

Chapter 1: An Unusual Day at Camp

Crystal called all the campers in her group together. She was eighteen years old now, so she could be a full-fledged counselor, but she'd already been working at camp Elwood for two years, and had been going to the camp since she was little. The name Crystal fit her well, as she was thin and had crystal white hair.

"We're going hiking today," Crystal explained. "But to make it more interesting we had the science club from Louisville High plan something special for it."

A teenage boy wearing a yellow shirt with a Star Trek symbol on it walked over. "Live long and prosper," he said as he made the Vulcan salute. "I'm Trekkie. Have you ever played Geo-caching? Well, this is basically the same thing, but with aliens. We've put out a bunch of alien traps, and now we're going to see if they've taken the bait."

One of the kids asked, "Do you really go by Trekkie?"

"Everyone in the science club has a nickname," Trekkie explained. He pointed to the rest of the club, who were coming out of the woods. "Those are the Quantum twins, Up and Down Quark. That's Techno, he's the club president. He's Drone. He's Bookie, and she's Hack." He turned back to the kids. "Now, let's get on with our trek. We'll boldly go where no man has gone before."

Another kid pointed out, "We've hiked these trails many times before."

They got on with the hike. Despite the fact that the campers had hiked the trails many times, the trail was much more exciting with the science club leading it with the alien search.

Their first stop was at what looked like a satellite dish. Techno explained, “This is a device that releases radio wave at a frequency of one times ten to the fourth, to one times ten to the fifth waves per second. It should be detectable by any species advanced enough to travel the stars, but it won’t interfere with most technology.”

Drone told them, “We’re looking for the wrong thing. The chance of finding aliens in the vast emptiness of space is almost nonexistent, but fairies, they live right under our noses.”

Bookie pointed at Techno. “Pay up, he said it.”

Techno put on odd glasses, and said, “Drone, we’ve been over this, this is the science club. If you want to talk magic, go to the fantasy club.”

“Magic is just science that we don’t understand yet,” Drone stated. “And you think I haven’t earned my place here? I made these drones. Can you do that?” He then realized who he was talking to. “Okay, you could do that, but can they?”

Bookie leaned over to Hack. “I bet our homework, that Drone will hit Techno with one of his drones.”

“I’m not taking that bet,” she responded.

Drone continued explaining, “You haven’t seen what I’ve seen. There is something out there, and they aren’t human, but they’re close. I’ve seen them with my drones right in front of me, but I can’t see them with my own eyes. They can hide themselves from people, but they are there.”

Crystal stood in shock. How did he know that fairies existed? They had evaded detection for centuries.

Techno sighed. "Let's just get back to the hike."

They did continue the hike. The kids found the description of what aliens might be like according to Trekkie interesting. He explained some extremely strange aliens that sounded weird, even to a twelve year old on a camp out. They can get rather strange.

Before they made it to the next trap, Drone noticed that there was a bird perched on Crystal's finger. At first he thought it was probably her pet or something, until he wondered why someone would bring their bird to a camp. He came closer and asked, "What kind of bird is that?"

"I'm not sure," she answered. "I think it's a robin."

"I'm going to guess that means it isn't your pet," Drone noted.

Crystal shrugged, "Believe whatever you want."

Drone then asked, "So, is it your pet?"

"Why are you so curious?"

"Because wild birds don't land on people," he explained. "I think it might be a fairy bird."

"It's a normal bird," Crystal explained. "Birds just seem to like me."

"Hmm, is there any particular reason for that?"

Crystal simply answered, "That is a very good question."

"Do you know the answer?" he asked.

“I have an answer you might laugh at,” she responded.

“Try me.”

She thought for a moment and asked, “Would you believe me if I told you that I’m a bird who was cursed by a demon, for stealing his lunch, to be transformed into a human, and that’s why I can speak to them?”

“Can you speak to them?” Drone asked.

Crystal laughed. “Did you really think I was a bird?”

Drone didn’t answer because they were at another trap. “This one is simply a corral filled with cows and an EMP device, because Up thought it would be funny,” Trekkie explained. “Although, alien lifeforms likely couldn’t consume earthling creatures as we are aliens to them, so they might have digestive systems that are so strange that they would not work for digesting any animal on earth.”

Up Shook her head. “It was meant to be funny, not for you to take it seriously. Aliens abduct cows in movies, so I thought it would be funny.”

Bookie stated, “Out of all the meats I’ve read about, I’d say that beef would likely be a good pick. It’s high in calories, and found in abundance in certain parts of earth.” He then got back to reading.

They started hiking to the next trap with Trekkie telling them stories of alien worlds he designed. Some were very earth-like to make them relatable, but others were very strange, creating conflicts the kids wouldn’t have ever thought of.

Nearby, there was a man with spiky, fiery red hair, very dark skin, red veins, and dual short swords standing on a branch.

He closed his eyes and focused until a large bear came charging at the group. Several people started running, and a few pretended to be dead.

As everyone was distracted with the bear, Crystal felt something graze her side. She looked in the direction of where she thought she was attacked from, and saw two strange looking men fighting.

One had spiky red hair and the other was wearing armor. He had blue hair, a very distinctive look. Who were they, and why were they fighting?

She watched as both men hit swords against each other. The clanging of the swords rang around her, and she gasped, panicked that someone was about to die in front of her.

The two men fought boldly. She watched as the red haired man charged at the other, but the blue-haired man parried. Who were these men, and why would one want to hurt her? Hurt... she was definitely hurting. She put her hand on the cut on her side, pulled it back, and saw blood all over it. She listened to the striking of the swords as she focused on herself, the wound healing as she did.

As she focused on herself, she heard one of the men hiss, "You're on the wrong side. She must die!"

"No!" the blue-haired man retorted. "You are the one who will die if you don't stand down."

The red-haired man kicked the blue-haired man back before he seethed, “You know the danger of her kind! She must die!” He stepped over to the blue-haired man lying on the ground and hissed, “I’d heard you were protecting her, Layton. Now, you will die.”

Layton, the blue-haired man, rolled away as the man thrust his sword down for the killing blow and then rolled up to his feet. He parried a strike and then hit with a counter-strike as he retorted, “She is innocent. I will protect her.”

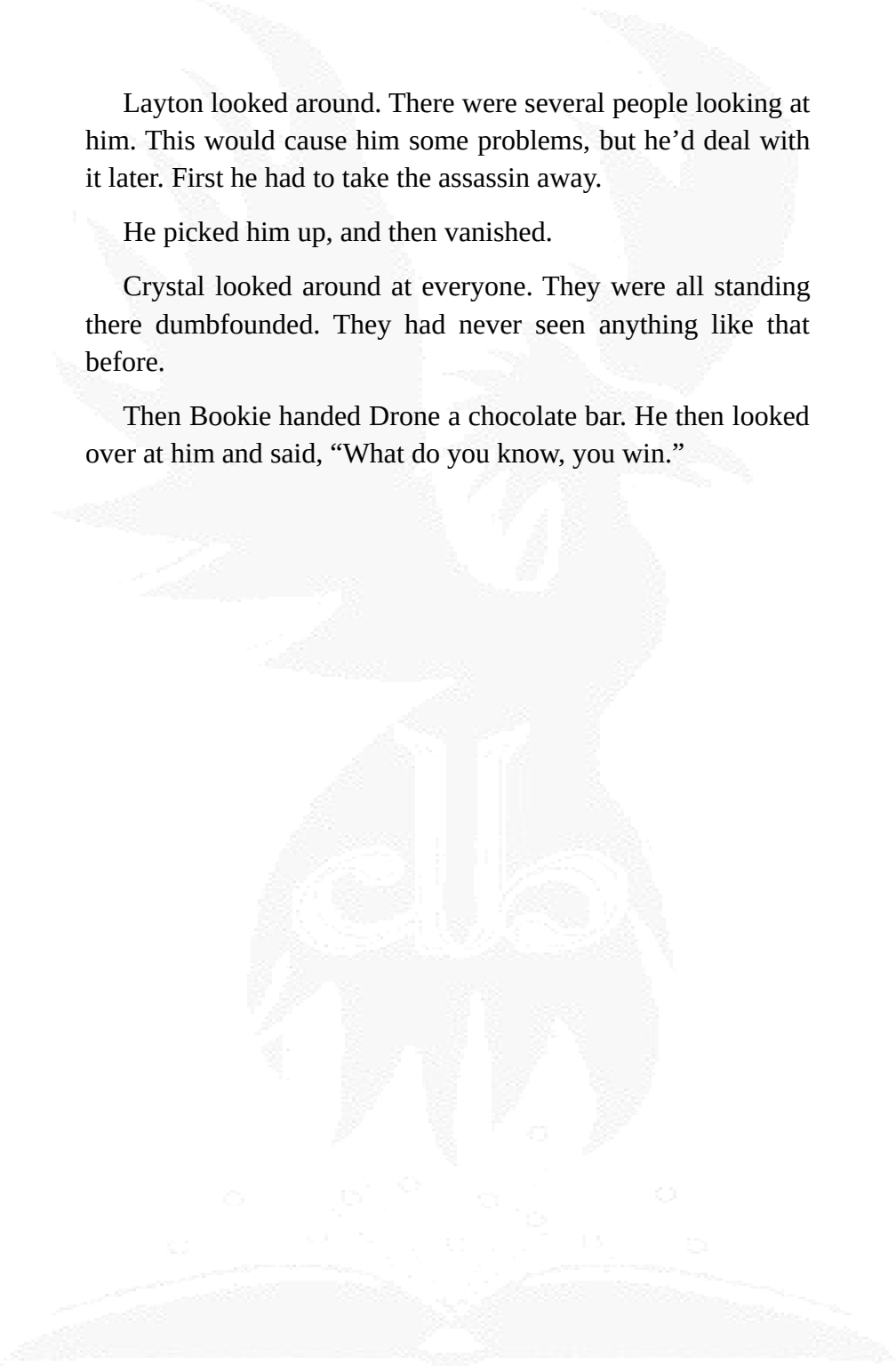
Somehow he had to protect her. For months, he’d been protecting her. Yet, never had he not been able to stop the attack before she saw him. He’d deal with her seeing him after the fight. At the moment, he had to worry about staying alive.

They struck swords several times, then Layton jumped over the assassin and struck from behind, but the cut appeared on the man’s front. He didn’t die, but he was injured. The assassin started attacking what looked like thin air, but then Layton dropped the illusion.

After that, the fight only lasted a few more seconds, when Layton kicked the man into a tree. He then held his sword to him. “Come peacefully,” He ordered.

The assassin raised his hands and said, “Fine, I surrender.” As he closed his eyes.

Layton then hit about a foot from the assassin’s head with his sword hilt. Then the illusion dropped, and the man fell to the ground unconscious.



Layton looked around. There were several people looking at him. This would cause him some problems, but he'd deal with it later. First he had to take the assassin away.

He picked him up, and then vanished.

Crystal looked around at everyone. They were all standing there dumbfounded. They had never seen anything like that before.

Then Bookie handed Drone a chocolate bar. He then looked over at him and said, "What do you know, you win."