powers.”

“Zapping powers and such?”

“Exactly.”

“I love it. You’re a genius Aunt Aria!”

“Thank you dear. Now let’s go get James out of prison.”

We got to the prison and Aunt Aria got us to James’ cell

“Who are you?” he asked.

“Your dream come true babe, now you want out of here or not?” Aunt Aria said.

“Of course I do, can you make it happen?”

“Yeah, come with us.”

“You’re breaking me out?”

“Yep, and you won’t be here ever again, now let’s move.”

“Don’t have to tell me twice.” James said.

We took him back to our hideout.

“So what do you want?” James asked.

“To help you. You just have to do one thing.” Aunt Aria said.

“What’s that?”

“Help us get revenge on Michelle Bradley.”

Anna

~~~~~

I was sitting in the police station with my family and Harley when Tommy came in.

“I got it.” Tommy said.

“What?” I asked.

“The tape. It might show us who planted that on you.”

“Let’s watch it!” I cried.

“Ok.” Tommy said putting the tape in. He pressed play and we watched.

“Nothing.” I said.

“Keep watching.” He said as he fast forwarded some.

“Hey wait, go back, someone opened my locker there.” I said.

He rewound it and we watched.

“Who is that?” I asked, I couldn’t see the face.

“Let me get it on the computer, see if I can zoom in at another angle.” Tommy said doing some stuff on the computer.

“Here we go...let’s see who this girl is.”

“Finally...so who planted the drugs on me?” I asked as he brought it on screen. Suddenly I recognized the girl who put the bag in my locker. “Beth?!”

*"Alone in this house again tonight
I got the TV on, the sound turned down and a bottle of wine
There's pictures of you and I on the walls around me
The way that it was and could have been surrounds me
I'll never get over you walkin' away*

*I've never been the kind to ever let my feelings show
And I thought that bein' strong meant never losin' your self-control
But I'm just drunk enough to let got of my pain
To hell with my pride, let it fall like rain
From my eyes
Tonight I wanna cry"
~ "Tonight I Wanna Cry" Keith Urban*

I looked around the house again. It was so empty without Michelle. Blake was watching Felicity and last I heard Harley was still at the police station supporting Anna. It was almost midnight so the Wild Cats and all the other students had long since gone to sleep.

I went into the kitchen and pulled out a six pack of beer I had then I went in the living room and turned on the CD player. A CD Michelle made for me was in there. I sat down and started to drink. I thought back to when I first met Michelle.

It was years ago. Blake and I had just arrived in Blue Bay Harbor with the idea we would get revenge on Sensei Watanabe for murdering our parents, we had been observing the Wind Rangers from afar and I knew Michelle was the Purple Ranger when I met her, but one thing I didn't know from my observations was what a beautiful person she was. The day we finally met her for the first time I was shocked. Blake and I made our entrance at the moto track, we kicked Dustin's butt and so after the race he and Michelle walked over to us. When looked into her eyes the first time I knew I was in trouble. I also knew I couldn't fall in love again. Sara had broken my heart and I swore I'd never love again. I threw all my focus on vengeance so I wouldn't get distracted. Fighting her was so hard, the idea I might have to kill her hurt but I just stayed focused. When I found out it was really Lothor behind the death of my parents and Michelle was fighting on the same side I wanted to be on I was very happy. We finally had a shot and I realized no matter how I tried I had fallen in love again.

I felt some tears fall from my eyes at the memory. I missed Michelle so much...granted it had never been easy for us. We fought all the time...she was a pain in the ass a lot of the time...she could act like a child, like with not wanting to hire Conner...she could be spoiled and annoying and she was constantly screwing things up...but I loved her with all my heart...I always had.

Michelle

~~~~~  
It was 5:00 in the afternoon but I was exhausted, probably from the time change. I fell into a big over-sized chair in my living room and looked around. I had pictures of Hunter and I all around. I started to cry. How did this happen? How could he be Arissa's father? It was unreal...how could he have slept with Lilianna? She was my worst enemy...

I hugged a pillow that was next to me as I cried harder. I loved Hunter so much...I should have been with him all along...I could still remember the first time I saw him after I married Rocky.

*Rocky and I were fighting about my career and I had enough. I went out to a dance club and ended up running into Hunter. We ended up going to get coffee and we talked. We talked for hours about everything. It felt so natural to be with him. I knew when I ended up back at Hunter's place that I made the wrong choice in marrying Rocky but I didn't*

*want to deal with another failed marriage...so I continued my affair with Hunter...that's when Harley came along and I had to make a decision...again, as it happens, I made the wrong one...but I finally managed to get exactly what I wanted.*

Everything was supposed to be perfect when we got married, but it's still been one trial after the next. Granted, Hunter can be stubborn and short tempered. He's annoying at time and can be hard headed and a royal jerk. But I loved him with my whole heart and soul...maybe things weren't meant to be perfect for us. I mean I had everything I wanted...why was I pushing my luck? Why did I have to be so stupid and run whenever things were hard?

Hunter

~~~~~

I finished the fourth beer of my six pack and restarted the CD in the CD player. I picked up a picture of Michelle and I from our first wedding anniversary. She was so beautiful...and not just because of the whole anti-aging Sataurian thing either, she was just a beautiful person anyway. I finally started to cry. I couldn't hold it in anymore. If Michelle stayed in Australia I didn't know how I'd carry on. I needed her in my life.

I was such a fool to ever let her get away in the first place. We should have been married 27 years ago...I never should have let her break up with me when she went to train DinoThunder...I never should have let Tommy talk us out of eloping in Vegas after we found each other again. Maybe then none of this would be happening. I could almost hear what Sensei Omino would tell me, 'Hunter, we can not know what would have happened, you don't know if it would have been better, it may have been worse. Everything has a reason for happening the way it does.' I let out a bitter laugh through my tears. I really wished I knew what the reason for this was.

If Michelle really was gone what would I do? I didn't think I could move on again...hell what am I saying? I never really got over her in the first place did I? I mean I was with Cam, and he was great, but really, the second I had a chance with Michelle I went running. I loved Michelle...I loved my family, my daughters...all of them...even Arissa. Of course I was closer to Felicity than any of them, because I was there from the start with her...I couldn't take it if Michelle decided to go for custody of Liss. She was my little girl and I loved her so much. She was maybe the one person I loved more than Michelle, in a different way of course, but none the less...I needed to have my daughter to survive...god what was I gone do?

Michelle

~~~~~

I cried for hours as I tried to figure out what to do. I loved being home, Australia had always been my home.

I was such an idiot. Maybe none of this would have happened if I had stayed with Hunter instead of training DinoThunder...of course I did enjoy my time with DinoThunder, but I never should have let Tommy talk me out of marrying Hunter back when we went to Vegas and I should have told Hunter about Savannah from the start. I sighed. I just knew what Tommy would tell me, 'Everything happens for a reason, God has a plan.' I really wish I knew his plan now.

Should I go home? Should I stay gone? If I divorced Hunter I knew I'd never get over him again...hell, listen to me, like I was ever over him in the first place. Sure I married Rocky but I wasn't ever 'over' Hunter. A week after I married Rocky I was sleeping with Hunter. The second he said he'd leave Cam for me I pushed my divorce with Rocky through. No, Hunter was my soul mate...he was my other half...my better half.

Of course one of my favorite things about Hunter was watching him with Felicity. He was an amazing father, I felt a horrible guilt for hiding Harley from him for so long. I knew if I left him I'd be leaving Felicity too. I couldn't bring myself to take his daughter away from him, he loved her so much.

I was jolted from my thoughts by a knock on the door.

"Who could that be?" I wondered as I walked to the door. I opened it. "Dusty? What are you doing here?"

"I came on Hunter's behalf to bring you home. He wanted to come but I told him it would be better if he didn't."  
"Sorry, Dusty, I'm not ready to go back." I said.  
"To damn bad, you're coming." Dustin said walking inside.  
"Um, no."  
"Hmm, nice place." Dustin said.  
"Thanks. Make yourself at home." I said.  
"Michelle, why won't you go home?"  
"I need time to think. Please don't push me."  
"You need to go fix things with Hunter, he's going nuts without you. And I risked my marriage to come find you."  
"You shouldn't have done that, I'm not going back."

Tommy

~~~~~

I couldn't believe Beth set her own cousin up but it was all on tape. I talked the Reefside PD into letting me handle this case. I drove to Eric's house and knocked on the door. Tally answered.
"Oh, Tommy, hi." Tally said.
"Hi...is Beth here?" I asked.
"Beth? Yeah. Why?" Tally asked as Beth came to the door.
"Hi Tommy, what's up?" Beth asked.
"Erica Elizabeth McKnight, you are under arrest for possession of illegal drugs and for falsely implicating Anna McKnight for the crime. You have the right to remain silent, anything you say, can and will be used against you in a court of law, you have the right to an attorney, if you can not afford one then one will be provided for you. Do you understand these rights?" I recited.
"Yes." Beth said.
"What's going on? ERIC!" Tally cried.
"What's going on?!" Eric asked running to the door.
"We have it on tape, Beth is the one who set up Anna." I said.
"What? No...Beth?" Eric asked.
"I'm sorry Dad." Beth said. I took her to the car and drove her to the police station. Anna was there waiting for her.
"You bitch! How dare you set me up to go to jail! How low can you get?" Anna cried about to attack.
"Back off Anna, you'll have your chance to talk to her later." I said taking Beth to a holding cell.

Arissa

~~~~~

"Just drink it." Aunt Aria said again.  
"Not till you tell me what it does." James said.  
"I told you, it will make you look younger and give you the powers to rival Michelle."  
"I still think you're more insane than I am. Michelle isn't a Power Ranger."  
"She was. Now just do it."  
"Listen up, you drink that now or I'll shove it down your throat!" I commanded as I pressed my sword to his neck.  
"Ok, yes ma'am." James said drinking the potion. Right before our eyes he looked to be 22 again.  
"That's more like it, now Aunt Aria will show you how to use your new powers." I said laughing. Everything was going perfectly.

Jesse

~~~~~

~Dear Journal,

Sometimes I really wonder what my purpose is. Why didn't I just die in that accident with my parents? Why am I still here? What's the reason? I don't want to be here, I don't want to live. I don't matter to anyone. I'm just a nuisance. Aunt May doesn't care about me, I just take a spot at Starlight, a kid with real problems can't get in because I take up a spot. God must really hate me, if he even exists.

Then to top it all off I'm the Blue Ranger? Could anyone be less suited to be a Ranger? I'm not a team player, I'm not brave, I'm not a skilled fighter, I'm not a hero. I'd give anything to just end things...but I don't think I have the guts to take my own life and so far Arissa is failing at killing me so I'm stuck.

Of course I don't think anyone would miss me if I did die. I mean who is there? Aunt May would celebrate because all the money would be her's. My team mates? April is cold-hearted and doesn't care about anyone but Derek and herself. Derek is too busy with his own problems to even notice I exist. Chris...well he's Chris, he gets me to do his chores, he might miss that, but it's not like he sees me anything as an out of doing chores. Destiny, I know she's not a Ranger, but she is a Wild Cat, in either case she's too busy trying to emulate April to notice that maybe April isn't all that. Tiff...well Tiffany might miss me, she may be a princess but she has a good heart. One person, wow...ok so there's the Bradleys...I'm just another student to them...I know that...so other than Tiff who would miss me?

Why can't Arissa just kill me and get it over with...if she doesn't hurry up I might get the guts to take myself out...

Jesse~

I closed my journal and put it away then I turned my flash light off and got back in bed. If I got caught awake at this hour I'd be in major trouble.

"About time you turned that thing off." A voice said.

"Chris? You're awake?" I whispered.

"No, I'm talking in my sleep. Of course I'm awake." He said.

"I thought you treasured each minute of sleep you could get."

"Nah, sleep is just a way to escape. Besides, unless there's work to be done, I can't sleep with any lights on."

"Oh, sorry."

"So what were you doing?"

"Journal writing."

"So you do express yourself. Man, how come you never talk in group?" he asked.

"Who would care what I have to say?"

"Everyone would. We'd like to get to know you but you make it kind of hard."

"I'm not worth knowing."

"I think you're full of it but whatever. I'm going to sleep."

"Goodnight." I said. I put my head on my pillow but laid awake.

Beth

~~~~~

I couldn't believe I was so stupid. I sat in the interrogation room talking to Tommy. Because I was a minor both my parents were there too.

"OK, so where did you get the drugs and why did you put them in Anna's locker?" Tommy asked.

I sighed, "I don't know."

"Beth, do you understand how big this is? You could go to juvie until you're 18." Tommy said.

"Erica Elizabeth, just tell the truth." Mom said.

"If you tell us where you got the drugs it will lessen your penalty." Tommy said.

"Where did you get the drugs?" Dad asked.

I couldn't take it. I didn't want to rat out Cathy but I also didn't want to go to jail...

"I never meant for it to go this far...it was supposed to be a joke." I said.

"How is planting drugs in your cousin's locker a joke?" Tommy asked.

"You don't understand...Anna is a freak! Sharing a last name with her was ruining my reputation so I had to do something. Cathy was gonna make me so miserable I'd quit the squad since I was a McKnight. She said if I could prove I wasn't like my cousin then she'd forget my last name. She handed me a bag and told me to put it in Anna's locker. I didn't know what was in it. I asked and she wouldn't tell me. She said it was all part of the game. I only did it because Cathy told me to." I said.

"So this Cathy girl is the one who gave you the drugs to plant in Anna's locker?" Tommy asked.

"Yes." I said.

"Ok...she'll need to spend the night in a holding cell but first thing in the morning I think I can get her released with

probation and community service.” Tommy said.

“Thank you Tommy. Well see you tomorrow Erica Elizabeth.” Mom said. I knew she was mad when she used my first and middle names. I knew Dad was mad because he left and didn’t say a word to me.

Tommy took me to a cell and I laid on the cot and tried to sleep.

Anna

~~~~~

“I can’t believe Beth tried to frame me!” I cried.

“I’m so sorry about this.” Mom said hugging me.

“I can’t believe it either sweetie.” Dad said.

“Well, thank you guys for believing me.” I said.

“We’d never doubt you on something like this.” Josh said.

“I’m so lucky to have you guys.” I said hugging my family. Furious as I was I was also very happy. “Hey…where’s Stacy?” I asked.

“I don’t know…” Mom said.

Stacy

~~~~~

Well, I found everything I was looking for. Turns out Fernandez Industries was slowly sinking. Dad fixed the books so no one could tell but the company was failing. I also saw Dad was several years behind on taxes but hadn’t been caught. Not to mention the insider trading I caught on too. If Nikki knew all this she was right, she could bring Fernandez Industries down with a phone call. No wonder Dad was taking the wrap for her…he could face life in prison otherwise. I had to figure out some way to save the company, bust Nikki for the accident and black mail, and get my dad off the hook. I made a pot of coffee and prepared to pull an all nighter as I sat down with the books and started to work numbers.

Michelle

~~~~~

Dustin and I had dinner then we sat and talked for hours about random things.

“Don’t you miss Hunter?” Dustin finally asked.

“Of course I do. I just need time to think…I’m hurting…I…I don’t know what I am.” I said.

“You just need to talk things out with him.”

“Would that help? I’m not so sure.”

“I think it would help…talking normally does.”

“Maybe.”

“Just give him a chance…you know you two belong together.”

I sighed, “Yeah, I know.”

“Why do you say it like that?”

“Because sometimes I wish that I wasn’t in love. I wouldn’t get hurt. I could just be with whomever looked good that night.”

“You wouldn’t want that.”

“Why? No pain and I could have fun. I could have anyone…like I could do this if I wanted.” I said as I kissed Dustin, I don’t know why…I guess I wasn’t thinking clearly. But when I was into the kiss I tried to take it further but reaching my hands under his shirt. He pushed me away.

“Stop…we can’t do this, we’re friends.”

“So? Come on, I know you want me…”

“Michelle, no…think about Hunter and Marah.”

“They don’t need to know.”

“What is it with you Bradleys? If it’s not Harley coming on to me it’s you! I’m happily married and I’m not going to lose Marah. Do what you want Michelle, stay, go back, I don’t care anymore. I’m going home to save my marriage…”

but think about this...it's not if you can live without Hunter, it's do you want to live without Hunter..." He said as he left.

I stared after him. He was right...how could I think of doing that to Hunter? I started to cry again as I thought about what he said...did I want to live without Hunter? That was a very good question...

Hunter

~~~~~

I finished off the six pack and went into the bedroom. It felt so empty without Michelle. I hated sleeping alone. I loved waking up next to Michelle and watching her sleep or seeing her blue eyes staring back into mine. "Please, come home..." I whispered as I got in bed and cried myself to sleep.

Jesse

~~~~~

I couldn't sleep. Finally around 2 in the morning I got up and went into the bathroom. I washed my face with cold water and looked in the mirror. I decided I had enough. I couldn't take this anymore. I wanted to be with my parents. They kept Starlight pretty clean but I knew one of the guys always kept a stash under the sink to sell to newbies. I reached under the sink and found the small plastic bag taped there. I couldn't quite figure out what the pills were but I did figure if I took them all it would kill me. I swallowed all of them then sat on the floor until I passed out.

*"Some secrets need to be kept
Some stories should never be told
Some reasons shouldn't be understood
They just might turn your blood cold*

*Who needs all the answers?
Who takes all the chances?
Who said the truth's gonna save you?
When the truth can be dangerous "*
~ "Dangerous to Know" Hilary Duff

I woke up and rubbed my eyes. I still had 15 minutes before I had to be up, which I normally would have taken advantage of, but it was nice not to have to fight for the bathroom. I got out of bed and walked to the bathroom. When I got in there I saw Jesse passed out on the floor. He looked pale.

"Oh shit...DEREK!" I cried.

"What man?" Derek mumbled.

"Get over here! I think Jesse is dead!" I called.

"What?!" Derek ran over and felt his pulse. "Shit...he's not dead yet but his pulse is weak. Go get Hunter, I'll stay here."

"Ok." I ran across campus to Hunter's house and banged on the door. He opened it.

"Chris? What's wrong?" he asked.

"Jesse...he's...well he's passed out in the bathroom. Derek said his pulse is weak." I said.

"Oh god..." Hunter said as he ran back in his house. He called 911 then ran with me back to the dorms. Hunter carried Jesse down stairs to meet the ambulance. They just got Jesse loaded in the EMS truck when Josh walked in.

"What's going on?" Josh asked.

"Jesse passed out. I think he may have taken something. I'm not sure." Hunter said.

"How would he get anything in here?" Josh asked.

"I don't know. I'll worry about that later. I need to get to the hospital right now. Can you find Julia and watch things here until your dad gets here? I'm gonna ask him to watch the place until I know what's going on with Jesse." Hunter said.

"OK, no problem. Where's Felicity?" Josh asked.

"She's with Blake. Thanks Josh. I'll call and update you." Hunter said taking off.

I sat down in a daze.

"Are you ok?" Josh asked sitting next to me.

"I just...I'm shocked." I said.

"Go get dressed. We need to go tell the girls what happened." Josh said.

I nodded and went back upstairs to get dressed then we all walked to the lodge and Josh gathered us up.

"What happened?" April asked.

"Yeah, we saw an ambulance but Tamara and Julia said we couldn't go see what it was." Destiny said.

"Where's Jesse?" Tiffany asked.

"It was Jesse the ambulance came to get. We think he may have taken something, that's all we know right now." Josh said.

"Oh my god..." Destiny said.

"How would he get something in here?" Tiffany asked.

"We don't know yet...we don't even know what it was." Josh said.

"Chris, are you ok?" Destiny asked.

"Fine." I said.

"He's the one who found Jesse this morning." Derek said.

"I just don't believe this." I said. I mean it wasn't like I'd never seen someone dying before. In my hood it was a daily

occurrence, but this was different. I wasn't expecting to see that here...we were supposed to be safe here...and Jesse... he was like a brother to me, just like Derek...working with the Rangers had created a bond I never had with anyone before, not even my boys in the gang. I couldn't wrap my mind around this.

Hunter

~~~~~

I sat in the waiting room hoping for good news about Jesse. While I sat there I called Jesse's aunt.

"Hello?" a voice said.

"Hi, can I please speak to May Donovan?" I asked.

"Speaking."

"Hello, Ms. Donovan, this is Hunter Bradley from Starlight Academy."

"Oh hello Mr. Bradley, what has Jesse done now?"

I paused, she talked like Jesse was in trouble all the time, but so far as I knew he was never in any sort of trouble. "Um, I'm sorry to have to tell you this but Jesse is in the hospital. The doctors don't know what happened but one of the students found him passed out this morning." I explained.

"Oh it just figures."

"Would you like to come to Reefsides to be with him?"

"Why would I do that? I have things to do, I'm a very busy woman Mr. Bradley. If he dies let me know so I can make arrangements, aside from that it is not my concern. He isn't my kid, he's my sister's and she is the one who left him with me. Goodbye Mr. Bradley." She hung up.

I sat there in shock. I couldn't believe his aunt really said that. I decided it was up to me to make sure Jesse was ok. I dialed Michelle's cell phone number, hoping I could fill her in on what was going on. I didn't get an answer and her voice mail was turned off. "Great..." I mumbled as I continued to wait.

Michelle

~~~~~

I was laying awake in bed. I missed Hunter so much.

"So what are you doing here you idiot?" a voice in my head said.

"Shut up." I said aloud in response to the voice.

"Don't you think Hunter is suffering right now too?" the voice kept on.

"Well I'm sure this is hard on him too...and having Arissa as his daughter must be a shock...he didn't even know he slept with Lilianna...she drugged him..." that when it suddenly hit me, "OH MY GOD! You idiot! Hunter was date raped! After what happened to him in school this can't be easy for him to cope with...he needs me and I ran away again!"

"Duh!"

"I said shut up! Ok, I have to get home and hope it's not too late." I jumped out of bed and got dressed then packed what I needed and rushed to the airport to get the next flight back to Reefsides.

Arissa

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"What do you mean gone?" Aunt Aria asked.

"I'm telling you, I did the spying like you said, Michelle is gone. I think she left when she found out about Hunter being my father. No doubt she'll be back soon though. One of the Wild Cats is in the hospital." I said.

"This is good news...they're short a Ranger, now is the time to strike. We must plan quickly." Aunt Aria said.

"Remember, when all is done I get Harley, she's beautiful, just like her mother." James said.

"Of course, providing you help us get rid of Michelle you can have Harley, Savannah, and Felicity if you want." Aunt Aria said.

James smiled evilly.

"So what's the plan?" I asked.

Aunt Aria smiled, "You'll see Arissa, you'll see."

Hunter

~~~~~

I was so worried about Jesse. I was also trying to figure out why Jesse would do something like that. It was obvious he ODeD on something even if I didn't want to admit it to myself. Finally a doctor came to tell me something.

"Mr. Bradley?"

"Yes, Dr. Walsh, what's going on with Jesse?" I asked.

"Jesse has ODeD on barbiturates, Nembutal to be more exact. We were able to stabilize him and he should be ok in a few days. He's very lucky. Another hour and he wouldn't have made it."

I sighed with relief. "Thank you doctor. Can I see him?"

"He's sleeping now, but you can look in on him. If I were you though I'd get back to the Academy and figure out how someone got barbs in there."

I nodded, "Oh I will find out, this won't happen again anytime soon."

Conner

~~~~~

When I got the call about Jesse I agreed right away to watch the Academy, I got there and the first thing I did was make sure all the kids got fed and to class. Josh decided to skip his classes and handle the coaching duties so I could do the head master work.

"Dad, who do I have first?" Josh asked.

"The Cardinals and the Wildcats, but I'm going to excuse the Wildcats today, they'll be in the lodge with me. I think we need to talk about what happened." I said.

"Ok, so just the Cardinals?"

"Yes. Have them run laps or something"

Josh nodded. "I'll cover it."

I went into the lodge with the Wildcats.

"Ok guys, anyone want to start talking?" I asked.

"Not really." April said.

"Conner, phone call, it's Hunter." Julia said.

"I'll be right back." I said.

"If it's about Jesse tell us." Tiffany said.

"Of course." I said.

"Hello?" I asked.

"Conner, it's Hunter. Jesse is going to be ok. He ODeD on barbiturates but they stabilized him. I'll be back at the Academy in about an hour, I want to see the Wildcats first, I need to figure out how Jesse got a hold of barbiturates in the first place."

"OK. I have them gathered now. I excused them from class so they could have a group session."

"Good idea. Keep them all there until I get back."

"Not a problem."

"Thanks...see you soon. Bye."

I went back to the group.

"Ok, Jesse is gonna be fine. He ODeD on barbs but they have him stabilized." I said.

"Oh thank god." Tiffany said.

"That's such great news." Destiny said.

"But this isn't over yet...Hunter wants to talk to you all when he gets back." I said.

Stacy

~~~~~

I had pulled an all nighter and continued to work through most of the morning but I finally figured some stuff out. If I dug into my trust fund, the only source of money my dad couldn't touch (since I was over 18 it had to be me to pull money from it), I was able to pay most of the back taxes, enough so I should be able to get an extension on the rest of what was owed. If I went into my dad's retirement fund and petty cash and a couple of other hidden accounts I found I was able to pay all of the bills. Finally, if I cut 50 of the less important jobs I was able to save the company almost a million dollars a year with very little loss to production. The only problem was to do any of this Dad would have to sign the company over to me. I could pay off the debt and Dad would spend minimal time in prison, of course him fixing the books before was something he'd just have to deal with, I couldn't get him out of that, but 6 months in prison would be better than life, or even 30 years.

I went to the jail to see my dad.

"Stacy...you didn't leave..." Dad said.

"No, but I might. We need to have a serious chat." I said.

"About what?" Dad asked.

"Fernandez Industries."

Dad looked at me.

"I know all about Nikki blackmailing you to take the fall for her and I know all about what she has on you. I went into your office last night and did a bit of research and number crunching. I can get you out of debt and make it so you only do 6 months in prison if you sign off Fernandez Industries and all related assets to me." I said.

"You've got to be joking. How can you pay everything anyway?"

"Don't worry about that. I promise you I'll do everything legally. Now, here's the papers. I have a lawyer right outside to witness the signing. You in or do I leave you here to rot?" I asked.

Anna

~~~~~

I heard my parents call me so I went downstairs.

"Yeah?" I asked.

"Your Uncle Eric wants to talk to you." Mom said.

"OK..." I said sitting next to Uncle Eric on the sofa.

"I'm so sorry this happened to you Anna. It was wrong and I can't believe Beth took things this far." He said.

"Why did she do it?"

"She wanted to fit in. A cheerleader named Cathy told her to do it so she did. She says she didn't know what was in the bag when she planted it in your locker."

"It's because I'm a McKnight and Cathy can't stand me."

"Why does Cathy hate you so much?" Mon asked.

"Because I'm different. I don't conform to her ideals so she thinks I'm a freak." I said.

"Sounds like Cassidy, except Cassidy had her limits. I don't think Cathy does." Mom said.

"I'm so sorry Anna. This was a horrible thing to happen." Uncle Eric said hugging me. I could tell he really did feel totally terrible.

"It's ok. It all worked out...what will happen to Beth now?" I asked.

"Well, since she fingered Cathy as the one who gave her the drugs to plant she should get off with probation and community service. Cathy might not be so lucky, we don't know yet." Uncle Eric said.

"Mom, where's Dad and Josh?" I asked.

"Oh, I meant to tell you, they're at the Academy. One of the Wildcats ODed and Hunter is at the hospital with him so Conner and Eric are holding things down at the Academy." Mom said.

"Oh my god! Which Wildcat was it?" I asked.

"Um, Jesse I think." Mom said.

"Oh god...that's horrible! I should go see if they need help." I said.

"No, you should go back in your room and get some rest. You're going to school tomorrow. I'm only letting you stay home for today." Mom said.

"Ok...fine." I stomped back up to my room and got back in bed.

Beth

~~~~~

I was in a holding cell with Cathy, who had just been brought in.

“How could you rat me out like that McKnight?” Cathy asked.

“You’re the one who set me up! You had me set my cousin up on camera!” I cried.

“I didn’t know there was a camera facing her locker!”

“You still got me caught and I wasn’t about to go to juvie for you.”

“You will pay for this McKnight, both you and your cousin.”

“Give it a shot. There’s so many McKnights in this town...you’d be toast if you tried anything.”

“You know you’ll be off the squad now. Drug use is illegal.”

“I’m about to be cleared of possession and besides I passed my drug test...did you pass yours?”

She glared.

“Didn’t think so. When you’re off the squad I’ll take over as captain and my squad will go all the way to nationals.” I said.

“The squad is nothing without me.”

“We’ll see about that.” I said.

Hunter

~~~~~

I got back to the school and talked to the Wildcats.

“Listen up, I’m only asking this once and I want a straight answer. Who got the barbs in here?” I asked.

Everyone looked at each other.

“I’m serious! Jesse could have died! If someone knows something spill it!”

Chris sighed. “Kevin Carter had them. He kept a stash under our sink and sold a certain amount to newbies.”

“What?! Who else knew about this?” I asked.

All the Wildcats raised their hands.

“And no one said anything?!”

“We didn’t wanna be narks.” Tiffany said.

“Damn it! Jesse almost died! You are to report violations of Starlight code for the safety of everyone. We have rules in place for a reason!” I cried.

“I’m sorry.” Chris said.

“We all are.” April said.

“You’re all on dorm arrest...in fact I want every student on this campus in their bunks now! Conner, Josh can you take care of that? And I want to see Kevin Carter in my office right now!”

“Of course...um...Hunter?” Conner said.

“What?” I asked.

“You may want to see Kevin later...” Conner said nudging his head.

I looked behind me and saw Michelle standing there. I froze.

“Ok. Take Kevin to the shuns cabin, I’ll deal with him later. Everyone else in their bunks.” I said as I headed to the office. I knew Michelle was following me.

“What’s going on here?” she asked as we got in the office.

“Jesse ODeD on barbs and I found out Kevin Carter had a stash everyone knew about but no one said anything about.” I said.

“Oh my god...we need to talk but you should deal with this first...what can I do?” she asked.

She was right. I had to put the kids first. I took a breath to focus myself. “Go make sure all the students are in their dorms for now, I want every student in the lodge in one hour. That’s all the time I need to deal with Kevin.”

“What are you gonna do with him?”

“He’s here as a juvie alternative. That’s over now. He’s going to juvie. No more chances.”

She nodded and went to handle the dorms.

I went to the shuns lodge and found Kevin sitting in there.

“What were you thinking? Were you trying to blow your second chance? That’s what you did!” I said.

“Supply and demand dude, the newbies wanted it, I offered it.” Kevin said.

“Because of your ‘supply’ one of your fellow students almost died!”

“Not my fault he was stupid.”

“Ok, obviously you don’t want help, that’s not my problem.”

“It is your problem that you couldn’t catch me sooner.”

“I’m only human, that’s something I’ll have to accept, as for you...you’re going back to juvie...but you’re almost 18 and this is a drug charge. 3 months and you’re off to prison. I hope you enjoy yourself.” I said as I heard the door open.

“You called?” Jason asked.

“Yeah, he’s all yours.” I said. I watched as Jason arrested Kevin and took him away.

I called Kevin’s parents and told them what happened then I went to the lodge. Every student in the school was there.

“OK, as many of you have heard one of your fellow students, a Wildcat, Jesse Hayes, was taken to the hospital today because of an overdose on barbiturates. Many of you have asked how Jesse managed to get a hold of barbiturates here at Starlight, some of you already knew the answer and that is why we are here. For those who didn’t know, Kevin Carter, one of the Cruisers, has had a stash of barbs for several months. I also found out several students knew about this and did not report Kevin. This disturbs me a great deal. Jesse almost died and if someone had reported Kevin that would not have happened. I know all the Wildcats knew about it and I’m willing to bet 90% of the rest of you, if not more, knew too. Somebody should have said something to prevent this. Now that we do know Kevin has been dealt with, he’s facing prison time. As for everyone else, I can’t prove how many of you knew so everyone is getting punished. First, I’m putting a locked comment box on my desk, if you know of anyone else with a stash you can put an anonymous note in the box. No one will know who told and we can keep this school clean. Second, forget any free time this weekend. Everyone will have plenty of chores to do then dorm confinement, except for meals, which brings me to my next punishment, the Wildcats were unable to protect one of there own, now I know Jesse did this to himself, but you know how it works here, we work in teams. Wildcats have a week of kitchen duty, cooking, cleaning, the works. Are there any questions?” I finished.

Everyone was quiet.

“OK then, everyone back to your bunks until dinner. I’ll have Josh, Conner, Julia, and Detective Jason Scott searching the campus for any other drugs so stay in your bunks and cooperate with the search party. I’ll be in my office if there is an emergency.”

I went back to my office. Michelle followed.

“You handled that really well.” She said.

“Thanks.” I said.

“We need to talk.”

I paused and tried to decide what to say. My next comment surprised even me. “You left me when I needed you most. What else is there to say?”

*"Are you aware of what you make me feel, baby?  
Right now I feel invisible to you, like I'm not real  
Didn't you feel me lock my arms around you?  
Why'd you turn away?  
Here's what I have to say:*

*Why should I care?  
'Cuz you weren't there when I was scared  
I was so alone  
You, you need to listen!  
I'm startin' to trip, I'm losin' my grip  
And I'm in this thing alone"  
~ "Losing Grip" Avril Lavigne*

I sighed and looked down. "Yeah, you needed me and I wasn't here. I'm sorry...I didn't think, I just reacted, and my first reaction is to run...always has been...but it doesn't change how I feel about you and it doesn't mean I love you less."

"So you want to work this out?" Hunter asked.

I nodded, "Yeah, I do. I love you Hunter and I really don't think I could live without you...not after everything we've been through." I looked at Hunter. I knew what was going on. He wanted to be strong and push me away because I hurt him. It was as natural to him as running away was to me. "Sweetheart, don't push me away...we both know what you're doing. I'm sorry I hurt you...I can't even imagine what you're going through...knowing that Lilianna date raped you after everything you went through with Mr. Jackson...then I take off...I'm so sorry baby...I should have stayed with you."

He took a deep breath and started to cry.

I pulled him close to me and held him. "You were there for me when that creep James raped me...I never should have turned my back on you."

"I missed you so much...and the idea...what is it about me? Why did it happen to me twice? I was a fucking Ranger then and she still date raped me!" Hunter cried.

I started to cry too, "I know sweetie, there was nothing you could do though. She drugged you. But I know how you feel. I felt the same way when James raped me. I should have been able to stop it, but sometimes it just happens and we can't stop it."

"Like you leaving? How could you Michelle? You had to know this was killing me...you had to know I needed you and you left anyway!" he cried.

I took a step back as I felt more tears falling from my eyes. "I'm so sorry. You're right. I never should have left. I came back though...I came back for you...I came back because I love you..."

"You love me?"

"You know I do!"

"Do I? Is love taking off on a person when they need you most?"

"I'm sorry! I didn't know what else to do! I wasn't here for you when I should have been but I'm here now, hoping it isn't too late...I promise you, I won't leave again."

Hunter sighed. "I do need you."

"And I need you. We need each other Hunter. It's always been that way."

"Come here...we've both made our share of mistakes...let's just move on." He said pulling me into his arms.

"Yeah, but you've always been there when I needed you." I said resting my head on his chest.

"Not always, or did you forget how I turned on you after I found out about Savannah...but that's beside the point. The point is we're here for each other now."

I nodded. "So, how are you going to deal with all of this?"

"Well, I'm hoping Arissa will stop her manhunt for you but if she doesn't the Rangers will deal with her. As for what Lilianna did...I'll have to get past it...focus on what I have now, not what happened then."

I hugged him tight, "You have me now...you always will"

Stacy

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"You can't seriously expect me to hand over my company to you." Dad said.

"I can if you want to stay out of prison." I said.

"Stace..."

"Father, I can't do anything unless the company is mine. Now are you going to sign it over to me or not?"

"Well..."

"You have three seconds to decide then the offer is void and I'm gone for good."

"Stace..."

"Two seconds..."

"You can't be serious."

"One second..."

"Stacy..."

"Oh, time's up. See ya Trent." I said getting up and heading for the door.

"No...ok fine! I'll sign it over to you."

"I thought you might." I said calling in the lawyer. He witnessed the signing of the papers. "You've done the right thing Dad." I said heading out. I had a ton of work to do.

Derek

~~~~~

"You know, we really should have said something about Kevin sooner." I said.

"I know...but who could have known someone would OD? And in my hood if you nark then you die...it's not something I think about doing." Chris said.

"Jesse is so lucky." I said.

"I should have talked to him more...I saw him sitting awake that night."

"Doing what?"

"Writing in his journal."

"You think he wrote anything about why he ODeD? Like if it was on purpose?"

"I don't know man, it's a personal thing."

"I'm gonna look...if it will help him it'll be worth the trouble." I said as I picked up Jesse's journal. I read the last entry. I was shocked at what I saw. "Oh my god..."

"What?" Chris asked.

"You have to see this...Jesse's OD wasn't accidental. It was a suicide attempt." I said.

"Should we show this to Hunter?" Chris asked.

"I don't know...I guess so...Hunter should know." I said.

Chris nodded. "OK, let's go."

I closed the book and Chris and I snuck past the search team and went to the Bradley house on the other side of campus and knocked at the door.

"Just a second!" Michelle called. I'd never admit it but I was glad the Bradleys were back together. They were turning out to be like second parents to me. They finally opened the door. "What are you two doing here? You're on dorm lock down."

"I know, but you and Hunter need to see what we found." I said holding up the book.

"What's that?" Hunter asked.

"Jesse's journal." Chris said.

"I know it's private but we thought maybe it had a reason for his ODing and it does...it looks like it was a purposeful OD...it was a suicide attempt Hunter." I said.

"What? Let me see that." Hunter said.

"Calm down...come in boys and have a seat." Michelle said letting us in the house. We all went inside and I handed Hunter the book. He read it. "What does it say?"

"Well...the second paragraph says 'Then to top it all off I'm the Blue Ranger? Could anyone be less suited to be a

Ranger? I'm not a team player, I'm not brave, I'm not a skilled fighter, I'm not a hero. I'd give anything to just end things...but I don't think I have the guts to take my own life and so far Arissa is failing at killing me so I'm stuck.' And then the last line is 'Why can't Arissa just kill me and get it over with...if she doesn't hurry up I might get the guts to take myself out...'. I think you boys are right...Jesse did this on purpose. He knew what he was doing and he wanted to die." Hunter said.

"Oh god..." Michelle took the book and read the whole thing. Tears fell from her eyes as she read. "This is horrible."

"Yes it is...we just have to reassure Jesse he's important to us and he is loved." Hunter said.

"Thank you for bringing this to our attention." Michelle said to Chris and I.

"Yeah, you know we don't condone invasion of privacy but under these circumstances you did the right thing." Hunter said.

"Thanks." I said.

"So did you two fix things?" Chris asked.

Michelle looked at Hunter.

"Yeah, we're working on it...we'll be fine though. We've been through too much to give up on each other now... besides, I don't think we could survive without each other." Hunter said putting his arm around Michelle. She smiled.

"Now you two better get back to your dorms." Michelle said.

"Yeah, you're still on restriction." Hunter said.

"Ok, we're going." I said.

Chris and I turned to go back to the dorms.

## Beth

~~~~~

Tommy finally brought me out of the cell and into a meeting room where my parents were waiting for me. I sat and waited to see what was going on.

"OK Beth, here's the deal. Cathy told us where she got the drugs from...she also told us neither of you knew what was in the bag when you planted it. It doesn't excuse you but I've managed to get you off with 1 year probation and 6 months community service." Tommy explained.

"She's lying! She knew!" I cried.

"Beth, enough! Take whatever punishment you're getting." Dad barked.

I sighed, "OK, where's my community service?"

"Starlight Academy." Tommy said.

"You've got to be joking. That the school for messed up kids." I said.

"Yes it is, you're going to help those messed up kids." Tommy said.

"I think that's a great idea." Mom said.

"I agree." Dad said.

"OK fine...what will I have to do?" I asked.

"That's up to Michelle and Hunter. You report there five days a week after school and Saturday morning and do whatever they give you to do." Tommy said.

"WHAT?! You've got to be kidding!" I cried.

"Erica Elizabeth I suggest you take this punishment with a good attitude and realize how lucky you are." Dad said. I could tell he was dead serious.

"Yes sir." I said softly

"If you understand the terms of your sentence then you're free to go." Tommy said.

"Let's go home. You may have your court sentence but your punishment at home still needs to be dealt out." Mom said. I sighed and left with my parents.

Harley

~~~~~

I had been out by myself, letting the surplus of sisters I was getting sink in. I finally decided to go back to the Academy and when I got there everything was in a state of quiet chaos.

"What's going on?" I asked Josh.

"Jesse ODed and is in the hospital. Turns out Kevin Carter had a stash everyone knew about. Hunter is pissed no one

said anything about it so everyone is on bunk restriction and Hunter has the rest of us searching for any other stashes.” Josh explained.

“Oh my god...is Jesse gonna be ok?” I asked.

“Yeah. He’ll live...he got lucky.”

“Oh my god...what can I do to help?” I asked.

“You can help Tamara and Julia search the girl’s dorm if you want.”

I sighed. “On it.”

I went to the girl’s dorm and found the dorm monitors.

“Hey Ju Ju.” I said.

“Hey, you’re back. Missed ya Airy.” Julia said.

I laughed, “Never thought I’d say this but I missed you too. What can I do to help?”

“We’re doing a mattress search right now, you can help with that.” Julia said.

“Ok.” I said.

“Have you met Tamara?” Julia asked.

“No.” I said through my teeth.

“Oh...you should. She’ll be your sister soon. Tamara Kingston, this is Harley Bradley. Harley, this is Tamara.”

“Harley *DeSantos*-Bradley” I corrected.

“Right...I’ll be a DeSantos soon too.” Tamara said.

“Oh?” I asked.

“Well with Rocky adopting me, only seems right to take his name. I’m really excited about it. I never had a sister before.”

“And you still don’t. Rocky is my dad, not yours. Get that through your head.”

“Whoa...Har...” Julia said.

“What? She comes here and thinks she can take my place with the Wild Cats and with my father? Not gonna happen.” I snapped.

“Newsflash, I did it to help you out! And Rocky isn’t your father, Hunter is. Rocky is just a nice guy who didn’t disown you. He’s not even your adoptive father.”

My eyes widened and I felt my fury raging. “I’m so fucking sick of sisters popping up out of nowhere! You are not my sister Tamara and Rocky is not your father! He is mine! Legal or not, he raised me! You ever suggest he isn’t just as much my father as Hunter is again and I will personally take you out!”

“Is that a threat?”

“No. I don’t make threats, I make promises...remember that.” I said storming out of the dorms. I was speed walking across campus when Josh grabbed me from behind and pulled me backwards.

“What’s your hurry speed demon?” Josh asked.

“I’m going to the track. Let me go!” I commanded.

“Um, sorry, you’re not going to the track when you’re this upset. You’re going to tell me what is going on then you can go riding.”

“No. Let me go!” I screamed pulling away from him.

“Harley!” Josh called.

I ignored him and kept going. I ran in the house.

“Dad I want the keys to the truck!” I cried.

“Where are you going? And why do you look ready to kill someone?” Dad asked.

“I’m going riding so I don’t kill someone.” I said.

Dad got a worried look but I knew he could relate to riding out anger. “Ok, here’s the keys. Just be very careful.”

“Thank you. I will be.” I said as I went outside and loaded my bike in the back of the truck.

I got to the track and started riding around the track. With each lap I let out a little more of my anger out. I was coming around for my 10<sup>th</sup> lap when I saw another rider on the track. I sped past him and at the end of the lap I stopped, signaling the other rider to do the same. I knew who he was. I watched as he stopped and took his helmet off.

“Well DJ, I was beginning to wonder if you fell off the face of the Earth.” I said angrily.

“Sorry about that Har...stuff at home got intense...my sister got arrested and it’s just been insane. I’m glad you’re ok

though.” He said.

“Don’t give me that crap about Beth being arrested, that happened AFTER I was already better. You weren’t there when I really needed you!”

“I know...I’m sorry. I can make it up to you.”

“Too late DJ...it’s way too late. It’s over.”

“Over? Har, don’t...we can work this out.”

“No, we can’t...get lost.”

“But Har...”

“No buts. I fell for lines with Jay, I won’t make the same mistake with you. I’m leaving before it gets worse.” I said.

“I’m not Jay. Don’t treat me like I am.”

“You’re right...you’re not Jay. Jay would have at least been there for me when I was recovering.”

“I said I’m sorry.”

“Don’t you get it?! Sorry doesn’t cut it DJ! It’s over. Accept it! Move on! I have!” I cried.

“Har...”

“No more discussion! It’s over!” I cried putting my helmet back on and going back on the track. DJ did the same and tried to pass me. I kept ahead of him. He was really pissed when I wouldn’t let him pass me. After 5 laps we stopped.

“What the hell Harley?!”

“If you can’t keep up then go home. Leave the track for the true riders.”

“You want me gone? Fine! I’m gone!” DJ cried as he loaded up his bike and took off. I hit the track again and sped around trying to find myself.

Stacy

~~~~~

Now that I had the company I decided I had two things to do. Tell off Nikki and fix the company. Before any of that I decided I needed to sleep. I went back to my parents’ house and went in.

“There you are! I was wondering what happened to you.” Mom said.

“Just had some things to do. Where’s Conner and Josh?” I asked.

“Starlight. Helping with a search there, one of the kids smuggled some drugs in so they’re searching to see if anyone else got anything in.” Mom said.

“That’s horrible.” I said.

“Yeah it is...you sister is upstairs if you want to go talk to her.”

“I think I will. Love you Mom.”

“I love you too sweetheart.”

I went upstairs and found Anna in bed.

“You ok?” I asked.

“Fine...you look horrible though.”

“Thanks kid...”

“I’m serious...what happened?”

“I pulled an all nighter trying to find a way to free my dad.”

“Trent doesn’t know how lucky he is to have you. So did you find a way?”

“Yeah...sure did. Turns out Nikki was blackmailing him to take the fall for her. She was driving not him. She was using some of what she knew about the company as blackmail.”

“And you figured a way around this?”

“I figured out a way to fix the company. I was up all night crunching numbers but I did it.”

“But you can’t do anything. You’re not on the board.”

“You’re right...but I am CEO.”

“WHAT?!”

“As of today I’m the new CEO of Trent Fernandez Industries. Dad signed over the company to me...after a bit of convincing.”

“Stacy! How could you?! CEO? That’s everything you never wanted!” Anna cried.

“I know...I’m just gonna head up the company long enough to get it going again. Chances are Dad will spend at least 6 months in jail. When he gets out I’ll turn the company back over to him and I’ll go back to my life and graphic

designing.” I said.

“No you won’t! You’ll get roped in just like Anton roped Trent in.”

“That won’t happen! I got it under control.”

“Sure you do.”

“Damn it Anna! Just chill out! I know what I’m doing...you’d do the same for Conner.”

“I wouldn’t have to. My dad wouldn’t be involved in anything illegal!”

“Well good for you. My dad is...that doesn’t mean he’s not my dad still or that I love him less.” I said turning and leaving the room. I went in the room I was staying in and practically fell on the bed.

Beth

~~~~~

I got home and sat on the sofa as I waited for my parents to hand down my other punishment.

“Beth, we can’t tell you how disappointed we are but we’re sure you know...” Dad started.

“You’ve let your quest for popularity go too far. You caused Anna some serious trouble and could have ruined her life...your own cousin.” Mom continued.

“All because she’s different from you and you were afraid of what those differences would do to your image.”

“You need to learn family is much more important than your social status.”

“Please, just don’t make me give up cheering.” I begged.

“You haven’t heard?” Mom asked.

“Heard what?” I asked.

“Because of what happened the school has disbanded the cheerleading squad until next fall. Even then there’s no guarantee anyone currently a part of it will stay a part of it.” Mom said.

“What? That’s not fair!” I cried.

“I’d say it’s more than fair.” Mom said.

“Agreed. Now as for the rest of your punishment, you’re grounded for the next 6 months.” Dad said.

“Grounded from what?” I asked.

“Everything that doesn’t include community service or family. You can go with Josh, Harley, or your brothers to go see Anna perform. You can hang out with any of your cousins or brothers. You can talk to any of them. Aside from that you are to go to school, do your work at Starlight and be at home. We reserve the rights to check up on you, read your e-mail or IMs, and listen in on your phone conversations.” Dad said.

“You’re only allowed out with Noah, DJ, Josh, Anna, Savannah, Stacy, and Harley.” Mom finished.

“But Stacy and Harley aren’t family.” I said.

“Stacy is family because Kira is family and Harley is practically family and will probably end up being in charge of you at Starlight.” Dad said.

“Harley isn’t even close to being family!” DJ cried as he stormed in the house.

“What happened?” Dad asked.

“She dumped me!” DJ cried.

“Why?” Mom asked.

“She says I wasn’t there for her after the accident.” DJ replied.

“She has a point. You did avoid her.” Dad said.

“I don’t believe this! My own parents are taking her side!”

“Well she’s right DJ. You weren’t around when she needed you. Can you blame her for breaking it off?” Mom asked.

“Forget it! Obviously you guys love Harley more than you love me. I’m out of here!” DJ cried storming out of the house.

“He’s right, he’s family, Harley isn’t.” I said.

“Harley is like family and DJ is being unreasonable.” Mom said.

“Back to you though, do you understand your punishment?” Dad asked.

“Yes sir.” I replied.

“Ok then, go to your room.” Dad said.

“Yes sir.” I replied again as I stomped upstairs and fell into my bed.

Hunter

~~~~~

“OK, we did a full search, everything looked clean. I think this was an isolated case.” Conner said.

“Good. Thank you for your help.” I said. I was in my office with the search team getting a report. I noticed Tamara looked upset. “Tamara? Are you ok?” I asked.

“Fine.” She mumbled.

“She and Harley got into an argument.” Julia said.

“Oh boy...” Michelle said.

“That explains why Harley took off so angry.” I said.

“She hasn’t gotten back yet?” Josh asked.

“Not yet.” I said.

“Where did she go?” Michelle asked.

“Riding.” I replied.

“Oh great. I hate when she does this. She’s just like you, you both go riding when you’re angry and it’s so dangerous.” Michelle said.

“It helps to clear our heads.” I explained.

“She really is your daughter.” Michelle said with a sigh.

I laughed. “She’ll be fine. Anyway, good work guys. I appreciate it. Julia, Tamara, and Josh, please get the Wild Cats to make dinner, everyone can come down to eat then it’s back to the bunks and early lights out.”

“Not a problem...but when Harley gets back can you have her find me? I’m worried.” Josh said.

“Sure thing.” I said as I watched everyone leave. “What a day.”

“No kidding.” Michelle said turning and looking outside. She screamed.

“Mich? What is it?” I asked running to her side.

“I thought I saw him...he was looking in at us...” she said about to cry.

“Who?”

“James Calloway...”

*"I see you looking over your shoulder
Tell me who do you think's out there
You're reaching for your four leaf clover
But baby there ain't no luck down there
I swear that there's no heart in this city
It's here the slogan reads
"Do your time" everybody's doing
their sentence
It's just there ain't nobody here
Who knows just what's the crime...
I read the rules
And yeah I know them
Still you ain't ever gonna
Make me play the game of
Fear"
~ "Fear" Bon Jovi*

"No...please..." I begged as he handcuffed my wrists to the bed and held my feet down. I tried to kick him but his hold was too strong. After my wrists were secure he tied my feet down. "Please...I'll do whatever you want, just don't do this."

"You know you want this...besides I'm getting what I want. I want to make love to you." James said as he ripped my clothes off.

"This isn't making love! This is rape! You really think you'll get away with it? You won't!" I screamed.

"Sure I will, because after we make love you have two choices, you marry me or I kill you. Your call." James said as he ripped the last bit of clothes from my body. I was so incredibly scared. I couldn't believe this was happening to me. I was a Power Ranger...how could this be happening?

"Please, just let me go." I pleaded.

"No. We are going to be together forever, this is only the beginning...oh and if that stupid Hunter guy comes to save you he's good as dead so you better hope he doesn't find us." James said as he started to undress himself.

"No! Leave Hunter out of this!" I screamed.

"You're mine now. I can't let some other man try to take you from me." James said as he climbed on top of me.

"NO!" I cried as I tried to wiggle to force him off. He pressed me down so I couldn't move and forced himself into me. I cried out in pain as I felt tears stream down my face. I cried as I watched him. He was enjoying this. He was getting off by forcing me into having sex with him.

"NO!!!" I screamed as I sat up with a jolt.

"Sweetie? What's wrong?" Hunter asked sitting up next to me.

I started crying. "Oh god...it was a nightmare."

"What happened?" Hunter asked as he pulled me into his arms.

"It was James...I had a nightmare about that night with James." I said crying harder.

"Oh sweetheart, he's in jail."

"But I saw him. Hunter, I know I did. I saw him...he's watching us again...he got out somehow. I know it."

"Even if he did I won't let him hurt you again. I'll kill him if he comes near you."

I took a deep breath and we laid back down. "I know...Hunter, hold me." I said cuddling into his arms.

"I'm right here." He said holding me closer as we drifted back to sleep.

The next day we were in our office doing paperwork when Beth walked in.

"Oh, hello Beth, ready to start your community service?" I asked.

"Sure. I guess." Beth said.

"Ok, well we'll start you off with some basic cleaning till you get the hang of things around here. Our shuns dorm needs cleaning top to bottom. You can start there." I said.

“Yes ma’am.” Beth mumbled as she went off to start.

“What are we going to do with her for six months?” Hunter asked.

“Well after the Academy is clean we’ll get her involved in group. I think that’s the real reason Tommy sent her here, so she could get help without officially getting help.” I said.

“Smart.” Hunter said.

“Isn’t it? Yes, my brother is good.” I said as Harley came in.

“I have some demands.” Harley said.

“Oh?” I asked,

“I want my powers back and I want Tamara out of the dorm. I’m moving back in with Julia and I don’t want to hear any argument against it. I’m so sick of these sisters popping up out of nowhere and taking over my life. I want my life back, like it was before I found out about Savannah.” Harley said.

I looked at Hunter.

“Seems fair enough to me.” Hunter said.

“Can we start with the dorm thing and work our way back to Rangering?” I asked.

“No. All now.” Harley said.

I sighed. “Fine...I’ll call Savannah over here.”

“Thank you.” Harley said.

“I’ll tell Tamara she needs to move in with her parents.” Hunter said.

“You mean her mother, Daddy is not her father.” Harley said.

“Of course sweetie.” Hunter said.

Savannah

~~~~~  
I had been trying to live as normally as possible considering I was a Ranger again and my birth father turned out to be someone I’d known my entire life. I have to admit it, I had been avoiding Conner since I found out he was my father. It was sort of weird. He was Dad’s friend, one of his best friends...and the idea Michelle slept with him when he was so young...underage even. Needless to say when Conner and Josh came in for lunch I was kind of on edge.

“What can I get for you?” I asked.

“I’ll take a ham sandwich.” Josh said.

“Yeah, me too. You’re welcome to have lunch with us if you have time.” Conner said.

“Um...I...we’re very busy.” I said.

“It’s ok Sav. I got it covered.” Mom said taking the notepad from me. “What do you want sweetie?”

“A tuna wrap.” I said.

“Ok. I’m on it.” Mom said.

“So how have you been?” Conner asked.

“Fine...all things considered.” I said.

“Oh?” Conner asked.

“Well, Harley hates me and is set on making me miserable.” I said.

“Harley doesn’t hate you. She hates all these sisters popping up out of nowhere.” Josh said.

“Well she doesn’t need to take it out on me.” I said.

“Give the girl a break. She’s got a lot to deal with.” Josh said.

“I’m yours and Anna’s sister too and you guys haven’t been treating me like crap.” I pointed out.

“Yeah, you also didn’t push us in front of Trent Fernandez’s car.” Josh said.

“That was an accident.” I said.

“I would hope so. In any case, you can’t expect Har to accept you over night. Anna and I might be nice enough to you but we still don’t consider you a sister the way we do Stace. That will take time.” Josh said.

“Josh...” Conner said.

“It’s ok...I get it. I’m the one who wanted nothing to do with my birth parents...well birth mother anyway.” I said.

“That’s another thing, how can you expect Harley to like you when you always bash her mother to her. Michelle gave you up, ok we get it, and she hasn’t always been a great mom to Harley but she’s a pretty good one now and she and Har are finally getting close.” Josh said.

“Ok fine...” I said.

“Savannah, would you like to have dinner, just to two of us sometime this week?” Conner asked.

“Conner, I know what you’re trying to do...don’t. I know you want to be my father now but it’s a bit late for that. I have two great parents.” I said as my cell rang. “Hello?”

“Savannah? It’s Michelle, can I see you when you get the chance...sooner the better.”

“I’ll be right there.” I said hanging up, “Speaking of the wicked birth mother of the west she needs to see me.”

“Savannah, don’t...I happen to like Michelle, you should give her a chance.” Josh said.

“Whatever...I’ll catch you later.” I said taking off for the Academy.

Stacy

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I pulled into my dad’s driveway and smiled. Nikki’s car was there. I went in the house and found Nikki in the dining room.

“I see you had the cook make you a great meal.” I said.

“Oh, hello Stacy...I’m so glad you’re here. It’s so lonely without your father, would you like to join me?” Nikki asked.

“Oh cut the phony step-mother act.”

“What are you talking about?”

“I know all about you blackmailing my father, I know all about what you had on him, I know everything. I also got him to sign the company over to me and I’ve taken care of the finances so you have nothing on him anymore. I’m telling Tommy everything then you’ll be in prison for the accident and for blackmail.” I said.

“You know everything I have on him?” Nikki asked with a smirk.

“Yes. About Fernandez Industries going under...I know all about it.”

“Oh? You know it all? So then you know about Conner and Trent’s little love affair?” Nikki asked.

“What?” I asked confused.

“I have him confessing to it on tape. When they were teenagers Trent and Conner slept together. Sure it was a one time thing and they were experimenting but I can make it seems like it’s an on going affair. Wouldn’t the press love that, ‘Millionaire Businessman Linked to Ex-wife’s Husband’”

“No, you’re lying...Conner and Dad never slept together.” I said. I felt the color draining from my skin. The idea of it was beyond sick.

“You thought you beat me you brat? You can’t beat me. I’m too smart for you.” Nikki said.

I had to think fast...Nikki couldn’t win. “Ok fine...tell the press about Dad and Conner, I’ll just tell the press that you made passes at me. I’ll go under oath and tell them all kinds of things.”

“It would be lies and you know you couldn’t pull it off.”

“Ok so I’ll tell everyone...I’ll tell everyone your real age.”

Nikki paled, “You could never prove it.”

“Sure I could. There’s this great thing called a birth certificate. I happen to have a copy of your real one stored for a rainy day Nicolette JoAnn Cruthers...your last name isn’t even Valentina...I bet the press would love to know that.” I said.

“You brat.”

“Yes I am...now I’d rethink taking your knowledge pubic. Face it Nikki, you’ve been beat. And it feels so good after the crap you’ve put me through for all these years. To think I’m the one who gets to bring you down, it’s so sweet. And fair warning...oh and don’t run...it will make you sentence harsher.” I said turning to leave.

I got in my car and raced home. I needed some answers from Conner...I couldn’t believe what Nikki had told me.

Tiffany

~~~~~

“Hey Chris, head’s up!” I cried throwing a wet dish rag at him. It hit him in the face.

“Oh, you are so gonna pay for that.” Chris said with a smile as he came after me.

“Ugh, guys, can we finish up in here?” Destiny whined.

“Hey, may as well make it fun.” I said giggling as Chris caught me and tickled me.

“We’re being punished, fun isn’t part of it.” Destiny replied.

“You’re such a downer.” I said.

“Come on Dest, have some fun.” Chris said putting some soap suds on the end of her nose.

She smiled, "You're such a jerk." She ran and jumped on his back.  
I rolled my eyes. It was ok for her to goof around with Chris but I couldn't. What was the deal here? "Hey Destiny, could you make your crush on Chris a little less obvious?" I asked.  
She glared at me and got off his back.  
"Cat fight!" Derek called.  
"All over Chris? You guys are insane." April said.  
"Hey!" Chris cried.  
"I don't have a thing for Chris...if you do you can have him." Destiny said turning her nose up.  
"Aww, she does have a crush on Chris, look at her!" April cried.  
"I said I don't!" Destiny cried.  
"So if Chris asked you out you'd say no?" I asked.  
"I didn't say that." She said.  
"You so have a crush on him." April said.  
Chris looked on with amusement. "You both have a thing for me?"  
"No." Destiny and I said together.  
"Oh god, stop lying, you both do!" April said.  
"I have to agree...it's kinda obvious." Derek said.  
"I don't have a crush on anyone...anyway, what would the point be?" I asked.  
"What?" Chris asked.  
"Look at me...even Destiny is more attractive than I am." I said turning to leave the kitchen.  
"Where did that come from? Tiff?" Chris asked.  
"It's true...why would I bother liking anyone? Look at me, I'm a cow!"  
"You are not. You're beautiful." Chris said.  
"Oh god...look at me, I'm a princess who needs attention." Destiny said.  
"Destiny?" April asked.  
"Yeah April?"  
"Shut up!"  
"What?" Destiny asked.  
"You heard me. Leave Tiff alone. It's one thing to bag on her when she's really being princess like, but she needs support right now." April said.  
"And after what happened with Jesse we should all realize how important supporting each other is." Derek said.  
"Oh come on! This is all for attention!" Destiny said.  
"Like you never do anything for attention." April said.  
"I'm so not as bad as Miss Pink over there." Destiny said.  
"Just leave me alone Destiny, you don't know anything about me so don't pretend you do." I said storming out of the kitchen.  
"Tiff!" Chris called as he ran after me.  
"What?" I asked.  
"Don't listen to her...or yourself for that matter. I think you're amazing." Chris said.  
"Ok...who do you have a crush on?" I asked.  
"Well, until now I thought it was on Tamara and Destiny."  
"And now?"  
"And now all I want to do is show you how beautiful you really are."  
"Oh? How can you do that?"  
"I can start like this." He said leaning in and kissing me. It felt so good, I had never been kissed like that before. The kiss finally broke. "Was that ok?"  
I nodded, "That was amazing."  
"Did it work?"  
"What do you mean?" I asked.  
"Do you feel as beautiful as you are?"  
I smiled, "I think I'm getting there."

~~~~~  
After Savannah left I went home and found Kira.

“Hey babe.” I said pulling her into my arms.

“Hey sweetie, what are you doing home?” she asked.

“It occurred to me just how little we see each other lately and I figured I’d come see you while the kids were in school.”

I smirked as I moved the radio. I turned on the CD player. Maroon 5’s “She Will Be Loved” played. It was the first song that was ever ‘our song’. She smiled and I took her in my arms again. We danced around the living room to the song.

“I love you so much Conner, I’m so lucky to have you.” She said.

“I’m the lucky one. I have the girl of my dreams. I love you so much Kira. You’re everything I ever wanted.” I said kissing her.

“You’re everything I never knew I wanted.” She replied as I held her closer. I was really enjoying this when suddenly the door flew open.

“I want some answers now!” Stacy cried.

“What the hell? Stace? What’s wrong?” I asked letting go of Kira.

“Nikki said she has proof you slept with my father Conner! Please tell me she’s bluffing and that never happened.” Stacy said.

I gasped. I couldn’t believe Nikki knew about it, much less had proof...I also couldn’t believe Stace knew about it. “I’m sorry Stace, it’s true.”

“Mom, did you know about this?” Stacy asked.

“Yeah, I knew. I found out years ago.” Kira said.

“Oh great...thanks for filling me in!” Stacy cried.

“God...Stacy, I never wanted you to know. We were teenagers! It was a mistake and I’ve tried really hard to forget it ever happened.” I said.

“I can’t believe this...this is so totally gross.” Stacy said going upstairs.

I sat on the sofa and sighed, Kira sat next to me. “She’ll get over it sweetie...it’s just a shock.”

I sighed, this was so embarrassing, “I hope so.”

Destiny

~~~~~  
“They’ll make a cute couple.” Derek said.

“Yeah, princess and the thug, sounds like a fairy tale.” April said.

“Oh you know you’re happy for them.” Derek said.

“We don’t know that they’re together.” I said.

“Oh you saw the way he chased after her.” April said.

“Yeah, they’re together.” Derek said.

I couldn’t believe Chris cared about that princess. I had to find some way to make him notice me...I had to figure out how to beat her.

For the time being all I could do was wait, when a thought suddenly occurred to me...if that Arissa chick got a certain Pink Ranger she’s be out of my way.

“Guys, I’m done with my stuff. I have...homework to do. Catch you later.” I said running back to my bunk. I started to plot how to get rid of Tiffany once and for all.

Arissa

~~~~~  
“You were seen?” Aunt Aria asked.

“Yes.” James replied.

“You idiot! You weren’t supposed to be seen yet!” I cried.

“It’s ok. Only Michelle saw me. Hunter probably thinks she losing her mind or something.” James said.

“For your sake you better be right. In the meantime what’s the next plan?” I asked.

“You distract Hunter while James deals with Michelle.” Aunt Aria said.

“I can do that.” I said.

“Soon we will have our revenge on the Queen...she will pay for what she did to Lilianna.” Aunt Aria said.

I went to the Academy and found Hunter.

“Hey, can we talk?” I asked.

“Talk or battle?” he asked.

“Talk.” I said.

“OK...that we can do.” He said walking with me.

“Listen, I’m sorry things have to be this way.”

“They don’t...you could give up this crazy quest for revenge...I’ve been there, it’s not a good place to be.”

“No. My mom was murdered in cold blood. I have to avenge that.”

“She wasn’t murdered in cold blood. She was murdered in self defense.”

“That’s what Michelle wants you to believe.”

“That’s the way it happened...listen, I know you love your mother’s memory but just look what she did to me. She date raped me...she wasn’t a good person.”

“Stop it. I didn’t come here to hear you bash my mother.”

“I’m just telling you the truth.”

“Your truth. She isn’t here to defend herself.” I said getting angry.

“But I am here to be a father to you...trust me Arissa.” Hunter said as we heard a cry in the distance. I disappeared, hoping James hadn’t messed up.

Michelle

~~~~~

I was in the office when I heard the door slam.

“Hunter?” I asked walking out of the back. I saw James standing there.

“Hi honey, I’m home.” He said with a smirk.

“Oh shit...you are back...how did you...what are you...” my entire body was shaking with fear.

“I knew you’d be happy to see me.”

“Get the hell out.”

“Relax, it’s not you I’m after this time. I have Aria and Arissa convinced you’re the target, but I have a bigger goal...”

“Bigger goal?”

“Yes. You’ll find out any second now...”

Just then Harley walked in the office and James grabbed her. “See I’m after a purer love this time. I will be back for you, and this time your sweet Hunter won’t be alive to save you, I’ll make sure of it.” James said running off with Harley. When I tried to run after him he zapped me. Don’t know when he got powers. Anyway I did the only thing I could do. I screamed as loud as I could. Hunter came running over.

“What’s wrong?” he asked.

I started crying. “I was right...James is back. He’s working for Arissa and Aria and he’s got Harley.”

*"Cause I'm a train wreck  
Waiting to happen  
Waiting for someone to come pick me up off the tracks  
A wild fire born of frustration  
Born of a world, oh, that gets me so high  
I've no fear at all"  
~ "Train Wreck" Sarah McLachlan*

"Conner, it'll be ok. Stacy will get over it...I was shocked when I found out but I got over it." Kira said.  
I put my arm around Kira. "Have I mentioned lately how much I love you?"  
She smiled. I loved that smile. "I love you too Conner. Do you believe in soulmates?"  
I nodded, "Yeah I do because I believe you're mine."  
"Good...because I believe you're mine too."  
I kissed her. "Do you think I should go talk to Stacy?"  
Kira shook her head. "No sweetheart, she needs to let this sink in...she'll come to you when she's ready to talk. That has to be one groosome image in her head right now."  
I shuttered at the thought, "I can't even imagine."  
"She'll come talk when she's ready."  
"What if Anna and Josh find out about this?"  
"We'll deal with it...sweetie, there's nothing wrong with what happened, you were a teenager and experimenting."  
I sighed, "I hope the kids realize that."

Harley

~~~~~  
"LET ME GO CREEP!" I screamed as I kicked and squirmed.
"You're just like your mother." The man said.
"Listen, I don't know who you are but you really don't wanna mess with me. If I don't kill you my dad will."
"I'm James and trust me, there's nothing your daddy can do. If Hunter comes near I'll kill him on sight."
"No!" I screamed as he chained me down.
"Yes!" he smirked, "Don't worry. I'm not out to hurt you."
"What are you going to do?" I asked.
"Simple...you're beautiful like your mother, and I love her but she always lacked innocence...and innocence you have."
I thought a second before what he said clicked. "You're going to rape me?!" I screamed.
"Rape? No sweetheart, I'm going to make love to you. I'm going to be your first." James said as he started to undress me.
"Oh my god! No!!! Please!!!" I begged as I started to cry.

Michelle

~~~~~  
"We have to find her Hunter." I said crying. We had gathered Rocky, Aisha, Josh, Savannah, and Tamara to help us.  
"Where would he have taken her?" Aisha asked.  
"I don't know...but I know what he'll do to her." I said.  
"He lays a hand on her he's a dead man!" Hunter growled.  
"Get in line moto boy, I'm killing him first." Rocky said.  
"And when you guys finish killing him he's mine." Josh said.  
"Why would he take Harley?" Savannah asked.  
"She's my daughter...I'd be careful Savannah, you might be next." I said.  
"But I'm not your daughter." Savannah said.  
"Look in the mirror sweetie, you look like me and you share DNA with me...that's all James cares about." I said.

“You know being related to you causes a lot of trouble.” Savannah said.  
I sighed, “No kidding.”  
“Shouldn’t we be trying to find out where Harley is?” Tamara asked.  
“Yeah...I’m sick of talk. I’m going to look for her.” Hunter said as Arissa walked in.  
“What do you want?” Savannah growled.  
Arissa sighed, “Listen, I’m not here to fight...I want to help.”

Chris

~~~~~  
I couldn’t believe it. All my wishing for Destiny to like me and once she did I decided I liked Tiffany more...the princess of the group...the princess and me...I still couldn’t believe a girl like her liked me. Anyway, we were sitting in the lodge working on homework together. I had one arm around her and one writing on my worksheet.
“Um...do you know how to work this problem? I suck at math.” I said.
“Yeah...let me see.” She said looking it over, “It’s actually pretty close. You just carried wrong.”
I looked at it again. “Oh...thanks.” I said fixing it.
“Could you two be any more sickening?” Destiny asked as she walked by.
“Get over it Destiny, just because I ended up with the guy you wanted that’s no reason to be sore.” Tiffany said.
“Destiny, just chill out...you go too far.” April said. She was sitting with Derek on the other side of the room.
“Oh, you two an item now too?” Destiny asked.
“No, we’re friends who share a common demon.” April said.
“You really need to mellow. You’re not making many friends in here.” I said.
“Why did you even bother saving me Chris? It’s obvious I wasn’t worth saving.” Destiny said.
“Oh my god...and people think I’m a drama queen.” Tiffany said.
“No, you’re just a snobby princess.” Destiny said.
“Lay off Destiny, she didn’t do anything to you.” I said.
“God, I’m so sick of you people protecting that princess like you’re her royal court or something!” Destiny cried storming off.
I sighed. “Are you ok Tiff?”
“Fine...she just makes me so angry.” Tiffany said.
“She doesn’t know when to quit.” April said.
“So...are you two together?” Tiffany asked.
“No. Like I said, we’re friends who share a common demon.” April replied.
“I’m so sick of math.” I said.
Tiffany smiled, “Come on, you’ve almost finished.”
I sighed, “I can’t do anymore.”
“Sure you can...come on I’ll help you.” She said looking at my worksheet.

Anna

~~~~~  
I was sitting in Cyberspace working on a new song when Hayley sat down with me.  
“Hey, how’s it going?” she asked.  
“Fine...I guess...considering the rumors around school.” I replied.  
“Rumors?”  
“Well everyone is talking about Beth and me and that whole thing.”  
“I’m sorry.”  
“It’s ok...it’s just...I don’t even like going to school anymore.”  
“Well I think you should write about it...maybe that will make it easier.”  
I nodded, “I’m trying...I just don’t want it to seem too angry.”  
“If you’re angry be angry...write what you feel...how about your favorite smoothie to get those creative juices going?” Hayley asked.  
I nodded, “Thanks”  
When I was alone I looked at my notebook again. I was about to start writing when DJ came in and sat with me.

“Hey, you look like crap.” I said.

“I’m pissed ok?” he snapped.

“Chill. I heard about what happened. Harley dumped you then embarrassed you at the track.” I said.

“She didn’t embarrass me at the track, I let her win.”

I laughed, “Sure you did...everyone knows Harley is the best in town.”

“Not for long. Preliminaries for the state finals are in two weeks and she’s going down.”

“Deej, you can’t be serious...Harley is one step away from factory pro...her dad and uncle were factory pros...there’s no way.”

“That’s for the support cuz.”

I sighed, “I’m just saying, be real...she’s a great rider...a great racer, and you’re a freestyler...Noah has a better chance than you do and even in that race my money would be on Har...she’s good.”

“Whatever...I’m gone.”

“God...stop being a jerk! No wonder Harley dumped you!”

“Just leave me alone.” He said taking off.

I sighed and was about to start writing again when I saw two girls from school come in.

“Oh look, it’s the McKnight chick.” One girl whispered.

“Yeah, I heard she was in on the whole thing with her cousin. Their plan was to get rid of the cheerleaders all along.”

The other girl whispered. I gritted my teeth and started to write.

“I’m so fucking sick of rumors.” I whispered under my breath.

Michelle

~~~~~

“You came to help? And why should we believe that? You’ve been trying to kill me and my daughter for months.” I said.

“Ok...fine...” Arissa sighed, “Listen, James wasn’t supposed to go after Harley.”

“Oh he was just supposed to rape me again then kill me this time.” I said.

Arissa sighed, “Ok, so that was the plan...my point is I didn’t mean for Harley to get involved...she’s not even a Ranger right now...I’m just gonna tell you where she is...that doesn’t change my mission...”

“Why should we believe you? You were playing distraction so I wouldn’t be around when Michelle was attacked.”

Hunter said.

“I told you, Harley wasn’t the target.”

“How do we know this isn’t a trap?” Rocky asked.

“You don’t. But if you don’t trust me Harley is in for it.” Arissa said.

“She’s right guys...she’s our only chance at finding Harley.” Savannah said.

“Ok...fine...where is she?” I asked.

“Warehouse district. 2A” Arissa said.

“Ok...fine...” Hunter said.

“Michelle, Savannah...if you guys go James will go after you...I wouldn’t recommend going.” Arissa said.

“Thanks for your concern.” I said with a glare.

“Yeah...whatever, listen, this never happened. If Aunt Aria finds out I helped you I’m dead.” Arissa said taking off.

“Ok, let’s go guys.” I said.

Arissa

~~~~~

I was walking off campus when I heard a voice.

“Arissa right?”

“Um, who are you?” I asked.

“Name’s Destiny Locke. I have a proposition for you...what if I could get you the Pink Ranger?” Destiny asked.

I gave this some thought. “Sounds good...but now isn’t a good time. Meet me at the lake tonight and we’ll discuss it.”

“I’ll be there.” Destiny said taking off.

I smirked, civilian help was always good.

I went into town and was walking around thinking. Why did I help them find Harley? Why did I feel the need to help Harley? I was totally lost in my thoughts when I got knocked down.

“Watch it!” I said getting up.

“Me? You ran into me!” a man said looking at me, “Dude, you look familiar.”

“You too...you’re Josh’s cousin aren’t you? Noah?” I asked.

“No, that’s my twin brother, I’m DJ.” He said.

“Right, DJ...sorry.” I said.

“How do you know Josh?” DJ asked.

I sighed, “I’m Arissa.”

“Whoa, dude, the evil chick that’s trying to kill Michelle...”

“Yeah, that’s me.”

“You look a lot like Harley...”

“She’s my sister, duh! Anyway, aren’t you here boyfriend?”

“Ex...she dumped me.”

“So then I guess you don’t care she’s been kidnapped.”

“By you?”

“No. By mistake.”

DJ seemed to give this some thought. “Are her parents going to save her?”

“Yeah, her parents and Josh.”

“Then why should I care?”

“Suit yourself.” I said walking away.

“Wait...would you like to go out sometime?” DJ asked.

I laughed, “Sorry. I got distracted from my mission once already...can’t let it happen again.” I walked away. I needed to get ready to meet with Destiny and figure out exactly what her plan was.

Tiffany

~~~~~

After we finished homework Chris and I got started on our chores.

“Is it true Derek’s mom is going to trial soon?” I asked as I dusted a table.

“Yeah...in a couple of weeks or something. That’s gotta be hard...he’s gonna have to tell a courtroom full of strangers what she did.” Chris said.

“I still can’t believe a mother could do that...bad as my mom is she would never do that...she just makes me feel inadequate.”

Chris reached for my hand and squeezed it. “You’re not inadequate...you’re amazing.”

“You’re said that today.” I said smiling.

“Maybe someday you’ll believe it.”

“I always thought you saw me as just a princess.”

“I did at first...but you’re beautiful and sweet and so upbeat it’s hard to ignore you. I realized after you beat that shape shifter that there was more to you than the princess thing.”

“Yeah...I still can’t believe I did that.”

“But you did...you’re stronger than even you know.”

“I feel like I can be when I’m near you.”

Chris smiled at me. “You’re fine without me...I’m the one who is a better person when I’m with you.”

“I hope Derek has someone to lean on when he’s facing the trial.” I said.

“April will be there...she wouldn’t let him go into it alone...she knows what it’s like.”

Michelle

~~~~~

Hunter, Savannah, Josh, and I arrived at the warehouse and were sneaking around (everyone else was else where for backup in case this was a trap). We heard James talking to her. We got closer so we could see. He was about to rape her.

That sent Hunter over the edge and he went charging at James, knocking him down.  
“You were damn lucky I didn’t kill you for raping my wife but you sure as hell aren’t going to rape my daughter.”  
Hunter said beating the crap out of him.  
“Dad!” Harley cried.  
“Har!” I screamed running over to her. I freed her and helped her get her clothes back on.  
“Har, over here.” Josh said. Harley ran to Josh’s arms and he held her close. James got away from Hunter and pulled a gun.  
“You just made a big mistake Hunter. I’m so sick of you getting in my way.” James said.  
“James, no! Please...I’ll go with you, just don’t kill Hunter!” I pleaded.  
“Michelle, no!” Hunter cried.  
“Oh you’re coming with me...so are Harley and Savannah, after I kill Hunter and Harley’s little boyfriend over there.” James said.  
“No!” Harley cried.  
“Put the gun down James.” A voice said. Arissa materialized behind James.  
“Arissa, I...I’m going to get Michelle as I promised.” James said.  
“Were you? After you finished your own plans? This was not what we told you to do. Now let Hunter go.” Arissa said.  
“But he’s in the way.” James said.  
“I said let him go...in fact let them all go, you’ve messed up the plan entirely and Aunt Aria will not be happy about this. Let’s get out of here.” Arissa said.  
“Fine...you haven’t seen the last of me.” James said as he took off with Arissa.  
“Harley, are you ok?” Hunter asked running to her side.  
“Oh god...Dad.” She cried as she left Josh’s arms and fell into Hunter’s.  
“Sweetie...let’s go home.” Hunter said picking up Harley and carrying her.

Arissa

~~~~~

James totally messed up the plan! I took him back to our lair.
“What happened?” Aunt Aria asked.
“James kidnapped Harley and tried to kill Hunter instead of going after Michelle.” I said.
“James! You fool! You stick to our plans, do not stray from the plan again!”
“Yes Aria.” James agreed.
“Excuse me. I have a meeting. We might be able to get a hold of that little Pink Ranger.” I said.
“Excellent. Carry on.” Aunt Aria said.

I got to the lake and found Destiny.
“So, you’re offering me the Pink Ranger?” I asked.
“Yeah.” Destiny said.
“Why?”
“Because she’s a pain. She’s always in my way and I want her gone. I don’t really care how and you seem to be the most logical way to get her gone for good.” Destiny said.
I nodded, “Can do. How do you intend on getting her to me?”
“Well...if I can get her out here, to the lake, alone, maybe you can take it from there?”
“You mean abduct her from here while she’s alone? Sure. I can handle that.”
“OK...give me 10 minutes.” She said.
“Sounds good...I’ll be here.” I said.

Destiny

~~~~~

Finally...Tiffany would be gone for good! I ran up to the lodge.  
“Tiffany, can I talk to you for a second? Alone?” I asked.  
“Um...what’s up?” she asked.  
“I’m sorry for how I acted and I think we should discuss it.”

“OK...I’ll be back in a second.” She told Chris as she kissed his cheek and followed me, “Where are we going?”  
“The lake...it’s a good place to have a talk.” I said as we got to the lake.  
“Oh, ok...” Tiffany said as Arissa came behind her and grabbed her. She screamed.  
“Buh-bye Princess. Don’t worry about Chris, I’ll take care of him.” I said smiling.  
“You brat!” Tiffany cried as she tried to get away.  
“Don’t think so Pinky.” Arissa said disappearing with her.

I ran back into the lodge screaming.

“Oh my god! Help!” I cried.

“What’s wrong? Where’s Tiff?” Chris asked.

“We were talking when Arissa showed up and took off with her...oh god Chris, I’m so scared, I thought I was dead for sure...oh god...hold me.” I said falling into his arms.

Harley

~~~~~

“I want my Morpher back now.” I said once we were back at the house.

“Fine, your gratitude is overwhelming.” Savannah said throwing the Morpher at me.

“If I had my Morpher James wouldn’t have gotten me.” I said.

“Oh, so leave me unarmed.” Savannah said.

“Better you than me.” I said.

“You are such a spoiled brat...I’m beginning to be glad you don’t want anything to do with me.” Savannah said.

“Sweetie, are you sure you’re ok?” Dad asked.

“I’m fine...” I insisted.

“You want to go to Cyberspace and watch Anna?” Josh asked.

I nodded, “I’ve love that.”

“I’m not sure that’s such a good idea.” Mom said.

“I’ll be fine...now that I have my Morpher back.” I said walking out with Josh.

We got to Cyberspace and found a seat just in time to see Anna take the stage.

“Hey everyone! This is a new song we’re trying out so we hope you like it.” Anna said as her band started to play. She started to sing:

“Saturdays I get into the club

And it makes me wanna tell the DJ

Turn It Up

I feel the energy all around

And my body can't stop moving to the sound

But I can tell that you're watching me

And you're probably gonna write what you didn't see

Well I just need a little space to breathe

Can you please respect my privacy

Why can't you just let me

Do the things I wanna do

I just wanna be me

I don't understand why

Would you wanna bring me down

I'm only having fun

I wanna live my life

Like I wanna do

I'm tired of rumors starting

I'm sick of being followed

*I'm tired of people lying
Saying what they want about me
Why can't they back up off me
Why can't they let me live
I'm gonna do it my way
Take this for just what it is ”*

I cheered when the song ended. “You think she was trying to make a point?”

Josh nodded, “I think she just made her point...I have a feeling Anna isn’t gonna take crap from anyone anymore.”

I nodded, “She’s not the only one.”

*"Oh jealousy, coming over me,
It's that jealousy, breaking my heart.
Whoa jealousy, taking control of me"
~ "Jealousy" Bryan Adams*

"Tiff what? Oh god..." Derek said.

Destiny was filling all the Wildcats in on Tiffany being taken.

"We need to tell Hunter and Michelle." April said.

"Um...no...I'm sure there's nothing we can do...Tiff is probably dead by now." Destiny said.

I pushed Destiny away from me. "She isn't dead! I for one and not about to waste time telling anyone else. We know where Arissa's lair is, I'm going in and saving her."

"Chris, you're insane. Arissa will blow you away if you go charging in there. We need a plan." April said.

"She's right...we need a plan." Derek said.

"I have a plan...get in there and get Tiff out. Works for me." I said taking off. I wasn't about to let Arissa get away with hurting Tiffany and the longer it took to save her the more at risk she was.

Harley

~~~~~

I was sitting alone by the lake. I had guitar napped one of my mom's guitars and was playing it. I had done some dabbling with lyric writing and I was curious how it would sound if I added music to it.

*"Should mention, you're not the only one  
Who betrayed me, been through this on and on  
What happened to all the promises you made  
I guess the promises you made have all just fade*

*It all happened so fast  
I did not realize  
I thought it would last  
What a surprise  
It all happened so fast"*

I finished and heard some clapping behind me. I jumped up and looked. It was Kira.

"Oh...I didn't know anyone was there." I said.

"I was just looking for Josh when I heard you...you're really good. Did your mom teach you to play?" she asked.

"No, I taught myself. My mom doesn't even know I like music."

"She doesn't know you can sing..."

"Well...no..."

"Why?"

"I don't want to be compared to her."

Kira nodded. "Understandable, but you're really good...you should consider playing at Cyberspace or something...or entering the contest."

"Contest?"

"Yeah. Cyberspace is holding a contest for performers. Three categories, music, dance, and comedic. The winner gets \$5000." Kira said.

"Maybe...I'll think about it."

"I think you should. Anyway, I'm gonna go find Josh."

I nodded, "You might wanna check the lodge."

"Ok, thanks." Kira said leaving me alone...I started to ponder what she said.

April

~~~~~

"Chris is a moron. Let's go inform the Bradleys before he gets himself killed!" I said.

"With ya." Derek said.

"Guys, is that really necessary?" Destiny asked.

"You know you're sure acting like you don't want Tiff found." I said.

"Yeah, we all know you hate her but surely you wouldn't want Arissa to kill her." Derek said.

"Of course not!" Destiny cried.

"OK then." Derek said as we ran to the Bradleys' office

"What's wrong?" Hunter asked when we went in.

"Tiff...she was kidnapped by Arissa...Chris went after her alone." Derek said.

"Oh god...Michelle, call Harley." Hunter said.

"On it." Michelle said.

A few minutes later Harley came running in.

"OK, so we know where Chris went and we know who took Tiff...I say we go get them back." Harley said.

"It's so good to have you back." Derek said.

Harley smiled, "Glad I was missed."

"Not so fast guys...Arissa sent one of her creatures to play..." Michelle said.

"Oh great. We have two team mates to save, a monster to beat, and our team is down to three." I said.

"Well then what are we waiting for...let's get to work." Harley said.

"Wildcat Transformation!"

Anna

~~~~~

I walked into Cyberspace and sat down.

"Hey Savannah." I said.

"Hey Anna, what can I get for ya?"

"Usual."

"Coming right up."

"Savannah...can I ask you for some...big sisterly advice?"

Savannah turned and looked at me. "You consider me your sister?"

"Yeah, why wouldn't I? You are my sister"

"Cause Harley doesn't."

"That's Harley's deal. Anyway, can I ask you or not?"

"Sure, what's up?"

"Well, I'm worried about Stacy." I said.

"Why? What's wrong with Stacy?"

"She's taken over as CEO of Fernandez Industries...I can see it's a huge mistake...why can't she?"

"She just wants to save her father Anna."

I sighed, "I know, I know...but it's not like Trent was much of a father."

"Maybe not, but he's still her father."

"But Dad has been more of a father to her." I said.

"I know, and she knows, but that doesn't change the fact Trent is still her father."

I sighed again.

"Listen, if Conner did something you didn't agree with but you could help him would you?" Savannah asked.

"Yeah...I'd always be there for him."

"OK then"

I nodded. "I guess I see your point."

"Let Stacy do what she has to and be there for her if she needs you to be. That's all you can do."

"Thanks Sav." I said hugging her.

"Anytime. Oh...are you entering the Talent Contest?"

"Yeah, I heard about that. It might be fun."

"Good, you should enter. You could win."

“Yeah, you never know. So what’s going on with you and Har anyway?”

“She’s gone over the edge. Finding out she has three new sisters has just made her go nuts. She’s been rude and stand offish...I don’t know what to do about her.”

“She’s a good person...just give her time to come around.” I said.

“I’m trying...but she’s not making it easy.”

“But you have some of us that do accept you...I know Dad wants to get to know you.”

“It’s a little late for that.”

“Maybe he can’t be your father but he can be your friend...you should let him...don’t be as closed to him as Harley is to you.”

She looked at me. “You’re smart for a kid.”

I smiled, “Thanks”

Tiffany

~~~~~

“What do you want with me?!” I screamed. I was chained to a wall.

“Um, you’re the Pink Ranger...I’m your enemy...I’m going to destroy you...unless I find some use for you.” Arissa said.

“She serves no purpose. Kill her now while we can.” Aria said.

“Give it time Aunt Aria...she might be a useful bargaining chip.” Arissa said.

“Or you could let me go...I might be able to get you Michelle.” I said. I wasn’t serious! I was desperate.

“Yeah, right. You couldn’t betray Michelle. You’re just a princess.” Arissa said as a man walked in.

“Oh, I see we have company.” He said.

“Yes James, this is that pesky Pink Ranger.” Arissa said.

“She’s cute. If I can’t get a hold of Michelle, Savannah, or Harley she’d do nicely.” James said.

“I think we just found a use for her. If you don’t mess up again you can have her.” Aria said.

“What? No!” I screamed as James brushed his finger against my face.

“You’re so beautiful.” James said.

I cringed and held back tears.

Hunter

~~~~~

“I hope they can get to Tiff in time.” Michelle said.

“They will sweetheart. I have faith in them.” I said.

“So do I...where’s Liss?”

“With Blake. They should be in here any second now. Blake is going home today.”

“Oh...I wondered when he’d go back. I’m sure Tori and Lindsey miss him like crazy.”

“They do, and he misses them...but it’s been great having him here.”

“Yeah...it has been.” Michelle agreed as Blake came in the office with Felicity. Jason and Tommy were right behind him. “Hey, it’s all our brothers.” Michelle said with a smile.

“Yeah, we ran into Blake and Felicity outside.” Tommy said.

“Ok, well we know why Blake is here, why are you two here?” Hunter asked.

“Well, after seeing the way things are with the school and everything we decided it might help you guys out to have some connections to the Reefside PD...not to mention we’ve enjoyed working here so we’re going to get a transfer from AGPD to RPD” Jason said.

“Are you serious? Kat and Kim are ok with that?” Michelle asked.

“Yeah, Kim is fine with it. It’s not like we have a reason to stay in Angel Grove anymore anyway. The only reason I moved back there was because Jase talked me into it.” Tommy said.

“And honestly, Kat and I need a change of pace. We’ve been in Angel Grove too long.” Jason said.

“But what about Alex, I thought he started going to AGU to stay close to you.” I said.

“He did, but we never see him anyway. He and Cali got an apartment together so he’d never even miss us.” Jason said.

“Well, it might be nice to have some detectives assigned to Starlight.” Michelle said.

“Which is exactly what we want. Our main job would be taking care of legal issues at and around the Academy.” Jason

said.

“And if you happen to need a science teacher I wouldn’t be opposed to doing that again.” Tommy said.

“I thought you gave up teaching because it wasn’t fulfilling enough.” Michelle said.

“Yeah, well I’m kinda starting to miss it.” Tommy said.

“Never satisfied.” Michelle teased.

“You’re one to talk Miss 50 careers.” Tommy said.

“Oh please, I haven’t done that much.” Michelle said.

“Actress, singer, model, head mistress...” Tommy listed.

“All related, except the head mistress thing...but teaching, studying dinosaurs, and being a detective don’t relate to each other at all.” Michelle said.

“Neither do motocross and teaching ninjas but I still enjoyed both.” I said.

“Thank you Hunter.” Tommy said.

“Anytime.” I said

Michelle glared at me. “You’re supposed to take your wife’s side.”

“I’m sorry baby.”

“You will be...tonight.” She said with a smirk.

The guys all looked at each other and took a step back.

“Anyway, we need to get going...lots of work to do.” Jason said.

“Yeah...and I have a plane to catch.” Blake said.

I stood up and took Felicity from him then hugged my brother. “Thank you so much for everything.”

Michelle stood up and hugged Blake too. “Yeah, we really appreciate it.”

“Anytime. I’ll talk to you guys soon.” Blake said leaving.

I looked at Felicity. “Did you miss Mommy and Daddy?”

Felicity nodded.

“Daddy missed you too sweetheart. I love you very much. Do you know how much?” I asked.

“This much.” Felicity said opening her arms as far as they could stretch.

“Even more than that.” I said kissing her head.

“I love you too Daddy.” Felicity said.

“How much?”

“A million times around the world.” She said giggling.

I hugged her. I was so happy to have my family back. This time I’d be sure that nothing would split any of us up again.

Harley

~~~~~

I got to the scene of the battle and found a giant plant monster along with an army of Bots.

“Oh just great...” Derek said.

“It’s ok guys. We can take this.” I said.

“If you say so. We’re only half a Ranger team.” April said.

“We have to try. Now come on, give it your all.” I said.

“I have an idea...” Derek said using his sword to bust a fire hydrant. The water gushed at the monster.

“Ah, a shower, so refreshing.” The monster said.

“Good call Derek, fight a plant with water!” I said.

“Bravo.” April said.

We went to work fighting the Bots, but it seemed the more we fought the more appeared.

“God, don’t these guys ever get tired?” April asked.

“Lots of them, few of us...I’d say we’re the ones who are gonna get tired soon.” Derek said.

“Keep fighting...we can’t stop.” I said.

“We need Chris and Tiff.” Derek said.

“I hate to admit it but he’s right.” April agreed.

“There’s too many.” Derek said.

“No kidding.” April said as she ended up getting thrown a few feet away. “Ugh, so not what I wanted to do today.”

“April, are you ok?” Derek asked.

“Fine...the ground broke my fall.” April said pulling herself up and getting back into battle.

“I hope Chris is having more luck than we are.” Derek said.

Chris

~~~~~  
I went into Reefside Tower and started sneaking around. I had to find Tiff. Suddenly I heard a voice.  
“NO! PLEASE!” followed by a scream.  
It sounded like Tiffany!

I took off running and was just about to the room I thought I heard the scream from when Arissa appeared in front of me.

“Going somewhere Black Ranger?”

“Let Tiffany go!” I cried.

“Why would I do that when she was so generously given to me?” Arissa asked.

“What?” I asked.

“You fellow Wildcat, Destiny I believe, was so nice to hand her over, why would I give her back?”

“Destiny? She set this up?” Suddenly it clicked. Destiny didn’t want us to save Tiff, she was there when Tiff was taken...it all made sense. “Hand her over or you’ll pay.”

“Oh I’m so scared.”

“Fine, you asked for it. Wild Cat Transformation!”

“Oh boy, I’m impressed.” Arissa said with a fake yawn.

“Crossbow, power up!” I loaded my weapon and shot it at Arissa. She dodged and hit me with a beam. I staggered back in pain but it didn’t stop me. I reloaded my weapon and shot another shot. This time I hit Arissa in the shoulder and she fell back. “Don’t mess with me Arissa, you’ll lose.” I said as I ran into the room. I found Tiffany chained to a wall, this man was touching her face. “Get your hands off of her!” I cried as I tackled him.

“Chris! Be careful!” Tiffany cried.

I punched the guy and he pushed me back. I pulled my bow again and shot him. It hit him in the stomach. I blasted the locks off the chains and got Tiffany. “Let’s get out of here.” I said as we ran from the tower. “I got Tiff.” I said into my communicator.

“Good, now we could seriously use some back up here!” Derek replied.

“On our way.” I said.

“Let’s do it. Wild Cat Transformation!” Tiffany called.

We got to the battle and found the Rangers over run with Bots.

“This doesn’t look too fair, let’s even out the odds.” I said.

“About time!” April said.

“Your gratitude is noted.” Tiffany said.

“Ohh, big work Princess, I’m impressed.” April replied.

“I aim to please.” Tiffany said.

We finally got rid of the Bots and then used the Wild Combo Blaster to defeat the monster. Arissa made him grow so we used our Zords to finish him. That is one of the best parts of Rangering, fighting in the Zords. It just so much power and takes so much skill...it’s totally amazing.

Anyway, after we finished the monster I gathered the team up.

“Are you ok Tiff?” Harley asked.

“Yeah, thanks to Chris and no thanks to Destiny. That jealous brat would make a great Green Ranger.” Tiffany replied.

“Is she really behind this? And why would she do this?” I asked.

“Yeah. She asked me to go talk to her at the lake but she had Arissa there waiting for me.” Tiffany said.

“She what?!” Harley cried.

“She’s dead...that’s it, dead...” April said about to go charging after her.

Derek caught her and held her back. “No Ape, we’ll deal with Destiny, but killing her isn’t the answer.”

Harley looked to be in deep thought, “He’s right...we will deal with Destiny though...teach her a lesson she’ll never forget.”

Anna

~~~~~

I walked into my house and found Stacy and Noah sitting on the sofa engaged in a tickle war.

“What’s going on here?” I asked.

“Oh...Noah just came over to pick up a guitar he let you borrow and I invited him to hang out.” Stacy said.

“I see that...” I said.

“I guess I should be going...I’ll see you later Stacy.” Noah said.

“OK, that’ll be great. See ya.” Stacy said letting Noah out.

“Um, ok...what the hell Stacy?” I asked.

“What?”

“You’re hitting on Noah...he’s our cousin!”

“Um, no. First of all I wasn’t hitting on him, second of all he’s your cousin, not mine.”

“He might as well be your cousin...oh wait, you’re a Fernandez, not a McKnight, how could I forget that, you point it out so frequently.” I said running upstairs.

“Anna!” Stacy called as she ran after me.

“What? Just leave me alone Stacy, you don’t want to be part of this family fine, you’d rather help Trent who is a corrupt dishonest man than recognize a family that has done more for you than he ever did...fine...just get out of here then! Go live at Fernandez Estate! Go!” I cried.

“I thought green was my color.”

“You think I’m jealous? Why on Earth would I be jealous?! How can you help him after the way he treated you and Mom?!”

“Anna! He’s my father!”

“I know...everyone knows! And after everything he did to you and Mom you’d still rather be part of his family than this one.” I said going in my room and slamming the door. I locked in and fell on my bed. I was fuming.

Hunter

~~~~~

I was sitting with Felicity in her room.

“Daddy?” she asked.

“Yes sweetheart?” I asked.

“Can we go to see Mickey?”

“Maybe during the summer we can take a trip to Disneyland and you can see Mickey.” I said.

“YAY!” she cheered, “Daddy?”

“Yes?”

“When is summer?”

“Soon.”

“YAY! I love you Daddy.”

I smiled. “I love you too.”

Felicity smiled and tried to tickle me.

“Oh you wanna play that huh?” I asked as I started to tickle her. She started to squeal with laughter. “You give up?”

“No!” she said laughing.

I kept tickling her.

“OK...ok...I give up!” she cried.

I stopped tickling her and kissed her head. I heard someone giggle. I turned and saw Michelle standing in the door.

“How long have you been standing there?”

“Long enough. You’re such a wonderful father.”

I smiled. “Well I love my little girl.”

“I know you do...so do I. Oh, just figured you’d want to know all the Rangers are back safely.”

“Except Jesse.”

“I know sweetie, but he’ll be back tomorrow...we’ll take extra care of him.”

I nodded. “Yes we will...from here on in we’ll take extra care of all of the Wildcats.”



*"Spinning a web that's hard to see  
Of envy, greed and jealousy  
Feeling angry but you don't know why  
Why don't you look me in the eye?  
You want my friends  
You want my clothes  
You're one of those*

*Haters  
Traitors to the human race  
Haters  
What a drag  
What a waste  
I'd like to see them disappear  
They don't belong anywhere  
Haters, Haters, Haters, Haters"  
~ "Haters" Hilary Duff*

We were going to teach Destiny a lesson she wouldn't soon forget. After working out the details I went into the lodge looking miserable.

"Chris? Are you ok?" Destiny asked.

"No." I said softly.

"What happened?"

"It's Tiffany...we were too late. By the time we got to Arissa's lair she was dead. We rescued a corpse."

"Oh my god..."

"Michelle and Hunter are calling her parents right now." I said as Derek came in looking angry.

"Derek, I heard what happened...I'm sorry." Destiny said.

"Yeah, well we're all in trouble now." Derek said.

"What? Why?" I asked.

"When Hunter told Mr. and Mrs. Jennings about Tiffany's death they had to tell them why. Tiffany's parents know she was a Ranger and they know about us...they are going to the media. Our cover's been blown!" Derek said.

"Shit...there's no way we can stop Arissa now." I said.

"I know...she's won. It's over. Way to go Chris." Derek said.

"Me? How is this because of me?" I asked.

"Tiffany was your girlfriend...you should have been watching out for her!"

"You think I wanted her to die? I cared about her so much!"

"How could a ghetto boy care about someone of Tiffany's standing? You were probably only after her money."

"You're screwed in the head man, I didn't care about that superficial crap, I cared about the person she was." I said as April walked in.

"Well, it's really over." She said.

"What?" I asked.

"The battle with Arissa. Michelle is preparing to surrender. With our identities out there's no way we can defend the world now. She's going to hand over the Amethyst." April said.

"She can't! If Arissa gets that gemstone she can rule this world and any other she chooses!" Derek cried.

"I tried to talk her out of it but she said there was no other way." April said.

"How's Hunter taking it?" I asked.

"Not well at all. He's so torn up about it but as a veteran Ranger he understands this is the only way." April said.

"Damn it! Why did Tiffany have to die?! If only I had been there to protect her none of this would have happened!" I cried.

"So you admit it's your fault?" Derek asked.

"Step off man, I feel bad enough!" I cried.

“Make me.”

“Fine by me.” I said as Derek and I started to fight. Not serious fighting, more like a training spar but Destiny didn’t know that. I saw Destiny out of the corner of my eye. She was pale as a ghost.

Stacy

~~~~~

After my fight with Anna I was very upset. I drove to the track and found Noah. I watched him ride for a while. When he noticed me there he stopped.

“Hey, are you ok?” he asked.

“No...Anna and I got into a big fight.”

“I’m so sorry...I’d hug you but I’m kinda muddy.”

“It’s ok...mud never killed anyone.” I said.

“Then come here.” Noah said pulling me into his arms.

I rested my head on his chest and closed my eyes. It felt so good to be held by someone who cared. “Noah...you don’t think of us as cousins right?”

“No. I mean, I guess in a sense, but we’re not actually related.” He said.

“Good...”

“I wouldn’t be spending so much time with you if I considered you a cousin...last thing I need is to fall for another of my cousins.”

I nodded. “Savannah?”

“Yeah.”

“Well we don’t have that problem. As a matter of fact I’m starting to fall for you too.” I said smiling.

“Oh is that so?”

“Yes that’s so.”

“Is that what you were fighting with Anna about?”

I sighed, “Only part of it, mostly it had to do with my helping my father.”

“Trent may not be a great man but he’s your father, what does she expect you to do?”

“That’s what I said!”

“Don’t worry. She’ll get over it.”

I nodded. “I hope so.”

Noah looked at me then gently kissed me. I was so happy, I almost didn’t care about Anna being mad anymore.

Arisa

~~~~~

“All of your plans have failed Arissa!” Aunt Aria said.

“Hey, I don’t see your plans getting us a win either. And you’re the one who brought James in, he’s done nothing but cause trouble.” I said.

“Don’t you ever use that tone with me again Arissa.”

“Sorry.” I mumbled.

“We have to beat those Rangers! I’m so sick of losing!”

“Well do you have a plan?”

“I do as it happens. We take them out from the inside. You have to pretend to be Harley. A bit of magic and you can look just like her. Find out their weaknesses and work from there.”

I sighed. “You don’t think they’ll catch on?”

“Not at all. A shape shifter spell will make you look exactly like her.”

“OK...fine.” I said skeptically.

Harley

~~~~~

I had decided to join the contest that Kira told me about. I just needed a back up band. I dialed Josh’s cell number.

“Josh here...”

“Josh! It’s Har...have I mentioned lately that you are my best friend?”

“What do you want Har?”

I laughed, “I need a band.”

“A band? Why?”

“I’m entering that contest at Cyberspace.”

“You sing?”

“Yes I sing. Little known fact about me. Anyway, you’re a musician, will you help?”

“Sure. Anna will be mad cause she’s in the contest too, but she’ll live. Who else were you thinking of asking?”

“Noah?”

“He’d probably help. I can ask him for you. I’m on my way to the track to pick him up anyway...I just got here actually...oh shit!”

“What is it Josh?” I asked.

“Noah and Stacy are making out...my cousin and my sister!”

I laughed, “Well they’re not cousins.”

“I know...but still.”

“Let them be happy. Noah needs someone unrelated to him after the whole Savannah thing.”

“Speaking of Savannah, what’s your deal with her?”

“She doesn’t want to be my sister or she would have told me that we shared a mom before, I’m sure not going to accept her now that I found out by accident.”

“But she does want to be your friend.”

“Too late for that.”

Josh sighed. “Anyway, I’ll let you know if Noah’s in or not.”

“Ok thanks. You rock. Later.” I said hanging up. I decided to go into the woods and work on a new song I had written. I needed to do this alone. But first I needed to check on the Wildcats. Make sure Destiny was getting her just desserts.

I went in the lodge and saw Derek and Chris fighting, I knew it was a spar for Destiny’s benefit and I decided to join in the fun.

“Hey, guys enough!” I said pulling them apart.

“It’s his fault Tiff is dead and Arissa has won!” Derek cried.

“It’s not my fault Tiffany got captured and Michelle has decided to surrender the Amethyst.” Chris said.

“Enough you guys, my mom knows what she’s doing...I’m not happy about this either. I’m the one losing my mother, but have some faith. The Power Rangers are no more, this is the only way.” I said.

“I wish I knew how Tiff got captured. She was turning into a pretty good fighter. I wouldn’t have thought she could get captured before calling for back up.” April said.

“Especially with a civilian there to protect...she would have fought even harder.” Derek said.

I saw Destiny about to crumble, she just needed a final push. “She probably got captured because she was protecting Destiny. She would have done anything to keep her group mates safe.”

“No! She wasn’t protecting me! This is my fault! I set her up! I made a deal with Arissa!” Destiny cried.

“You made a deal with Arissa? Why?” I asked in mock shock.

“I was jealous of her...I never meant for it to go this far. I just wanted Chris to like me...I never wanted the world to end or for Arissa to win!”

I smirked, “We have a surprise for you Destiny...”

Michelle

~~~~~

I was so happy to be home. I know, I’d been home a few days...but as I stood in the doorway of the kitchen and watched Hunter trying to teach Felicity to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich I couldn’t help but be thankful for what I had. It was actually very cute. More peanut butter ended up on Felicity’s face and hands than on the bread.

“Sweetie, I think the idea is to make a sandwich, not peanut body paint.” I said laughing as I went in and got a wet towel ready to clean Felicity up.

“Yeah, I think we need a few more practice tries.” Hunter said taking the towel from me and cleaning up Felicity.

“I just did a call in to the lodge. Everything seems to be running smoothly. Even the problems we were having with behavior have gone down since your little chat with the students.” I said.

“Good. Maybe I got through to them.”

“You know you’re kind of sexy when you take charge.” I said kissing him.

“Icky!” Felicity cried.

I laughed. “So what are your plans today?”

“Well I finally am caught up on paper work. I was thinking about taking Felicity to the p-a-r-k.”

“Ok. Go for it. I can cover things here.” I said.

“You sure? I don’t wanna ditch you here” Hunter said.

“No, go. Have fun. You two could use some quality time together. I know you’ve been missing spending time with her.” I said.

“Ok, thanks Mich. I love you.”

“I love you too sweetie. Have fun. I’m gonna go to the office.” I said.

“Bye Mommy.” Felicity said. I kissed Felicity and then Hunter and headed to the office.

On my way to the office I saw Harley.

“Hey sweetie.” I said hugging her.

“Um...hi.” She said.

“Are you ok? You don’t seem yourself.”

“I’m fine...just great.”

“Ok, well your father is about to take Felicity to the park if you want to see him before he leaves.”

“Oh, yeah...I will...thanks.”

“See you later” I said continuing to the office. Harley had seemed really different for some reason.

Josh

~~~~~

When I saw my cousin and sister making out I was shocked to say the least. After hanging up with Harley I got out of my car and walked over to them and cleared my throat. They broke the kiss and turned around.

“Oh...hi Josh.” Stacy said.

“Hi Stace...having fun?” I asked.

“Um...” Stacy looked dumbfounded.

“It’s ok. It’s weird, but I don’t really care...he’s not your cousin.” I said.

Stacy smiled, “Thanks Josh!” she hugged me.

I hugged her back. “Hey, if you’re happy that’s what matters. I mean I had a crush on my sister’s sister so ya know...the McKnight clan is just a very twisted bunch.”

“What do you mean had? You still have a crush on Harley.” Stacy said.

“I did, but I moved on.” I said.

“Ok...sure.”

“Whatever, anyway you still need a ride Noah?” I asked.

“Um, sure. See you later Stace?” he said.

“Count on it.” She said going back to her car.

Noah stored his bike in the shed then got in the car.

“So...you and Stace?” I asked.

“I guess so...I really like her” he said.

“Good...oh...almost forgot, Harley wants to enter the contest at Cyberspace, she needs to get a band together.”

“Harley sings?”

“Apparently so...I didn’t know it either.”

“Wow...”

“Yeah, so you in?”

“Sure, Anna will be pissed but she’s pissed anyway.”

“About what?” I asked.

“She went off at Stacy about helping Trent.”

“Why? I mean it’s not like I like the guy but he’s Stacy’s father.”

“I know...I guess Anna thinks Stacy should turn her back on him since Uncle Conner has been a better father to her.”

“That may be but it doesn’t change the fact Trent is still her father.”

“I know.”

“I’ll talk to her. Anyway how are your parents?” I asked.

“Fine. They finally worked things out.”

“And Beth?”

“Still serving her sentence. I still can’t believe she would do something like that to Anna.”

“I know...crazy.”

Noah nodded, “You were right about one thing...the McKnights are one twisted clan.”

Tiffany

~~~~~

“A surprise?” Destiny asked carefully. There was my cue

I walked into the lodge and when Destiny saw me she looked ready to pass out.

“Hey Destiny. I hear you were real worried about me, I’m so grateful for your concern.” I said with mock sweetness.

“T...Tiffany...” Destiny said with shock.

“I didn’t die...I know that was your plan, didn’t work.” I said.

“We knew you were behind Tiffany’s capture this whole time.” April said.

“And we wanted to show you how dangerous it was to make a deal with Arissa...what could have happened.” Harley said.

“Jealously is a dangerous thing Destiny, you really should work on controlling it.” I said.

“I didn’t mean to cause trouble...” Destiny said.

“You could have messed up everything...Arissa is out for blood Destiny, she’s not someone to be making deals with.” Harley said.

“I’m sorry...I really am.” Destiny said softly.

“I believe you...and I guess I forgive you, just don’t ever do anything like that again.” I said.

“And if you ever do you will answer to me. I’m with Tiff, not you, deal with it.” Chris said.

“Now, Destiny, to show us how sorry you are how about to clean the kitchen alone tonight?” April asked.

Harley nodded, “Sounds fair to me.”

“I guess I deserve that. Ok.” Destiny agreed as she went away sulking.

Harley smiled, “Good work guys, I’ll see you later. I have some work to do.” She left and I sat down with Chris.

“I’m so glad you’re ok.” Chris said.

“Me too. I’m glad I had you to come back to.” I said cuddling with him. All things considered life was looking up.

Arissa

~~~~~

Pretending to be Harley in front of Michelle was not easy at all...but I couldn’t fail Aunt Aria again. After leaving Michelle I went over to the house she shared with Hunter. I went inside and saw Hunter...Dad...nah, Hunter, putting shoes on a baby...I assumed the baby to be Felicity. It was the first time I had ever seen my little...I mean Harley’s little sister. Hunter heard me come in and looked up.

“Hey sweetie, what are you up to today?” he asked.

“Um, nothing much, same old stuff.” I said.

“I’m taking Felicity to the track, you wanna come?” he asked.

“Track? Mi...Mom said you were taking her to the park.” Calling Michelle ‘Mom’ was so totally hard.

“That’s what she thinks. Felicity is only 3, your mother would flip if she knew I was trying to teach Felicity to ride already.”

“How old were you when you learned to ride?”

“I was just a little older than Liss, she’s old enough and she enjoys it. I just hope she doesn’t spill the beans to Michelle.”

I smiled, “Yeah, that wouldn’t be good.”

“So you wanna come? We can load up your bike and you can ride laps while I work with Liss.”

I considered this offer. I really did want to spend time with Hunter. He was seeming to be a pretty cool guy...but on top of the fact Aunt Aria would kill me I didn’t know how to ride a dirt bike. “Um, I’m not sure about riding today but maybe I could come watch?”

"If you want to. Why don't you want to ride?"

"Because..." I had to think fast, "Because I hurt my knee last time out and it's not entirely well yet."

"Oh...ok. Of course you can come watch. Let's go." Hunter said, "Here, hold Liss while I load up the bikes, I don't want her taking off."

"Um...ok." I said as he handed me Felicity. When I got her she started crying.

"Har-Re!" she screamed.

Crap! This brat could sense I wasn't Harley.

"What's the matter sweetie?" Hunter asked.

"Har-Re!" she cried again.

"Shh, I'm your other sister...Arisa...I promise I won't hurt you." I whispered calmly in her ear. As I did I wondered what I was doing but it was like an instinct. She instantly got quiet.

"Weird." Hunter said as he loaded up the truck. After everything was ready to go we got in the truck and headed for the track.

When we got there I watched Hunter interact with Felicity. He was such a great father to her. I wished I had a father like that...oh yeah, I have a father like that...he even offered to accept me even after everything I did but I turned my nose up...

'Focus Arissa!' I scolded myself.

I tried to think about other things but Hunter didn't make it easy. After we finished at the track he took us to McDonalds so we could eat and Felicity could play. While Felicity was playing Hunter and I sat at a table and talked.

"Are you ok Har? You're being very quiet." He said.

I nodded, "I'm fine...Dad, I'm just thinking."

"About what?"

"Arisa."

"What about her sweetie?"

I took a deep breath. "Well she's your daughter biologically and everything...do you consider her your daughter though?"

Hunter seemed to consider this. "I would if she'd give me a chance. Har, since I lost my own parents I knew I wanted to be a father someday. I wanted a lot of kids...I also wanted a son but I like having daughters, anyway, I would never turn my back on one of my kids who wanted a relationship with me. If Arissa would stop going after you and your mother and wanted to be my daughter I'd be more than willing to accept her...I just wish she'd accept me."

"Maybe she wants to..." I said softly.

"She has a funny way of showing it then."

"Maybe she's scared because revenge is what she's always known...to change that path would be very scary."

"Are you trying to defend Arissa? I thought you hated her."

I gasped. I hadn't realized what I was sounding like, I just started speaking from my heart...oh god...my heart...ugh,

"No, of course I'm not defending her. I don't know where that came from...can we go soon? I have some things to do."

"Sure, let's get Liss and go." Hunter said getting Felicity. We got back in the truck and headed for the Academy. I was really getting myself in deep here.

Harley

~~~~~

"Finally!" I said as I finished the song I had been working on. Sometimes bad relationships left something good, like writing inspiration. I went to my mom's office to see if she needed me to do anything. "Hey Mom"

"Hey Har, what's up?" I asked.

"Did you need me to do anything?"

"Not right now."

"OK, where's Dad?"

"Probably looking for land to open a new dojo."

"No, not Rocky, Hunter."

"Oh, I told you he took Liss to the park."

“You did?”

“Yeah...”

“Um...”

“Maybe he’s back. Let’s go check.” Mom said

“OK.” I said following her. We got back to the house as Dad was getting out of the truck with Liss...and....ME?!

*"Oh Lessons learned, man they sure run deep  
They don't go away and they don't come cheap  
Oh theres no way around it  
cause this world turns  
On lessons learned"  
~ "Lessons Learned" Tracy Lawrence*

"What the hell is going on here?" I asked as I looked on and saw my dad and baby sister with someone who looked freakishly like me.  
"Two Harleys? How?" Mom asked.  
"Rissa." Felicity said reaching for the other me. The imposter picked up Felicity and held her.  
"Arisa! I should have known! Put my sister down!" I screamed.  
"Arisa? Is that really you?" Dad asked.  
"Yes! OK? I'm Arissa!" Arissa said converting back into her normal self.  
"Put down my sister." I commanded again.  
"Newsflash Princess Saturn, she's my sister too. We were just bonding, weren't we Liss?" Arissa said tickling Felicity.  
"What in the hell were you doing pretending to be me?" I asked.  
"Such language around our baby sister...bad influence..." Arissa said.  
"I'm serious Arissa, what do you think you're doing?" I asked.  
"What does it look like? I was pretending to be you to try to take out the Wildcats from the inside, didn't plan on all the family bonding." Arissa said.  
"We did bond Arissa...you know you can be part of this family...just stop your vendetta against Michelle." Dad said.  
"Sorry, can't do that. See you later Felicity." Arissa said handing Felicity to Dad before taking off.  
"UGH! I hate her!" I cried.

Stacy

~~~~~  
"And so that's what really happened." I finished. I was filling Tommy and Jason in on the whole black mail story.
"Do you have proof?" Tommy asked.
I nodded, "Yeah...I got my conversation with her on tape."
"You're awesome Stacy." Jason said.
I nodded, "I know." I was very proud of myself. I hadn't edited the tape, just cut out the last part where Nikki talked about Conner being with my dad...ick!
"Let's go partner, we have an arrest to make." Jason said.
"Can I come watch?" I asked.
Tommy laughed, "Sure, but you should take your own car."
"OK thanks." I said.

I got in my car and followed Tommy and Jason. We got to my dad's house and went inside.
"Nikki!" I called.
"Oh Stacy, what can...oh..." Nikki said walking in the room and seeing Jason and Tommy.
"Nicolette Cruthers alias Nikki Valentina you are under arrest for extortion and vehicular hit and run. You have the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law." Jason said.
"You brat!" Nikki screamed at me.
"Buh-bye Nikki, see you in the next life, cause that's when you'll be getting out of prison." I said as Jason and Tommy took her away. I smiled, I was very pleased with myself.

Jesse

~~~~~

I was finally getting out of the hospital. Not that it much mattered, I mean where else did I have to go? I was ready to go when Hunter came in to take me back to the Academy.

“Hey Jesse, you ready to go?” Hunter asked.

I nodded, “I guess so.”

“OK then, let’s go.” Hunter said.

When we got back into the Academy Hunter walked me to the lodge. The other Wildcats were all sitting around.

“Jesse!” Tiffany cried running to me and hugging me.

“Hi Tiff.” I said hugging her.

“You sure gave us a scare.” Derek said.

“No lie, what were you thinking doing something stupid like that?” April asked gently punching me in the arm.

“Sorry...didn’t think I’d be missed.” I said.

“Of course you’d be missed! You’re one of us!” Destiny said.

“Thanks.” I said softly.

“Ok, I’m glad you guys are finally reunited, but it’s time to get to work on your chores.” Hunter said.

“Hunter...” Tiffany whined.

“Now.” Hunter said.

“Yes sir.” We all said as we went to work. Chris and I ended up on dish duty.

“So why did you do it?” Chris asked.

“Who would miss me? My parents are dead. My aunt wishes I were dead. Who do I have?” I said.

“You have us...Michelle and Hunter...”

“I’m just another student to Michelle and Hunter.”

“That isn’t true...you know for all the crap we give them they actually do care about us. They could help you if you let them.” Chris said.

“I thought you were opposed to the whole Starlight experience” I said.

“That was before I found a great girlfriend who gave me a reason to want to change.”

“Girlfriend?”

“Oh yeah...Tiff and I are together.”

“Are you serious? Wow. I thought you saw her as a spoiled princess.” I said.

“I did...I was wrong.”

“Wow...looks like I missed a lot.” I said.

Beth

~~~~~

“OK Michelle, I finished the list of chores you gave me.” I said.

Michelle nodded, “OK, good work Beth. Would you like to go with me and Felicity to the store? We need some supplies for the kitchen.”

I shrugged, “I guess so.”

“OK let’s go.” Michelle said picking up Felicity. We were headed out of the office when Hunter came in. “Oh hey sweetie, we’re going to the store for kitchen supplies. Do you need anything while we’re out?” Michelle asked.

“Why don’t you pick up dinner for us while you’re gone so we don’t have to cook? I’d like to spend some time in with the Wildcats tonight.” Hunter said.

“Ok what do you want?” Michelle asked.

“Doesn’t matter. Hamburgers are fine.” Hunter said.

“OK. Should I get food for Har too?” Michelle asked.

“I don’t know. She took off after Arissa left and I haven’t seen her since.” Hunter said.

“Neither have I. Should we be worried?”

“No, she probably went to the track. Maybe you should get her something just in case she comes home hungry.”

“OK. Beth, would you like to eat dinner with us?” Michelle asked.

“I guess so. Thanks.” I said.

“OK. We’ll be back soon.” Michelle said.

“Do you want me to watch Liss?” Hunter asked.

“No. I’ll take her. She needs to pick out a cereal anyway.” Michelle said.

“Ok. See you later.” Hunter said kissing his wife and daughter. We walked out of the office and Michelle put Felicity in her car seat then we got in the Jeep and headed for the store.

“So you were on the cheer squad?” Michelle asked.

“Yeah.” I replied.

“I was a cheerleader when I was in high school.”

“You were?”

“Yeah, back then I thought the only thing that matter was my fame. I had just finished shooting a popular TV show and...”

“Yeah Palisades High right? That show changed the way teen shows were made.”

“Yeah. Anyway, while I was filming the show I got it in my head that celebrity and status and all that superficial stuff was the only stuff that mattered.”

“You were wrong?” I asked.

“I was so wrong.”

“What made you come to the conclusion?”

“Well when I became a Ranger I started to grow out of that, by the time I started dating Rocky I knew what it was like to truly care about someone, but when I left Rangering and married Jon Giovanni I started to fall into that mind set again...when I met Hunter and got to know him and everything he went through...it just made everything...all the material stuff, seem so small. Then, when I lost Hunter but my career was taking off again I realized that being at the top of the charts didn’t mean a thing without Hunter to share it with, that’s when I truly realized material stuff didn’t matter and never had in the first place...it was a long process before I learned what true happiness was.” Michelle explained.

“Oh.” I said.

“I really think you should sit down and talk to Chris or Derek...listen to what they have to say. You might be surprised how it affects you.” Michelle said as we pulled into the store parking lot. She parked the Jeep then got Felicity out of the car seat and put her in a shopping cart and we went inside to buy the stuff she needed. “If you’d like to get something to snack on while you’re working you can pick something and we’ll keep it in the office.”

“Oh, ok. Thank you.” I said.

“No problem.” Michelle said as Felicity reached for a candy bar sitting on a shelf, “No sweetheart. Come on let’s get you your cereal.”

We went into the cereal aisle and Michelle held up two cereals for Felicity. “Ruit Hoops.” Felicity said.

“Ok, Fruit Loops it is.” Michelle said putting the box in the cart.

“You let her pick her own cereal? Isn’t she only 3?” I asked.

“Yeah, but she is still human. I don’t let her get any one she wants. I pick two I know she’ll eat then I let her pick one. This way she feels like she’s getting a say in what she eats and I know the cereal won’t go to waste.” Michelle said.

“She doesn’t talk very much.” I said.

“She’s only 3...give her a couple of months and we won’t be able to shut her up.” Michelle laughed.

I nodded.

We finished at the store then went to pick up dinner.

“OK, can you go in and get the Wildcats, they’ll need to help unload the groceries and then put them up.” Michelle said.

“OK.” I said going inside. I found that Tiffany girl, “Hey, um, Michelle said the Wildcats need to help with groceries.”

“Oh ok. Hey Wildcats! Unloading time, come on!” Tiffany called. They rallied around and got to work unloading the Jeep then they put everything away.

“OK, good work guys. Go tell the Cardinals to cook dinner. Hunter and I will be over here after we eat.” Michelle said.

“OK, we’ll be here.” Derek said.

Harley

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I raced around the track for the 20<sup>th</sup> time. I still didn’t feel better. I was so totally pissed at Arissa for pretending to be me. I looked at my gauges. I was low on gas. I loaded my bike up and went home. I went inside my parents’ house and

found Dad in the kitchen finishing up some dish washing.

“Hey.” I said.

“Hey, are you ok?” he asked.

“No, I’m not as it happens. I’m pissed beyond words.” I said.

“I see I was right, you were riding.”

“Yeah.”

“Why don’t you go shower? Your mother will be home with dinner soon.”

“Ok fine.” I said. I went upstairs and took a quick shower before going back downstairs. I was just getting downstairs when I saw Mom walk in with Felicity and Beth. They had food with them.

“Har, are you ok? I was worried about you.” Mom said setting the food on the table.

“I’m fine. Just angry.” I said picking up Felicity. I put her in her high chair and sat at the table. “What did she get?”

“The chicken nuggets.” Mom said.

“OK.” I got Felicity’s food out and set it on her tray. “Here you go Liss.” She picked up a nugget and started gnawing on it.

“I got you a bacon cheeseburger, is that ok?” Mom asked me.

“Yeah, that’s fine.” I said taking the food from her, “So why did we pick up food?”

“With Jesse just getting back I want to have a special group session tonight. Jesse needs the support and I want to fill him in on everything that’s been going on while he was in the hospital.” Dad said.

“Oh ok. I’ll be there.” I said.

“Beth, would you like to join in?” Mom asked.

“Um...I don’t know...” Beth said.

“Come on, it’ll be good for you...consider it part of your community service.” Mom said.

“Well, ok.” Beth agreed.

Stacy

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“Dad, I talked to your lawyer...if you plead guilty to tax evasion the DA is willing to give you 6 months in prison...it’s a great deal. I advise you to take it.” I said. I had gone to fill my dad in about Nikki’s arrest and everything else.

“Why?” Dad asked.

“Cause there’s no way you’re getting off without any prison time. 6 months is the best you’re gonna do. I wasn’t even expecting that, I was expecting at least a year...take the deal.” I said.

“OK...fine. I’ll take the deal.” Dad said.

“Smart move.”

“So Nikki is going to prison?”

“Yes...for a very long time. The DA refuses to make a deal with her. She’s also filing for divorce.” I said.

“Just as well. I would have divorced her years ago if it wasn’t for the extortion.”

I nodded. “OK. Well if you’ll excuse me I have meetings to get to.”

“What is going on with the company?”

“I fired a lot of people. Now I’m going to meet with a rep from NY Designs. They are a very highly respected fashion agency.”

“Since when does Fernandez Industries work with fashion?”

“Since I took over. There is a great deal and if we can get in on it then it might make us enough money to get the company back on it’s feet. Trust me. I know what I’m doing. Bye Dad, see you soon.” I said leaving.

I got to the office.

“Ms. Fernandez, Ms. Truman is waiting for you in the office.” My secretary said.

“OK, thanks.” I said going into my office, “Hi, I’m Stacy Fernandez.”

“Hi Stacy, I’m Krista Truman, it’s nice to meet you.”

“Likewise. So what sort of deal can you offer us?” I asked as I sat at my desk.

Beth

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I went and sat with the Wildcats. Harley, Michelle, and Hunter sat with us as well while Felicity sat off to the side playing with her dolls.

“Ok, first off I’d like to welcome back Harley as group leader, and of course we welcome back Jesse. It’s great to see the Wildcats as a full unit again.” Hunter said.

“Yes, totally. Welcome back Jesse.” Tiffany said.

“Thank you.” Jesse said.

“Now, we have a lot to discuss, which is why I called this group session. Of course the end of the school year is coming which means added stress of finals, we need to make sure you are all prepared for this stress so that we don’t have another incident like what happened to Jesse.” Hunter said.

“Plus April is facing some hard times ahead and we need to be there for her.” Michelle said.

“On top of that Derek has a lot on his plate and needs our support. He is graduating at the end of the year and the trial against his mother will be starting in a few days.” Hunter said.

“We will also discuss what happened to Jesse and why he did what he did. Jesse, you’ve gotten out of talking in group many times, this time we need you to open up.” Michelle said.

“And of course anyone who has anything to add is more than welcomed to speak.” Hunter said.

“So let’s begin...first of all who feels prepared for finals?” Michelle asked.

No one raised their hand.

“Ok, how can you, as a team, prepare for your tests?” Hunter asked.

“Well, we can partner up to study or even work in study groups.” Tiffany suggested.

“Very good idea Tiffany, any one else?” Harley said.

“We could make sure we take detailed notes in class then compare notes during study time.” Destiny said.

“Another great idea. The important thing to remember is these are just tests. They are important but in the grand scheme of things they aren’t everything.” Hunter said.

“But before finals we have another challenge to face as a group, Derek’s mother is going to trial and Derek will need all of our support no matter the outcome.” Harley said.

“Why is Derek’s mom going to trial?” I asked, this made no sense.

“Derek, would you like to tell her the story? It might be good practice for when you take the witness stand.” Hunter said.

Derek sighed, “Ok. Beth, the reason my mom is going to trial is I’m pressing charges against her.”

“For what? Why would you press charges on your own mother? How totally sick.” I said. Seriously, what kind of person tried to land their mom in prison?

“Sick? You know what’s sick? What she did to me? Do you know what she did to me?” Derek asked angry.

“Can’t have been that bad.” I said.

“You’re right...she just would come in my room at night, force me to take my clothes off, and then make me have sex with her, if I refused she would tie my hands to my bed and make me do it anyway...it started when I was 8 and continued as I grew up. For the last 10 years...but yeah, you’re right, I should let her off.” Derek said.

I froze. “I...I had no idea.”

“You think we’re at Starlight because we like talking in group? No, we’re here because home isn’t an option.” Derek said.

“Exactly...and the idea of coming home is too much to bear.” April said.

“April you don’t have to do this...” Derek said.

“She needs to understand why we’re here. She’s a bigger princess than Tiff. You know why I’m here? Because my stepfather raped me. I ended up running away because I couldn’t take it anymore. I lived on the streets for months, just to survive I became a streetwalker. When I ended up here it was a godsend and now to find out I might have to go back to live with that monster and a mother who won’t protect me...I’m not sure I can take it...I don’t want to go back...I don’t want to face him because it will happen all over again.” April said crying.

“Ape, come here.” Derek hugged her.

“Uh, I’m sorry...” April said backing off, I knew she hadn’t meant to cry.

“It’s OK April. Thank you for sharing your story, would anyone else like to explain why they’re here to Beth...Jesse?” Michelle asked as she hugged April too.

Jesse sighed, “OK. Well unlike April and Derek I had wonderful parents, they were the best parents anyone could hope for but they were killed in an accident. After their death I was forced to go live with my Aunt May. She didn’t want the responsibility of a kid but she did want the life insurance money that came with me. She ignored me for years before she finally decided to ship me here. I don’t have any family, that’s why I ODeD.”

“So you see Beth, life isn’t all about cheering and popularity.” Michelle said.

“On that note would you like to share with the group why you framed Anna just to look cool to your friends?” Harley asked.

I looked down. Suddenly everything with Cathy seemed so small. “Because I wanted to fit in...back at my old school I was on top and when I moved here I just wanted to fit in.”

“So you sold out your own family because she wasn’t cool enough for you?” Harley asked.

“And when you got caught your parents helped you and supported you even though you were wrong. When I got arrested my dad told me I could rot in juvie, the only reason I’m here is the judge strongly suggested my father send me here, if he had it his way I’d be locked away.” Chris said.

“Consider yourself lucky. Your dad would never do anything to hurt you, neither would your mother. You have it so good you don’t even know.” April said.

I was totally speechless.

“You know why I’m here? I ask you cause I used to be like you, thinking looks and popularity mattered more than anything. I let my mother convince me I was fat and ugly and not worthy of my name. I was so determined to be who she wanted me to be I purged my food and became bulimic and when the inner pain became too much I turned to cutting to release it. I ended up here because I passed out from malnutrition. The more time I spend here the more I learn all that really matters is how I feel about me.” Tiffany said.

I gasped, my mother would never ever tell me I wasn’t perfect as I was. “Can I go home now?”

Michelle nodded, “Yeah, see you tomorrow.”

I went home and found my parents.

“Daddy?” I said.

“What is it sweetie?” he asked.

I ran into his arms and started crying. I don’t exactly know why, except for the fact I suddenly felt very lucky to have my parents.

“Beth? What’s wrong sweetheart?” Dad asked as he held me close.

“Is everything ok?” Mom asked rubbing my back as Dad hugged me.

I hugged him tighter. “Thank you for being my parents, I love you guys.”

*"I don't, don't care if it's not right  
To have your arms around me  
I want to feel what it's like  
Take all of you inside of me"  
~ "Forbidden Love" Madonna*

I walked into Cyberspace and plopped down on the sofa in the corner.

"Anna? What's wrong with you?" Savannah asked sitting next to me.

"Stacy is what's wrong! She helped get Trent off!" I cried.

"What? I thought he was still doing 6 months."

"Oh big wow. He should be in prison for life!"

"Anna? I know you dislike Trent, and you're not alone, most of the town hates Trent, but your dislike for Trent seems to run deeper. Why is it you hate Trent so much?"

I took a deep breath. Should I tell her? Part of me really did want to tell someone and I trusted Savannah a lot...of course I couldn't tell her everything...maybe if I told her half the story that would make me feel somewhat better.

"OK...well...yeah I guess I do have my own reasons for hating Trent."

"Ok...care to share?" Savannah asked.

"I guess so. When I was a kid Trent was babysitting me, I guess I was about 7 or something, he was pissed that he got talked into watching me and he made comments about having been with both my parents in a sexual way." I said.

"What?" Savannah asked.

"Trent slept with Dad when they were teenagers"

"Are you serious?"

"Yeah. I never told anyone I knew...until now, but I've never forgiven him for telling me about that."

Savannah nodded, "Wow...ok I get it.

I nodded, and she only knew the half of it.

Arisa

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Aunt Aria and I were in a submarine with a tracker. I still didn't understand exactly what we were doing.

"OK, so we're looking for shards of something? Why?" I asked.

"We're looking for the shards of the Gem of Souls. It is a very powerful Gem and one of the few powers in the universe that can combat Michelle's Amethyst. If we get our hands on that Gem she will be no match for us." Aunt Aria said.

"And these shards are in the ocean?" I asked.

"It was said that one of the Rangers threw the shards into the sea so that they could never be used for evil...well they didn't plan on us, we will reunite the shards and use the Gem's power to rid the world of the Saturn Queen, then the Amethyst, the Earth, and Saturn will be ours and nothing those pesky Ranger do will be able to stop us." Aunt Aria said.

"And what is James up to while we're doing this? He shouldn't be left alone. I don't trust him." I said.

"James has his own project, don't worry about him."

"I do worry. How do we know we can trust him?"

"Don't worry Arissa, I have James under control."

"Somehow I doubt that." I mumbled.

Michelle

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I had taken Felicity out into the woods to pick some wild flowers. I needed some time with her and Hunter and Harley had things at the Academy covered.

"Mommy, look, pretty!" Felicity squealed as she picked a purple flower.

"Very pretty, just like you my little princess." I said smiling at her. After my little run to Australia I started to realize

how much I had taken my children for granted, I decided I wouldn't do that again. I was very blessed and it was about time I acted like it.

"Mommy! Look!" Felicity picked a crimson colored flower.

I laughed, "You are a mix of your daddy and I...my little crimple."

"Crimple!" Felicity giggled.

I smiled. "I love you sweetheart."

"I love you too Mommy." Felicity smiled.

"How sweet, mother/daughter bonding...and she looks like she'll grow up to be a pretty one. I can't wait." A voice said.

I turned around and saw James. "You...you stay the hell away from my daughter." I said trying to hide my fear. I picked up Felicity and held her close to my body.

"Relax. It's not the kid I'm after...yet...it's you my sweet Michelle. I know you love me but that evil man, Hunter, he's poisoned you against me." James said walking towards me and brushed his fingers across my face.

"You're more psycho now than you were then." I said pulling away. Felicity buried her head in my chest, she was clearly scared.

"Sweetheart, come with me, you know you want to." James said reaching his hand out.

"Stay away from me and my family. I mean it, you come near me or my daughters or my husband and I will kill you, got it...I lost to you once and it was the worse defeat of my life, I won't lose again, especially not now since you know what I am." I said holding Felicity with one arm and using my free hand to conjure up some lightning. I sent it crashing into a tree directly behind James which caused a branch to come crashing down next to him. "Next time that lightning bolt will be aimed at you, now get the hell away from here."

"Fine, I'll go...for now, but I will be back for you my love." James said disappearing.

"Mommy..." Felicity said holding on to me tightly.

"It's ok sweetie...it'll be ok." I said as I held her close and took off running for the office. I ran in the office and I was shaking so bad I could barely hold Felicity. Hunter was on the phone but quickly got off.

"Sweetheart, what happened? You look white as a ghost...and you're shaking...what happened?" he asked taking Felicity from me.

"James...he found us...I thought for sure he was going to hurt me or Liss." I said shaking.

"Oh god...sweetie come here." Hunter said pulling me to him with his free arm, "Are you ok?"

"Yeah, I'm fine. I scared him off with a lightning bolt, but he said he'd be back." I said.

"That creep...Felicity are you ok sweetie?" Hunter asked.

"Yes...Mommy scared?" Felicity said.

I looked at her and pulled myself away from Hunter and wiped a few tears that escaped, "Oh I'm fine sweetie, just needed a hug from Daddy. You know when you have a bad dream and you want a hug from Daddy?" I asked taking Felicity back.

Felicity nodded.

"Well that is what Mommy needed, just needed a hug from Daddy. Now why don't you go in the back and play with your new doll?" I said.

"Ok. I love you Mommy." Felicity said.

I hugged her. "I love you too my little Crimple." I said putting her down and watching her go to the back.

"Crimple?" Hunter asked.

"Haven't you noticed she's like the perfect mix of each of us? Crimson and Purple...Crimple." I said.

Hunter laughed, "Oh sweetie. I'm glad you ok." He said pulling me into his arms.

I sighed and held on to him tighter.

Anna

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"Thanks for listening." I said.

"Anytime. I gotta get back to work, but if you need me I'm around." Savannah said getting up.

"Thanks." I said.

Once Savannah left me alone I started to think about everything...the whole story...the whole reason I hated Trent so much.

I could remember it like it was yesterday but I was only around 7 like I told Savannah, I just didn't tell her everything. Josh had a high fever and needed to go to the ER and Hayley and Ethan were out of town so there was no one to watch me so when Mom asked Trent to keep Stacy she asked if he could watch me too.

"Please Trent, there's no one else." Mom begged.

Trent sighed and didn't look happy at all, "Fine."

"Thank you. She won't be any trouble. I'll call and check in soon as I can. Now you be good for Trent sweetie." Mom said.

"Yes ma'am." I said.

"OK. I'll call soon." Mom said leaving me alone with him, Stacy had gone up to her room by this point and Nikki wasn't around for whatever reason.

"OK, well, you can go watch TV or whatever." Trent said.

I went in the TV room and turned the TV on. I was watching a cartoon when I turned around and noticed Trent staring at me. He saw me look at him and he came and sat next to me. I still remember the beer smell on his breath when he spoke. Since he hadn't been expecting Stacy that night he had been drinking. Mom was too worried about Josh to notice this apparently.

"You remind me of your Mom...but you remind me of your Dad too. They were both good lays though so I bet that mean you'll be amazing when you get older. Maybe someday we can test that theory." Trent said to me.

I just looked at him not knowing how to react. I was only 7 and didn't get what he meant at first.

"Too bad you're not 18 yet...that's ok, in 11 years we can have some real fun."

"Fun?" I asked.

"Yeah, adult fun. You'll love it. And you should be a natural at it. Your father is. He was such a great lay...too bad it was just that once."

I didn't know why but I started to feel weird around him, "I'm sleepy. I'm going to go to Stacy's room."

"If Nikki wasn't coming home we could go to my room." Trent said brushing some hair out of my face with his hand.

"Goodnight." I said going upstairs. I went in Stacy's room and got in bed with her. "Stacy?"

"Yes Anna?"

"What is a 'good lay'?" I asked.

Stacy, who was 12 at the time, started laughing, "You know those parts in the movies where Mom or Conner covers your eyes?"

I nodded.

"OK, that's what it means."

I suddenly got what Trent had been saying, I had seen sex scenes in movies when my parents only thought they had my eyes covered. I decided not to say anything, at first out of embarrassment for myself, then I was worried that Dad would be embarrassed, so I never said a word. Secretly part of me always worried that Trent would make good on his promise and try to molest me or rape me or something...not that I thought he was a total monster, but he had done some bad things...why not that?

"Anna? Are you in there?" Josh asked snapping his fingers in front of my face.

"Oh...sorry, I spaced."

"Obviously. Are you ok?"

"I'm fine...just dazed."

"Oh...ok...well Mom just called me, she wanted to know if we'll be home for dinner."

"Yeah, I'm gonna head home now." I said getting up and leaving Cyberspace.

Arisa

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*"I'm picking up something on the radar." I said.*

*"Oh...that's one of the shards. Good work Arissa. Let's get it." Aunt Aria said. She pushed a button that released a mechanical arm from the submarine. It picked up the Gem shard and stored it.*

*"We will get those shards and we will win." Aunt Aria said.*

*"Aunt Aria? Can I ask you something?" I asked.*

*"Sure. What is it Arissa?" she asked.*

“Why did Michelle kill Mom?” I asked.

“Because she’s just that type of person.”

“Mom didn’t do anything to maybe provoke her?”

“What? Arissa, are you trying to say you don’t blame Michelle for killing Lilianna?”

“No, I’m not saying that, I’m just trying to understand...she doesn’t seem so bad.”

“Murderers never do. She killed your mother in cold blood and for that she must pay.”

“Of course.” I nodded. Secretly I was starting to wonder if there was more than what my aunt was telling me.

Stacy

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I had lunch with Krista and finalized a deal that would make us both a great deal of money. During our talking it had come up that Krista went to school with my parents and Conner. Dad had a class with her and Conner used to date her.

“I’m sure Conner would love to see you again, so would Dad but he’s kind of...detained.” I said.

“I heard about Trent’s arrest...it’s horrible. I would like to see him though.” Krista said.

“Well, if you don’t mind going to visit him in prison I’m sure he’d love to see you.” I said.

“I just might do that when I have the time.”

“I think Dad would like that.”

“So Conner really married Kira? That’s a match I thought I’d never see.” Krista said.

“Yup, they are married and have two kids.”

“Wow...back in high school Conner was the hot jock of the school and Kira was this loner musician, everyone was shocked when they became friends, still don’t know how that happened.”

“Fate works in weird ways.”

“Just amazing they got married...though people do change. I’m proof of that.” Krista said.

“Oh?” I asked.

“Back in high school I was this total environmental geek. Saving trees and stuff. It was insane, I don’t know what I was thinking, guess every kid needs a hobby. If someone would have told me back then I’d be representing the world’s biggest fashion agency I would have said they were nuts. Funny how things change.”

“Yeah, your company doesn’t really focus on environmental saving procedures much.” I said.

“No, but it’s all part of the business. Have to make some sacrifices to increase production.”

I nodded, “I hear that. It’s hard to keep a company running efficiently.”

“So, Stacy, are you seeing anyone?”

“Sort of. Conner’s nephew actually.”

“Something about those McKnights.”

“Yup, what about you? You seeing anyone?”

“Not at the moment. I was dating a designer from Paris but the long distance thing just wasn’t working, plus I think he was screwing around with one of his female models, which is just as well since I was screwing around with a male model.”

“Yeah, my dad just got divorced, I think she was screwing around on him...I don’t know if it worked the other way though, Dad worked too much to really have time for an affair. I think his job was his mistress, which is pretty much why Mom left him.”

“Work is important, if you slack off for a second someone else can swoop in and take your market share.”

I nodded, “I’m beginning to learn that.”

James

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I was hiding out in the woods, leaning on a tree by the lake, waiting for some opportunity to present itself. Michelle wanted me, I knew it, deep down she wanted me. She just needed to be reminded. Of course Harley and Savannah weren’t hard on the eyes either. I could be happy with them, and I knew they all wanted to be with me...why disappoint? I could satisfy them all.

“James?”

I looked up and saw Michelle standing in front of me, Harley and Savannah stood directly behind her. All three wore white

shimmering sun dresses that came just below the knee, except for Michelle's which was down to her ankles. They looked like angels. "What are you doing here?" I asked.

"We've gotten rid of Hunter...I see now he was controlling my mind...trying to make me think I loved him when you are the only one I could ever love." Michelle said.

"The McKnights are out of the way too." Harley said.

"We're all yours James." Savannah said.

"That's what I like to hear. Come here my loves." I said as I took Savannah in one arm and Harley in the other. I kissed each of them passionately then released them so I could hold Michelle with both arms. I kissed her then held her close.

"What can we do for James?" Harley asked.

"What would make you happy?" Savannah added.

"I am already happy, but if you'd like me to be even happier you can slip out of those dresses. You won't be needing them." I said.

"If that is what you wish." Harley said.

"You wish will be granted." Savannah said as they did as I said.

I smiled when I noticed they had nothing else on under their dresses. I looked over their bodies, they were as perfect as their mother.

"Very good girls, now go get in the lake and wait for me."

"Yes James." Savannah replied.

"As you wish." Harley said as they went and got in the lake.

"Are you pleased?" Michelle asked.

"Yes my dear, I am quite pleased." I said.

"Would you like me to join the girls?" Michelle asked.

"Yes, in a moment. I want to undress you myself, I have waited a long time for this. I want to enjoy it." I said as I unzipped the zipper of her dress and slid it down her body. She wore nothing under her's either. I smiled. "You look as perfect now as you did the first time we were together."

"I will never forget that night, it was the best of my life." Michelle replied.

"Let's see if we can top that. Come my dear." I said leading her to the lake. I guided her in and watched the three girls for a moment for taking off my clothes and joining them.

"James, please, make love to me first." Savannah begged.

"No, please, me. I want you to be my first James." Harley begged.

"Now, now girls, you will each get a turn, there is no need to fight. Michelle, you are my prize and I shall save you for last. Now girls, Harley is right, this is her first time so it should be special." I said.

"Being the first with you would make it special." Harley said.

"Then I think you should be first, come here my love, you two can watch. This is a momentous occasion for Harley." I said getting out of the lake. I helped Harley out then she lay on the grass by the lake. "Are you ready?" I asked.

"Please, I am ready. Make love to me James." Harley begged.

"As you wish." I said as I guided our bodies together.

After I was done with Harley I was with Savannah and then Michelle. This continued on and on. It was heaven.

I was snapped from my wonderful daydream when I heard a noise. I went to go see what it was.

## Destiny

I wasn't feeling like I fit in at all with the other Wildcats. They were all Rangers, a team...I was just their annoying group member. I didn't fit in at home and I didn't fit in here...I was beginning to wonder if I'd fit in anywhere. Maybe making a deal with Arissa wasn't horrible...I mean at least someone appreciated me then.

I went for a walk in the woods to clear my head...suddenly I was grabbed from behind. I tried to scream but my mouth was covered. The man who grabbed me let me go but kept hold of my wrist.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"I'm James. And you're Destiny right? The girl who made a deal with Arissa?"

“Yeah that’s me...what do you want?”

“I want you to make a deal with me.”

“OK...”

“Help me get to Hunter.”

“No.”

“Oh come on Destiny, what has he ever done for you?”

“I can’t...no.”

“If you do there’s something big in it for you.”

“Like what?”

“Like anything you want. You want to go live in Paris, Tokyo, anywhere, I can make it happen.”

“London?” I asked.

“Consider it done. You’ll live in luxury and never want for anything.”

“Anything?”

“Servants can tend to your every need, men will line up just to touch you...the world will be at your feet...I can make this happen, all I need you to do is help me get rid of Hunter.”

“Rid of?”

“Yes. He’s in the way of my greater plans. Hunter must be disposed of before I can proceed.”

“As in killed?”

“Well if you’d like to phrase it that way.”

“No...not a chance.”

“You’d give up a life on easy street just to protect a man who doesn’t even care about you?”

“You’re talking about killing someone...that’s wrong, no I won’t help you.”

“Then I’ll have to take you out before you can warn him.

“I’d rethink that James.” Derek said. He and April were headed in my direction.

“Oh great, Rangers. Such a nuisance.” James said pointing his finger and zapping at them.

“You wanna play it that way? Bring it on.” Derek said, “Ready?”

“Ready.” April replied.

“Wild Cat Transformation!”

“You still wanna play?” April asked pulling her daggers out.

“You really think I’m scared of a couple of teenagers in spandex?” James replied as he tried to zap them again.

“You asked for it.” Derek said pulling his sword. He went after James and they fought for awhile.

“Destiny, get out of here.” April said.

“Are you sure?” I asked.

“Yes, go!” Derek said.

“Ok...” I took off running and ended up in the Bradley’s office. Hunter and Michelle were in there.

“Destiny, what’s wrong?” Hunter asked.

“James. He attacked me in the woods. Derek and April are fighting him now.” I said.

“Why did he attack you?” Michelle asked.

“He wanted me to help kill Hunter, when I refused he tried to kill me.” I explained.

“What?! Why would he want to kill Hunter?” Michelle asked wide-eyed.

“I don’t know...he just said Hunter was in his way.”

“He wants to get to you Mich, and he thinks by taking me out you’ll be his.” Hunter said.

“His mistaken...I won’t let him get to you.” Michelle said.

“He won’t get to any of us. Destiny, get back to the lodge and tell the other Wildcats to be on standby, just in case they’re needed.” Hunter said.

“Ok.” I said taking off and following Hunter’s directions, for once I actually felt useful.

Anna

~~~~~

I was sitting in my room when I heard someone. I turned around and saw Trent.

“What are you doing here?” I asked.

"I needed to see you." Trent said.

"Why?"

"Because...you'll be 18 soon, only another month, and I know you want me."

"No...I don't."

"Don't fight it Anna, we both know you want me as much as I want you." Trent said.

"You're wrong."

"I know you've been thinking about my promise of 'adult fun'...you want me to make good on that promise, don't you?"

"I..." I paused because he came over and sat next to me on my bed.

"All you have to do is say the word and I'll keep my promise." Trent said. I could feel his warm breath on my face.

My body tensed and I couldn't speak.

"Anna, just say you want me, just say yes."

My breathing became uneven, "Yes" I whispered as I fought to catch my breath.

"That's all I needed to hear." Trent said taking me into his arms and kissing me. We fell back on the bed and I felt his hand go under my clothes and take them off. The pleasure of our skin touching after our shirts were off was indescribable.

"Trent...oh god..." I moaned.

"Do you want more?" he asked.

"Yes." I whispered.

"How much more?"

"Make love to me Trent...I want all of you."

"That's what I was hoping you'd say."

We proceeded to make passionate love on my bed, it was amazing.

"Anna? Sweetie? Earth to Anna!" Mom said waving her hand in front of my face.

"What? Oh...sorry." I said snapping from my daydream.

"Dinner is ready...are you ok?" Mom asked.

"Yeah, fine..." I said getting up and walking downstairs to the dining room.

"Are you ready for the contest?" Mom asked me at dinner.

"Yeah. I have a song ready. I think I stand a chance of winning." I said.

"I think so too, Harley is pretty good though." Mom said.

"Harley? She's entering the contest?" I asked.

"You didn't know?" Mom asked.

"No I didn't even know she sang." I said.

"Oh, yeah...so between Harley and Josh I'd say you have some good competition." Mom said.

I looked at Josh who had sunken down in his chair. "You? You're entering the contest?"

"Yeah, with Harley." Dad said.

"Oh, I thought it was a solo thing." Mom said.

We all looked at Josh.

"I don't wanna talk about it." Josh said getting up from the table and taking his plate to the kitchen.

I got up and followed him, "What are you hiding?" I asked pinning him against the counter.

"Nothing." Josh said trying to get free.

"Riiight, come on, fess up, are you in the contest?"

"Yes."

"In Harley's band or as a solo artist?"

"Yes."

"That wasn't a yes or no question."

"Ok, yesterday Savannah asked me why you hated Trent so much."

"OK? So? We talked about it today. Don't change the subject."

"So she made a good point, why do you hate Trent so much?"

"This is about you."

"I just made it about you. Tell me why you hate Trent and I'll fill you in about the contest." Josh said.

"Whatever, just, whatever." I let Josh go and stormed off to my room and fell on the bed. I could never tell anyone my

real problem. It wasn't Trent's behavior when I was younger that disturbed me, not anymore anyway. It was the fact that I was starting to find Trent's sick promises erotically arousing that disturbed me even more.

*"I've got my hands at redemption's side
Whose scars are bigger than these doubts of mine
I'll fit all of these monstrosities inside
It'll come alive, come alive"
~ "Redemption" Switchfoot*

"April, phone." Julia said.

I stood up and walked to the phone. "Hello?"

"April, I just wanted to let you know I'll be there tomorrow to come pick you up. It's time to come home." Mom said.

"What? No...why are you doing this to me?" I asked.

"We can't afford Starlight anymore."

"Oh yeah? I guess alcohol is getting expensive huh?"

"April Snyder, that's enough. Now this is your home and you belong here anyway, not at some wilderness school.

Besides, Ed misses you."

"I bet he does."

"Not that I understand why after all the lies you told about him."

"They weren't lies mother, it's the truth."

"Ed loves you, he's a good man. He'd never do what you claim."

"Mom, he would come in my room and force me to have sex with him. Obviously he wasn't satisfied with just you cause he had to have me too."

"If he ever touched you it's cause you're a slut who probably seduced him."

"Oh yeah, I forced him to pull my night gown up and rip off my panties. Yeah, the tears that fell down my face as he forced himself into me were tears of pleasure...sure."

"Stop it, stop the lies April. You know Ed would never do that."

"Whatever, nice to know you still love that monster more than your own daughter."

"Yes I do, how can I possibly love you when you are so impossible?"

"Oh wow, you admit it, big shocker."

"You're coming home tomorrow. I'll see you then. Goodbye April."

"But...no!" I screamed, she had already hung up. I slammed the phone down. This was bad, Derek's trial started tomorrow.

Stacy

~~~~~

I was working on some paperwork on the deal I had with Krista. It was a lot to get done in a short time. I was so involved in it that I didn't hear Noah come in until he called my name. I looked up.

"Oh...Noah, hey." I said.

"You have time for lunch?" he asked.

"I can't. I have a lot of work to get done."

"You're proving Anna right."

"What?"

"You're becoming too involved...just like your father."

"No I'm not."

"Take it from an outsider, you are." He said.

I sighed, "Well, ok...I guess I can take a lunch break."

"Good, let's go." Noah said. We went across the street to a deli.

"Thanks." I said.

"Anytime, just make me a promise." He said.

"OK."

"Trust me when I tell you that you need a break. I won't bother you unless I feel you're too involved."

I smiled, "OK, I can do that."

"Promise? When I tell you that you need a break you'll drop whatever you're doing and take a break?"

I nodded, "Unless I'm in a meeting I promise."

"Fair enough." He said, "So I hear you got your dad off with only 6 months of time."

"Yeah, which means I have to run the company for 6 months before I can give it back to him."

"Just remember how much you love your graphic designing. Don't give that up."

I nodded, "I won't."

"And don't forget to go out and have fun...like on Saturdays for example...how about this Saturday we go out and have some fun?" Noah asked.

I smiled, "You asking me on a date?"

"Yes, I believe I am. You saying yes?"

"I believe I am." I said.

"Great, pick you up at 7?"

I nodded, "Sounds great."

~~~~~  
Harley

I finished my last lap around the track when I saw Josh was there. I stopped the bike and took off my helmet.

"Hey you." I said.

"Hey, looking good out there." Josh said.

"Good, I have to. DJ is determined to beat me at preliminaries and I'm not about to let him. I have two weeks to make sure I'm on top of my game." I said.

"And you have a week to get ready for the Cyberspace competition, you ready to go practice?" Josh asked.

"In a bit. Noah said he'd meet us at 2, he's having lunch with Stacy right now." I said.

"I'll never get used to Noah and Stacy dating." Josh said.

I laughed, "Be happy for them."

"I am, it's just weird."

"I know, but it's good for both of them." I said

"Yeah, it is."

"So...have you heard from Arissa lately?" I asked.

"No, I think she gave up on trying to get me to forgive her...which is just as well. I don't care if I never see her again."

"I'm sorry you had to go through that."

"It's ok...I mean in all honesty I was never really into her in the first place."

"Really? Someone else on your mind?"

"You could say that. Anyway, I'm sorry about DJ."

"Nah, I wasn't really into him either. He was just a fun way to pass time."

"Yeah..." Josh said.

"Yeah..." I repeated. I noticed we were moving closer and closer. "Josh...I..." I was cut off by Josh pulling my body to his and kissing me. I wrapped my arms around his neck and we kissed for the longest time. It was the most intense kiss I ever shared with anyone and it felt so wonderful.

The kiss finally broke, "Har...I'm sorry."

I focused on trying to catch my breath, "It's ok..."

"We should go to practice."

"Um...yeah, let me put my bike up and we'll go." I said taking off. I couldn't believe that just happened.

~~~~~  
Arissa

Aunt Aria and I had managed to find two of the Gem shards, the best I could figure the Gem had been split into five pieces. Aunt Aria said that it had been said three of the shards ended up in the ocean, but no one knew where the other two had ended up. While Aunt Aria was down in the sub looking for the third shard it was my job to ask around and try to find out what happened to the last two shards.

While I had some alone time I decided to go peek in on Hunter. I was kinda curious what he was up to. I went to the Academy and hid myself in the air vent. I could see and hear Hunter without him seeing me. He was talking to Michelle. "I think it's for the best." Michelle said.

"You really think she'll be safer in Florida?" Hunter asked.

"Yes I do. James is here, not in Florida, and Tony and Mel still have their Ranger powers just in case anything does happen." Michelle said.

"Damn it! I could kill James for this!" Hunter cried.

I listened closer, what had James done?

"I know sweetie, but there's nothing we can do. He already threatened me and Felicity. I can defend myself but Felicity can't. If James did anything to her I could never forgive myself." Michelle said.

"I'll go take him out then our problems will be solved." Hunter said.

"No sweetheart, James is out to kill you, it's too risky. The best thing to do is send Felicity to Florida, where she will be safe, and let the Rangers deal with James. He's not just an ordinary human anymore." Michelle said.

I heard enough. James was obviously after Felicity and Hunter, this was unacceptable. I snuck out of my hiding place and went to track down James, it was time for a heart to heart chat with Aunt Aria's new recruit.

Derek

~~~~~

I went and knocked on the office door.

"Just a second!" Hunter called. I waited for a second until he opened the door, "Oh Derek, come on in."

I went inside. "Is everything ok?"

"Yeah, just discussing if Felicity would be safer if we sent her to stay with her cousin for awhile." Michelle said.

I nodded, "Maybe it would be for the best." I still though Felicity was a brat but she had kinda grown on my. I really would hate for anything to happen to her.

"That's not your problem though. I assume you're here to discuss the trial?" Hunter asked.

I nodded. "Yeah, exactly."

"Ok...well do you have any questions?" Hunter asked.

"What can I expect? You've been through this before, what's going to happen?" I asked.

"Every trial is different, there is no set formula but after going through my own trial and sitting through Melody Grayson's I can tell you a couple of things to expect. First of all they will try to discredit you anyway way the can, try to make your mother into the victim. They will also try to say that she never raped you, they will do this by either saying the sexual encounter never happened or that it was consensual. It depends on if they are trying to clear her or get the charges lowered to statutory and that depends on how good they think the DA's case is. The important thing to remember is to keep your cool, stay honest, and don't let the defense doubt yourself." Hunter explained.

"So basically it comes down to my word against her's?" I asked.

"I'm afraid so." Hunter said.

"It'll be ok though, we'll all be with you through the whole thing." Michelle said.

"Yeah, and my own father will be supporting the rapist." I said bitterly.

Hunter put his hand on my shoulder, "I know that hurts, but try not to let it get to you too much. We're your second family and you just have to focus on that."

I laughed resentfully, "You guys are my only family now. My dad wouldn't care if I changed my last name to Bradley at this point."

Michelle hugged me. "It'll be ok Derek."

"Thanks. Just for being here." I said hugging Michelle then Hunter. There was a knock on the office door.

"Derek, you have a phone call" Tamara said.

"I do? Who is it?" I asked.

"I don't know, I didn't ask. Julia sent me to get you." Tamara said.

"Oh ok. I'll be right there." I said.

"It'll be ok Derek. Just remember to trust yourself." Hunter said.

"I'll walk with you, I have to talk to April." Michelle said.

I nodded and headed back to the lodge to get the phone. Michelle followed and went looking for April when we got there.

April

~~~~~

I was sitting on the sofa in the center of the lodge with my knees to my chin when Michelle came and sat next to me.

"I heard your mom called." She said.

"Yeah." I replied.

"What did she say?" Michelle asked.

"I'm going back to that house tomorrow." I said.

"You're going home?"

"No. I'm leaving home. I'm going back to hell."

"You consider Starlight your home?"

"It's the closest thing I've ever had to a home. I feel safer here than anywhere. I'm not safe at home."

"Because of your step father?"

"Yeah. It'll just happen again. He'll rape me...I can't stop him. He'll beat me into submission if I try to resist."

"You're stronger now than you were then."

"Why? Cause I'm a Ranger? Funny thing is that doesn't matter. I can't fight back. He's too strong. I can kick the shit out of Bots and whatever Arissa throws at me but the biggest monster of them all is too strong for me. God, what were you thinking letting me be a Ranger? Look at what I am? Look who you made the Yellow Ranger."

"You talk like you're not worthy and you are. You've made an amazing Ranger."

"Right. All it did was give me a false sense of strength." I said.

"Maybe we can talk to your mom, give you a scholarship...whatever it takes, maybe we can find a way to keep you here."

"Stop it! Stop trying to give me hope! There is no more hope for me! It's over...I lost, I'm going back to that hell hole where Ed can have his way with me anytime he gets a little horny! There's nothing I can do to stop it. It's my fate!" I screamed.

"No, you're wrong, we can change our fate." Michelle said.

"No! I can't! Hope is for people who have a chance! I don't!" I screamed. Visions of Ed and the stuff he did to me and made me do to him flooded my head. "There's no hope!" I screamed as I got up. I didn't even know what I was doing at that point. I pushed over the coffee table and knocked over a coat rack and anything else standing. It was like I had totally lost control. I hit and punched anything around.

"April!" Michelle cried pulling at my arm. I pulled away and she reached for me again.

"Let me go!" I screamed as she pulled me into a hug.

"No...no I won't." she hugged me tighter and I finally broke down. I started crying and couldn't stop. "Shh..." she whispered as she hugged me and brushed my hair with her hand. "Destiny, Tiff, clean this up. April let's go to the dorm." Michelle said. Tiff and Destiny were staring wide-eyed, they nodded as Michelle guided me to the dorm.

Stacy

~~~~~

Noah took me back to the office and I set back to work. I had a lot to get done. I was in the middle of something when I got a call. Nikki's hearing would be in a couple of days. That was one hearing I planned on attending. I smiled and went back to work. Everything was going great.

"Stacy?"

I looked up and saw Krista. "Hey! Come on in."

"Thanks, I just came to bring you some of the contracts for the deal." She said.

"Oh, thanks. I'll have the lawyers look over them and I'll have them ready for you tomorrow." I said.

"Great. So, I was thinking about it, I really would like to see your dad again...when can I visit him?"

"Well, I can get you a visitor's schedule if you'd like."

"Sure, sounds good."

"Great, I know he'll be glad to see an old friend."

"I can't wait to see him." Krista said smiling.

Harley

~~~~~

“Ok, let’s do it.” Noah said running in.

“About time you got here.” I said.

“Sorry, lunch with Stace went long.” He said.

“How’s that going anyway?” Josh asked.

“Fine. We’re going out Saturday. She’s a great person Josh, I really like her.” Noah said.

“Just be careful. I don’t want to have to be in between my sister and cousin if you guys break up.” Josh said.

“I know...we wouldn’t do that to you.” Noah said.

“Can we please guys? We have a lot of work to do if I’m gonna beat Anna. She has a few years of band practice on me.” I said.

“Oh...right, let’s go.” Josh said taking his place behind the drum set. Noah picked up the bass and I got my guitar and we got to work.

“Good song Har, did you write it?” Josh asked.

“Yeah.” I said.

“Who’s it about?” Noah asked.

“Partly about Jay, partly about...” my voice drifted.

“DJ?” Noah finished.

“Well yeah...sorry, I know he’s your twin...”

“But he was a jerk to you. It’s ok. I know he treated you horrible. I don’t blame you.”

“Thanks Noah.” I said.

“So what made you enter this contest anyway?” Noah asked.

“I think the reason April is being pulled out of Starlight is because of money...I haven’t mentioned this to anyone but if I win the money I’m gonna give it to April so she can stay at Starlight.” I said.

“That’s a great idea...well we’ll win.” Noah said.

“Maybe.” I said.

“We will...we’re the best.” Noah said.

“Thanks.” I said hugging Noah. I looked at Josh, he looked very distant. I started to worry that kiss might have affected our friendship some.

Arissa

~~~~~

“James, you are a dead man.” I said.

“What did I do now?” James asked.

“Your mission was to go after Michelle. Not Felicity. She’s my sister therefore she’s off limits.” I said.

“Harley is your sister too and you’re trying to kill her.” James said.

I pushed James against a wall and pinned him, “Harley is a Ranger, that’s different. Felicity is a baby, she is innocent and defenseless, don’t forget that.”

“I didn’t touch Felicity.” James said.

“Not for lack of trying. I’m serious James, stay the hell away from Felicity...and Hunter.”

“Wait a second, I made it clear from the start Hunter was my target.”

“Fine, go after Hunter, but I’m warning you now, if you touch Hunter or hurt him in anyway I will kill you. He is my father and he’s done nothing to warrant an attack. Michelle and Harley are our only targets.” I said.

“Your aunt won’t like that.”

“My aunt won’t find out we had this chat, if you want to live that is. Are we clear?”

“Crystal.” James said.

“Good. I knew we could come to an agreement.” I said letting him go.

“You’re psycho.”

I nodded. “And don’t you forget it.”

Derek

~~~~~

I picked up the phone, not knowing who to expect.

“Hello?” I asked.

“Derek? Hi, it’s your Uncle Derrick.”

I took a deep breath, I hadn’t heard from my uncle in awhile and I didn’t know why he was calling, my guess was to lay into me like Dad had. “Oh, hi Uncle Derrick.”

“I heard about the trial.”

“You don’t believe me do you?”

“Actually I do. That’s why I’m calling. After talking to your father I got the feeling you didn’t have a ton of family support and I just wanted to let you know I’m behind you.”

“But Mom is your sister…”

“Yeah, and you’re my nephew and godson, I trust you wouldn’t make stuff like this up.”

“Thank you Uncle Derrick. You have no idea how much I needed to hear that.” I said.

“I know what it is to need family support. When I told the family I was gay they all turned their backs on me for a very long time. In fact your mother named you after me as a way of showing she was finally willing to accept me again.” He said.

“Yeah, that must have been hard...how is Uncle Kyle anyway?” I asked.

“Fine. He’s been busy with work but we’re all doing fine here. I heard Conner McKnight is working at Starlight Academy?”

“Yeah. You know Conner?”

“Yeah, we went to high school together. Kyle is best friends with Eric and Tally McKnight too...it was the McKnight twins that introduced Kyle and I.”

“Are you serious? Wow, small world.”

“Yeah it is...anyway...stay strong and know you aren’t alone. I am on your side here...and I hope you win your case. What my sister did to you was horrible and I do hope justice is served.” Uncle Derrick said.

“Thank you so much Uncle Derrick.” I said.

“Don’t mention it. I’ll call you soon.”

“OK...love you, and give Uncle Kyle and the girls my love too.”

“Ok, I will. And we all love you too Derek. Bye.”

“Bye.” I hung up and took a deep breath...I finally felt ready to take on the trial.

April

~~~~~

“I can’t leave Derek before the trial ends.” I said.

“Hold that thought.” Michelle said taking out her cell phone. She dialed a number. “Hello? Mrs. Smith?”

“Michelle? You called my mother?!” I whispered.

She put up a hand to tell me to hold on. “Hi, this is Michelle Bradley from Starlight Academy, I hear you wanted to get April tomorrow?...Right, I understand that.....right, but you see one of her friends here is about to face a major trial and April made a promise to him she’s be here for him through it.....Right, of course, it would be free of charge, consider it a gift since April has been such a joy to have here.....Well perhaps we can work out a scholarship of sorts? We love having April here.....Of course, I’m sure you do miss your daughter.....Another week is all I ask.....Thank you.....Yes of course.....OK thank you.” She hung up, “OK, you can stay through the trial.”

“Are you serious?”

“Yep.”

“Oh my god! Thank you Michelle!” I cried hugging her.

She hugged me back. “See Ape, never lose hope.”

*"Thanks to you, my heart is black.
You've pushed too far, I'm pushing back!
Fiery rage burns in my head, when I get done, you'll wish you're dead.
No more peace, now it's time for war!"
~ "When the Hammer Falls" Wicked Angel*

"Are you ready?" Hunter asked.
"As ready as I'll ever be." I said.
"OK, April? Are you coming?" Michelle asked.
"Yeah. I'm coming." April said.
"Then let's go." Harley said.
"Good luck Derek." Tiffany said hugging me.
"Thanks Tiff." I said hugging her back.
"Go get 'em man, you'll be fine." Chris said.
"You'll do great." Destiny said.
"Yeah, hang in there." Jesse said.
"Thanks guys." I said.
"You guys behave for Josh." Harley said.
"We always do." Chris said.
"Sure..." Josh said, "Don't worry, we'll be fine. Just focus on Derek. Good luck."
"Thanks Josh." I said as I followed the Bradleys and April. We loaded into Hunter's Durango and headed for the courthouse.
"Felicity is with Tommy right?" Hunter asked as we drove.
"Yeah, Kim picked her up this morning." Michelle said.
"OK. Derek, remember what we talked about, just stay cool and don't doubt yourself." Hunter said.
"I know." I said as April reached over and held my hand.
"You'll be fine." She said.
I smiled and squeezed her hand. I was so glad she was with me.

When we got to the courtroom I saw my parents. My father glared at me and my mother looked at me with a pained look. I took a deep breath.
"You'll do fine, just be strong." April whispered as she kissed my cheek. I hugged her and then went with Hunter to sit with the DA at the counsel table. Michelle, April, and Harley sat in the first row of seats in the public seating area.
"Good morning Derek, are you ready?" Mr. Adams asked.
"Yes sir, as ready as I'm gonna get." I said.
"OK, we present our case first. I'm going to call your mother to the stand then Hunter then the social worker that worked on this case then you. Is that ok?" Mr. Adams asked.
"I guess so..."
"Ok. The judge will be in here any minute."

April

~~~~~

I watched Derek preparing for the trial. It reminded me of what I went through with Ed. Of course he never went to trial. The case was dismissed in the investigation stages.

*"Your honor, this case is erroneous, how can we take the word of a teenager who is nothing more than a prostitute over a man who has no past criminal record?" the defense lawyer asked.  
"What? Why do you think I ran away and had to sell myself? I was trying to escape him, that's why!" I cried.  
"April, that's enough. Your honor, my husband is a wonderful man and would never do anything like my daughter is suggesting. She's a drama queen that is trying to get attention." Mom said.*

*"How can you defend the man who raped your own daughter?!" I cried.*

*"That's enough April." Mom said.*

*"Your honor, there is no evidence that warrants taking this case to trial, this is obviously a case of a dramatic teenager. I feel it is this teenager that needs help. May I recommend sending her to alternative education school rather than juvenile hall." The lawyer said.*

*"What? What did I do to go to juvie?!" I asked.*

*"Prostitution is against the law in California." The lawyer said.*

*"I agree with you councilor. I recommend April Snyder spend the next 12 months at Starlight Academy, it's a new alternative education school that I believe will help her. The case against Ed Smith is dismissed." The judge said.*

*"NO!" I screamed.*

"April? Wake up, the trial is starting, are you with us?" Harley asked.

"What? Oh...yeah...sorry." I said snapping from my flashback. I watched as Derek's mom took the stand.

Derek

~~~~~

I took a deep breath as my mother was sworn in. Somehow I didn't think she had any intention of telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I watched as the DA stood up and began to question her.

"Mrs. Hall, you are aware of the charges against you?" Mr. Adams asked.

"Yes sir." Mom said.

"Have you ever touched your son, Derek Hall, in any way that can be construed as sexual in nature?"

"No sir."

"Have you ever gone into Derek's room and forced him to undress?"

"No sir."

"You have never forced your son to engage in sexual intercourse with you?"

"No sir, I have not. He is my son, why would I do something so horrible?"

"Why would your son make up such accusations?"

"My son was brought up on drug charges and was sent to Starlight Academy instead of juvenile hall. It is my belief that in his therapy sessions that Derek was led to believe that I abused him and he now believes it to be the truth."

"Derek is 17 years old, it is uncommon for a young adult of his age to be led to any belief."

"Then he made this up to justify his drug use, I do not have all the answers Mr. Adams, I just know I would never touch my son in any sexual way."

"No further questions at this time."

I sighed, she lied through her teeth. The defense didn't cross examine so Hunter was called to the stand next and sworn in.

"Mr. Bradley, please explain a little bit about your school."

"I am one of the two head masters and owners of Starlight Academy. My wife, Michelle Bradley, and I set up this school to help troubled youth."

"Please define 'troubled youth'"

"There is no clear definition but generally speaking it is teenagers that have fallen off into a path of trouble, be it drug use, gang activity, or some other destructive behavior. Starlight Academy has various types of student from those who have been abused to those who have eating disorders. It varies student to student."

"And it is your job to council these students?"

"Yes. We try to dig into the source of the problem and help the student realize there is a better, non destructive way to handle their problems."

"And these counseling sessions are confidential?"

"Yes, unless there is some sort of criminal activity that we are required by law to report, such as child abuse, be it sexual or physical."

"Please explain how you came to discover Derek's accusations against Mrs. Hall."

"I could see Derek was not being open. He would try to dodge questions about his family life by either joking, using

sarcasm, or just not speaking at all. Finally, he opened up to one of his fellow students and told her that his mother had sexually abused him. With the encouragement and support of his classmate he came to me to specifically tell me his story.”

“And what did Derek say?”

“That his mother had forced him into sexual intercourse many times in the past several years.”

“No further questions.”

The defense attorney decided to cross examine this time.

“Mr. Bradley, is it possible that when you get a large number of so-called ‘troubled youths’ together that they start to concoct stories to ‘one up’ each other?”

“It has been known to happen on rare occasions.”

“Is it possible Derek made up this story to justify his drug use as Mrs. Hall suggested?”

“I suppose anything is possible but I highly doubt that is the case here.”

“And how did you come to this conclusion? Did you talk to Mrs. Hall or are you taking Derek’s word on it?”

“It is not my job to get both sides, I am not a social worker, my job is to listen to Derek and help him through this.”

“So there is no way you can possibly have an objective view on the situation.”

“Like I said, it isn’t my job.”

“No further questions.”

I sighed, I had a feeling this wasn’t going well. There was no hard evidence. I asked Mr. Adams if I could go take a walk during the social worker’s testimony. I needed air. He agreed. I went and sat outside the courthouse. April sat next to me a minute later.

“She’s gonna get off.” I said.

“No she won’t, you don’t know that.” April said.

“It’s my word against her’s and she’s a respected member of the community, they are making me look like nothing more than a druggie that belongs in juvie.” I said.

“We both know that isn’t true.”

“It doesn’t matter what we think. The jury is the one convicting her.”

“It’ll be ok Derek, it’s not over yet. You still have to testify...just be honest and I’m sure justice will be served. Now come on, I’m sure they’ll need you soon.”

“Ok...thanks for coming here April, I know this can’t be easy for you.”

“Hey, we’re friends. I’d do anything for you Derek.” She said hugging me.

I held her for the longest time. It felt so good to have her in my arms.

We finally went back into the courtroom, and not a moment too soon either, the social worker was stepping off the stand and I was called. I walked up and was sworn in. Unlike my mother I would tell the whole truth.

“Derek, can you please tell us your version of what you claim your mother did to you?”

“Yes sir, how much detail you want?” I asked.

“As much as you’re comfortable with sharing.”

“You asked for it.” I said as I took a deep breath. It was time for the jury to hear the whole horrid tale in graphic detail, detail that I couldn’t make up if I tried. It was time to tell the stuff I hadn’t even told Hunter. I closed my eyes and took another breath before opening my eyes and starting. “Well, each time was slightly different, but basically she would wait until late at night after my father was sleeping, usually between midnight and 2:30 in the morning. She would come in my room and wake me up, but she wouldn’t turn a light on. I had a small nightlight in my room, each room had one, and that’s how she would navigate. After the first few times I knew why she was there when she’d wake me up at that time. She would close my door and lock it then pull the top sheet and comforter off my bed so nothing covered me. She’d sit on the bed and reach her hand under my shirt, if I happened to be sleeping in one, other wise her hands would roam around my upper body. She would start kissing my neck then tell me to stand up. If I would refuse she’d slap me across the face. Once I was standing up next to the bed she would command me to take all of my clothes off so that I was naked then she would pull me back into the bed and pin me down. If I was being particularly obstinate that night she would tie me to my bed posts with a rope and undress me herself. Either way, once I was naked she would undress herself and climb on top of me. If I wasn’t tied up she would give me orders about what to do. Sometimes she would tell me to touch her breasts, other times she would want me to finger her or sometimes just French kiss her, I remember a couple of times she wanted me to perform oral sex on her. As I got older and fought her more I would end up tied up

more frequently and she seemed to enjoy performing oral sex on me. This is all what she considered foreplay. After that part was over she would lower herself onto me so that my penis penetrated her and we would have sexual intercourse. This would go on until she reached a climax, and she would always make sure I ejaculated, then she would get off me, get dressed, and clean me up and tell me to get dressed and then make my bed up and tuck me in before going back to her own room. During the day it was as if none of it ever happened, until the next time she decided she wanted me.” I finished. I was focusing on my breathing so I didn’t break down on the witness stand.

“Did this occur every night?”

“No, normally once every couple of month, unless my dad would go out of town, then she’d take advantage of it. She would make me sleep in her bed with her and it would go on all night, every night he was gone.”

“How old were you when this started?”

“The first time she did this I was only 9.”

“And it never stopped?”

“No.”

“Is this why you turned to drugs?”

“Yes. It was a way for me to cover up the pain.”

“Do you feel your time at Starlight Academy has helped you?”

“Yes I do. It’s made me stronger and more able to deal with life.”

“No further questions.”

I took a deep breath and braced myself for the defense attorney.

“Derek, your story is very graphic indeed, if it is true, as you say, why didn’t you every fight back? Especially once you were a teenager. You’re an athlete, surely you are stronger than your mother.”

“She scared me when I was a kid. She told me that if I ever told or tried to stop her then she’d...” I took another deep breath, “...that she’d make me pay.”

“What does that mean?”

“That she’s kill me, she showed me a gun one time. I was afraid she would shoot me if I ever fought too hard or told anyone.”

“Do you really believe that a mother would kill her own son?”

“She raped her own son didn’t she?”

“Derek, you were on a variety of drugs, including hallucinogens, is it possible this whole scenario occurred in your head while you were in a hallucinatory state?”

“No.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes! I’m sure! I know what happened!”

“Isn’t that the point of hallucinogens? It skews reality?”

I couldn’t speak because I felt myself losing control of my tears.

“No further questions.”

I stepped off the witness stand and a recess was called. Hunter hugged me.

“You did well. I’m proud of you.” He said.

“I don’t know if I can take it if she gets off.” I said crying.

“I know...you’ve done well though...you really got graphic in your account of things.”

“The jury needed to hear it.”

“You’re right, they did.”

“Where’s April?”

“She said she was going to get some air.” Michelle said.

April

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After seeing the way the defense was trying to discredit Derek I knew I had to do something. Ed might have gotten away but I wouldn’t let Mrs. Hall get away with what she did to Derek. I had to act fast. I talked to every cop in the building but they said there was nothing they could do. I had one last chance. I went to a pay phone and called Detective Scott. He was like Michelle’s brother and his partner, Detective Oliver was Michelle’s brother. After talking to

Detective Scott for a little while he agreed to help me. I caught a cab and went to go meet him a couple of towns away at Derek's house.

When I got there Detective Scott was already there with a search warrant. He had called in some favors to get it fast. "OK, let's see what we can find." He said as we entered the house. We did a lot of searching but hadn't found anything when I heard someone come in the house.

"Who are you?" A man asked me.

"April Snyder, I'm with Detective Scott, we're searching this house."

"For clues against Tara Hall? I think I can help. Let's chat." The man said.

We talked for awhile and the man agreed to come testify in court. Just as I was ready to give up hope of finding clues Detective Scott came out with a box that was locked in a safe. It was a locked box full of naked pictures of Derek. In some he was tied up just as he described in his story. A picture was worth a thousand words and we just found a locked box full of pictures. Between the new witness I had and this box there was no way Tara Hall would ever see the light of day again.

Detective Scott took me back to the courthouse and I found the DA. I explained my new findings to him and he thanked me for my help.

"Good work Ms. Snyder, I think we have this case all wrapped up."

"That's what I was hoping." I said as I went and sat back down.

Derek

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After the recess Mr. Adams said he had a way to wrap this case up but he didn't have time to fill me in before the judge came back in. I only had enough time to tell him 'do whatever it takes'. He nodded and stood up.

"Your honor, new evidence and a new witness has come up that I feel is vital to this case if you will allow it." Mr. Adam said.

"Very well Mr. Adams, I will allow it but it must prove to be vital." The judge said.

"Yes your honor. First I would like to call an additional witness to the stand."

"You may."

"OK, I call Mr. Derrick..."

'Oh great, me again, what else can I say?' I thought to myself.

"...Holmes to the stand"

'Derrick Holmes? Uncle Derrick?' I watched as he entered the courtroom and took the stand. He was sworn in. I was totally confused now.

"Mr. Holmes please tell us your relation to the defendant." Mr. Adams asked.

"She is my older sister."

"OK, now please tell the court why you have come here today and insisted on testifying."

"Because I feel that it would be unjust for a jury to make a ruling without hearing my story."

"Please tell the story you came here to tell us."

Uncle Derrick took a deep breath, "When I was 11 my sister was 16. From that time until the time she moved out when she was 18 she would periodically come in my room and force me to have sexual intercourse with her."

*"Hope dangles on a string
Like slow spinning redemption
Winding in and winding out
The shine of it has caught my eye
And roped me in
So mesmerizing, so hypnotizing
I am captivated, I am*

*Vindicated
I am selfish
I am wrong
I am right
I swear I'm right
I swear I knew it all along
And I am flawed, but I am cleaning up so well
I am seeing in me now the things you swore you saw yourself"
~ "Vindicated" Dashboard Confessional*

OK so I was more than a little shocked by Uncle Derrick's confession that my mother had raped him too. It wasn't what I was expecting.

"She would come into my room after our parents were asleep and tell me to strip of my clothes then she would force me to have intercourse with her. If I tried to fight her or stop her she said she'd tell the police I raped her and it would be my word against her's so I kept quiet. After finding out what she did to my nephew I knew I couldn't keep quiet any more."

"And so you've decided to come forward."

"Yes. I couldn't stand by and watch my nephew be torn to bits when he is the victim."

"No further questions, however I would like to submit some hard evidence into the court."

"I'll allow it." The judge said.

"I present exhibit A. This box, which was locked and then locked in a safe in Mrs. Hall's home and obtained with a search warrant, contains numerous nude photographs of Derek Hall. As you can see your honor some of the photographs even show Derek tied to the bed as he described." Mr. Adam said.

My jaw dropped. There was a box of naked pictured of me? And it was in the courtroom?

"Your honor, may I ask for a short recess in light of this evidence?" the defense attorney asked.

"Yes, 15 minutes." The judge banged his gavel.

"Looks like you're gonna win." Hunter said.

"This is great!" April said coming up behind me.

"How dare you. You had no right." I said glaring at her.

Stacy

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I got myself in to see Nikki right before her hearing by pretending to be the grieving step-daughter.

"Well, hello Nikki." I said when I got in there.

"You brat...this is all your fault!" she cried.

"Now, now Nikki, better watch the temper."

"Why did you do this to me? What have I ever done to you?"

"You've done everything possible to make sure I never had a relationship with my father, well guess what, you lose. My father loves me more than he loves you...you were an arm ornament to him, I'm his daughter. You thought you could take down this family...well look where it got you."

"I did love you father at one time but he killed it."

“Bullshit, you never loved him.” I said.

“I did, but I wouldn’t expect you to understand that...you’re just like your father, not capable of love...it’s funny, you’ve fought your whole life to change your father, he’s the one that ended up changing you. You’re just like him now.”

“That isn’t true.”

“It is very true...sad that you don’t even see it.”

“Whatever. I just came to tell you I hope you rot in hell. See you in the courtroom Nikki.” I said turning and walking out.

I was expecting some dramatic, elaborate defense when Nikki entered the courtroom, to my surprise I got something dramatic and elaborate, but it was no defense.

“Your honor, I would like to speak before I make a formal plea.” Nikki started.

“You may.” The judge said.

“Thank you. I know what I’ve done is horrible. I’ve betrayed the man I love in the most horrible way. I was going to let him sacrifice himself for a mistake I made. I almost killed Harley Bradley and there is no fixing a mistake like that, no matter how much I would like to. Nothing I can say or do will undo the damage my actions have caused. To Harley, words can not express my remorse. To my husband, whom I do love, I am sorry for the pain I caused. To my stepdaughter, Stacy, who is here today, I am sorry for hurting you. I love you like my own child and there is nothing I wouldn’t do for you. On that note I plead no contest and am willing to accept whatever punishment is handed down to me.” Nikki finished.

I rolled my eyes and fought the urge to start clapping. After all, that was an award winning performance.

“Thank you for your words Mrs. Fernandez, I am ready to hand down your sentence. I sentence you to life in prison without parole. Case closed.” The judge banged the gavel and Nikki’s jaw dropped. I guess that performance was to get her a lighter sentence. I laughed and shook my head as Nikki was taken away.

I got up and headed for the prison. Krista would be visiting my dad and I agreed to accompany her.

April

~~~~~

Derek seemed really mad at me so I didn’t go near him.

“What did I do?” I asked Harley, “I was only trying to help.”

“I know that, and so does Derek, he’s probably just embarrassed. Wouldn’t you be if a box of naked pictures of you showed up?” Harley replied.

“Well, yeah I guess so.”

“Just give him some time to think about everything. He’ll come around.”

“I hope so.”

“You care about him a lot don’t you?” Harley asked.

I nodded, “Yeah, I do.”

“Well don’t worry, cause I think he cares a lot about you too.”

“You do?”

“Yeah, I’ve seen the way he looks at you.”

“Did you see the way he just looked at me? That was hatred.”

“No, that was massive humiliation, he will think it was worth it when he sees his mom taken away in cuffs.”

“I hope you’re right Har.”

“Of course I am. I always am.”

I forced a laugh, “Let’s hope so.”

Derek

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I was so embarrassed it wasn’t even funny. I was glad when Uncle Derrick came and sat with me.

“You ok?” he asked.

“Yeah, I guess.” I replied.

“Pretty embarrassing to do this in front of so many strangers huh?”

“Yeah. It is.”

“I know...but it’s for the best. That girlfriend of yours sure went to a lot of trouble to make sure your case had enough evidence.”

“She isn’t my girlfriend and she had no right to bring those pictures in.”

“You’re mad at her?”

“Well, yeah!”

“Well you shouldn’t be...those pictures probably saved your case. It added much needed proof to your story. Without that the odds were Tara would get off scott free.” Uncle Derrick said.

“Derrick, how dare you come here, you aren’t even part of this family.” Dad said charging over.

“I am part of this family and I came to help my nephew.” Uncle Derrick said.

“You stupid fag, how could you do this to your own sister?” Dad said.

“Derek is your son Steven, now that you’ve seen proof how can you defend Tara?” Uncle Derrick said.

“How could Derek come forward? This is a disaster, everything is ruined. Our family is ruined. You couldn’t just keep your mouth shut.” Dad said rushing off.

I hugged Uncle Derrick, “Thank you for being here.”

“Anytime.”

“Where’s Uncle Kyle?” I asked.

“At home in Blue Bay. I decided to come on such short notice he couldn’t get away.”

“Well I’m glad you came.”

“Come on, the judge is about to call the court to order.” Uncle Derrick said leading me back into the courtroom.

Stacy

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I got to the prison and met up with Krista.

“Hey girl.” I said hugging her.

“Hey, you ready?” she asked.

“Yep, let’s go.” I said. We went in and got visitor passes then went to the room they would be bringing Dad into. When they brought him in I hugged him. “Hi Dad, I brought an old friend who wanted to see you.”

“Hi Trent, it’s good to see you again, I just wish it were under difference circumstances.” Krista said.

“Krista? Wow, I haven’t seen you in years.” Dad said hugging her.

“I know, you look good, all things considered.” Krista said hugging him back.

“You look amazing. Is that a real leather jacket you’re wearing? I thought you were into being Miss Earth Protector.” Dad said.

“I gave that up awhile back. Protecting cows isn’t gonna help make my company a profit.”

“Wow, you’ve changed.”

“From the looks of things I’m not the only one. Crooked business Trent? I would have thought you’d be smarter than that.”

“My business was sinking, I had to do something.”

“Should have called me. We could have worked something out, like I did with Stacy. You should be proud of her, she’s got a great deal for Fernandez Industries. We’ll both make a lot of money off of it.”

“Really? That’s great news.”

I nodded, “Yes, I think you’ll be pleased when you step back into your position as CEO.”

“When do you get out of here?” Krista asked.

“Well, officially, 6 months, my lawyer says if I behave there’s a chance I can get off after 3 months.” Dad said.

“That’s great. Well I guess I’ll just have to come see you every week until then.” Krista said.

“You want to see me again?”

“Yeah...it’s really nice seeing an old friend.”

“And I like having the company.”

I smiled at them. They were so into each other.

“You know, I never said anything, but I always had a crush on in high school.” Krista said.

“Why didn’t you tell me?” Trent asked.

“Cause I dated Conner first and he was your friend, besides Kira was kind of a friend and you were dating her.” Krista said.

Ok, they had forgotten I was there.

“That might have changed if you said something.” Dad said.

I rolled my eyes. Could they flirt any harder? The ink on Dad and Nikki’s divorce papers hadn’t even dried yet and he was already trying to land the next hot chick in bed...I knew that’s what he was after, the second he was out of here

Krista and he would be sharing a bed...ewww, gross...bad mental image. I had to do something. “OK, I’m just gonna be going and let you guys catch up.” I said.

“Oh ok, thanks for coming sweetie.” Dad said hugging me.

“Anytime, I love you Dad.”

“I love you too.”

“Bye Krista, see you for lunch tomorrow?”

“Sure, see you then. Bye Stace. Krista said.

I left the prison with a smile. Sick as the thought of my dad in bed with Krista was I was glad he’d finally be with someone I could stand. Krista was becoming a friend. I wouldn’t mind having her as step mommy number 2 if things went that way.

Derek

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I sat next to Hunter and Mr. Adams as the court was called to order.

“Permission to speak?” the defense attorney asked.

“Permission granted counselor.” The judge said.

“In light of the new evidence my client would like to change her plead from not guilty to no contest.”

“Mrs. Hall, you understand that you will be sentenced as if you plead guilty.” The judge said.

“Yes sir.” Mom said.

“OK, then I will call on final recess while I determine sentencing. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you are dismissed. Court will reconvene in 15 minutes.” The judge said banging his gavel.

I sat there in shock. I couldn’t believe this was happening. My mother was going to pay for what she did...

“We did it.” Hunter said hugging me.

I hugged him back. I was still in shock.

“Doesn’t feel like you thought it would does it?” he asked.

“No. I thought I’d feel some relief...it’s just like a hollow victory.”

“I know, because what’s done is done. It happened and no amount of jail time can undo that.”

“Yeah.”

“I know, but she is going to pay. Take some solace in that...and you have a pretty great friend to help you through this.”

Hunter said looking over at April who looked very sad.

“I should apologize shouldn’t I?” I asked.

“Well, your mother would probably be walking free if she hadn’t helped you. You decide.”

I nodded, “Thanks Hunter.”

I walked over to April and sat next to her.

“Hey...” I said.

“Hey...” she said.

“Listen...April...I’m sorry I went off on you...I just...I was embarrassed and I took it out on you.”

“No, you were right, I never should have gotten involved.”

“No, I was wrong. If you hadn’t stepped in there would be no hard evidence and my mom might have gotten off. I’ll live through the humiliation, the important thing is she’s going to prison. Thank you April...”

“For what?”

“For being such an amazing friend...I couldn’t have made it through this without you.” I said hugging her.

Stacy

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I got back to my office and found a vase of flowers on my desk. A dozen white roses, my favorite. I smiled and looked for a card. I pulled the card out and read it. "Just thinking of you. ~ Noah" I giggled. Noah was so sweet. I decided to take the rest of the day off and do something special for him. I dialed his cell phone number.

"Hello?"

"Noah, it's Stace, listen, if you don't have dinner plans would you like to come eat with me at Fernandez Estate tonight?" I asked.

"I'd love to."

"OK, meet me there at 6:30?" I asked.

"See you then."

"Ok. Bye." I hung up and headed over there. I instructed the chef to prepare all of Noah's favorite foods then I went to the dining room and set it up. Tonight would be a night Noah would never forget.

Derek

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The judge finally returned to hand down the sentence.

"Tara Hall, you are hereby sentenced to 15 years in California State Women's Correctional facility. Case dismissed."

I stood up and Hunter guiding me from the courtroom. My father came running over to me.

"I hope you are happy! Look what you've done." He said.

"She raped me! How can you defend her?" I asked.

"Because she is my wife."

"And I am your son...or at least I was. Take a good look at me cause you're never going to see me again. Let's go Hunter."

We went back to his Jeep and piled in.

"I'm proud of you." Michelle said.

"Yeah, you handled yourself really well." Harley said.

"Where did my Uncle Derrick go?" I asked.

"He said he was going back to his hotel and that he'd check in on you tomorrow." Hunter said.

"Oh ok." I said. I was really looking forward to getting back to the Academy.

Stacy

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That night when Noah got there I guided him to the table.

"Wow, this looks amazing." He said.

"Thank you." I said as we sat down.

"Nice place."

"Yeah, my dad was involved in every step of the building process."

"Awesome. So you have like a real wait staff?"

"Yeah, I chef and everything."

"That's cool." He said.

After we ate I dismissed the staff and took Noah on a tour of the house.

"Wow, a pool, a pool house, 9 rooms, 7 bathrooms...this is insane." He said.

"Yeah, and this is my favorite room. This is the master suite." I said showing him in.

"This is huge! There's a Jacuzzi in the middle of the room."

I nodded, "And a bed on the other side of the room. This room is bigger than the living room."

"It's amazing."

"Would you like to try out the Jacuzzi?" I asked.

"I would but I don't have my swim trunks."

"That's ok...I don't think we'll need them." I said kissing him.

He smiled, "I like the way you think."

"So, I ask again, you wanna tryout that Jacuzzi?"

This time he smirked, “You bet.”

Derek

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When we got back to the Academy Hunter asked if I would mind sitting through group to fill the others in. I agreed and we all sat around, I told the others everything that happened.

“That’s awesome Derek!” Tiffany said hugging me.

“Totally, I’m so proud of you.” Destiny said.

“Way to go man.” Chris said high fiving me.

“Yeah, congratulations.” Jesse said.

“I can’t take all the credit. April helped.” I said.

“Way to go Ape.” Chris said hugging her.

“Yeah, you rock, that was really great.” Tiffany said.

“Now if you’ll excuse me, I could use some air.” I said getting up. I went off into the woods a bit before sitting down. A few minutes later April sat next to me.

“It’s really over.” I said.

“I’m glad at least one of us saw justice get served.” April said.

“Maybe some day...”

“No...it’ll never happen. Not for me. I have to go back to that hell.”

I put my arm around her. “No...he won’t touch you again. I won’t allow it.”

“You can’t stop it Derek...I wish you could but you can’t...no one can.”

“We’ll see about that.” I said as she rested her head on my chest. I swore to myself right then that April would never hurt like that again.

*\*AN: In order to add to the effect of this story I have created an MP3 file with song sample from all 6 songs presented in this story. The lyrics sampled in the file are **bolded** in the story. You can listen to the file [here](#). A list of the songs in the file is at the end of this story.*

PRWC 35- “Almost Famous”

*“Fame  
I'm gonna live forever  
I'm gonna learn how to fly high  
I feel it coming together  
People will see me and cry  
Fame  
I'm gonna make it to heaven  
Light up the sky like a flame  
Fame  
I'm gonna live forever  
Baby remember my name”  
~ “Fame” Irene Cara*

I took a deep breath. This would be the first time I had ever sung in public and I knew there were a lot of people who would be comparing me to my mom when they heard me. I had to remind myself that didn't matter. All that mattered were my reasons for doing this in the first place. I hadn't told anyone, except for a few select people, about this. My parents, all three, were on the long list of people I hadn't told. Mom would make a much bigger deal of my singing than needed to be made of it. I didn't wanna hear it.

“Har? Are you ready?” Josh asked walking up behind me.

“Yeah, sure am, let's go.” I said following him to the car. We went to Cyberspace and met up with Noah. “Thank you so much for doing this with me guys.”

“Anytime Har.” Noah said.

“Yeah, anytime.” Josh echoed.

“So what's the performance order?” I asked.

“Let's go ask Savannah, she's running the contest.” Noah said.

“Um, I'll go ask, you guys can set up.” Josh said.

“Ok, will do.” I said as I started working on tuning my guitar.

“Ok, you're up first Har.” Josh said coming back.

“Awesome, good to get it over with.” I said.

Anna

~~~~~

“Ok guys, there's gonna be some tough competition but we can do this. Just play you best and I'm sure we'll win it.” I said. I was trying to get my band pumped.

“You didn't mention Harley Bradley was going to be in the contest.” Maggie, my bassist, said.

“So? Does it matter?” I asked.

“It's just, well she's Michelle Morris's daughter.” Peg, my drummer, said.

“And?” I asked.

“And Michelle Morris is a living legend.” Maggie said.

I sighed, “So? Michelle is the legend, not Harley. Harley has never stepped foot on stage before. We have years of experience on her.”

“Then why Josh working with her instead of us?” Maggie asked.

“Because he's got a thing for her.” I said.

“And Noah?” Peg asked.

“Noah is too nice for his own good. Harley asked and he couldn't say no. Now can we please focus on our own

performance here? We're going second, remember your parts and stay calm. Just pretend it's like any other Cyberspace performance." I said.

"Anna, that's easier said than done." Maggie said.

"Just focus." I commanded. I really needed a new band.

Harley

~~~~~

"OK, it's time. Savannah is about to announce us." I said.

"Just take a deep breath, you'll be fine." Josh said.

"Yeah, you are really good Har. Just go and do your thing." Noah said.

"Thank you everyone for coming to the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Cyberspace Talent Search. The winner today gets a prize check of \$5000 dollars. I'm Savannah James, your hostess for the show, so let's get it going. Please welcome our first contestant, Harley Bradley."

I walked out on stage and strapped on my guitar. "Hey there Reefsides! Thank you everyone for coming out this afternoon. This song is one for all the stupid guys out there!" I announced, causing a massive female applause. I took a breath and Josh started the song off. I started playing my part and then started with the vocals:

*"Every time you go away  
It actually kinda makes my day  
Every time you leave you slam the door  
You pick your words so carefully  
You hate to think you're hurting me  
You leave me laughing on the floor*

*Cause I don't give it up  
I don't give a damn  
What you say about that?  
You know  
I don't give it up  
I don't give a damn  
What you say about that?  
You know  
I'm not gonna cry  
About some stupid guy  
A guy who thinks he's all that*

*I thought we were just hanging out  
So why'd you kiss me on the mouth?  
You thought the way you taste would get me high  
You went to all your friends to brag  
Guys are always such a drag  
Don't you know the reason that I kissed you was to say goodbye*

*Cause I don't give it up  
I don't give a damn  
What you say about that?  
You know  
I don't give it up  
I don't give a damn  
What you say about that?*

***You know  
I'm not gonna cry  
About some stupid guy  
A guy who thinks he's all that***

*Hanging, hanging out  
I am simply hanging, hanging out  
I am simply hanging  
So why'd you kiss me on the mouth?  
Don't you know that I...*

*I don't give a damn about you  
I won't give it up  
Not for you  
I don't give a damn about you  
I won't give it up  
Not for you  
I'm not gonna cry  
About some stupid guy  
A guy who thinks he's all that*

*I don't give it up  
I don't give a damn  
What you say about that?  
You know  
I don't give it up  
I don't give a damn  
What you say about that?"*

Anna

~~~~~

Harley was good. I admit it...ok she was very good. When she got off stage Savannah took the stage again.

“Thank you Harley, next please welcome a Cyberspace favorite, Anna McKnight and her band Sky High!”

We went on stage like every other time we performed here. “Hey Cyberspace, are you ready to rock?” the crowd cheered, “That’s what I like to hear! Let’s do it!” Peg counted us off and we went into our song, which happened to be one of my favorites because I wrote it about Aaron, obviously by the lyrics:

***“You're the kind of friend
Who always bends when I'm broken
But remember when
You took my heart and put it back together again
I've been wasting time with ruinous guys
But now it's over
Let me tell you why I'm through
I've got someone new
Who's just like you***

***You're it
You're the ultimate
It's automatic***

*I'm sure of it
No lie
So don't even try
To tell me that you're not the guy
Cause I've been waiting all my life
For someone just like you
But you're it
You're the ultimate
You*

*You're the kind of guy
Whose hand in mine
Sends shivers up and down my spine
You took my heart and put it back together again
You're the kind of guy
That knows my mind
But now it's my turn
You've been right in front of me
Everything I need
Why didn't I see*

*You're it
You're the ultimate
It's automatic
I'm sure of it
No lie
So don't even try
To tell me that you're not the guy
Cause I've been waiting all my life
For someone just like you
But you're it
You're the ultimate
You*

*You're it
You're the ultimate
It's automatic
I'm sure of it
No lie
So don't even try
To tell me that you're not the guy*

*You're it
You're the ultimate
It's automatic
I'm sure of it
No lie
So don't even try
To tell me that you're not the guy
Cause I've been waiting all my life
For someone just like you
But you're it
You're the ultimate
You*

*You're it
You're the ultimate
You"*

I was pleased with our over all performance. It would have gone better, but we did very well. When we finished I stepped off the stage. Nothing could have prepared me for the next performer. I could tell by Harley and Josh's faces that they were in even more shock than me.

"Thank you Anna. Our next performer is..." Savannah paused and looked at the name again, "...um...our next performer is...Arisa...Bradley?"

Arisa

~~~~~  
OK, close your mouth. It's not that shocking is it? OK maybe it is. Maybe I should explain myself here...first of all I needed a last name and most Earthlings take their father's right? Well that made sense to me. As for why I entered the contest to begin with? I was sick of looking for that damn Gem and I needed some fun. What's more fun than freaking out your new sister by showing up where she least expects it then not even attacking? Plus I really was a musician of sorts. I had written poems for quite some time, then one day I just began to set them to music...that is all a song is right? Anyway, the entire thing was worth it when I saw the looks on Josh, Anna, Savannah and Harley's faces.

After Savannah announced me, which it looked almost painful for her to do, I took the stage with the house band. I didn't bother to talk to the crowd before I started. That was lame. I just started playing my guitar and went into the song. It was one I wrote a couple of weeks ago after a battle. I was having a particularly depressing night.

*"I wish there was a photograph  
That showed me here with you  
And I could kiss the photograph  
And make my wish come true  
I wish I was a humming dove  
So I could sing so sweet  
I wish that I could steal the moon  
And kiss it with my feet  
I wish I was a remedy  
That you were meant to take  
A product of a recipe  
That no one had to bake  
I wish I could forget that day  
The hurting in my heart  
And wash our mouths with listerine  
To make a brand new start*

*Watching the rain fall down  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain fall down  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain fall down*

*I wish there was a fairytale  
That turned into my life  
So I could kiss prince charming  
And be his princess wife*

*I wish the voices in my head  
Would leave my ears alone  
So my eyes would stop there water bleeding  
And I could find a home  
I wish there was a ruby rose  
Where I spread my wings with you  
So I could inhale the perfume  
And be the morning dew  
I wish the raindrops on the glass  
Would let me join their dance  
I'd spin and twirl and laugh with them  
And drown my thoughts per chance*

*Watching the rain fall down  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain fall down  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain fall*

*Lalala I kinda like it  
Lalala I kinda like it this way*

*Watching the rain  
Watching the rain*

*Watching the rain fall down  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain fall down  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain  
Watching the rain"*

Harley

~~~~~

OK, much as it pains me to admit it, Arissa was really good. What bothered me is what she was doing there in the first place. After she got off stage I went over to her.

"Nice work...now what the hell are you doing her?" I asked.

"Same as you Sis. Partaking in the contest fun." She said.

"I'm not your sister, get that through your head...and you better only be here for the contest cause if you stir up any trouble I'll take you out myself."

"Yeah, like that'll happen. You've had so much luck defeating me so far."

"I'm serious Arissa. You best behave." I said walking away. I went back and sat down. I didn't hear Savannah announce the next singer but I took notice when she started to sing. She was really good...but her song...it was...suggestive. I hadn't seen this girl before...at least not that I could remember. She seemed to have some serious issues though, as evident in her lyrics:

*"You can dress me up in diamonds
You can dress me up in dirt
You can throw me like a lineman*

*I like it better when it hurts
Oh, I have waited here for you
I have waited*

*You make me wanna lala in the kitchen on the floor
I'll be your French maid where I meet you at the door
I'm like an alley cat
Drink the milk up I want more
You make me wanna
You make me wanna scream*

*You can meet me on an airplane
Or in the back of the bus
You can throw me like a boomerang
I'll come back and beat you up
Oh, I have waited here for you
Don't keep me waiting*

*You make me wanna lala in the kitchen on the floor
I'll be your French maid where I meet you at the door
I'm like an alley cat
Drink the milk up I want more
You make me wanna*

*You make me wanna lala in the kitchen on the floor
I'll be your French maid where I meet you at the door
I'm like an alley cat
Drink the milk up I want more
You make me wanna
You make me wanna scream*

*I feel safe with you
I can be myself tonight
It's alright with you
Cause you hold my secrets tight
You do, you do*

*You make me wanna lala lalala lalala lalalala lala
You make me wanna lala lalala*

*You make me wanna lala in the kitchen on the floor
I'll be your French maid where I meet you at the door
I'm like an alley cat
Drink the milk up I want more
You make me wanna*

*You make me wanna lala in the kitchen on the floor
I'll be your French maid where I meet you at the door
I'm like an alley cat
Drink the milk up I want more
You make me wanna
You make me wanna scream*

You make me wanna lala lalala lalala lalala lala

You make me wanna lala lalala lalala lalala lala
You make me wanna lala lalala lalala lalala lala”

See what I mean? Slightly suggestive, no? After she finished I asked around, no one seemed to know who the mysterious girl was. I turned to ask Josh about her but he was gone.

“Where did Josh go?” I asked Noah.

“I don’t know, but he said to make sure you stay put.” Noah said.

“Um...ok.” I said staying where I was. What was Josh up to?

Josh

~~~~~

After kissing Harley I knew my feelings for her were still there and very real. I also knew I could never tell her how I felt in words. I was a musician and music was the only way I could do this. I wasn’t in the contest for the money, if I happened to win I’d give the money to April too, I was in it cause it was the easiest was to make Harley listen to me.

“Our final contestant is Josh McKnight.” Savannah said.

I took the stage behind my keyboard and adjusted my mic. I caught a glimpse of Harley, she seems shocked I was doing this solo. “This song is for a very special moto girl out there, she knows who she is.” I said looking directly at Harley. I began to play and sing:

*“You know me, you know my every step*  
*Since you I feel like no one understands*  
*I know this; I tangled with your lips*  
*Since you the sun has gone into eclipse*

*Close our eyes realize were running circles in the sun*  
*I'm feeling fine just losing time and knowing you're the one*  
*So come with me come with me*  
*I can't wait till we run away cause we need no reasons*  
*Run away cause we love the night*

*You know me, you know my every step*  
*Since you I feel like no one understands*  
*I know this; I tangled with your lips*  
*Since you the sun has gone into eclipse*

*Through the dark make a start and we'll leave this all behind*  
*Lose the time free our mind and we'll build a paradise*

*Come with me come with me*  
*I can't wait till we run away cause we need no reasons*  
*Run away cause we love the night*

*Oh, oh, oh, I wanna run away*  
*Oh oh run away with you...*

*You know me, you know my every step*  
*Since you I feel like no one understands*  
*I know this; I tangled with your lips*  
*Since you the sun has gone into eclipse”*

After the song was over I got off the stage and walked over to Harley.

“That was for me?” she asked.

“Who else?” I asked.

“Was that your way of asking me out?”

“Yeah...do you accept?”

She smiled, “I think a question in a song deserves an answer in a song.”

“What?” I asked.

She ran up to the stage.

“That last song was so beautiful wasn’t it? Well, while we wait for the judges to judge the contest I think that maybe a short reply is in order since the moto girl in question happened to write a song for the piano playing singer that she was too scared to sing until now.” Harley said as she started to play her guitar and started to sing again.

*“I coulda been the one you noticed  
I coulda been all over you  
I coulda been like all the others  
Is that what I'm supposed to do?*

*It woulda been really stupid,  
If I woulda went home with you  
To give you everything you wanted  
It woulda been way too soon*

*I try to be sensitive  
I try to be tough  
I try to walk away...  
I try to be innocent  
I try to be rough  
But I just wanna play*

*You're my daydream, you know that I've been thinking about you... lately  
And everytime I look at you  
I can't explain I feel insane, I can't get away  
You're my daydream*

*If I tell you what I'm thinking,  
If I let myself trust you  
Can you give me what I'm missing  
Can you make my dreams come true*

*I try to be sensitive  
I try to be tough  
I try to walk away,  
I try to be innocent  
I try to be rough  
But I just wanna play*

*You're my daydream, you know that I've been thinking about you... lately  
And everytime I look at you  
I can't explain how I feel insane, I can't get away  
You're my daydream, yeah*

*And you know, and you know, and you know, and you know,  
You're making me insane*

*And you know, and you know, and you know, and you know,  
You're doing it again  
And you know, and you know, and you know, and you know,  
You're making me insane  
And you know, and you know, and you know,  
You're doing it again"*

I smiled when she finished. It sounded like a 'yes' to me. I walked over to the stage and she jumped off into my arms. I caught her and held her.

"Was that your way of saying 'yes'?" I asked.

"Very good. Now let's make it official." She said smiling.

I moved my face to her's and we kissed for the longest time, suddenly we realized everyone in Cyberspace was clapping. It was like one of those big scenes in a movie. We broke the kiss and looked around.

"I think they got a pretty good show." Harley said.

"More than they bargained for." I said laughing.

"About damn time you two." Anna said walking over.

"Shut up Anna." I said hugging Harley tighter.

Arisa

~~~~~

I sighed, so sweet. My sister took my boyfriend. Ok so he wasn't really my boyfriend anymore...but still...I was sort of quietly fuming about this when DJ McKnight walked over to me.

"Hey." He said.

"You again...hey." I replied.

"You were really awesome on stage."

"Thanks."

"You have plans after the contest?"

"Why?"

"Cause I was thinking, maybe we could catch a movie or something."

Ok, good chance to get revenge on Harley. She got my ex, I could take her's...except she wouldn't actually care. She didn't like DJ at all anymore and I had to focus on finding those other two Gem shards. "Sorry, no can do. It just so happens I do have things to do after the contest. World domination is a full time job."

"Arisa, come on, I know you like me."

"Sorry DJ, not gonna happen." I said walking away.

Harley

~~~~~

I was still hugging on Josh when I noticed Derek's Uncle Derrick...how weird does that sound? Anyway I went over to him.

"Hi, Derrick? I'm Harley Bradley, I work with your nephew Derek at Starlight." I said.

"Oh, yes, we met at the courthouse, I remember." Derrick said.

"Right...so what brings you to Cyberspace?" I asked.

"My daughter was in the contest." He said.

"Oh? Who's your daughter?" I asked.

"Sweetheart, come here." Derrick called to his daughter. She walked over. It was the mysterious singer! "This is my daughter, Melanie Holmes. Melanie this is Harley, she works with your cousin at Starlight."

"Nice to meet you Melanie." I said.

"Yeah, sure." She said walking away.

"Sorry...she isn't the most social person in the world." Derrick said.

"It's ok. Neither was Derek at first. By the way, I really admire what you did for Derek." I said.

"I did what I had to." He said.

“How long are you gonna be in town?” I asked.  
“We’re leaving right after the contest. Melanie needs to get back for school.”  
“Well it was great meeting you.”  
“Likewise, and congratulations on your new boyfriend.”  
I smiled, “Thank you.”

I went back to Josh.  
“You ok?” he asked.  
“Yeah...there’s something about Melanie...I don’t know what it is...something that I find intriguing.” I said as Savannah took the stage again.

“Our judges have finished voting. The winner of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cyberspace Talent Search and the \$5000 dollars is...Harley Bradley!” Savannah announced.

My jaw dropped, “Did I just win?” I asked.  
“Yes you did! Congratulations!” Josh said spinning me around.  
“Oh my god!” I cried. I ran on stage and collected the check from Savannah, I was so excited I even gave her a hug.  
“Congratulations Harley, you really were good.” Anna said.  
“Thanks Anna.” I said.

After the celebration died down Josh took me back to the Academy. We went to the office and found my parents.  
“Mom, Dad...I have so much to tell you.” I said.  
“What? What is it?” Mom asked.  
“Ok, well first of all Josh and I are an official couple now.” I said.  
“You are?” Mom asked.  
“That’s great, it’s about time.” Dad said.  
“I know, I know...anyway, the other thing, I entered the talent search at Cyberspace, save the lectures about me not telling you I just didn’t want to be compared to Mom or for a big deal to be made about it. Either way I won the \$5000 dollar prize and I’d like to donate it to April if she is able to stay here.” I said.  
“Are you serious? That’s very generous.” Dad said.  
“I’m sure. April is one of my Wildcats and I will protect her from suffering again. Just don’t tell her where the money came from. Tell her it’s a scholarship or something.” I said.  
“Ok, I’ll call her mom right now.” Dad said.

Dad did call and after a lot of talking Mrs. Smith agreed to let April stay, however she said she would still be visiting to assess if Starlight was the best place for her. I decided to go tell April the good news.

The Wildcats were all in the lodge studying for finals.  
“Hey, April, can I talk to you for a second?” I asked.  
“Sure.” She said.  
We went off to a corner, “I have some good news for you.”  
“Oh?”  
“My dad talked to your mom about you staying here on scholarship and she agreed.” I said.  
“Are you serious?” she asked.  
“Yeah...your mom is still coming for a visit, but when she leaves she’ll be leaving without you. You’re stuck with us.” I said.  
“That’s great news! Thank you Harley!” April cried hugging me, then she ran to the other Wildcats and filled them in. Derek hugged her for the longest time. I smiled and went to find Josh. He was at the lake.

“Hey you.” I said.  
“Har...hey.” He said putting his arm around me. I leaned on him, “You did a great thing for April.”  
I smiled, “Yeah, well on top of her still needing help it’s not right to separate her and Derek. He’s her rock and everyone needs a rock.”

“You have a rock?” he asked.

I nodded. “Yeah...just took me a little while to realize he was right in front of me this whole time.”

The songs presented in this story and the aforementioned sound clip are:

“I Don’t Give” by Avril Lavigne (AKA “Harley Bradley”)

“Ultimate” by Lindsey Lohan (AKA “Anna McKnight”)

“Watching the Rain Fall” by Katy Rose (AKA “Arisa Bradley”)

“La La” by Ashlee Simpson (AKA “Melanie Holmes”)

“Every Step” by Ben Jelen (AKA “Josh McKnight”)

“Daydream” by Avril Lavigne (AKA “Harley Bradley”)

*"Did I keep you waiting?  
I apologize  
I will wait forever just to know you were mine  
You know I love your hair  
I love what you wear  
You're exceptional  
I can't wait for the rest of my life*

*This is it  
I finally found someone  
Someone to share my life  
I finally found the one to be with every night  
Cause whatever I do it's just got to be you  
My life has just begun  
I finally found someone"*  
~ "I Finally Found Someone" Bryan Adams and Barbra Streisand

"OK Wildcats, great session, now off to your dorms. Lights out in 30." I said as my group went their own directions. I turned around and saw my dad, Rocky, standing there. "Hey Daddy, what brings you to the lodge?" I asked hugging him.

"I came to tell you the good news." He said.

"What news?" I asked.

"Well, two things actually, first of all I found a house here in Reefside and a place to open up Blue Dragon mark 3 so I'm staying in Reefside."

"Oh that's wonderful!" I cried.

"And the other thing is Aisha and I have decided we don't want to wait anymore. We're going to have a very small ceremony. We're getting married tomorrow."

My jaw dropped. "What?!"

"As of tomorrow Aisha will be your stepmother and as soon as the adoption papers come through Tamara will be your new sister." Daddy said.

I shook my head, "No! She will not be my sister! Not tomorrow, not ever! I'm so sick of sisters! Savannah isn't my sister, Arissa isn't my sister, and Tamara most definitely isn't my sister! You know who is my sister? Felicity, that's who, she's the only sister I've got!" I cried running off.

"Harley! Get back here!" he called after me.

I ignored him and kept going. I was furious. Where did my three parents get off throwing me sisters like this? I was just fine as an only child, then Felicity came along, and I admit, I was less than thrilled at first but now I couldn't imagine life without her. This was entirely different though. Savannah lied about being my sister, Tamara wasn't even related to me, and Arissa was trying to kill me. Would you accept them?

DJ

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I had just finished practicing at the track; I had to be ready to take Harley down. I was loading up my bike when Arissa walked up to me.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"What a greeting." She said, pretending to sound hurt.

"What did you expect Arissa? You turned me down twice when I asked you out."

"What if I changed my answer?"

"What's in it for you?"

“A small favor.”

“Thanks, but no thanks, I don’t do deal dates.”

“It’s nothing major, just curious about something...I really do want to go out with you.”

“I might end up regretting this, but what are you curious about?”

“Well, I heard about this old ninja myth, that there’s this thing called the Gem of Souls. It looks really pretty and I was just wondering if it existed and being as your parents were ninjas I thought they might know something about it, so maybe you could ask them, since ya know I don’t think any ninja would even talk to me. If you can tell me if it exists and where I can find it I’ll go out with you anytime, and maybe even throw in some perks as well.” Arissa said smirking.

I swallowed hard, Arissa just offered herself to me, “Let me see what I can do.”

“Great, I’ll meet you here tomorrow at lunch time...just one more thing...” she said as she kissed me passionately, “Just a reminder what you’ll be getting.”

I just stared at her as she walked away. She was so incredible.

Harley

~~~~~

“I won’t accept her! I won’t!” I cried as I paced back and forth in the living room of my parents’ house.

“Harley, calm down.” Mom said.

“Yeah, this isn’t the end of the world. So what if Rocky is adopting Tamara?” Dad asked.

“She isn’t my sister!” I cried.

“She’s just as much your sister as Lindsey is your cousin. Remember, Blake is only my brother through adoption.” Dad said.

“That is totally different. You and Uncle Blake have a bond tighter than blood and Lindsey is my cousin. Tamara is not my sister, and it has nothing to do with blood because Arissa and Savannah aren’t my sisters either, just the little girl sleeping upstairs, that’s it.” I said continuing to pace.

“So then if it isn’t about blood why won’t you accept Tamara?” Mom asked.

“Because she’s purposely trying to horn in on my family.” I said.

“Rocky is about to be her family too sweetie.” Mom said.

“I don’t care! She had a dad and she lost him, Rocky is mine.” I said.

“But you have me.” Dad said.

“Yeah, and I have to share you with Arissa of all people!” I cried.

Dad sighed, “I know this isn’t easy to accept Har...”

“Easy? Try impossible!”

“Harley...”

“Don’t even Dad...just don’t even. I’m going to bed.” I said leaving their house and heading back to the dorm.

On my way back to the dorms I ran into Tamara.

“Watch where you’re going.” I said.

“Sorry...you ran into me anyway.” She said.

“I did not. You fully ran into me. Anyway what are you doing out here?”

“We ran out of bottled water so I went to get some from the kitchen in the lodge.”

“So now you’re stealing my water!”

“What? Harley? What is your problem?”

“You being a thief. You tried to steal my job with the Wildcats, you are trying to steal my dad, now you steal my water.”

“You’re being beyond ridiculous Harley.”

“Am I?”

“Yes, you are.”

“Whatever, just stay out of my way Tamara, cause if you don’t I will make you pay.”

Stacy

~~~~~

“I don’t care, that is unacceptable.” I said into the phone.

“But, Ms. Fernandez, it was an innocent mistake.” The supervisor on the other end said.

“That ‘innocent mistake’ has cost this company thousands of dollars.”

“But ma’am...”

“But ma’am...” I mocked, “Just fire him, I don’t want any excuses.” I said hanging up the phone.

“Turning into your dear old dad?” Noah asked walking in.

“How long have you been standing there?” I asked.

“Long enough to tell you sounds just like Trent Fernandez, and I don’t mean that in a good way. You need to get out of here, it’s already almost midnight.”

“But I have work to do.”

“No buts, remember our deal.”

I sighed, “Fine, a deal’s a deal.”

Noah laughed and pulled me away from my desk and into his arms, “Let’s go back to your place and I’ll show you how good the deal can be.”

I giggled, “I think I like that idea.”

We went back to Fernandez Estates and had some quick dinner before going to the master suite. I wrapped my arms around Noah’s neck and kissed him. He lifted me up and carried me to the bed...needless to say it didn’t take long for me to forget about work.

After Noah and I finished our ‘fun’ I rested my head on his chest and he held me close.

“I really like spending time with you.” I said.

“I like it too...I worry about you sometimes Stace.” He said.

“Worry? About me? Why?”

“Because, you’ve fought for so long to be different from your father and I can see you following in his footsteps. You’re getting sucked in.”

“I am not. I’m doing what I have to until he’s released.”

“I hope that’s true, cause I would hate to see you end up like Trent.”

“I won’t...I’m smarter than that.”

Noah nodded, “Yeah, you are.” He said getting up.

“Noah, don’t go home. Will you stay here with me tonight?” I asked.

Noah looked at me then nodded, “Yeah, ok. I’d like that.” He said getting back in bed and pulling me back into his arms. I closed my eyes and started to dose off.

DJ

~~~~~

I gave some thought to Arissa’s deal and decided to do what she wanted. I mean what could it hurt? I went to my parents for breakfast the next morning and sat down at the table with my dad.

“I have a question.” I said.

“What’s that?” Dad asked.

“Um...well when I was dating Harley she mentioned some ninja legend about something called the Gem of Souls. She never finished explaining what it was and I was just curious.” I said.

“The Gem of Souls is not just ninja folklore, it’s real. Harley should know that, her father holds one of the shards to it.” Dad said.

“Rocky?” I asked.

“No, Hunter. Hunter used the Gem to protect the first group of Ninja Storm Rangers once. In the process it shattered into...I believe 5 shards...anyway Cam threw 3 of the shards into the sea but Hunter hid two. He kept them hidden for awhile...eventually they needed them. After they were finished using the shards Hunter kept one of the shards and Cam took the other. It was kind of like a symbol of love between them. I think they each still have their part of the Gem...does that answer your question?” Dad asked.

I nodded, “Yeah...thanks.”

After breakfast I went to class. Noah and I had the same class and he walked in 10 minutes late...this was after he never

even came home last night. That wasn't like him at all, he was normally the responsible twin.

"Where were you?" I whispered.

"At Stacy's." he replied.

"All night?" I asked.

He nodded.

"I wonder what you were doing." I mumbled.

"Noah and Dustin, would you like us to stop and wait for you to finish?" the professor asked.

"Sorry sir." Noah said.

"And I prefer DJ sir, thanks." I said.

The professor just glared and continued.

After class I stopped Noah.

"So are you and Stacy serious?" I asked

"Yeah, I think it's getting that way." He said.

"Are you sure that's smart? I mean she's Aunt Kira's daughter."

"So? She's not Uncle Conner's."

I nodded. "Point...just be careful."

"Like you care. You've never cared before DeeJ, why start now?" Noah asked walking away.

I sighed and headed for the track to meet with Arisaa.

When I got there she was waiting.

"Hey you, did you find out what I wanted to know?" Arissa asked.

I nodded, "Yeah, well it turns out the Gem of Souls is real and it exists in 5 shards. 3 are in the sea and Hunter and Cam have the other two, one each."

"Oh really? Cool, thanks DJ, I owe you."

"Why is this so important?"

"It's not really, I'm just a gem stone collector and I was curious about the Gem of Souls." She said.

"Oh ok. Listen, you don't have to go out with me if you really don't want to."

"I do want to...I really do. Pick me up at Cyberspace, say 7?"

I nodded, "See you then."

Arisa

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This was too perfect. My father had one shard and Cam had the other. Getting Hunter's wouldn't be easy but I was fairly sure that I could get Cam's. From what I knew he had a son and men could be charmed...I also knew from Josh that this son Cam had was Harley's ex-boyfriend who screwed her over royally. A little shape shifting and that shard would be mine!

First I had to figure out where the Thunder Ninja Academy was. I was pretty sure that's where Cam and his family were. That wouldn't be hard though. I just needed to pay a visit to my dear old Dad...maybe scope out the other shard while I was at it.

I went to the Academy and peaked in the window of Hunter's house. It was lunch time and Felicity was attempting to eat some cereal while Michelle grabbed Hunter's hands and made him dance with her in the kitchen. He pulled her close and they kissed, then Felicity started throwing cereal at them. They laughed and Hunter kissed Felicity's head while Michelle cleaned up the cereal Felicity had gotten all over the kitchen and herself. I sighed.

Michelle really did seem to love Hunter and her daughters...she seemed to really care about the fate of the Earth and Saturn. How could she be all that and a cold blooded killer?

My focus went back to Hunter. He was leaving the house. Michelle was staying behind with Felicity. I ran over to Hunter.

“Hey.” I said.

“Arisa...what do you want? Should I be watching Michelle and Harley?” he asked.

“No, this isn’t a ploy to kidnap them...I just want to talk...get to know you better...I know you were a ninja right? At the Thunder Ninja Academy?”

“Yeah.”

“Did you just study ninja skills or did you go to high school?”

“I went to high school?”

“Really? Where at?”

“Thousand Oaks High.”

“Really? You lived in Thousand Oaks, California?” I asked.

“Yeah, well being as that’s where the Academy is it was the logical choice.”

Bingo. “Wow...so did you enjoy school?”

“It was ok. I preferred Ninja training. I really don’t have time for this Arissa. I have a lot of work to do. Graduation is coming up which means extra paperwork.”

I nodded, “Oh of course. I’m sorry...I’ll see you later.” I turned to leave.

“Hey...wait.”

I turned back around, “What?”

“I love you Arissa...I really do.”

I stared at him, wide-eyed, and watched him walk away.

Great, as if I wasn’t wishy-washy enough...

I decided to put off my trip to Thousand Oaks till tomorrow...I really needed time to think...and to get ready for my date, which Aunt Aria could not find out about.

On my way to find a place where Aunt Aria wouldn’t find me I ran into DJ again.

“You stalking me or something?” I teased.

“I think it’s fate.” He joked.

“Maybe...”

“Since you’re here you wanna get lunch?”

“Sure. Why not?”

“OK, how about Reefsides Café?”

“Ok, let’s go.” I said walking off with him.

Harley

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“Harley, please, I really want you at my wedding.” Dad (Rocky) begged.

“No. You’ll have Tamara there, you won’t need me.” I said.

“You’re being silly Har...of course I need you there, you’re my daughter.”

“So is Tamara now.”

He sighed, “I have to go get Adam and Mina from the airport, please reconsider, I’ll be back soon.”

I watched him leave and I went to go find Josh. He was in the lodge.

“Har? What’s the matter sweetie?” he asked hugging me.

“I don’t want my father to get married.” I said hugging him back. I felt so safe in his arms.

“You don’t want him to get married or you don’t want him to adopt Tamara?”

“I...I guess I don’t want him to adopt Tamara.”

“Don’t you want your father to be happy?”

“Of course.”

“Well, it looks like Aisha makes him happy.”

“And he does deserve that after what Mom and Dad did to him.”

“Huh...oh right...I’ll never get used to you having two dads...anyway, I think you should go to the wedding and show your support for your father.”

I sighed, "I hate it when you're right...will you at least go with me?"

"Of course." He said kissing me.

"No PDAs in the lodge!" April called from the Wildcats' lunch table.

I laughed, "It's like having kids."

"No kidding, you want to go get lunch elsewhere?" Josh asked.

I nodded, "Sounds good. Hey Wildcats! I'll be back!"

"Don't do anything I wouldn't do!" Chris called.

"And that would be what exactly?" Derek asked.

"Nothing." Tiffany giggled.

I rolled my eyes and Josh and I headed for town.

"So, Cyberspace?" Josh asked.

"No." I said.

"Why? Because of Savannah? She's our sister, like it or not...oh man does that sound weird...our sister..."

I cringed, this was a reminder Mom slept with Josh's dad. "Ick, that does sound weird...but it's ok, don't call her our sister cause she isn't my sister, she's your sister if you choose to accept her but not mine."

"You guys share a mom Har, she's your sister."

"She disowned my mom."

"Actually your mom disowned her if you wanna get technical."

"Don't start with me Josh. Savannah isn't my sister, that's all there is to it. Geez, next you'll be telling me that Arissa is my sister."

"She is."

"No she isn't."

"Ok fine, I'm not gonna argue with you. If not Cyberspace then where?"

"Reefside Café is fine." I said.

We went into Reefside Café and guess who was sitting inside looking all cozy and cute. Arissa and DJ.

"What the hell? Why can't I escape these sisters!" I cried.

"I thought they weren't your sister." Josh said.

I glared, "Don't start with me."

"Sorry. You want to go somewhere else?"

"No, I want to go give your cousin a piece of my mind." I said marching over to their table, "DJ, what in the hell? After what Arissa did to Josh how can you sit here and play footsies with her?"

"Arissa is a good person, she's just misunderstood." DJ said.

"Yeah, and a shark is a vegetarian. Give me a break. She's tried to kill me God knows how many times, she played with Josh's head, she pretended to be me, she's trying to kill my mother...how can you date her?"

"Get off it Harley, you have no right to tell me anything, you dumped me, remember? Josh, will you please control your girlfriend?"

"Control me? I'll show you control."

"Har, come on babe, let's just go." Josh said pulling me away.

"Fine. But when she tries to kill you don't come crying to me." I said taking off. I hated that smug look on Arissa's face.

"Let's go Josh."

We ended up getting fast food and eating on the way to the chapel.

"Are you ok?" Josh asked.

"Fine." I mumbled. I saw my father and some of his friends were already there.

"You're going in right?" Josh asked.

I nodded, "Yeah, yeah, I'm going."

Josh helped me out of the car and we went inside. Dad was right, this was a small wedding. Uncle Tommy, Uncle Jason, Aunt Kim, Aunt Kat, Adam, Mina, Tamara, and Mom were the only ones there.

"Mom?" I asked.

"Sweetie, I'm glad you decided to come." She said.

"What are you doing here" I asked.

“Well, once upon a time Aisha was one of my best friends and believe it or not I do still care about your father and I want him to be happy.”

“Where’s Dad...the one you’re married to?” I asked.

“At the Academy. He had too much paperwork to do.” Mom said.

I nodded, I knew he was really busy with pending graduations.

“You should go find your father.” Josh said.

I nodded, “Ok.”

I went and found him talking to the preacher.

“Hi Daddy.” I said softly.

“Harley. I’m so glad you’re here.” He said hugging me.

I started crying as he hugged me, “I just want you to be happy Daddy, I really do...I just...I don’t want to lose you.”

“You’ll never lose me sweetheart...we’ve been through too much together. You’ll always be my Princess.”

I started crying more at the use of my nickname. “I love you Daddy.”

“I love you too Princess.”

I finally let go of him, “OK, well I think there’s a wedding that being held up here.”

Adam took the roll of the best man and Aunt Kim was the maid of honor, all the other guests sat down and watched the wedding. It was your basic wedding, but they had written their own vows.

“Aisha, we’ve known each other for so long and yet somehow I managed to over look what a truly amazing woman you were. I let myself be blinded by a feeling I only thought was true love. You are who I’m truly meant to be with, who I’ve always been meant to be with. I love you baby and I am so happy to finally be able to stand here with you. I promise you my love and loyalty forever.” Dad said.

I looked at home, that had to sting some. I mean, “blinded by a feeling I only thought was true love”? Damn.

“Rocky, I did have true love once before and when I lost it never thought I could love again. You reopened my heart. You showed me that there is still some good in the world and that love can happen more than once. You took me and my daughter in during our darkest time and accepted us as your family and I will never be able to thank you enough for that. You’re everything to me, my best friend, my love...everything. I pledge to be true and love you until the day I die.” Aisha said.

They got pronounced man and wife and that was that. Everyone did the big hug and congratulations thing. Even Mom hugged Daddy. Aisha walked up to me.

I took a deep breath, “Congratulations Aisha, welcome to the family.”

“Thank you Harley.” She said hugging me.

“Be good to him.”

“Of course...I hear congratulations are also in order for you, you and Josh finally got together.”

I smiled, “Why does everyone keep saying finally? Did everyone know we were meant to be together except me?”

“Actually baby, yeah.” Josh said kissing my cheek, “Congratulations Aisha.” He said hugging her.

“Thank you Josh.” She said, then she went to greet other guests.

“I’m proud of you sweetie.” Josh said hugging me.

“Thanks...maybe this will be the end of my sisters popping up out of nowhere.” I said.

“So you’re ready to accept Tamara as you sister?”

“Oh not a chance. Nothing’s changed, except I got a pretty decent step mom.”

“Two dads, a mother, and a step mom...you have one messed up family Har.”

“No kidding...Rocky would technically be my step father, except he’s been my father since I was born so that kinda makes Hunter my step father, but he’s my blood father...you’re right, my family is confusing.”

“Hey, the McKnights are not exactly simple.”

“Maybe that’s why we fit together so well. We’re both from screwed up families.”

Josh laughed and we headed for the car. “Maybe so.”



*"I'm stronger  
Than I ever thought that I could be, baby  
I used to go with the flow  
Didn't really care 'bout me  
You might think that I can't take it, but you're wrong  
'Cause now I'm*

*Stronger than yesterday  
Now it's nothing but my way  
My loneliness ain't killing me no more  
I, I'm stronger"*  
~ "Stronger" Britney Spears

"April, your mother is here." Harley said.

I sighed. It was time for the visit. I got up, walked out of my class, and went to the lodge. Sure enough there was my mother...and him...Ed. I was glad Derek was in class, he'd kill Ed.

"Hello Cutie." Ed said pulling me into a hug. I just stood there.

"April, Ed missed you, the least you can do is greet him." Mom said.

I sighed, "Hello Ed." I said pulling away from him.

"Thank you for getting my daughter Miss Bradley, I will be taking her until tomorrow." Mom said.

"Tomorrow?" I asked.

"Usually it is recommended that the students are in by nightfall, just to keep up a routine." Harley said.

"And she can continue her routine tomorrow. Tonight my daughter will stay at the motel with her father and I." Mom said.

"He isn't my father." I growled.

"Not now April. She will be back for classes in the morning, do you have any objections Miss Bradley?" Mom asked.

"No ma'am. Enjoy your visit April." Harley said.

I sighed, poor Harley didn't deserve my mother being so rude to her. She was only trying to help me. Harley knew I didn't wanna go and she knew why.

"Come on April." Mom said.

I sighed, I knew I had no choice so I left with her and the monster.

Michelle

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"Babe, I'll be right back, I'm gonna go get some supplies out of the shed for the hike later." I said.

"OK...hey, where's Felicity?" Hunter asked.

"With Julia playing at the lake. I'm gonna go check on them while I'm out." I said.

"OK, see you in a bit."

I headed for the lake. I was almost there when I heard a scream. It sounded like Julia. I took off running. When I got there I saw James. He had Julia and Felicity cornered. He had to be after Felicity.

"Hey! James! Leave them alone!" I cried.

"Michelle, I was simply trying to spend some time with your lovely little girl." James said.

"It's me you're after, I've warned you, leave my daughter alone!" I cried.

James turned to face me.

"Julia! Get Felicity out of here!" I cried.

She took off running with Felicity.

"Alone at last, as it should be." James said coming at me.

"You asked for it." I said firing off some lightning at him. He was expecting it cause he dodged. "Stay away!" I screamed taking a fighting stance.

“You forget, I have powers now too.” James said firing a beam at me. I tried to run from it but it caught my leg and I fell to the ground. I tried to get up but I couldn’t and James was coming at me. “I have waited for this moment for so long.” He whispered as he sat on my stomach and put his hands on my chest.

“NOOOO!!!!” I screamed.

“Yes Michelle, this will be better than anything you’ve ever felt. I can make you feel wonderful.” He said.

“NO!” I screamed again, I knew he was about to rape me again. Suddenly he slumped over in pain. I freed my hands from his and pushed him off of me. I sat up and saw Hunter. He ran over to me.

“Are you ok sweetheart?” he asked.

“Hunter! I’m so glad to see you.” I said hugging him. He held me for a second then walked over to James.

“I’ve told you before to stay away from my family. You better not ever touch my wife again.” Hunter said.

“You think you can stop me?” James asked.

“I know I can.” Hunter said as James stood up. They had a stare off before going into hand to hand combat. While it was true James had powers, Hunter had ninja skills that James couldn’t anticipate. Eventually James had no choice but to retreat. I ran over to Hunter.

“Are you ok?” I asked.

“Yeah, I’m fine. Are you?” he asked.

“I think so...God, that was so close.” I said as I hugged Hunter and started crying, “He was after Felicity, if I hadn’t got here...”

“I know, Julia told me. I think you were right, sending her to stay with Tony and Mel is a smart idea. She’ll be safer there.” Hunter said.

I nodded, “Let’s go call Tony.”

James

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I was very angry after I retreated. I almost had Michelle, she could have been mine again if that annoying Hunter hadn’t shown up. I decided it was time to be rid of him once and for all. I was plotting my attack when I heard Aria called me.

“Yes Aria?” I asked

“Arisa doesn’t feel you’ve been pulling you weight around here, what have you been doing to further our cause?” Aria asked.

“As a matter of fact I had Michelle today, if not for that blasted Hunter our mission would be accomplished.” I said.

“Then I suggest you find a way to work that problem out.” Aria said.

“I was just doing that. Don’t worry. We’ll have Michelle, and soon.” I said.

“Very well then.” Aria said.

I went off to continue my plans.

Harley

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Noah and I finished up our last lap around the track and parked our bikes.

“Nice riding Har,” Noah said.

“You ready for tomorrow?” Josh asked.

“You bet. I’m gonna kill all the other riders out there.” I said.

“I wouldn’t count on that.” DJ said walking up behind me.

“DJ, what are you even doing here? You’re a freestyle rider.” I said.

“I changed specialties...and Noah, why are you practicing with her over your own brother?” DJ asked.

“She’s my friend.” Noah said.

“Some loyalty.” DJ said.

“Hey, just cause you’re being an unreasonable jerk, don’t try to tell me who I can be friends with.” Noah replied sternly. I smiled, dating Stacy had given him a backbone.

“Fine, then stay at Stacy’s tonight cause I don’t want to share an apartment with a traitor.” DJ said.

“Fine. I will.” Noah said.

DJ glared at the three of us then stormed off. He got his bike started up and began his practice.

“You didn’t have to do that.” I said.

“Yeah, I did. I’m sick of him being an arrogant jerk.” Noah said.
“On that note, shall we go grab some dinner?” Josh asked.
“Sure, can I invite Stacy?” Noah asked.
Josh cringed a bit, “Um, sure.”
“Josh can’t say anything about you dating his sister because he’s dating his sister’s sister.” I laughed.
“Oh god, that sounds sick...” Noah said.
I laughed harder, “Yeah it does.”
“And she loves grossing people out by saying it at every opportunity.” Josh said.
“It’s not sick but it sounds like it, it’s fun.” I said jumping on Josh’s back for a piggy back ride.
“Ugh, babe, you’re getting mud on me.” Josh said pretending to be grossed out.
“Poor baby.” I said putting my head on his shoulder and kissing his neck.
“Stop that or I’m gonna drop you.” He said. I noticed Noah was on his cell phone, calling Stacy I assumed.
“You wouldn’t drop me, would you?” I asked as I nibbled on his ear.
“You keep that up and I will.” Josh said.
“You guys are cute, can we go now though? Stacy is gonna meet us at the hamburger place downtown.” Noah said.
“OK, let’s get going.” I said.

We got in Josh’s car and headed over there. While we drove I changed into some un-muddy clothes.
“Harley! You’re sitting in the front seat! Everyone can see you changing!” Josh cried.
“So? It’s not like I’m getting naked or anything. It just looks like a bikini.” I said as I slid into a pair of jeans and a t-shirt, “Besides, Noah is changing in the backseat.”
“So? He’s wearing boxers.” Josh said.
“And I’m wearing a bra and panties, your point? It’s the same thing.” I said.
“No it isn’t, Noah isn’t my girlfriend.” Josh said.
I laughed and noticed Noah turn red, “I would hope not!” I said as I put some shoes on.
“This is the last time we take my car from the track. You guys have mud everywhere.” Josh complained.
“Stop whining.” I said as we got to the restaurant. We went in and found Stacy and sat down with her.

“Hey.” Noah said kissing Stacy.
“Hey yourself.” She said kissing him back.
Josh winced again and I hit him in the arm, “Hi Stacy.” I said.
“Hey Stace.” Josh said softly.
Stacy smiled, “Hey guys.”
“How was work?” Noah asked.
“OK. I’m working on a few deals that should get Fernandez Industries back on its feet very soon.” Stacy said.
“That’s great.” Noah said.
“Yeah, so when you give the company back to Trent it will be in good shape.” Josh said.
“Yeah, I’m kinda wishing I didn’t have to give it back.” Stacy said.
“What?” Josh asked.
“Well I like it. It’s addicting.” Stacy said.
Josh sighed, “Anna was right, you never should have got involved in Fernandez Industries.”
“What? Not you too...I wish everyone would stop acting like this is such a bad thing.” Stacy said.
“But it is Stace...don’t you remember growing up and watching your father? You said so many times you never wanted to be him...you’re becoming him!” Josh said.
“I am not! I just never understood him before.” Stacy said.
“If you think you understand Trent Fernandez you’re in bigger trouble than I thought.” Josh said.

April

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We went to dinner then to a hotel room. All during dinner it was like Mom and Ed were trying to seem like we were a normal family. It was almost laughable, if it wasn’t so sick. After we got back to the hotel is where the problems began. Ed decided he wanted some dessert and wanted to send Mom to the store. She agreed.  
“I can go with you.” I said.

“No, why don’t you stay here and we can talk.” Ed said.

“Yeah, Ed missed you, this will be a good chance for you two to catch up.” Mom said.

“NO! I mean...I missed you Mom.” I lied.

“Just stay here. We can talk later. I’ll be back.” Mom said leaving.

Next thing I knew I was alone with the monster.

“Come sit with me April.” He said patting the bed he was laying on.

“Um, actually, I’m fine right here.” I said tapping the chair I was sitting in.

“Oh come on...don’t you remember the fun we used to have?”

“That wasn’t fun, that was a nightmare.”

“It’s only because you got so tense.” Ed said standing up and walking over to me. He grabbed my arm and forced me to the bed, “See, so tense, just relax...we don’t have much time together so let’s make the most of it.”

“Don’t, please just don’t.” I begged as I tried to get away.

“Stop fighting me April.” Ed said throwing me against the wall. I fell to the floor and Ed picked me up and threw me on the bed. He pinned me down and ripped my shirt off. “I’ve missed you so much.” He said as he kissed my stomach.

“Stop!!!” I screamed.

“Shut up!” he yelled, slapping me in the face, “You went and fucked all those other men for money, so now you can shut up and let me have my share you little whore.”

I started to cry. I felt like that helpless girl again. I hated that feeling. I felt him unzip my jeans and put his fingers in me. As I felt him invading me like that again my anger began to build. I was the Yellow Ranger. I had beat lots of Arissa’s space freaks, yet here I was being attacked in the worst way and hardly putting up any fight. It was ridiculous! I wasn’t gonna have sex with him. I wasn’t gonna let him rape me now or ever again. When he went to kiss me again I bit his lip hard.

“You little bitch!” He cried easing up his grip. It left me with just enough movement to lift my leg. I kneed him in the balls and pushed him off of me.

“You will never touch me again. I’m not that same timid girl anymore. I have power now, power to take care of myself, you have nothing.” I said running from the room. I ran to the lobby.

“Please, call the cops, my stepfather hit me and he was trying to rape me.” I said to the clerk.

“Oh my god...ok...” the clerk said dialing 911 and explaining everything, “Would you like a jacket or something?” the clerk asked after she hung up.

I realized I was in my bra and unzipped jeans. I fixed my jeans and nodded. I put the jacket she handed me on. “Can I use the phone? I have someone I need to call.”

“Sure.” She said handing me the phone.

It was late, Hunter and Michelle would be in their house. I dialed that number and Michelle picked up.

“Hello?”

“Michelle! It’s April.” I said about to cry.

“April? Is everything ok?” she asked.

“He tried to do it again.”

“What? Are you ok?”

“Yeah, I stopped him this time and I called the cops. Can you come pick me up?”

“Where are you?”

“Reefside Inn. I’m in the lobby waiting for the cops.”

“I’ll be right there.”

Michelle

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I was so many things when I hung up with April. Mostly I was proud of April for stopping him this time.

“What’s wrong?” Hunter asked. We had been sitting in the living room watching TV with Felicity, she’d be going to Florida tomorrow and we wanted to spend time with her.

“Ed tried to rape April again.” I said.

“Oh my god...no...”

“Yeah, I’m going to Reefside Inn to be with her when the cops show up. See if I can get her released into our custody.”

I said.
“I’m going too.” He said.
“No, you need to stay here with Liss.”
“Harley can watch her.”
“Sweetie, this is her last night here for who knows how long...you stay. I can handle this.”
“Are you sure?”
“Yes, I’m sure. I love you.”
“I love you too.”
“Whatever you do don’t mention any of this to Derek.” I said.
Hunter nodded, “I know, he’s lose it.”
“See you soon.” I said kissing him before I left. I got in my Jeep and headed for the motel.

April

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The cops got there pretty quickly. I went out to meet them.  
“We received a call?” an officer said.  
“I had the clerk call. My step father beat me up and he tried to rape me. He’s in room 192. He can’t have gone far from there, my mom is gone with the car.” I said.  
“OK, I’ll check it out, my partner is going to question you.” The officer said.  
“Fine...just do something.” I said.  
“What’s your name?” another officer asked.  
“April Snyder. What’s your’s?”  
“I’m Officer Jackson.”  
“Pleased to meet you, now can we get this over with?”  
“Can you tell me exactly what happened?”  
“I did! He grabbed me, threw me against a wall, beat me, then tried to rape me. If you wait a couple of hours these bruises will have even more color.” I said showing the officer my arms.  
“We’re just trying to get the facts.”  
“The fact is that Ed Smith is a monster!” I cried as I saw Michelle drive up. She got out of her car and I ran over to her,  
“Michelle!”  
“April, are you ok? Oh god, you look horrible” she said hugging me then looking me over.  
“Are you her mother?” Officer Jackson asked.  
“No, I’m Michelle Bradley, head mistress of Starlight Academy. April is one of my students. She was away on visitation with her mother and stepfather. She called me right after she called the police.” Michelle explained.  
“Oh, you’re a Starlight girl?” Officer Jackson asked.  
“Yes.” I nodded.  
“Detectives Scott and Oliver left strict instructions to take care of you kids.”  
“Yeah, Detective Oliver is my brother.” Michelle said.  
“And you believe Miss Snyder’s story?”  
“I never doubted her. Ed Smith is a rapist and tonight he tried to do it again.”  
“Don’t worry Mrs. Bradley, Miss Snyder, we’ll handle this.” Officer Jackson said as my mom pulled up. She got out of her car and ran over.  
“What the hell is going on here April?!” she asked in a yell.  
“Ed tried to rape me again, this time I put a stop to it.” I said.  
“I’m sorry about this officers, she can’t be trusted. She’s such a drama queen.” Mom said trying to pull me away from the officer and Michelle.  
Michelle grabbed my arm and pulled my back, “I’m sorry Mrs. Smith, I believe your daughter, and I can’t believe you don’t. Look at her arm. Does it look like she’s lying? How a mother can be so blind when her daughter needs her most is beyond me.”  
“We got him, we’re taking him down to the station.” The first cop said.  
“You will pay for this April Snyder.” Mom said running to her car to follow Ed to the police station.  
“Can I go back to Starlight?” I asked.  
“That’s up to Officer Jackson.” Michelle said.

"I think that would be ok, just be ready to answer some questions tomorrow." Officer Jackson said.

I nodded, "OK, thank you."

"Let's go." Michelle said. She took me to the Jeep and drove me back to the Academy.

We went into her house first.

"April, are you ok?" Hunter asked.

"I will be." I said.

"Come here." Hunter said hugging me.

"I don't want to face the other Wildcats tonight. Can I sleep here?" I asked.

Michelle nodded, "Of course. You can have the guest room. I have a shirt you can sleep in."

"Ok, thank you...I'm ready for bed I think...Michelle? Can you sit with me until I fall asleep?"

"Of course." She replied walking with me to the guest room. I got ready for bed then Michelle sat next to the bed and started singing and brushing my hair with her hand. I gave a small smile. Hearing her sing was comforting and I soon fell asleep.

~~~~~  
Harley

The next day I was at the track, preparing for the race. Noah and I were doing final preps on his bike since we finished mine.

"No matter who wins we're still friends?" he asked.

"Of course. Friends." I said doing our handshake with him, "And I don't care which of us win as long as we don't let that egotistical twin of yours win."

"I hear ya, between the two of us we won't let DJ win." Noah said.

I walked back to my bike and got ready to ride.

"Harley! Wait!" Tamara called running over.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"To keep my new big sister alive." She said.

"I'm not your sister, god get that through your head, what are you talking about anyway?"

"Check your back tire."

"I just did a prep. It's fine."

"You did a prep then you prepped Noah's bike...check it."

I did and it was loose, it would have fallen off before the first lap was over and I would have crashed. "How did you know it was loose?"

"I saw DJ do it."

"DJ? That rat...he was gonna trash my bike!" I cried.

"That's a new low, even for him." Noah said.

"Must be the company he's keeping these days."

"What?"

"Your brother has been hanging with Arissa."

"You're kidding!"

"Nope. Anyway, did you see him do anything else?"

"No, just that." Tamara said.

"Probably thought that would be enough."

"Are you gonna report him?" Noah asked.

"Nope. I'm gonna shock him by beating his wannabe butt." I said.

"That's the Harley we all know and love."

I smiled, "Let's go teach that twin of yours a lesson."

"Good luck Harley." Tamara said.

"Yeah." I mumbled, then I froze, "Thanks Tamara." I said then I walked to the track.

"Good luck DJ." I said as the race was about to start."

"See you at the finish line." He said smirking.

I put my helmet on and smirked too. He had no idea what was coming.

The race started and I took off like a shot. I knew from the way DJ started to hesitate he was shocked. It was great. I ended up getting first place, Noah got second, and another rider got third.

I walked up to DJ.

“So, you thought you’d sabotage me?” I asked.

“You figured it out?” he asked.

“Yes I did and I fixed my tire. You could have killed me!” I cried.

“You wouldn’t have died.”

“Newsflash, moto is a dangerous sport and any crash can result in death. You ass, I’m just glad you didn’t win...you didn’t even get third. Guess who got first...oh yes, that was me. Now if you’ll excuse me, I have to go celebrate.” I said turning around.

“You go girl!” Mel said smiling.

“OH MY GOD!!! Melody!” I cried as I hugged my best friend, “What are you doing here?!”

She laughed and hugged me back, “Tony and I came to get Liss and take her to Florida for awhile so she’ll be safe from James. I had to see you while I was in town though. Last time I was here you weren’t in such great shape.”

“Oh yeah, well I remember everything now.” I said.

“I’m so glad, you had us all so worried. I hear a lot has happened around here. Tommy was filling us in on the way from the airport.” Mel said.

I nodded, “You have no idea.”

“Two sisters, one that’s Arissa...new boyfriend...you just can’t keep it simple can you?”

“Oh that would be boring.”

“So, you and Josh McKnight?”

I laughed, “Yes, me and Josh McKnight.”

“He’s cute.”

“Hey, back off, you have Tony.”

“I’m just saying.”

I play hit her. “Where is Tony anyway?”

“Talking to Hunter.”

“Let’s go over there.” I said as we walked over, “Hey stranger...”

“Har! Hey!” Tony said hugging me.

“It’s so good to see you. I miss you guys so much.” I said.

“We miss you too.” Tony said.

“We’re going to the Academy to get Felicity, you want to come?” Dad asked.

“Sure.” I said. We all headed for the Academy.

When we got to his house Dad decided we needed some more sodas for everyone.

“I’ll be right back.” He said leaving. I sat down to catch up with Tony and Mel.

April

~~~~~

Michelle forwent Harley’s race to take me to the police station. They were finally able to get Ed to confess. He was going to end up with 10 years in prison soon as they got a statement from me. While I waited for them to call me in I told Michelle I was going to get some air.

When I got away from her I went across the street to the country building and filled out some fast paper work, making sure to add my case number. I signed it and turned it in. The paper work was an application to become an emancipated youth. I wanted nothing to do with my mother ever again.

After that I went back and gave my statement. That was it, it was over. Michelle and I headed for Starlight and Ed headed to prison.

James

~~~~~

I had it all planned. I would be rid of Hunter once and for all. I hid until I saw Hunter come out of his house then I followed him. Being a ninja he knew someone was there. But even a ninja can't out run a bullet. I waited until he stopped to look around then I aimed to take my shot. It was great. I had a perfect shot at his chest.

Arissa

~~~~~

I didn't trust James and I knew something was up. I managed to catch up to him and found him aiming a gun at Hunter. I got so furious. I lost one parent already and even if this was Hunter I wasn't gonna lose another one. I jump kicked James from behind. He fell forward in front of Hunter and dropped his gun. I ran over and grabbed the gun.

"Oh my god...what is going on?" Hunter asked.

"James was going to try and kill you. That is not going to happen though. James, I told you to stay away from Hunter." I said.

"He's in my way!" James cried.

"Hunter, get out of here." I commanded.

"No...I..." Hunter started.

"Go! Now! I'm not sure how long I can hold him off!" I cried.

"Fine..." Hunter took off.

"Alone at last...I always knew you couldn't be trusted and now it's time to be rid of you once and for all. Goodbye James." I said shooting him in the head before he could say a word of protest. I quickly disposed of the body and made sure there was no trace of murder on the Academy grounds then I went back to Aunt Aria.

"Where is James? I tried contacting him and he's not responding." Aunt Aria said.

"James is dead." I said.

"What? How?"

"Harley...she killed him."

Aunt Aria's expression turned darker than normal, "She will pay...we will make her pay."

Harley

~~~~~

When Dad got back he told us he thought that Arissa took out James on her own for trying to kill him. I wasn't so sure. I wanted to check it out but Dad said no because we had other things to deal with. We all had lunch then Mel and Tony had to head back to the airport. They just came to get Felicity.

"I'm so glad I got to see you guys." I said.

"I know, I miss you so much Har." Mel said.

"Take care of my cousin..." Tony said to Josh.

"No worries, I got it covered." Josh said.

"And you take care of my sister." I said.

"Of course. She's in good hands." Tony promised.

"I love you Felicity." I said hugging her.

"Love you Har-re." she said hugging me.

"I love you too sweetie." Dad said hugging Felicity.

"Love you too Daddy." She said.

"Wait!" Mom said running up. "I couldn't let her leave without saying goodbye."

"Mommy!" Felicity said giggling.

"I'll miss you sweetheart. I love you my little Crimple." Mom said kissing Felicity's nose.

Felicity giggled, "Love you Mommy."

"Crimple?" I asked.

"Don't ask." Dad said

"You be good girl for Tony and Mel." Mom said.

Felicity smiled and Mom handed her to Tony.

“Thank you so much.” Mom said.

“Anytime Aunt Michelle. Just let us know when it’s safe and we’ll bring her home.” Tony said.

“Thank you.” Mom said hugging Tony then Mel.

We watched as they entered the boarding area.

I sighed, “Ok...now we can truly focus...James maybe gone, but Arissa and Aria are going down.”

*"Middle of the night and it's getting so hard to breathe
You can't sleep, can't think, can't hardly dream
Do you fear what the world wants you to be?
Open your eyes and just see what the world is
Open your mind and you're free*

*There's more in this world than we see,
Just leave these illusions behind and run with me
If all of the things that you thought you would be
Pass you by
We'll find what we need in our lives
We'll find what we need in our lives"
~ "Illusions" Ryan Cabrera*

It was finally here, graduation day...for me anyway. Reefside High was holding it's graduation today, some schools, like Starlight Academy, still had another week before their graduation.

I sat in my room looking myself over. 'Cap and gown, check. Black shoes that fit dress code, check. No smudges on my make-up...check. OK I'm ready to go.' I thought to myself as I headed downstairs.

"Ready." I said.

"I can't believe our baby girl is graduating." Mom said about to cry.

"I know, seems like just yesterday we were bringing her home from the hospital." Dad said putting his arm around Mom.

"Guys, can we not? This isn't that big of a deal." I said.

"Sure it is. You're our little girl Anna, you're growing up." Dad said.

I sighed, "Can we just go?"

My hope of it not being a big deal was crushed altogether when I saw who all showed up for my graduation...some people I wasn't even expecting from out of town. Of course my parents were there, so was Uncle Eric and Aunt Tally. Josh, Noah, DJ, Beth, Savannah, Stacy, and Harley were there as well. This is where I got a shock...my ex-team mates were there as well! Richie, Kristy, Steven, Aurora, and even Crystal were there. Aaron and Logan were there as well. I wanted to go ask so bad what they were doing here but I had to go take my place in the line-up. So much for this day not being a big deal.

Arissa

~~~~~

I arrived in Thousand Oaks and tried to decide where to go next. I couldn't exactly look up the Thunder Ninja Academy in the phone book. I thought about what I knew. From my research on Jay Watanabe it seemed that he attended McKinney University. That seemed like a good place to start. I went over there and after I changed my form to look like Harley I went in the student center and started asking around. 30 minutes later someone finally told me where I could find Jay.

I went to the building I was directed to and looked around.

"Harley? What are you doing here?" someone asked.

"Jay?" I asked, I was hoping he'd recognize me since I had no clue who he was.

"It's so good to see you." He said.

This was obviously him, "Yeah, well I...I have a favor and only you can help me. I figure you owe me after the crap

you pulled.” I said trying to sound bitter, though I didn’t know exactly what he did to Harley, just that it was bad. He sighed, “I know...I screwed up, I’m really sorry, and of course, if I can do anything for you I’ll be glad to help. I need to get back to the Academy though, would you like to come? I’m sure Mom and Dad would love to see you.” I nodded, “I’d like to see them too. Let’s go.”

We arrive at the Academy and took me to go see his parents. I had to admit, the Thunder Ninja Academy was a pretty nice place. Anyway, we got to the office and Cam was in there with LeAnn.

“Look who came to visit.” Jay said.

“Harley! Hey!” LeAnn said hugging me.

“Hi.” I said returning the hug.

“How are you?”

“I’m fine, thanks.”

“Are you hungry?”

“No, I’m fine.”

“Let me go put some tea on. I’ll be right back.”

“I’ll help you” Jay said. I think he was nervous around me.

I sat down and looked at Cam. We were alone now, it was a great time to find out about the Gem.

“So what brings you to the Thunder Academy?” Cam asked.

“I just wanted to get away for a bit. I hadn’t seen you guys for awhile and figured I’d pop by and say hello.” I said.

“I’m glad you’re here. I was worried you wouldn’t come by after what Jay did...for the record I’m really sorry he put you through all that.” Cam said.

I nodded. “Thanks.”

“So, how are your parents?”

“Fine. Dad showed me the coolest thing the other day.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah, this really cool gem shard. It was awesome.”

“The Gem of Souls...yeah, I have a shard too.”

“You do?”

“Yes I do. When the Gem was shattered three pieces were disposed of but Hunter hid two. He later admitted he had them. We used their power while we needed it but after Lothor was gone we had no need for them so I gave him back one shard and kept one for myself. They became symbols of our relationship.” Cam explained.

“Relationship?” I asked.

“Yeah. Since Hunter was so anti-marriage at the time it was the closest thing to a commitment symbol we had.”

Oh my god...my father was bi-sexual...he had been in a serious relationship with Cam! Ok, from the way he was talking Harley knew about this...I had to hide my shock. “Why was he anti-marriage?”

“He said he didn’t want commitment...of course then he married your mother after being back with her for less than a month so apparently it was just me. But then again Hunter always did love Michelle. They had a very special connection from the time they met. Even I think they’re soul mates now.”

I nodded, “You don’t like Mich...my mother much, do you?”

“There was a time I hated her more than anyone else on Earth, but that’s the past. I’m very happy now. I have LeAnn and Jay...I couldn’t ask for more. And I’ve also come to realize Michelle isn’t a bad person at all, she didn’t try to hurt me, all she did was love Hunter...it just so happened I loved him too.”

I nodded, “But back when you were with...Dad...the Gem...it was a commitment symbol? And you still have it?”

“Yes, what Hunter and I shared will always be special to me. I don’t keep it out or anything but I have it put away in a safe place.”

“Would you mind showing it to me?” I asked.

“Sure, come on.” Cam said leading me to it. I watched him. He kept it safe disguised as a book. This was so perfect. In a matter of hours the shard would be mine!

April

~~~~~  
I had spent the past few days avoiding Derek...and every other Wildcat. Tiffany didn’t notice because she was too busy snuggling with Chris, Jesse was lost in his own world still, Destiny was stressing about finals, but Derek kept trying to

corner me. I didn't want to tell him what happened at that hotel. I was so ashamed.

It was mid-afternoon and I was in the dorm cleaning up my bunk area.

"April..." Derek said coming in.

"This is the girls' dorm Derek, you can't be in here. You'll get written up if anyone catches you." I said.

"I'll take my chances." He said.

"You won't graduate if you get written up now." I said.

"Like I said, I'll take my chances." He said sitting on my bed, "Sit with me."

I sighed and shook my head, "No."

"Why have you been avoiding me Ape? I thought we were close."

"Well, you were wrong."

"Was I? April, you've been distance since your mom and Ed visited. Why? What happened? Did Ed try something?"

"Just butt out!" I cried.

"No...April, talk to me." He said getting up and grabbing my wrist. He turned me so I had to face him.

"I said leave me alone!" I screamed.

"He did try something didn't he? I've notice bruises on you. April! Tell me!"

"YES HE DID!!! THERE! Are you happy now?" I screamed as I started to cry.

"Oh god."

"He tried to rape me and he beat me and I stopped him. I called the cops and he's in jail...it's over...but...he still...he touched me...his dirty fingers were inside my body...he kissed me and I feel so dirty. How can anyone care about me when I hate myself like this?" I cried harder.

"April...I care...I care so much." Derek said pulling me into his arms.

"But I'm so dirty."

"That doesn't matter to me...you're pure enough for me." He said lifting my chin so he could look in my eyes then he lowered his face to mine and kissed me. I was in shock for a second then I returned the kiss. This was the type of kiss I needed. It was a kiss full of passion and true caring, maybe even love. This was the type of kiss I had always dreamed about but never thought I'd get the chance to experience. For the first time ever I didn't want a kiss to end.

Anna

~~~~~

After graduation everyone went to Cyberspace. I hugged all my friends.

"What are you guys doing here?!" I asked.

"We couldn't miss watching you graduate." Aurora said.

"Besides, I think a Neo Ranger reunion was long over due." Kristy said.

"We're proud of you Anna." Steven said kissing my cheek.

"How are all you guys?" I asked.

"Fine. I finally got permission to move off campus so I'm moving in with Logan." Kristy said.

"And Steven and I are living together now." Aurora said.

"I'm living in a sorority house at McKinney University and I'm dating Jay Wata...oh..." Crystal paused when she saw Harley glaring, "I swear Harley, I didn't know he hadn't broken up with you when I was dating him. He told me it was over."

"And you're still dating him after what he did?" Harley asked.

"He's a good guy Harley. I'm sorry things didn't work out with you guys but he is a good guy." Crystal said.

"Yeah, as long as he's getting what he wants." Harley mumbled. Josh put his arm around her.

"Anyway...Richie, what have you been up to?" I asked.

"I'm in veterinarian school. Soon as I finish I'm gonna join my dad's practice." Richie said.

"That's great. I'm glad you all are doing so well." I said.

"We hear Stacy is a big shot now." Kristy said play punching Stacy.

"Yeah, well I guess...I'm temporary CEO of Fernandez Industries." Stacy said.

"Thought you hated that big business stuff." Richie said.

"Things change." Stacy said.

"And you...why didn't you tell me you were coming?" I asked hugging Aaron the same time I play hit him.

"I wanted to surprise you. Are you surprised?" he asked.

“Totally. I’m so glad to see you.” I said hugging him tight.

“I have a hotel room if you want to go celebrate alone later.” He whispered in my ear as I hugged him. I just nodded.

“Ok, when things die down here we’ll slip away.” He whispered.

Harley

~~~~~

I saw that Logan and Kristy went to go sit down. I walked over.

“Hi, can I borrow Logan for a second?” I asked.

“Sure.” Kristy said.

Logan and I walked over to a corner. “So, why were you one of the only two Genesis Rangers that never came to see me? I thought we were friends Logan.” I said

“We are friends, but I was in school. I couldn’t get away...and from the looks of things you’re fine.” Logan said.

“That isn’t the point.”

“I’m sorry Har...I am glad you’re ok. I just...I couldn’t get away.”

I nodded, “Fine. At least I found out who my true friends were.” I turned and went to sit with Josh.

Arissa

~~~~~

I spent the day talking to Cam and LeAnn about my dad...Hunter...and anyway, it was educational. Turns out Hunter was a pretty amazing guy after all...I mean he seemed cool enough anyway, but he was really a good guy. And also turns out Michelle was pretty highly respected around the Thunder Ninja Academy too. I was really beginning to question my mission.

Right before dinner Jay and I went for a walk.

“So how have you been?” Jay asked.

“I’m fine.” I said.

“You seeing anyone?”

“Yeah. Josh McKnight. He’s a really amazing guy.” I said, this pretending to be Harley wasn’t so fun anymore. I remembered how Josh used to be mine and I started to get angry. I had to hold that anger in.

“Really? Josh McKnight...wow.”

“Yeah...you seeing anyone?”

“Crystal Mitchell. She forgave me for lying to her about us.”

“Why did you do it?”

“What? Cheat on you with Crystal? I don’t know Har...it was the distance I guess. I got lonely and Crystal was there. We bonded right away with her step mother being Aunt Haley and everything...one thing just led to another. As for why I never told you...that’s easy, I do care about you and I didn’t want to lose you.”

“You should have just been honest.”

“I know...I’m sorry...and I’m really sorry I tried to pressure you...you’re first time shouldn’t be like that...I hope Josh treats you how you deserve to be treated, lord knows I didn’t treat you right.”

“Thanks.” I said. Was I convincing as Harley or what?

“You wanna go back? It’s getting kind of chilly out here and I’m sure dinner is ready.” Jay said.

“Yeah, let’s go.” I said.

After dinner LeAnn showed me to guest quarters. I got settled and then after everyone was asleep I snuck to Cam’s office and picked the lock. I found the book safe and managed to get the lock on the safe open without breaking it. It took a little time but I did it. I got the Gem shard out then closed up the safe and put it away so it didn’t look like it was touched. I slipped out of the office and locked back up. No one would be able to tell I was there. I went back to the room and slipped the shard into my bag. Now I just had to leave in the morning like nothing was out of the ordinary and I was home free.

April

~~~~~

After the kiss finally broke I looked at Derek.

“Why did you do that?” I asked.

“Because...” he started, breathless, “I...I love you April and I hated seeing you cry. I just want to do something to make your tears stop.”

I froze, “You love me?”

He nodded, “Yeah, I do.”

I hugged him. “I love you too Derek.”

“You do?”

“Yeah. I do...we should get you out of here before someone catches us though.” I said.

“Ok.” Derek took my hand and we went into the woods. We sat by a tree and I kissed him again. We kissed for awhile then I just leaned against him and he put his arms around me.

“What do you see in me?” I asked.

“Someone who is beautiful and has so much to give if she has the chance. I see someone who has been hurt in the worst way possible and someone I can relate to because I’ve been hurt too. I see someone who can make me feel human again and someone I can maybe make feel human again.” He said kissing my head.

“Wow...I wish I saw all that in me.” I said.

“What do you see in me?” he asked.

“Someone who is stronger than he knows and has a strong heart but so much pain inside. Someone who is missing something and needs to fill that void...someone who I would like to fill that void for and someone who truly understands me and doesn’t judge me for what I did in my past...someone who can maybe help me have a brighter future. And most of all...when I look at you Derek, I see something I never though existed, Michelle always told me it did and I never believed her.”

“What’s that?” he asked.

“Hope.”

Anna

~~~~~

As things started to wind down I went to the back and helped Savannah clean up.

“Shouldn’t you be out there with your friends?” she asked.

“I’d rather be back here with my big sister.” I said.

“Something’s wrong isn’t it?”

“What makes you assume that?”

“Your phrasing...you need some big sister advice don’t you?”

“Advice in general will do. It’s just...well high school is over...what’s next. I don’t know what I want to do now.”

“Well, you could go to Blue Bay Harbor and be with Aaron or you could stay here and go to Reefside U...if you need a job I could use the help here.”

“Thanks...I don’t know...I don’t know where to go or what to do.”

“I bet if you look inside yourself you’ll know where you’re supposed to be next.”

“You think so?”

“I do. Just trust yourself...go for your dreams and don’t hold back...you’re an adult with only yourself to think of...or you will be a legal adult in a week anyway...this is your time to do whatever your heart desires and find out who you are.”

I smiled, “Thanks Savannah...I do know what I’m going to do next.”

After everything at Cyberspace was cleaned up I told my parents Aaron and I were gonna go hang out. We went to the hotel room he had and went inside.

“I’ve missed being close to you so much.” Aaron said pulling me close.

“I’ve miss doing this.” I said as I kissed him. We made our way to the bed and I took his shirt off.

“Whoa, feeling aggressive?” he asked as I then moved down to his jeans.

“I just want you so much.” I said.

“I get that...” he said.

“You gonna talk or you gonna help me here?” I asked as I fumbled in getting my own clothes off.  
“Are you sure you really want this?” Aaron asked.  
“Yes. I do.” I said kissing him.  
“Ok.” He agreed. He helped me get my clothes off then I pushed him back on the bed, pinning him down. “Hold on a second.”  
“What?” I asked annoyed.  
“Well, this could be a little safer.” he said.  
“I’m on the pill.” I said.  
“There’s other things to worry about.” He said.  
“We’ve only been with each other right? It’s fine.”  
“I just think we should be smart about this.”  
“It’ll be fine...just enjoy it.” I said kissing his neck.  
“You’re on the pill?” he asked.  
“Yes, it’s fine. No babies for us.” I said.  
“OK...just this once.” He said.  
“Ok then.” I kissed him then straddled him and lowered myself on to him. He put his hands on my hips and I closed my eyes and I got my rhythm set. “Oh god...” I moaned.  
“Anna...” Aaron held on to my hips tighter.  
I let out a deep moan. It was so amazing, like I went somewhere else. I had been with Aaron before but it had never been like this. The sick part? When I closed my eyes I wasn’t thinking of Aaron...I was thinking of Trent, which is why I was careful not to use names out of fear I’d call out Trent’s name. It was the thought of Trent, not Aaron, being under me that sent me to climax.

April

~~~~~  
Derek and I finally came in from the woods to help with dinner. When we walked into the lodge hand in hand everyone figured out what happened.
“About time you guys!” Tiffany cried.
“Way to go Derek.” Chris said high fiving Derek.
“Another Wildcat couple? Does this mean I’m stuck with Jesse?” Destiny asked playfully.
“Congratulations guys.” Jesse said softly, ignoring Destiny’s joke.
“Did I hear right? Another Wildcat couple?” Harley asked walking in with Josh.
“Yup.” Derek said.
“About time!” Josh said.
I hit him, “Stop that, that’s what everyone is telling us, it’s annoying.”
“Sorry babe.” Josh said kissing my head.
“Well this is great news...I say we celebrate. Let’s get the kitchen clean and we’ll all have some hot fudge sundaes.” Harley said.
We did exactly that.

That night when I fell asleep it was the first night I wasn’t scared about the future. I felt safe.

Arissa

~~~~~  
The next day I double checked that I had the shard. I did. I went to go say goodbye to Cam.  
“Thank you so much for letting me stay here.” I said.  
“You are always welcomed here Harley. Consider this another home.” Cam said hugging me.  
“Next time bring your father, we all miss him.” LeAnn said.  
“I’ll let him know. Thanks for everything.” I said. I turned and left.

It all went down perfectly!

I went back to Aunt Aria.

“I have another shard.” I said holding it up.

“Very good work Arissa. Even with James gone I think our plan can progress as planned.” Aunt Aria said.

“Only one more shard to go.”

“As soon as you get that nothing will be able to stop us.”

“And it will all be over.” I said softly.

“Your victory is at hand Arissa, don’t sound so sad.”

I nodded, “I’m thrilled...really. Michelle will soon be gone.” I said, though I wasn’t sure that is what I wanted anymore.

*"Hearts are worn  
In these dark ages  
You're not alone  
In these stories' pages  
The light has fallen  
Amongst the living and the dying  
And I'll try to hold it in  
Yeah I'll try to hold it in*

*The world is on fire  
It's more than I can handle  
I'll tap into the water  
Try and bring my share  
Try to bring more, more than I can handle  
Bring it to the table  
Bring what I am able ..."  
~ "World on Fire" Sarah McLachlan*

"That's it, my last final. I am finished!" I said falling back on the sofa in the lodge.

"So you finished your final final?" Tiffany giggled.

"Lame joke Princess." April said sitting next to me and leaning on me. I put an arm around her.

"I thought it was cute." Chris said kissing Tiffany's nose.

"The sweetness in here is gonna give me a cavity." Destiny said wrinkling her nose.

"Oh, just because you bombed your history final don't take it out on us." Tiffany said.

"I didn't bomb it. I passed." Destiny snapped.

"Ok, you passed by one point." Tiffany said.

"Either way that's no reason to be sour. We did warn you to study more." April said.

"All I know is Conner's final was a breeze." Chris said.

"Speak for yourself. A mile in 5 minutes is not easy." Tiffany whined as she rubbed her ankle.

"All I know is I'm finished. I'm graduating." I said.

"Aren't you scared?" Tiffany asked.

"Why would I be scared?" I asked.

"Ya know, going out into the real world...you're an adult now...it'll be a different world. I mean I know you hate your parents but they did support you before." Tiffany said.

What Tiff said really hit me. She was right and I hadn't thought much about it. What would I do now? I always planned on going to college on a basketball scholarship...that wouldn't fly now. I didn't have my dad's support anymore, he hated me. Suddenly I got really scared.

"I just remember something I need to do. I'll catch you guys later." I said getting up. I went into the woods to think. I thought about everything that happened in the past and how uncertain my future was now. Why didn't I ever think of this before? Maybe it was all the drama of court...maybe I just didn't want to think about it. Now I couldn't think of anything else. Two words echoed in my head...

What now?

Arissa

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"I don't want to wait anymore. We strike now. I will take every Bot we have into the city and attack. While everyone is distracted you go in to the Academy and get the final shard of the Gem." Aunt Aria commanded.

"I don't know exactly where the shard is." I said.

"Then go talk to Hunter right now and try to figure out where it is. He still trusts you a little, the fool."

“Ok fine, let me know when your army is prepared.” I said leaving. I sat down. This was it. We were really gonna take out Michelle...and the Rangers...Harley...and Hunter would probably get in the way...I really was getting to be unsure about this whole mission.

I arrived at the Academy and found Hunter.

“Hi...” I said.

“Arisa...” he said.

“Just so you know, James is dead.” I said.

“That’s good news.”

“I thought it might be.”

“Arisa, why can’t you just stop this revenge plan on Michelle? She doesn’t deserve it.”

“She killed my mother.”

“Do you even know the whole story?” Hunter asked.

“Yes. Michelle murdered my mother in cold blood.”

Hunter shook his head, “No, she didn’t. She did it to defend herself and her planet.”

“What?”

“You don’t know your mother, and truthfully I don’t either since she lied to me about who she was, but I do know the story about what happened. It started millenniums ago. Lilianna was going to try and take over Saturn, she was jealous of Michelle. Michelle managed to stop her but then some years ago Lilianna returned. She was going to kill Michelle... she tried to kill her, but Michelle managed to barely save herself.”

“No, my mom wouldn’t do that...that sounds like she was gonna do a hostile take over of Saturn.” I said.

“She was. Your mother was power hungry and jealous. Michelle only defended herself. She’s never done anything but try her best to be a good person, she hasn’t always succeeded but she tried and she would never kill anyone in cold blood, she’s not that kind of person.” Hunter said.

“I...I have to go.” I ran off, I’d find the shard later...this was too much. It was starting to sound like my mother had been the one who was a heartless monster, not Michelle. Could this be right? Was I fighting for the wrong side?

April

~~~~~

“Will Derek be ok?” Destiny asked after Derek was gone.

I nodded, “Yeah, I think so. He’s just overwhelmed.”

“Thanks to Princess here.” Destiny said.

“Hey, I was just asking a question.” Tiffany said as Detective Scott walked in.

“April, may I speak with you alone?” he asked.

“Of course.” I said following him.

Once we were alone he pulled out a letter.

“It says here you applied for emancipation.” He said.

“I did.” I said.

“Why? You’re safe here.”

“Yeah, but I don’t want my mother or Ed having any legal rights to me whatsoever.”

“I understand that...I’m here to let you know your request was granted. After viewing your case the judge granted it.”

“That’s means I’m a legal adult now?”

“Yes it does. It also means you don’t have to stay at Starlight anymore. I know you’re here on scholarship right now, but it’s your call now. You’re free to go anywhere you want.”

“It is?”

“It is.”

“Wow, thanks for coming down here Detective.” I said, “Have you told Michelle and Hunter about this?”

“No, you’re an adult now, I’ll leave that to you.”

“Thank you.”

Anna

~~~~~

It had been a few days since my friends all went home. Since that night with Aaron I had been analyzing myself. Fantasizing about your sister's father while you're making love to your boyfriend isn't normal...it was actually sick. I decided that all this Trent stuff was coming up because the thought of it was dangerous and exciting and that's what I needed...danger and excitement. Most people would go skydive or something. That was old hat to me. I had been skydiving, bungee jumping, hang gliding, and parasailing more times than I could count. I needed something more. I had some money saved up and nothing to do all summer. I decided I was going to find excitement...the first place I'd start? New York City.

My parents were less than thrilled with the idea but they knew they couldn't stop me. I packed up my car and got ready to go to New York. Aaron wanted to go to but I told him no. This was for me. This was something I needed to find myself. Something I had to do alone.

As I was getting ready to go Stacy and Josh were trying to stop me.

"Are you insane?!" Josh cried.

"New York City? Alone?" Stacy asked.

"You've never been away from home." Josh said.

"I was in Turtle Cove with Stacy for a year." I said.

"That was different, you had me and Turtle Cove is small. In New York you'll be alone...and it's...New York, it's big." Stacy said.

"I'll be fine. Trust me." I said.

"You are insane." Josh said.

"I'm perfectly sane. I need to do this...just please, let me go without all the drama. I'll be back in a couple of months." I said.

"There's no way we can talk you out of this is there?" Josh asked.

"Nope. Mom and Dad already tried." I said.

"OK then, be careful and have fun." Stacy said hugging me.

"And if you need anything call." Josh said hugging me too.

"I will...I'll be fine..." I said hugging them before I got in the car and taking off.

As I started on the road I suddenly felt like I had a direction. I was going to find myself and who I was...and on my own, in New York, I could be whom ever I wanted. I could be someone I never was in Reefsides.

Harley

~~~~~

I was getting some bottles of water from my parents' house. We were out in the lodge. I was about to go back when Mom called me.

"Harley! Wait, come here!"

I ran in the room she was in, it was the room that held the computer system. "What's wrong?"

"Aria. She's made her move. She's attacking the city and it looks like she has every Bot she owns with her." Mom said.

"This isn't good." Dad said.

"We can handle it. I'll go get the Wild Cats." I said.

I went to the lodge and rounded up Tiffany, Jesse, and Chris.

"Where's Derek and April?" I asked.

"Not here." Tiffany said.

"I'll contact them." I said pressing my communicator. We all met outside in our hiding place. "Ok guys, this is it. Aria made her move. She's launched an all out attack on the city. It's time to put an end to this once and for all. Are you guys ready?"

"Yes, we're ready." Derek said, "Let's do this Wild Cats. Ready?"

"Ready!"

"Wild Cat Transformation!"

## Destiny

~~~~~

After Harley took the others to the battle I went to the Bradley house. In all honesty I was worried. Harley looked so serious. I knocked on the door and Hunter answered.

“How serious is it? What are they facing?” I asked.

Hunter sighed, “Come in Destiny. You can help monitor the battle.”

I went to a room with Hunter. There was the awesome super computer set up. We watched the attack. It was horrible. This Aria person was destroying everything.

“I wonder where Arissa is.” Hunter said.

“Who knows? Maybe she’s biding her time.” Michelle said.

“I hope the Wild Cats will be ok.” I said.

“They will be Destiny...they are ready for this battle. Harley trained them well.” Michelle said.

“Yeah, they have become amazing Rangers. They can do this.” Hunter said.

Arissa

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So much for warning me about the attack. It caught even me off guard. One minute I’m walking through the city waiting for Aunt Aria’s signal, next thing I know the city is crumbling around me and Bots are attacking me!

“You idiotic Bots! It’s me! Arissa! You don’t attack me!” I cried. They backed off quickly.

I sighed, this meant it was time...but what if Hunter told me the truth...Michelle didn’t deserve this...but Aunt Aria told me Michelle killed my mother in cold blood, why would she lie? This was all so confusing...but I didn’t have time for this uncertainty. I needed to focus...I needed to get that Gem shard. I went to the Academy and started in the office since it was empty. I looked everywhere, no shard. This was bad...it was probably in the house but I knew Hunter and Michelle were in the house. I’d just have to be very quiet. I snuck into the house and started sneaking around. I would find that shard if it was the last thing I did.

## Harley

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We were so out numbered it wasn’t even funny.

“Harley!! I can’t do this!” Tiffany cried as she tried to get away from some Bots.

“Keep fighting Tiff. We can do this...we can’t quit fighting!” I cried as I used my staff to try to clear out some of the Bots. It worked but more and more kept coming. We couldn’t hold them off.

“There’s too many!” Derek called.

“We can do this guys!” I called. I flashed back to the last battle I had with the Genesis Rangers. It looked even more hopeless than this. All of us, except Nick, were captured by the Ice Kingdom. They had Felicity too and Nick had turned evil again, so we thought. We were sure it was all over.

“Then let’s waste no more time.” Ice said.

“Remember, you agreed to do this my way.” Nick said.

“Of course..” Ice said.

“And the baby doesn’t see this...having a baby in here is just asking for trouble. Give me the baby and you can carry on.” Nick said.

“Very well, take her to the nursery on the 3rd floor if you will.” Snow said.

“Of course.” Nick said taking Felicity.

“NO!” I screamed as Nick picked up my sister.

“OK...there’s just one more thing before I go.” Nick said.

“What?” Ice asked.

“Never trust a Ranger...” Nick said hitting a red button that released us. “Go guys! I’ll get Felicity home, you handle these creeps!” he cried running as fast as he could to get Felicity out of there.

We had survived Queen Snow...we even survived Cobra...we survived too much for it to end now. I had faith in my team then and I had faith in this team.

"Keep going you guys. We can beat this!" I cried.

Michelle

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This was sad to watch. The Bots had the Rangers so out numbered that there was no way they could win. Aria didn't even have to lift a finger. Every now and then she's zap a Bot so it was at full power and more impossible to defeat, but that was it.

"I'm going to surrender." I said.

"No you're not! Are you insane?" Hunter asked.

"No, but look sweetie. Aria is going to take out the Rangers. I have to protect them." I said.

"You're not going to surrender." Hunter said.

"He's right, you can't, there has to be another way." Destiny said.

"Well, they need help. I'm going to help them." I said standing up.

"Not without me you aren't." Hunter said.

"Me too." Destiny said.

"No way, you stay." I said.

"No, I'm coming to help." Destiny insisted.

"It's too dangerous." I said.

"I can help get civilians to safety." Destiny said.

"She's right." Hunter said.

"Ok, let's go." I said

We got to the scene of the battle.

"Mom!" Harley called.

"We're here to help!" I called.

"Help? There's no way they can win! Surrender now Michelle and I will spare them!" Aria called.

"Like that'll happen. By the way, where'd you get your outfit? Sluts R Us?" I said looking at her barely there leather jumpsuit.

"You're one to talk, you're the Queen of the Sluts." Aria said.

"No, no, that would be you, I'm just the Queen of Saturn and it's gonna stay that way."

"We'll see about that." Aria said jumping into the battle and facing off with me.

Arissa

~~~~~  
I heard Hunter and Michelle leave. This meant I had free reign to look for the Gem. I went into Hunter and Michelle's bedroom and started looking through Hunter's things. I found a box with a bunch of old photos and letters in it. Most of the photos were of Michelle and Hunter at the track. Some of them were from public events that were related to Michelle's career. I opened one of the letters and started to read it:

Dear Hunter,

This is the hardest letter I've ever had to write and in all honesty I don't even know how to begin.

I guess I should start by pointing out that even though I've only known you for a few months you've changed my life forever. I always believed in "love at first sight". Until now I never believed in a "lasting love at first sight." I firmly believe that given the time our love would have been even more intense and stronger than anything I have ever known. It's already, just in this short time, been more than I ever could have dreamed with more passion than I ever thought possible.

I stopped reading. It was a letter from when they broke up. I moved to another paragraph that caught my attention:

I will always love you Hunter. Nothing and no one can change that. No matter how many Ranger teams I must

train in the future I will never forget my time with you and how much that has meant to me. In my mind we'll be together forever.

She really did love him. I folded the letter back up and put it away. I pulled out another letter. It looked like it was from their first wedding anniversary.

My Dearest Hunter,

Today has been one year since the day we said our vows and I still mean every word of what I said. I love you more each day and everyday I thank God that I finally have you by my side. The long road it took to get here was worth every second for all the happiness we have now. Everything I ever wanted has finally happened. I have a family with you, the one man I've ever truly loved the way a woman should love a man. I firmly believe us to be soul mates Hunter. I believe that now that we have found each other again we will never be apart again. Not a day goes by that I don't realize how lucky I am. You've given me everything. Happy Anniversary Sweetheart, I love you.

*Always yours,
Mich*

I put that letter away; under it was the letter Hunter wrote to Michelle on the same day.

Mich,

Did you ever think we'd be celebrating our first wedding anniversary? It's amazing to me that we've finally arrive at the point...it too so long to get here. But, now that I have you back I'm never letting go. You are the only one for me and I know you feel the same and while I wish we would have seen that sooner I am happy we are finally together. I have everything I ever wanted in life. I get to be a father with you at my side. That was my dream and I thought it would never be, yet here we are. Everyday I love you more and I hope you never doubt that. You are so beautiful and so wonderful and I am so grateful to have you in my life. I love you baby, Happy Anniversary.

*Forever,
Hunter*

As I put that letter away I started to cry. They really had been through so much and they loved each other so deeply. Losing Michelle would all but kill Hunter...and it seemed like she was a pretty good person after all...she had so much love for Hunter...how could someone who loved like that be worth killing? But Aunt Aria wanted her dead and Aunt Aria raised me from the time I was a baby. She would never lead me astray...but would Hunter? I was about to put the box away when I noticed the shard in the corner of the box. I had the shard now...the end was near.

*"The weight of the world, the need to survive
Has made you believe that you got no right
And out of the blue,
You meet someone who offers a place warm as the sun
Just close your eyes
Reach for the moment before it slips by
Here is your second chance, take it and fly"
~ "Second Chances" Trisha Yearwood*

I had the final shard to the Gem. I rushed to the scene of the battle. I saw Aunt Aria facing off with Michelle. She saw me.

"Arisa! Do you have it?" she asked.

"Yes, here, catch!" I cried throwing it over some Bots. She caught it.

"At last! The Gem of Souls is mine!" Aunt Aria cried as she connected the final shard. The Gem solidified itself and became whole again.

"NO!" Hunter screamed.

"Goodbye Michelle..." Aunt Aria said about to use the Gem.

"I don't think so!" Harley cried hitting Aunt Aria's hand with her staff.

"No! The Gem!" Aunt Aria cried.

"Got it!" April said catching it. A Bot pushed her down and got it, "Correction, the Bot got it."

"Not for long." Jesse said grabbing it, "Chris, catch!" he called as he saw Bots coming at him.

"Caught it!" Chris called as a Bot tackled him and got it, "No! Damn it!"

"Bring me the Gem." Aunt Aria commanded the Bot.

"Not a chance!" Tiffany said getting the Gem.

"Fine, I'll get it myself." Aunt Aria said going after Tiffany.

"Oh no! Derek! Catch!" Tiffany cried throwing the Gem. A Bot and Derek both went for it which knocked it through the air. It flew directly at me and I caught it.

"YES! Arissa, give it to me!" Aunt Aria called.

"No! Arissa, don't...please, give it to me." Hunter said.

"No, don't listen to him, he protects the woman who murdered your mother." Aunt Aria said.

"The only cold blooded killer around here is you, just like your sister was." Hunter said.

"Arisa, just give it to me." Aunt Aria said.

"No, Arissa, please..." Hunter said.

I stood there holding the Gem. I was caught in between two people I cared about. I started to think back to when I was a kid, the stories Aunt Aria would tell me.

"The Princess of Saturn...well soon to be Queen...she did it. She's the reason you don't have a mother." Aunt Aria would tell me.

"Why did she kill my mother?" I asked.

"She is a cold blooded killer, she killed your mother out of spite."

"One day she has to pay for it."

"She will, when you're older we will make sure Princess Michelle pays for what she has done to our family. I promise you, we'll avenge your mother's death."

At the same time I remembered what Hunter told me,

"Arisa, why can't you just stop this revenge plan on Michelle? She doesn't deserve it."

"She killed my mother."

"Do you even know the whole story?" Hunter asked.

"Yes. Michelle murdered my mother in cold blood."

Hunter shook his head, "No, she didn't. She did it to defend herself and her planet."

"What?"

"You don't know your mother, and truthfully I don't either since she lied to me about who she was, but I do know the story about what happened. It started millenniums ago. Lilianna was going to try and take over Saturn, she was jealous of Michelle. Michelle managed to stop her but then some years ago Lilianna returned. She was going to kill Michelle... she tried to kill her, but Michelle managed to barely save herself."

"No, my mom wouldn't do that...that sounds like she was gonna do a hostile take over of Saturn." I said.

"She was. Your mother was power hungry and jealous. Michelle only defended herself. She's never done anything but try her best to be a good person, she hasn't always succeeded but she tried and she would never kill anyone in cold blood, she's not that kind of person." Hunter said.

I remembered the pictures of Hunter and Michelle and the letters. They were so packed with emotion...the emotions of good people...they were so full of love. All Aunt Aria seemed to feel was hate. I closed my eyes. I knew what my heart was telling me.

"I'm sorry mother...I can't do this, I'm not saying you deserved to die but Michelle doesn't deserve to pay." I whispered to myself.

"Arisa! The Gem!" Aunt Aria cried.

"Arisa..." Hunter said.

"No! Aunt Aria, this is wrong! Michelle is a good person!" I cried.

"She killed your mother!" Aunt Aria cried.

"Mother tried a hostile take over a peaceful planet!"

"I don't have time for this! Give me the Gem so I can destroy Michelle or I'll destroy you." Aunt Aria said coming at me.

"You'd destroy me? Then I know this is for the best." I held up the Gem to block her attack. It reflected back at her and hit her.

"She's hit, now Rangers!" Derek called. They formed their blaster.

"Wild Cat Blaster, Fire!" the Rangers called.

In a flash of light my aunt was gone. I stood there in shock. I felt a hand on my shoulder.

"You did the right thing. Thank you Arissa." Hunter said.

"I couldn't let her hurt you...or Michelle." I said softly.

"What made you change your mind?"

"When I went to get that shard, I found in among letters and pictures...I saw the love you and Michelle have for each other...no one who loves like that is capable of murdering someone in cold blood...that's when I realized you were telling me the truth, it was self defense." I said.

"I'm glad you realized it before it was too late." Hunter said.

"Yeah, but what do I do now?" I asked.

"Well, I'd have to talk to Michelle, but you could come help us at the Academy...there's a spare room in the house."

"Are you serious? After everything I did you still want me to be part of your family?" I asked.

"You're my daughter Arissa. Of course...as long as you're over your quest for revenge and you really want to get a new start, then yes, of course I want you there."

"So do I. Thank you for saving me Arissa." Michelle said walking up to me.

"You do? Seriously?" I asked.

"We can trust you right?" Michelle asked.

I nodded, "Yes, I really do want a second chance."

"There was a time your father was after wrongful vengeance and I gave him a second chance...I see no reason not to give his daughter that same chance."

"Even after I tried to kill you?"

"Hunter tried to kill me too...listen, I love your father and if forgiving you makes him happy I'm willing to try."

"Thank you Michelle." I said. I knew right then I had been wrong about her, I was glad I was given this second chance.

"Starlight is all about second chances...if you really wanna change we'll all welcome you, right?" Tiffany said.

April looked me over, "I guess so."

“Hey, we all need a second chance right?” Chris said.

“On that note, let’s get back to the Academy. We have a graduation to prepare for.” Hunter said.

Derek

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“I’m gonna miss you April. I wish you could come with me.” I said. I was talking to April before graduation.

“Maybe I can.” She said.

“What are you talking about?”

“I just got the good news, I’m officially an emancipated youth. I’m an adult for all intent purposes...I can leave here whenever I want...if you’re serious about taking me with you.”

“Of course I am! Are you sure this is what you want?” I asked.

“Yes. I want a new start Derek. Our job as Rangers is over, my battle with Ed and my mother is over...I’m ready to put my past behind me and start again. I’d like to start again with you.”

“I’d like to start again with you too.” I said kissing her.

“Derek! Come on!” Hunter called.

“It’s time...see you after the ceremony.” I said going to join my fellow seniors.

After the ceremony I joined the other Wildcats.

“I can’t believe you’re really leaving.” Tiffany said crying.

“April and I will be sure to write.” I said.

“What?” Chris asked.

“I got emancipation. I’m going with Derek.” April said.

“Oh god, we’re losing you too? I’m gonna miss you guys.” Tiffany said crying harder.

“We’re proud of you though.” Destiny said.

“I’m proud of you.” A voice said behind me. I turned around and saw my dad.

“Dad...what are you doing here?” I asked.

“I came to see my son graduate...Derek, I was wrong to defend your mother. You’re my son, you should have come first...I hope you can forgive me.” He said.

“Sorry, second chances only go so far then you need a new start for yourself, and that’s exactly what I’m going to do with April...make a new start.” I said.

“But Derek, I’m your father...”

“And I’m your son, you turned you back on me when I needed you most...that’s not a father I want. Please leave.”

“Fine...if you ever need anything I’m here for you son.”

“I won’t...not from you.” I said as I watched my father walk away.

April

~~~~~

After the drama with Derek’s father I went to tell Hunter and Michelle I’d be leaving.

“Why didn’t you tell us you applied for emancipation?” Michelle asked.

“I wasn’t sure if it would work.” I said.

“Are you sure this is what you want? You know you’re welcome to stay here.” Michelle said.

I nodded, “I know, but this is what I want. A new start with Derek...it’s exactly what I want.”

“OK, then we wish you the best of luck.” Hunter said.

“If you ever need anything, any time, call us.” Michelle said.

“And you’re always welcome here, even if it’s just to visit.” Hunter said.

“Consider this your home.” Michelle added.

I smiled, “Thank you so much...for everything.”

I went to the dorm and packed up my things. I couldn’t believe this was really happening.

Arissa

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“Here you go, how’s this room?” Hunter asked.  
I looked around the bedroom, “Nice, very red...”  
“Crimson...Michelle let me decorate it. You’re welcome to redo it if you want.”  
“No, it’s cool. I kinda like it.” I said.  
“Ok, well make yourself at home.”  
“Thank you.” I said.

Hunter left me alone to go do Academy stuff and I sat on the bed. I looked around the room again. For the first time I did really feel at home. I went to look around the house. The room next to mine was decorated in purple, it was obviously Harley’s room. Across from that room was a room decorated in a weird color that looked like a mix of purple and crimson. At the end of the hall was the master bedroom, Hunter and Michelle’s room, it was obvious it was their room because the bed had a crimson and purple bedspread, the rest of the room was done to match it. I went back to my room and fell back on the bed. This was going to take some getting used to.

I jumped from my thoughts when I heard a knock. I hadn’t closed my door. I sat up and saw Harley standing in the doorway.

“Oh...hey.” I said.  
“Listen and listen good, I’ve been fighting you for the last several months because you’ve been trying to kill me and my family. If you haven’t really changed and you try to hurt any of them I will make you pay like you’ve never paid before...and Felicity is coming home today, you better not do anything to that little girl.” Harley warned.  
I nodded, “I know...I would never do anything to hurt Felicity...and I’m sorry for everything else I did...I promise you, I won’t screw up this chance.”  
“You best not.” She said turning and walking away.  
I sighed, “This was not going to be easy.”  
“Hey, Arissa, we’re having a barbeque before Derek and April leave, you coming?” Hunter called.  
“Sure.” I said going to join them.

I got to the area where they were barbequing and was shocked at all the people. Every McKnight, except Anna, was there, all the Wildcats, the Olivers, the Scotts, Harley, Hunter, and Michelle of course, and two people with Felicity I never saw.

“Tony, Mel...this is my daughter Arissa. Arissa, this is Harley’s cousin Tony and his fiancée Melody.” Hunter said.  
“Nice to meet you. You’re Detective Oliver’s son?” I asked.  
“Yes.” Tony said.  
“It’s nice to meet you Arissa. It’s great you switched sides. You’re in great company. Our friend Nick did the same thing you did.” Mel said.  
“You ended up accepting him and being his friend?” I asked.  
“Oh yeah, he’s a great friend. He’s actually dating Harley’s cousin Lindsey...I guess that would make her your cousin too though cause she’s Blake and Tori’s daughter.” Mel said.  
“That’s cool...so where are you guys from?” I asked.  
“We go to school in Florida. We just came for today to bring Felicity home.” Tony said.  
“I’m glad you did. Hey Felicity.” I said.  
“Rissa!” she cried. I smiled and hugged her.  
“Looks like she’s accepted you already.” A voice behind me said.  
I turned around, “DJ! Hey...”  
“So, I hear Harley was right...you were using me to get that Gem.” He said.  
“I’m so sorry...I really, really am.” I said.  
“I also hear you gave up the world domination business...you think that you might have some time to date now?” DJ asked.

I smiled, “You’re not angry?”  
“I was...but everything turned out ok and I really do like you...and since second chances seem to be going around I can give in another try. So what do you say? Go out with me this weekend?”  
“I’d love to.” I said smiling.  
“Come here.” He said pulling me into his arms.  
I hugged him. This was so great. Slowly I might actually be able to fit in here.

“Food’s ready.” Hunter called. We all went and sat down.

As everyone got their food I looked around. Chris and Tiffany were together, Derek and April were together, Harley and Josh were together, Noah and Stacy were together, Mel and Tony were together, of course the adults were all with their spouses, and I was with DJ...everyone looked so happy...even Destiny and Jesse, who weren’t actually together, looked happy.

Derek

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After we ate April and I loaded up our stuff in a rental car. I had enough money in savings to get us started. After everything was loaded up we went to say goodbye.

“I guess this is it.” April said.

“I’m gonna miss you kid...you were pretty cool.” Chris said hugging her.

“Yeah, I’ll miss you too...we had some fun...take care of the Princess.” April said.

“You got it.” Chris said.

“And take care of yourself...don’t give Hunter and Michelle too much crap.” I said.

“It’s gonna be weird in the dorms without you...” Chris said.

“Yeah, you’ll have to mess with Jesse on your own...don’t let him off easy.”

“Count on it.”

“And Jess, don’t let him get away with too much crap...I’m sorry if you didn’t think we were friends...you were a really great friend Jess.” I said.

“I know...we were friends...and you were a great leader Derek. I’m gonna miss you.” Jesse said, “And you April, I really looked up to you for your strength.”

“Really? Thanks Jess.” She said hugging him.

“You...Destiny...you watch yourself...don’t get into too much trouble.” I said hugging her.

“I’ll be good.” She said.

“Yeah right...you good? But seriously, take it easy on the Princess, she isn’t that bad.” April said.

“Listen...April, I know you hated me but I just want you to know I think of you as one of my best friends.” Tiffany said.

“Oh Tiff, I don’t hate you...and you’re one of my best friends too...you’re pretty cool...I’m gonna miss you.” April said hugging Tiffany.

I walked over to Harley, “And you...you were a great trainer and group leader. I couldn’t have done the Red Ranger thing without you.”

“You were a great leader Derek. I’m honored I got to work with you.” Harley said hugging me.

“You take care of her Josh.” I said.

Josh laughed, “You better believe it. You take care of yourself and April.”

“You got it man.” I said. I went over to Hunter and Michelle, “Thank you for everything. Both of you...Hunter, I will never be able to thank you enough for everything you did for me...you helped me find an inner strength I never knew I had and you stood by me when even my own father turned his back on me.” I said hugging Hunter, I started to cry.

“You’ve been like the son I never had. I’m so proud of you and I know you’ll do great out there. We’re gonna miss you here though...you’re welcome back anytime.” He said hugging me.

“Yes, thank you for everything...especially you Michelle...you gave me hope and held hope for me when I wanted to let it go. You helped give me my freedom and a second chance. You showed me I don’t have to live in fear.” April said hugging Michelle. They both cried.

“You two take care of each other...I know you will be fine though. You’re both stronger than you know.” Michelle said.

“And Arissa, if you hurt anyone here I will personally come and kick your ass. Other than that, good luck on *your* second chance.” April said.

Arissa laughed, “Thanks April...good luck to you too.”

“You two take care.” Conner said.

“You bet coach...don’t run them too hard.” I said.

“I wouldn’t dream of it.” Conner laughed.

“On that note we should get going.” I said.

“OK...we’ll miss you guys.” April said as we got into the car.

There was a chorus of “Take care!” and “Be careful!” We got into the car and drove off. April turned around and waved

until everyone was out of sight.

“You sure this is what you want?” I asked.

She nodded. “A second chance with an amazing guy? It’s everything I ever wanted.”

Hunter

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After Derek and April were gone we got the Wildcats back to the dorms and I took Arissa, Michelle, and Felicity home. We all sat in the living room.

“I know I said it already but thanks for accepting me.” Arissa said.

“Rissa play!” Felicity demanded as she walked over with a game.

Arissa laughed, “OK, let’s play.”

I sat and watched as Arissa sat on the floor and played with Felicity. It was so cute and made me so happy. Michelle sat next to me and put her arm around me.

“Life is good?” she asked.

“Life is perfect.” I said kissing her.

She kissed me back. “Yeah it is.”

Harley

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After all the excitement died down Josh and I went to go sit at the lake.

“Do you think April and Derek will be ok?” I asked.

“I think they’ll be fine.” He said.

“And Arissa...you think we can trust her?”

“Babe, I think everyone will be fine...I think everything worked out and I think we should all be grateful.”

I smiled and leaned on him. “You’re right. It looks like I got my happy ending after all.”