

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark jacket and pants, is walking away from the viewer down a paved path. The path is surrounded by green grass and hills in the background. The sky is hazy and pinkish, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is mysterious and contemplative.

# Dauntless Danielle

What happened nine years ago and  
why doesn't she remember it?

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## Acknowledgments

Thanks to Rexford Rich for illustrating my book cover. The picture on the front was found in various blogs; therefore I couldn't find the original owner. I want to thank my friends for inspiring me with ideas.

I really want to thank the authors that inspired me to write. Pittacus Lore inspired me even more. I have read a variety of books to realize how I needed to write my own book *Dauntless Danielle*. It certainly has been an adventure for me. I also want to say that being young helps to have creativity. High school English classes help me to express myself more than I thought they would. Thank you to those teachers who helped me to broaden my thoughts on who we are in this world.

## Prologue

I have been thinking lately of what I can remember. My past isn't much. Well to me, since I don't remember most of it, doesn't seem like much. You're supposed to remember your childhood. It's what defines you. So I'd have to ask myself so many times, *what defines me?* What happened to me back when I was seven? What was so traumatic that made me forget? I'm afraid of what I am or rather will be.

There are a few things I remember: my sister, Alima, whom I adored. She was the sweetest sister ever. I have a vague memory of her though. All I have is her soft blonde/brown wave of hair flowing in the wind when we would run outside in the sun. I miss the way it smelled of mangoes.

I remember someone else too: my best friend, Trent Garland. He was so sweet. He would take my hand when I was sad. One time I had fallen and scraped my knee. He came up to me and touched it, as if it surprised him. He somehow always could touch where I was hurting and make me feel better. Trent once said I could heal easily. My scraped knee healed right away. Right when he touched it. Although Trent had said that it was me that healed it, not him. Maybe it was how he made me feel that I could do it.

Why am I not able to see what happened? Where did they go to? Am I going crazy? All I remember after these memories is that I woke up in someone's house. I was afraid, with no clue as to where I was. I ran out of there as quick as I could.

I didn't get to say goodbye to my family and friends. Was there a goodbye? What happened to me and who am I?

This isn't the end, it's only the *beginning*.

## Chapter ONE

Gasp...I wake from a nightmare. I'm sweating so I pull the covers off me. It is still dark outside. I hate waking up in the dark. It scares me that there could be someone's face right in mine; some sick minded person's face.

In my nightmare someone was chasing me. I was young in this. I had short hair then. My hair was hitting my face as I ran and it stung. It was the usual story you hear about girls who run into dark allies in which a guy attacks them. I was attacked from all directions by the same person. It was like there were multiple ones of him. I couldn't run anywhere. Instead he grabbed me and with all of his multiples. He threw me into a van and drove away. I was still being held onto by others of him. I was really scared. He tied my hands and ankles together. Just when they slammed on their brakes and opened the van door I had woken up.

It happened like this every time. I never saw the ending of it. I'm glad I didn't. Why would I want to? Who knows what they were going to do to me. All I think about is why do I keep dreaming the same thing? I wonder if it's a memory and push that away, not wanting it to be.

Once in a while I dream about Trent. It always is the same one though. Trent tries to get my attention when I am driven away on a city bus. This makes me want to cry. I don't move my head, but I see him. I want to look directly at him, but I can't. It's like I'm being controlled. I do manage to put my hand on the window, just quick enough to hope he'll see it. As quickly as I put it up I have to put it down. I tried to keep it up, but it's too overpowering. This wave of control that I don't have is too much. Trent, I think I see him smile. It was just a glance in my peripheral vision. In the end I find myself getting off at a stop a few hours away from where I had gotten on. I walk towards a vacant building. The walls seem to be deteriorating. The doors open and I feel a sudden weakness in my legs as I fall down. They stop controlling me. Instead, now they grab me and take me inside the building. Trying to remember Trent's smile the dream ends.

I get out of bed and glance at the clock. It's 6:24. It seems like every time I wake, it never is a time with a five. I guess my mind has the sense of time and it doesn't want to see fives. Sometimes I feel like it means something to me. I'm not sure. Did something from my past have something to do with fives? I decide to think about something else now.

What will I be having for breakfast? I don't make my own breakfast. I live in an orphan house. There are more girls my age of sixteen and younger. I always hope no one hears me when I wake up, because we aren't supposed to be wandering around at night. By night they mean 10:30p.m.-6:45a.m. I always wake earlier than 6:45. My body doesn't like to sleep longer. Another thing is that I go to bed around 9:30pm to 10:00pm. I get so tired, before everyone else.

"Danielle?" I hear one of the girls whisper. "Did you have a nightmare again?"

"Yes Felicia I did, again." I whisper back. "It wasn't that bad."

"Oh, okay."

Felicia is about ten years old. She has brown hair. In a way she reminds me of Alima. She comes to me when she is sad. I try to consume her tears when I hold her in my arms. She is a tiny girl, kind of like me. I don't put too much weight on.

"Did you have good dreams?" I ask Felicia.

"Oh, yes I did." She smiles slightly. Whenever she does a quick small smile, I know that she is lying. She doesn't like telling me about herself too much. I realized this almost right away when I met her.

"If you don't want to talk about it, that's fine." I say to assure her that I know she is lying and she can talk about it if she wants to.

"My dreams are silly, why would I tell anyone?" She shrugs her shoulders a little. "You don't tell me yours."

"Mine are scary. I don't like to talk about them." I say quickly.

"Mine are too." She opens one of the drawers on the side of her bed and looks for something to wear to school.

"What are you going to wear?" I want to change the subject.

"I was thinking of black pants and a purple shirt."

"I was thinking of wearing a purple shirt and jeans." I say trying my best to match her. I only have jeans, so I can't match the pants correctly.

"How should I do my hair?" Felicia asks, "In a ponytail or braid?"

We aren't allowed to let our hair down at school. We have to keep it up somehow. The superintendents prefer ponytails or braids.

"I'll put a braid in your hair today." I grab a brush and a comb. "Two if that's okay?"

"That's fine, can you do French?"

"I can if that's what you want me to do." I love to French braid.

"I want you to; you're so good at it." Felicia giggles and hugs me. I hug her back.

I brush her rough brown hair. This is one difference between Alima's and Felicia's hair. As I brush the snarls out of Felicia's hair I sing a quiet gentle song. When I'm done brushing I part her hair down the middle.

I finish after like five minutes. Well four minutes and forty-six seconds to be exact. I don't know why, but I always know how fast I do things.

## Chapter TWO

On my way home from the school the other day I met this girl named Carla. It felt kind of familiar. It was like I had seen her before. She said she had a brother and two sisters. Though the names she didn't say. Somehow I recall her eyes. She is eight years old. It seems I had met her before.

When I asked Carla what her mother's name was, she said Tiffany. The name did sound familiar, but no face came to me. Why couldn't I remember?

Carla talked to me almost the whole way to the Orphan House. I stopped and she did too. I had told her that maybe I'd meet up with her again. I told her I wasn't allowed to give out that information. Carla only nodded. I didn't want to tell her where I lived and I had only just met her. It wasn't like I had to tell her everything about me already.

I went inside the Orphan House and went straight to the dormitories. I didn't feel like getting a snack, like I usually do. Instead I just went ahead and finished my homework. I had math in which was simple algebraic equations, and history reading to do. When I was finished I went outside to the playground and went on the swings. They have tire swings and regular swings. I go on the tire swings a lot. It's more exciting. The feeling like you can't hang on that long and you might fall off.

While on the tire swing I try to clear my mind. The wind in my face and hair taking whatever is stressing me away. At least it does for the moment. Sometimes I think too much.

So all I think about is Alima. One time we were at the beach on an extremely windy day. It was a little chilly. This is what I remember most about this day: Alima was running in the sand and her hair was in the air. She was chasing me. She runs pretty fast being younger than me. We were about the same size anyway. I was trying to get her to go into the water, but she wouldn't. I had wanted to jump in, but not without her. We had always done things together. I had just learned how to swim and she was beginning to. I wanted to teach her something ahead of her class. So she ended up chasing me and I ran into my mom.

*My Mom!* I stopped the swing.

Never before had I remembered what she looked like. There she was in my head. She was laughing at us. Her hair was brown and her eyes blue like mine.

It all came in a *flash*; then it was gone! I remembered Alima, but all I had of my Mom was her beautiful face. Why couldn't I remember?

Still sitting on my swing, I tried to get up and keep the memory alive. As I stood up something in my mind flashed and I don't remember what happened exactly. I know I reached out for the swing and missed. Instead I fell on the ground with woodchips in my hair. I blinked a few times and passed out.

I woke with the director and some girls around me. I was still on the ground, but had a blanket on me. I tried to get up but felt like I couldn't move. It was like there was a block holding me down. Again I tried to get up and the director saw it showing on my face. She took my hand and put her other hand on my back.

As I was standing up I almost lose my balance. My foot slipped but the director caught me. I didn't realize through all this time we were trying to keep me on my feet that someone was talking to me.

"What?" I said. "Did you say something?"

"I asked if you were okay." It was Felicia.

"Oh, I'm fine. I think I hit my head and fell out of the swing." Yeah I lied, but it would sound worse if they heard I fell out of the swing and passed out from nothing.

"We should get a doctor to check your head." The director, Courtney said.

"I'm fine," I say trying to walk away, but they have a hold of me, "I just fell out of the swing."

"Let me at least take the woodchip out of your hair." Courtney pulled at the woodchip and realized that it was stuck in my head.

"Did you get it?"

"You can't feel that?" Courtney looked at me not smiling. "There's a woodchip stuck in your head."

"I think I would feel it, stop trying to make me see a doctor." I backed away and touched my head where I felt Courtney put her hand. I felt the woodchip and realized that it was stuck in my head. How come I couldn't feel it?

“I’m calling an ambulance Danielle.” Courtney said worried. “Don’t pull it out.”

I wanted to pull it out. If I couldn’t feel it, shouldn’t I just take it out? I pulled on it and felt blood. With that came a twinge of pain.

“I told you not to pull on it.” Courtney took off her sweater and put it on my head around the woodchip.

“I wanted to feel something.” I felt it alright.

“Don’t be stupid, next time.” She looked me in the eyes. “We are going to get rid of the woodchips.”

The ambulance came and the paramedics put me sideways on the stretcher. As they were picking me up I felt pain, not in my head but my heart. I didn’t say anything, though I should have. I wasn’t scared. They put me in the ambulance and asked Courtney to come with them. She got in and sat down on one side of me.

By the time we got to the hospital, I realized that the pain in my head was gone. I wanted to feel it. As I was about to put my hand on the back of my head, the paramedic pulled it down.

“Please keep your hands down.” The woman said softly. “You could make it worse.”

The paramedic woman and the other paramedic took me out of the ambulance on the stretcher bed. They were wheeling me in the emergency room and there were already doctors waiting to help me. I was pushed into a room, and put on a different bed.

“Where is the woodchip?” one doctor asked. “I don’t see it.”

“It was in the back of her head.” Courtney said.

“Please step out of the room, ma’am.” The doctor said. “I will check her, and ask you to come back.”

Courtney walked out the room and closed the door behind her.

“So was there ever really a woodchip in your head?” the doctor asked.

“I don’t know, everyone said there was, but I didn’t feel anything.” I lied, knowing that when the pain had gone away that I had healed. The woodchip probably was in the ambulance.

“Well you were rushed all this way for nothing.” She sighed. “What did you do that made them say this anyway?”

“I fell off the swing, hit my head and passed out.” I say which is true.

“You must’ve hit your head really hard.” She touched my forehead and all round my head. “Okay, I don’t see anything, except for the fact that your hair does have blood in it.”

“Maybe I cut myself a little?”

“I think it’s not real blood. Are you pulling a prank?”

“No, I’m not. I don’t do that.” I say getting off the bed and standing up.

“Sit back down; I didn’t say you could leave.”

“I’m not pulling a prank.” I try getting back up again and all get is resistance from the doctor.

“I’m calling security,” the doctor said, “and you’re not going anywhere.”

I sat on the bed and thought about what I would say when the security got here to take me away. All I could think about was the blood in my hair. It was real and it was mine. What would happen when they test it and compare it to my blood? Would they arrest me for putting my own blood in my hair and coming to the hospital?

Security was here and so was I. I got up off the bed and walked out the door casually. The doctor motioned that I was the one they were looking to take. They ran after me and I kept walking as if I wasn’t who they were looking for. I walked faster approaching the entrance door. Courtney was there waiting.

“They told me to wait outside.” She said concerned.

“I’m fine Courtney.” I smile. “I think I’m going to have to leave your Orphan House.”

“I won’t agree, where are you going to go?”

“I don’t know and I think I’ll walk there myself.” I didn’t trust anyone at the moment. What if Courtney was going to take me to the police? First when I get to the Orphan House I’m going to have to pack my stuff and wash my hair.

I’ll have to say goodbye to Felicia, although I’m hoping to come back. I have to for Felicia. She couldn’t bear not seeing me again.

## Chapter THREE

After having washed my hair and packed, I hurried to leave through a passageway in the floor. Felicia and I were the only ones that knew about it. I never told anyone nor did she. It was our secret. I wrote a note and put it under Felicia's pillow. I wrote this:

*My dear friend Felicia,*

*I write this in a rush. I wish I could stay, but it will only cause you trouble. I wish it was the best thing to do. My life just got worse. There are people that are going to ask you where I am. Please do not tell them that I ran away. I also hope you will not show this to anyone. Since you are my best friend, the only one I can depend on. You must know, I will be coming back to visit you. It's hard to know when it's going to be. Keep me in mind as I will you.*

*With much love,*

*Danielle*

Aside from having to leave the Orphan House, I am fine. I do plan on going back to see Felicia. The only problem is I'll have to go when she's the only one in the dormitory. I must say though I have this feeling, as if someone is watching me; stalking me. I'm not sure what to do.

I still go to school, but I hurry to leave when the last bell rings. I don't know if someone is going to try and get me. It has been three days since the incident of me falling off the swing. It's likely that they came to the Orphan House to interrogate me. I knew I had to leave. I hadn't taken all my stuff with me. I wrote the note to Felicia to tell her to hold on to my things until I see her again. If she were to be adopted which is highly unlikely considering no one's been adopted since I've been there. I've been there seven years. If she were to be adopted she would put all of my things in the door in the floor. This way I can take it at a safe time.

I have always wanted to live on my own. Though, I wasn't expecting it to be like this. Yeah I go to school and get lunch, but after school I'm so hungry. I have some money and it won't last long. Maybe I could get a job. I'm old enough. I don't know where to find one. There was a wanted sign in a restaurant window. I went inside to see that it was a bar. I couldn't work here. Today I look around town to see if anyone's hiring. So far I don't see anything. There are stores in which might be hiring, but I think I'll have to lie about my age. I'll tell them I'm 18 and not 16. I'll also tell them I'm in college. This way I can still go to school. Yeah school is boring but I don't want to be a drop out.

It's around 7:30 and the Starlight Diner is the last place I can try. I go inside and feel like I belong. There are teenagers and few adults. As I go up to the counter I hear someone say something behind me.

"Is this your first time here?" It's a boy with a nice smile. "Name's Liam."

He reaches out his hand and I'm too nervous to do anything. I don't remember the last time I talked to a boy. The only one I ever really cared about was Trent.

"Danielle." I say shaking his hand. I want to turn around, but before I can he says something else.

"You are looking for a job?" Liam says.

"Yeah how'd you know?" I scratch my head.

"No one comes in here looking as disheveled and tired as you."

"Thanks, I kind of don't have a place right now."

"Oh, well I know someone who doesn't mind to help people out."

"I don't need help; I'm fine on my own." I'm not going to follow some random stranger.

"I wasn't meaning me. It's a girl. She's popular, kind of. Her name is Emily Garland."

*Garland! That's what Trent's last name is.*

"You okay?" Liam asks me when I quickly lean against the counter.

"I'm fine; do you know where Emily lives?"

"Now you want help. Of course I know where she lives. We've been friends since we were young."

"I met her before." I stand up straight. "So am I able to get a job here?"

"Yeah, it's possible." Liam takes a step back and then goes up to the counter. He whispers something to an older man. He nods and looks at me. Liam walks back towards me.

"What did he say?"

“He said to come on back.”

“Really just like that?”

“To come on back means an interview.”

“Oh, right.” I walk away and follow the man. He takes me to the office. His office is small and cozy. There is a small couch on one wall and two chairs at the desk.

“You are here for a job?”

“Yes, I am.” I don’t want to say anything further to show how desperate I am.

“Of course you are, and what do you suppose you’ll do here?”

“I saw that you have a kitchen and anything in the kitchen would do fine, but really I think it be best if I started out simple like maybe cleaned or took orders.”

“I see.” He looks me up and down. “You don’t know how to cook, so you’re not working in the kitchen.”

I was surprised he knew I couldn’t cook. I never cooked before in my life. I mean toast, and pancakes, but that’s it.

“I’ll have you take orders only if you clean up your appearance.” He looks me up and down again.

“Yeah I had a busy day.”

“Great, you’re hired!”

“That’s all?”

“Don’t question it.”

“What’ your name?”

“Xavier, now go home and come in tomorrow.”

“I have school to go to till 1:30 on weekdays.”

“Oh, you’re in college.”

“Yes and I’d like to finish if that’s alright with you.”

“Quite, quite report here when you can tomorrow and I’ll give you your schedule.”

“Thank you Xavier.”

“How old are you anyway?”

“I’m 18 is that a problem?”

“No that’s fine, just lately too many 16 year olds think they can get a job.”

“Oh, yeah I never could have gotten a job when I was 16; too much homework.”

“Alright now I have to get back to work and you should go home and clean up.”

He left his office and I followed out. As I was going to leave the diner I remembered I needed to ask Liam where Emily lived. I was about to walk back inside when someone grabbed my arm. I almost screamed until I realized it was Liam.

“Whoa it’s just me.” He let go of me. “Did you want me to take you to Emily’s?”

“Yeah, just let me run by my ‘place’ to get my stuff.” I ran towards the end of town. Liam ran with me. It was about ten minutes from here. I arrived to the place where I had been staying. It wasn’t much but it did have a locked door. It was like a little shed. I went in through the window. I grabbed my bag and hurried to get out.

“So Danielle what’s your story?” Liam asked me to break the silence.

“My story?”

“Yeah why are you on the streets. Such a pretty girl like you, I would think you had a great big family and friends.”

“Really that’s not even close to what reality is. I’m orphaned.”

“That’s cool.” Liam looked away.

“I ran away from the Orphan House.”

“Why did you do that? You had a place to stay. I would’ve stayed.”

“Things changed.” I don’t want to give anything away.

“Tell me what happened.” Liam steps in front of me.

“I didn’t like it there.”

“You’re lying.”

“Is it that easy to tell?”

“Yeah as a matter of fact the way you’re looking at me.”

“How am I looking at you?” I continue walking and he goes back to my side.

“Your eyes flutter.”

“So where is Emily’s house?” I do not want to talk about this anymore. What would he think if I told him that I fell out of a swing, got a woodchip stuck in my head, go to the hospital and it’s not there? They think I pulled a prank, and probably are looking for me.

“Fine, it’s right up the road. It’s an orange and white house.”

“Thanks Liam, see you later.”

“I hope so.” He smiles and walks back the opposite way.

“You know what Liam maybe you should introduce me to Emily.”

“I guess you’re right, but I thought you met her before?”

“Yeah, you see she probably doesn’t remember me. I was about nine when we last saw each other.”

“Gotcha, I’m coming.” He catches up with me and leads me to Emily’s.

We walk one more block when I see an orange and white house. It’s beautiful. It has a balcony. As we get closer I see a figure of someone on the balcony. I don’t know why but I get this creepy feeling again as if someone is watching me.

Liam walks me to the front door. He knocks, takes a step back and waits. A few seconds later he knocks again. The door handle rattles and someone opens it. It’s a girl with beautiful auburn hair and brown eyes.

“Hey Liam what’s up?” It must be Emily.

“Emily I want you to meet someone.” Liam gestures to me.

“Hi I’m Danielle.” Emily steps back and grips the door frame. I can tell she remembers me. I don’t dare speak. I’m waiting for her. Liam looks at me then back at Emily.

“I think I should go. See you Emily.” Liam says walking away.

“Bye Liam.” Emily whispers. “You have a sister right?”

“Yeah her name is Alima.”

“Shh, come in the house.” Emily pulls me in. I glance quickly around at what the entrance inside looks like. She continues to pull me and leads me up the stairs. As quickly as she can Emily opens her bedroom door and I see Carla.

“Carla?” I suddenly make a connection! Trent must be here. Carla and Emily are looking at me with wonderment.

“Danielle do you know where Trent is?” Emily asks me and I want to cry realizing he’s not here. I shake my head no.

“Carla why didn’t you tell me your last name?” I say wanting so much to cry myself to sleep.

“I don’t tell people my last name for security reasons.”

“Of course, I just thought for a second that Trent was here.”

“Danielle you need to tell us what happened when you were abducted.”

“I...I don’t know.” My voice is breaking. “I don’t remember.”

Emily takes me into her arms and hugs me tightly but gentle. Carla comes up to me and gives me a tissue. I blow my nose and sigh.

“We’ll talk about this tomorrow.” Carla says, looking at me then at Emily. Emily nods.

“I just want to eat and go to sleep.” I say tiredly.

“Sure, how about you go to the spare bedroom for now.” Emily goes back down the stairs and I go to the bedroom. As soon as I sit down on the bed I want to cry. Never before in my life have I felt so deflated.

How was I going to find Trent if his own family didn't know where he was? Emily brings me warm soup to eat and a cup of milk. I eat it slowly. As much as I'm glad I have a place to stay, how am going to be able to sleep tonight. Trent never seemed so far away in my mind. Where was my family? At least I found two people who will help me out.

## Chapter FOUR

It's been about a three day stay now at Emily's. Carla and Emily provided me with different clothes to wear to town and my new job. I still have to wear my uniform for school. I didn't think about this, but now I'm getting worried if someone at school from the Orphan House notices me, they'll blab. Whatever happens I don't want to be experimented on again. So I'm going to change my looks. I am going to cut my hair. I dread doing this but, I don't want people to recognize me. It's a good thing none of the girls are in my classes. Most of them are younger than me anyway.

My first day of work wasn't so hard. Xavier said my outfit looked amazing. I saw Liam there. He asked how my stay at Emily's was. I said it was fine. Then it was like out of the blue he asked me out.

"Are you serious, I only just met you Liam?" I say.

"I know but I know there's something about you." Liam says smiling a big one.

"Liam I have someone already."

"Oh, well where is he?"

"He's away on vacation." I lie.

"You're lying."

"I'm not lying."

"Okay if you say so."

"Really I'm not."

"So then when is he going to be back?"

"I don't know he didn't tell me."

"You're not lying about him not telling you."

"Of course I'm not why would I be?"

"Answer me this: when did he leave?"

"He left a week ago." I hope he doesn't know. I say it not too quickly, but not too late. He nods his head, but no smile. I don't think I like it when he's serious.

“You’re lying.” Liam says after about 30 seconds.

“What?!?” I do not want to argue with him.

“You tried tricking me.” Liam turns away to think. “I don’t know if I understand you. You lie and who are you anyway?”

“Let me tell you one thing Liam. My life is none of your business.”

“That’s not true. Friends have a right to each other’s business.”

“We are *not*, friends.” I walk away. I had enough for that day. Work then arguing with someone over something so stupid.

“Danielle, hey!” Liam runs after me. “There’s something about you, okay.”

“What’s that?” I don’t want to know but I ask anyway.

“Come with me and I’ll tell you.”

“I’m not going anywhere with you.”

“Fine we’ll go to Emily’s.”

“How’d you guys meet anyway?”

“We met after her brother disappeared.” Liam grabbed my hand and I quickly pulled away. “Her brother and his friend disappeared.”

“So what did you do?”

“I’m a few years younger than her, but I kept her company.” Liam stepped closer to me. “Emily had just gotten over a relationship and then her brother disappears the next day.”

“Liam I don’t want to hear anymore.” I want to cry, because I’m pretty sure that was the same day I was abducted.

“I know that his friend was you.”

“Liam!”

“Danielle I can help you find him... hopefully.”

“Liam how’d you know I was Trent’s friend.”

“I can tell when people are lying Danielle.”

“What does that have to do with anything?”

“I have powers like you do.”

“What in the world are you talking about?” I look into his eyes. I don’t want to believe him. What if he’s trying to trick me?

“I’m telling the truth. I can negate between what’s truth and what’s not.”

“I’m going to Emily’s.” I walk towards Emily’s house. I’ll ask her.

We walk together to Emily’s. It’s not that far from the Starlight Diner. Liam is keeping his distance from me. I wouldn’t mind being his friend. The only thing is that I have to find Trent before I start any serious relationships. We are at Emily’s now and I’m afraid of what she’s going to say.

Emily opens the door when she sees me through the kitchen window.

“What’s up guys?” Emily asks seeing Liam with me.

“We need to talk.” I say looking back at Liam.

“Liam what’d you do?”

“Let’s just go inside and talk.” Liam says not wanting to say anything outside.

We all go into the house and into the living room. I’m not sure if I want to sit down, so I don’t. Liam and Emily aren’t sitting down either.

“Okay Liam what did you say to her?” Emily asks.

“I have powers like she does.” Liam says facing Emily.

“Liam is telling the truth.”

“Do you have powers too?” I ask Emily.

“Yes, now let’s take this slow.” Emily is talking to me. “I don’t want you to become overwhelmed.”

“Yeah I’d like that.” Just I’m so confused. “Do you know where my family is?”

“That was seven years ago. I doubt they would still be living in that house.”

“I need to see them.” I don’t remember what my dad looks like. I need to.

“Dannie we don’t know what happened to anyone that day.” Liam was looking at me. Right then I had a feeling he knew me before he met me this week. He just said Dannie and that brought back the memory of Trent. He always called me Dannie.

Trent was the only one that called me Dannie. He said one time that he loved me. He was ten years old and I seven. I told him I loved him too. We were young but it was like we couldn't break that connection. So now when I hear Liam say my name I ache more for the even the sight of Trent.

“Danielle are you okay?” both Emily and Liam say looking at me. I must have sat down on the couch.

“You called me Dannie.” I’m crying now. “I wish Trent was here.”

“I forgot he called you that.” Liam says looking at Emily.

“Danielle you need to know that we didn’t get our powers from being experimented on. We were born this way.”

“Is that why I could heal when I got cuts? Cause when I was younger I could heal cuts and it was before I was abducted.”

“Yes, Danielle you see we aren’t from around here.” Liam says.

“We’re from another planet, Alera.” Emily pauses before saying Alera.

“Hey don’t feel bad I was born on earth.” Carla walks into the living room.

“Uh, do you have powers too?” I ask her.

“I can walk on walls and ceilings. I don’t really know any of my powers.”

“I remember when we were back on Alera that one of the Elder leaders said we develop most of our powers when we’re around 14-16 years old.” Emily says looking at me.

“I’m 16 now.” I say.

“You still might be developing your powers for another year.”

“Okay, lets’ take a break.” Liam says walking to the kitchen. “Do you have something ‘good’ to eat?”

“Sandwiches sound good?” Emily asks and Liam nods. “Cool I’ll make them.”

“You know how I like mine, go ahead.”

All I could process right now was the fact that I don’t remember coming to earth and how come I didn’t remember Emily, Carla, or Liam. Why couldn’t I remember what happened to me? I came from Alera, and I’m an alien? I look human. Really I am human with advanced abilities.

“Liam may I ask you something?” I ask staying a little out of the kitchen.

“Sure, Danielle anything.” Liam responded.

“Why did you ask me out? Give me the real reason.”

“You don’t remember me. I could tell you didn’t when you told me your name.”

“But what happened?”

“We were friends. You and I hung out a lot. Trent was always trying to tell you something, but I’d always drag you away. I loved you. I told you every day that I saw you.”

“Did I say anything?”

“No, you never said anything back. You always looked away, as if looking for Trent.”

“So you have always liked me?”

“You see I have, and I was your friend.” Liam is quiet. “I didn’t want to hurt you.”

“We were young, how did you know you liked me?”

“I think back on Alera, we were always like this. We can’t help having strong feelings at young ages. It’s like this: you’re going to be with that person for the rest of your life.”

“But that’s not going to happen.”

“Danielle, I respect you. I promise I won’t ask you again.”

I only nod, because all I want to do is cry. Why? Why? Why?

“Danielle no matter what happens I’ll help you find Trent.”

Yes! Help me, oh he better help me. If he truly does love me, he’ll help me find Him. Trent is mine. I just hope he hasn’t forgotten me. Oh, please no.

## Chapter FIVE

It was about time, so it seemed that I got my paycheck. I wanted to buy Emily something; to thank her for letting me stay at her house. I know she probably will be so humble about it and not want to accept it; still I want to do this. She deserves someone giving her something that she can't get herself.

I walk into a cheap jewelry store. I wanted to find friendship necklaces; one for me, Emily, and Carla. As I'm looking around there's this guy looking at me. He's probably there trying to find something for his girlfriend. I try ignoring him and find a set of three necklaces.

"Hey what you looking for?" the guy is next to me.

"Something for my friends." I walk away, but he follows.

"Get whatever you want," he starts whispering, "I'll pay for it."

Oh my goodness, he is on my nerve now. Guys like this I don't like. I'll buy it, oh yeah you have money. I don't care dude.

"No thank you." I say annoyed. Apparently that's the kind of answer he wanted.

"You work at the Starlight Diner." I wasn't expecting him to say that.

"I'm leaving." I decide I'll come back later to buy the necklaces.

"Wait, my name is Logan."

Whatever, dude, I leave him standing there and walk home. He just ruined my afternoon. As I near Emily's house, I'm wondering if 'Logan' is a stalker. I would think he is.

Should I ask about him? Hmm, I'm not going to worry about it. Finally arriving at Emily's and going into the house, I sense someone is behind me. Turning my head I see Logan. I step back outside and close the door and knock. Maybe I need to make it seem like I'm not living here. Emily comes to the door, looks at me surprised and glances behind me, nodding. She lets me in, not asking anything.

"So you met Logan?" Emily asks knowing full well that I did.

"Yeah, he followed me apparently." I say a little angry.

“That’s Logan for you.”

“Does he always follow girls around?”

“After a while when he’s convinced you’re not interested in him, he’ll stop.”

“That’s great; I’ll have a puppy on my heels.”

Emily looks at me, seemingly thinking about something important. I just stand there watching her for a little bit. Three minutes go by and I wonder if she’s okay.

“Emily?” I say stepping towards her.

“Oh Danielle, I was just thinking about how I once loved someone.” Emily looks me in the eyes. “I wish I didn’t...love him. Now I wonder if he was the right guy for me.”

“Emily, think of this. There’s going to be another guy waiting for you.”

“I know, and you’re right.” Emily walks out of the room and goes upstairs. I don’t follow her. Instead I sit down on the couch in the living room. I need time to think. What really happened 9 years ago?

I lay down on the couch and stared at the ceiling. When I was seven I remembered the last day being with my family. Alima was running around looking for something. I was annoyed and wanted everyone to leave me alone. I stayed in my room almost all day. I mean I would’ve if my mom didn’t ask me to take out the trash. I was mad, and maybe I was a little sensitive that day. I don’t know why I wanted to be left alone. All I remember is taking out the trash, and someone was watching me from across the street. The rest was a blur. It’s like something was erased. Like it *never* happened.

“Danielle what you thinking about?” Carla sat down to my right. “You’ve been sitting there for almost 20 minutes.”

“Really?” 20 minutes I was thinking about my last day. “I hadn’t noticed.”

“What were you thinking about?”

“Oh, just work.”

“I don’t believe you.” Carla puts her hand on my shoulder. “No one thinks about work for 20 whole minutes.”

“I was thinking of the last day I remember being with my family.”

“Did this just come to you?”

“Yeah, I guess it did.” I guess I didn’t realize that this new memory came back. I couldn’t remember it before. “So there’s hope for me yet.”

“There’s always hope.” Carla gave me a hug. “Are you hungry?”

“Always.” We got up and went to the kitchen.

It was a little weird seeing Liam again. He was going to be my friend. Well, he already was my friend over 9 years ago. It’s just the fact that he loves me. Liam is a good person; I don’t want to be mean. I just can’t let go of the fact that Trent is still out there; I have to find him.

“Danielle I found out why Logan was following you.” Liam says bumping into me.

“Why?” I ask.

“I care about you.”

“What? That’s why Logan was following me?”

“Oh, you meant... no, the reason he was following you was because he wants something *from* you.

“What does he want?”

“I don’t know.” Liam looks me in the eye with concern. “He was on the phone and I overheard him say I still haven’t gotten it from Danielle.”

“Come on! What would he want from me?” I can’t believe it. Who was Logan talking to and what did I have that he wanted?

## Chapter SIX

On my way to work I saw Liam talking with Logan. Logan seemed to be in a quest to be somewhere else. He kept looking at his watch and looking around. Liam put his hand on Logan's shoulder.

"LOGAN!" Liam shouted at him and I stopped walking. "I was asking you a question."

"I'm sorry Liam, but I have some place to be." Logan shrugged Liam's hand off and speed walked away.

Liam saw me watching and came over to me. He threw his hands up in the air and sighed.

"What did you say to him?" I ask.

"I asked him why he was such a stalker. He said he was late, but didn't say what for."

"Oh, all I heard was 'LOGAN! I asked you a question.' Sorry Liam, but I have to be somewhere."

"Yeah I wonder where." Liam looked me in the eyes with no expression. "I guess you'd better hurry to work."

"Yeah, I'd better. See yah." I give a small wave.

"Okay, bye." Liam lifted his hand in a lazy wave.

We went our separate ways, and I had the feeling that someone was following me. I didn't want to look around to let them know. It could just be in my mind, I don't know.

It took me about 10 minutes to get to work. Xavier was waiting by his office door. He didn't seem disappointed, but he wasn't exactly happy. Was everything okay?

"Are you ready to start taking orders?" Xavier asked.

"Yes, I don't mind cleaning and taking orders." I say. "I mean I know I've only been working for a week and a half, but to do more than cleaning is great."

“Great! Let’s make sure you have a waitress apron.” He leads me to a locker room. “There’s aprons on the middle shelf. The order pads are with the menus by the cash register.”

“Okay thanks.” Xavier was already moving me up. This was cool, I guess. Now I would have to talk to people. I can do it.

“Alright, then let’s go.” Xavier left the room and went out to take a few orders.

As I grabbed an apron something fell out of its pocket. I pick up the piece of paper. At first glance it looked like it would be an order sheet, but it wasn’t. It looked like a note written to me. I almost dropped it when I read it.

Danielle I know what you are. We’re coming for you, and you better give us what we want. You know what we’re talking about. Oh forgot to say, Trent would want you to help us. I wouldn’t trust Liam either. Have fun taking orders, but don’t forget to give us that something. Meet at the lighthouse tomorrow at six.

What was this? Was it Logan?

“Come on Danielle, customers don’t have all day.” Xavier said walking by.

“Yeah I’m coming.” I tie the apron on and stuff the note in my pants pocket.

“What were you doing?” He looks at me questioning my maturity. “Are you hiding something?”

“No, what!”

“How old did you say you were?”

“18, why?”

“Just checking to see if you were lying.” He glances at my outfit. “You aren’t doing drugs?”

“No, I’m not doing anything illegal.” I smile because why would I damage my body.

“Alright get to those customers.”

“I’m on it.” I went to my first table and realized I never paid much attention to what food they had here.

I look at the family sitting here. They are talking and waiting. I pull out my order pad.

“Good afternoon, I’ll be serving you. Drinks?” I ask.

“Yeah we’ll all have Cola.” The Father says.

“Alright, I’ll be back with four Colas.” Well, that wasn’t so bad. I walk into the kitchen area and go up to the drink machine. I fill up four cups of Cola and put them on a round tray using two hands. I don’t trust myself to use one.

As I walk towards the table again, I see Logan come in. I wish he didn’t have to appear here. I decide to ignore his presence.

“You guys ready to order?” I say as I slowly put down their Colas.

“Yeah I think so.” The Father chuckles. “It’s hard to decide.”

“I agree; too many choices.” I take out my order pad and pen.

“Okay my wife and I will have your Homemade Chili with the Nuts and Berries Salad.”

“Okay and what will you kids be having?”

“I want cheese pizza.” The little girl blurts out.

“Will that be one or two pieces?”

“Two pieces.” She smiles at me and I smile back.

“Great choice. What will you have?” I say to the boy.

“Same thing as her.” He nods.

“Alright, is that all you guys need for now?” I look at each of them then look at the Father.

“I think we’re all set for now.”

“Okay it shouldn’t take too long.” I go to the kitchen and give them my order sheet.

“They always get the same thing.” George says (he works in the kitchen).

“Hmm, I would think a lot of people do that.” I’m not surprised.

“They get the same thing every day.” George shakes his head and looks behind me.

“What’s wrong?”

“Logan is here. I don’t know why he bothers.”

“Yeah I saw him come in. What do you mean when you say why he bothers?”

“He constantly comes here to hit on girls. I notice he’s been watching you lately. I wouldn’t fall for him if I were you.”

“Ugh, like I would ever. I have a guy anyway and Logan isn’t what meets the eye.”

“How long have you known him?”

“Just three days, why do you ask?”

“It seems you know your people.”

“Yeah I’m good at reading people. I’ve been doing it all my life.”

“Well that’s good, but I think you should go see how other people are doing.”

“Oh right, customers.”

It wasn’t until after eight that I could go home. It got busy nearing five. It was me and one other waitress. Xavier seemed to be really watching me. He only wanted me to serve today, because the other waitresses were sick.

“Danielle you did very well today.” Xavier shakes my hand and smiles.

“Hey um, why did you ask me if I was on drugs?” I say curious.

“Oh, I always ask that.” He pats me on the back. “Now go home and get a good night’s sleep. I might need you tomorrow.”

“I will. Good night.”

“Night Danielle.”

I walk home and it's dark. Logan or someone is probably following me, but I don't show any concern. If I did, wouldn't that provoke them to come after me? I decide to take a detour to Emily's House. Maybe I could lose them.

"Dannie! Dannie!" Someone screams and I stop. It sounds familiar this voice.

"Who's there?" I ask turning towards the voice.

"It's... me. My name... is... Trent."

"Trent!?" I'm crying, because it can't be. "No, you're lying."

A shadow comes towards me and I realize it's a trap.

## Chapter SEVEN

“It’s not on her. Does she have it?” a deep voice echoes.

I cannot see anything because I’m blindfolded. It smells like sweat and it’s probably me. All I hear is that deep voice echoing. So this must mean I’m in a building that is big and spacious. I still have no clue where I am. Are these the same people that had abducted me before? The voice said I don’t have something. What is it they want?

“Danielle I’m going to ask you some questions.” The deep voice echoes in my ear this time. I only nod, because I don’t know if I can speak. “Where is the box?”

I don’t move. Box? I don’t have the box; Felicia has it. Great, because all I wanted to do was protect her. Now they’ll go after her, and I can’t protect her.

“I will not ask again. Where is the box?”

“I... don’t know.” My voice is raspy.

“You do know, and you will tell me.” He slaps me across the face and I sit still. His voice sounds a bit familiar. I can’t quite recall where it’s from.

“I don’t have a box.” I clench my teeth awaiting another slap.

“I knew it; someone’s holding it for you.” I feel his hand grab my chair. He pulls it across the floor and the screeching is the only thing I hear. He lets go and I fall to the floor onto my side.

Being tied to a chair isn’t any fun. Being dragged across the floor and practically thrown about isn’t any better. I feel like someone kicked me.

“You will tell me who you gave the box to.” He’s whispering in my ear again. “Until you do, I will give you torture.”

“I don’t know where the box is.” I say to surpass the agony.

“Alright, I’ll give you five minutes to think.” His shout echoes. This is all I hear until a door slams. If he went out of the room I didn’t hear his footsteps fade away.

What am I supposed to say? I cannot concede to having Felicia hold my box. I never got the chance to open it to reveal the belongings. All I know is that it’s mine. It has to be, because when I awoke in someone’s house and ran out I had this box in my

hands. So many times I tried to pry it open but the box was shut tight like someone had a telekinetic hold on it.

Asking Felicia to hide my things in the floor was the only reason I gave myself to be able to talk to her again. Now it was coming true. I would see her again soon and it isn't going to be pretty.

## Chapter EIGHT

It's seems to be late afternoon the next day when he comes in again. They took the blindfold off me and I was almost blinded by how little light was in the room. I was also really surprised by how small the room was. How come everything echoed? His deep voice must not be real.

He has a clipboard and pen with him. He clears his throat a few times and looks at me. It seems that he's studying me, but why? My stomach starts growling as he walks toward a cabinet. He unlocks and opens it to take out bread.

"Bread will do you some good." He says taking some bread out.

"Did you know you can't live on bread and water alone?" I say back because I remember that from somewhere.

"Ha, yeah but if that's all you have then you'll have to take it."

"Okay can I have some?"

He unties one of my hands and gives me the bread. I chew it slowly and think about escaping. Although, I know I can't because my feet are tied to the chair as well as my other hand. It would be impossible to get away without him noticing.

"Let me tell you something." He pulls a chair from a table and sits down about four to six feet in front of me. "About say eight or nine years ago we found out there was a boy and girl who had special powers. We wanted to know how they had gotten them. So we met them and took them into our compound."

"You mean you abducted them?" I remark. He's talking about me and Trent. Who else could he be talking about?

"No I don't. They came on their own."

"What do you mean on their own?" Is he lying?

"We asked if they could answer some questions and tell us about themselves. They asked their parents and came with us."

"Their parents didn't care?"

"We let the parents come with them. Anyway when we found out what had made them this way, they started acting strange."

“How did they act?”

“They weren’t as talkative as they were in the beginning. That’s when I knew they were hiding something.”

“Why are you telling me this?”

“You are hiding something.” He gets up and ties my arm back onto the chair. I only ate one piece of bread and he takes the other one back.

“Well I’m still hungry.” I say wanting the second piece of bread.

“You aren’t getting anymore until you tell me who has the box!”

“I can’t tell you, because I don’t know.”

“How could you not know who has it?” He looks at me suspiciously. “You don’t know huh?”

He puts the bread back into the cupboard and walks over to me. While he’s staring into my eyes I have a feeling I *have* met him before.

“I think what you need is a truth serum.”

I close my eyes and think about Felicia. How could I have been so stupid to leave it with her? Now they’ll find out she has it. They’ll probably terminate her too. Before any of this happens I want to know who this guy is.

“What’s your name?” I ask opening my eyes.

“Bandeles; it means follow me home.” Bandeles smiles and touches my hair. “I’ll be back.”

Bandeles takes his clipboard and pen with him out of the room. I notice that there is a scanner and password keypad. It would be astounding if I got out. I close my eyes again and try to remember Bandeles.

What does come to mind is that he isn’t in my memories. Follow me home; such a strange name. Follow me home? Follow me home! Did I follow him? Is this why I don’t remember the abduction? Is he even the same person who did so?

It was about four minutes later, when Bandele came back. He had a man in a lab coat with him. He really was going to give me a truth serum.

“Alright, now I want you to tell me where the box is.” He snaps at the man to inject the serum. I don’t move. As the man comes towards me, I can see he’s afraid. He puts on gloves and pulls out a needle and squirts the serum out a little. He puts it onto my skin and I feel my heart beating faster. As he injects it I don’t feel any different. “Is it working George?”

George checks my pulse and looks in my eyes. He shakes his head no.

“Give her two more.” Bandele is looking at my eyes now.

George doesn’t defy Bandele. He still looks scared as he is injecting a double dose. This time I feel a little something. It’s as if I can’t feel anything. Bandele says something but I don’t hear him.

“Danielle look at me.” Bandele snaps to get George away from me. “Can you hear me?”

“Oh, loud and clear.” I laugh.

“Where is the box?”

I don’t want to tell him. Felicia has it. I can’t tell him. It would be the end of Felicia. If that happened I’d never forgive myself.

“Where is the box Danielle?” Bandele repeats.

“The box is at my friends.”

“Where and who is this friend?”

“They live in a bland big house. The box is hidden in a room.”

“Tell me the address...”

“Oh it’s uh...” I’m trying to prolong it. I’m trying so hard to fight this feeling. “I don’t remember.”

“Ugh, how is that possible?” Bandele takes another truth serum needle and injects it faster than George did. This time it hurts in that I know blood came out.

“Ahh, I don’t know.” I’m starting to feel sleepier.

“Come on, you can tell me Dannie.”

He said Dannie and all I think now is how does everyone call me that now? Trent was the only one that called me Dannie. Now Bandele touches my hand because I'm shaking. I flinch.

“It's hard to say it.” I feel tears fall from my eyes. It's hard to fight this serum. I want to tell him that it's Felicia at the Orphan House on Rosé Street.

“Take your time.” His eyes tell me to hurry up. He doesn't want me to take my time.

“I can't, because this serum doesn't work on me.”

“Fine! I know what to do.” Bandele pulls out his phone and texts someone.

Six men come in and untie me. They are all on guard, although I know I could never fight in this state of mind. They lift me upside down so that my head is practically on the ground. They lift me onto a bar and tie my ankles to it. My blood rushes to my head right away. I feel worse. I can't reach the ground, so I'm just dangling there. Bandele looks at me and smiles. Not an evil smile. It looks like he's such a nice guy. Maybe he isn't so bad after all. Why did I think his name was strange? Who wouldn't follow him home?

“Dannie where's the box?” he says calmly. He is about two feet from my face and I reach out my hand to touch him. He takes my hands in his. “Where's the box?”

“The box is...”

## Chapter NINE

Waking up again, except this time I feel bruises on my face. I am not upside down anymore. Instead, I'm tied to the chair again. Only this time the chair isn't in the same room. I don't know where I am. No one is in the room that I can see of. It's a little dark and it seems that there is a table with medical supplies on the surface. The table has drawers in which are probably locked. There are a few cupboards in the room. Many of them seem high up on the walls. Why is that? You'd have to be six feet tall to reach them. I'm about five feet and two inches.

Closing my eyes I try to remember if I told Bandle where the box was. I don't think I did. The door opens and I flash open my eyes. Forgetting that it's dark in here, I squint. Who's coming in and what do they have in their hand. From the structure it looks like Bandle. Another person comes into the room with a bag. They walk over to me and I don't move a muscle. They put the bag down next to me and pull something out. Something goes around my neck; a neck brace. This person stands up and with my eyes I follow them to the table. It's a woman this time. She picks up one of the needles. When she's at my eye level, she says something, but I don't understand.

"Are you okay?" She repeats.

"I guess," my voice comes out slurred, "what's going on?"

"You passed out before we got an answer from you." That's a relief. "So we're trying something else. You've been out for three days."

"Three days?" I ask and she nods.

"This might seem like a pinch." She injects the needle into my arm. I feel sick; like I could throw up.

"What is that stuff?" I ask not realizing that I can't feel anything. My tongue and voice don't work right. So she has no idea what I said.

"Danielle is ready." She says to the shadow I now see. They nod and place something on the shelf by the wall. I hear a click then music. I try to keep my eyes open. Whatever it is they injected into my bloodstream made me drowsy.

*So far from where you are. These miles have torn us worlds apart and I miss you, yeah I miss you.*

The music plays and I feel lost; like I'm in the middle of an open field or plain.

*So far away from where you are. I'm standing underneath the stars, and I wish you were here.*

As the song plays I feel empty. My heart is missing a piece, a beat, as I close my eyes. I remember Trent's brown eyes. The way he looked at me when I smiled. He truly did love me. How come I didn't see the signs? I open my eyes and see a shadow come into the lighter part of the room. I still don't recognize who it is. As soon as I hear the low calming voice though, I know it's Bandele. He seems nice.

"Dannie, I know you miss Trent." Bandele is speaking, but it sounds like Trent. Oh how I missed his voice. "Trent would want you to tell me where the box is."

*Don't tell him, Dannie.* It sounds like Trent's voice in my head. He sounds like he's in pain. I know it's a hallucination or something. I don't think I could ever remember Trent being in pain. He never cried in front of me. He was always the strong one.

"Danielle it's the only way to get out of this place." He still sounds like Trent. "I'm here too, and it's the only way out."

*Dannie do not... Ugh, do not say a word.*

"Shut up!" I yell and feel a dizziness wash over me.

"It's only me, Trent." I shake my head despite the neck brace.

"No, no, no... I can't do it." I lean forward and about tip over the chair. The shadow rushes over leans me back to stable. "I can't do it."

"You can't do what, Danielle?"

"I can't... tell you."

*Dannie this is the last time I probably will see you. You can't see me.*

"How come I can hear you?" I mumble.

"What is it?" Bandele asks me in his normal voice.

*I have telepathy. I can read your mind. Therefore you hear my voice because I'm putting it there.*

“You have to help me.” I say louder this time. Bandele unties me and takes off my neck brace. I fall into his arms, because I have no energy left. I can’t feel anything in my body. My life is drained. My head starts to roll as if I hadn’t the strength to hold it up.

“Danielle I won’t let you die.” Bandele is carrying me to the door. I hear Trent one last time.

*You have to build up your strength to help yourself. I love you. You have to do this for yourself to get out.*

“Trent, why aren’t you here now?” My voice catches in my throat. I’m coughing into Bandele’s shoulder. He doesn’t like it and neither do I.

The song is ending:

*And I wish you were here...*

## Chapter TEN

I'm so far out of my mind. Have to get myself together. Trent was in my mind. He can read minds with telepathy. So it's true what he said. I have powers, and we're both from planet Alera. I just can't believe his voice was real. I wasn't delusional, because it felt completely tangible. The only thing is that I want to be able to touch his face and see his smile. That's something you can't put in someone's mind. Trent could talk to me all he wanted, but he couldn't put his face in my mind. It wouldn't be the same as in person.

I am strapped to a bed and I'm so exhausted. I have an IV in my arm; tubes going around my ears and in my nostrils. My head feels heavy as do my eyelids. When Bandele said torture I didn't think he meant this. It hurts to have bruises, but it hurts worse to feel drained of feeling love. How long have I've been here? It's been about a week and a half. All I want to do is sleep. So I close my eyes and think of sweet Felicia.

Someone comes in the room, but I'm not paying any attention to them. I'm reminiscing the good moments of my life.

"No questions today Danielle." A woman says. "You need to rest. For some reason your body isn't taking the serums right." She checks my pulse with her stethoscope. It's cold but feels good. She puts the back of her hand on my forehead. She's checking everything about me. As she sticks a thermometer in my mouth I start to fall asleep again.

I'm starting to feel numbness in my arms. It spreads up to my shoulders and neck. What did they put in the serums? As I sleep I dream something new; my life on my home planet, Alera.

"Danielle it's time for bedtime." My Father tells me as he takes my hand. He leads me inside our house and into my room. It has the stars of our galaxy on the ceiling. They look familiar now. One stands out in particular. It's bright and I realize it's a sun, our sun. Our sun is different than Earth's. As I lay here in my bedroom and stare at my sun on my ceiling, I become dizzy.

Gasp...my head is spinning. How can you become dizzy when you're sleeping? I do not know. I want to grab my head with my hands, but they have my hands strapped down. There's no one in the room. I decide to try and look around. It hurts my eyes to do it.

*Dannie?*

I hear Trent's voice in my head. It hurts though to listen. Where is he? Is he trapped somewhere hurt?

*Dannie are you alright?*

*I am not okay. I think to myself.*

*I can hear you Dannie. I know you're in pain, but you have to believe you can heal yourself. Remember when you skinned your knee.*

*How could I forget? I think about how he said I could heal.*

*You have to remember that feeling. What made you heal? Don't say it was me, although I wish it was.*

*It was you in the beginning. Ugh...I can't feel my arms. I healed my head one time. I don't remember how it felt though. I'm thinking now of the woodchip that was in my head, but fell out when I healed. Can Trent see this?*

*Yes Dannie, I see what happened. If you don't want me to see, just tell me. I don't want to invade.*

*Trent you could never invade. I've missed hearing your voice. If you have to read me, I don't mind. I just want to see you.*

*You will soon. Gasp.*

*Trent what's going on with you? Are you hurt?*

*I'm...fine; struggling to breathe. I've tried so hard to find you.*

I try to move my hands and I don't even know if they're moving. I lift my head and it takes so much effort. Tears are running down my face. Trent was always there for me. No one has ever been there for him. I don't care if I'm hurt. How is he? I move my fingers again and this time I feel it. As I squeeze my hands into fists, the woman comes in. She isn't looking at me though. Instead it's at the monitor that I'm connected to. My heart beat is spiking.

"Danielle look at me." The woman tells me and I look at her. "You need to stop stressing. If you don't your heart could stop."

“No! Tell me what you want with me!” I yell and my heart beat doesn’t change. She’s still looking at the monitor. My heart rate is 200 beats per minute. Sweat is running down my neck.

“Danielle we need you.” She says it calmly. “Bandeled needs to know how you got here. We need to know what’s in the box.”

“I don’t know, because I don’t remember.” Tears are streaming down my face and I feel like they’re squeezing my heart. “I don’t know...” I mumble and close my eyes.

“She’s flat lining!” The woman shouts. Doctors come running in with an AED. They place the paddles down.

“CLEAR!” one doctor says. “Again.”

They place the paddles again.

“CLEAR!” Danielle opens her eyes.

“Ugh, get...those off.” I groan. I don’t know what just happened, but the monitor says my heart is 180 beats per minute now. So it lowered.

“Danielle it’s going down, but you need to close your eyes and listen to my voice.”

I close my eyes. Instead of listening to her voice I think about the time when I had the woodchip in my head. What did it feel like? I felt that twinge of pain. I had pain, but then it was gone. What was I thinking at the time? My family was what was on my mind, before I fell. I remembered my Mom. Then I had “family” around when I woke up. They helped me get up off the ground. I’ve always had family with me. Only, it wasn’t always my flesh and blood. As I’m thinking about this now I feel the bruises on my face lessen. I open my eyes and look at the monitor. My heart rate is 94 beats per minute.

I close my eyes again and think about that feeling; the feeling of peace and unity. Having family wherever I am gives me that feeling. I have Trent somewhere in this building. Whatever was hurting me; my system is fighting it and ridding me of it.

“Danielle you’re healing...” The woman picks up my wrist and checks my heartbeat. It’s back to normal. “Danielle you don’t need the rest.”

Right after she says that Bandele comes in. His arms crossed and a smile on his face. He isn't looking at me though.

"Adeline get out of here." He's still smiling. Evidently that's what the woman doctor's name is. Adeline doesn't move, she thinks he joking.

"Are you being serious?" Adeline asks seriously.

"Yes, now please get out." He comes up to me and removes the straps. "Danielle you healed the last time you were here."

I was here before, but I have no recollection of it. Something dreadful must have occurred before.

"You don't remember, do you?"

"No, it's like my memory was wiped clean."

"How could that happen, you may be asking yourself?" Bandele takes my hands and ties them in the front of me. He picks me up and onto the floor so that I'm standing on my own two feet. "Come with me."

I follow him out of that room and he leads me down the hallway. It's brighter out here and I want to shield my eyes. He gives me sunglasses. I put them on and it's a relief. You know how in the winter when it snows, the sun reflects off the snow and into your eyes? Well that's how it felt stepping out into the hallways. It's bright.

"Where are we going Bandele?" I ask looking at his face. He doesn't look like a bad person, but looks can be deceiving.

"Outside to take a walk." He gently takes my arm as he opens the door and we walk outside. It seems less bright out here. I take off the sunglasses and have absolutely no indication of where we are. I'm surprised to see no fences or any reinforcements to keep me in. It's like a park where you can come and go.

"Where are we?"

Bandele points to the sun. Or at least that's what it looks like he's pointing at. It takes me a minute or two to realize he's pointing at a mountain in the distance. There's what looks like a lighthouse.

"That's a Secret Agent base." He turns towards me. "I'm a Secret Agent, Danielle."

“Really? I’m pretty sure Secret Agents don’t treat people like you treated me.”  
I step away from him.

“Actually we do, because you are not human.”

“How could you say such a thing?”

“You have super powers Danielle, in case you haven’t noticed. Ten years ago your people crashed landed in Labuan, Island of Malaysia. I believe it to be the least populated Island in the world.”

“What if we have a reason for crash landing? Do you think we would come here with no explanation?”

“Yes.” Bandle sure isn’t smiling anymore. Whatever attraction that made him look nice, is gone.

## Chapter ELEVEN

Just because I'm alien, doesn't mean they can experiment and hurt me. I asked Bandele what would happen if I just walked away. He said that they would immediately grab and put me in a locked room. For how long I asked. He says: depends on your specific intention. My intention is to find Trent and to protect Felicia. Then get back to Emily and Carla. Ultimately I would see if my family was still alive.

"Danielle, Trent hasn't tried talking to you has he?" Bandele asks and I want to say yes. The truth serum didn't work on me, but I still feel a connection to it.

"No, I don't know how he could. I haven't seen him since I was seven." I say slowly. "Why do you ask? Do you know where he is?"

"Don't get too excited. You won't see him around here." I knew he had to be lying. How else could he have talked to me in my mind? I really don't think I was imagining it.

"So what would you like to eat for dinner?" Bandele smiles at me. "We have macaroni and cheese, spaghetti, enchiladas, or pizza. What would you like?"

"I'll have enchiladas." Man I'm starving.

"I'll tell the cook." He leads me inside and leaves me at the door. "Feel free to walk around. I'm sure you'll find your way to the cafeteria."

"I bet I'll have no problem." I'm good with directions and I rarely get lost. When Bandele is out of view, I walk in the opposite direction. I know there has to be hidden cameras around. I try not acting suspicious. I look in rooms the best I can. Most don't have windows, but I have to say that it is very white and light pink in this building. All the walls are white and the ceiling a light pink. I'm surprised not to see any type of cameras or light bulbs. No light bulbs, then where is the light coming from?

I come to a hallway with one door. It's all the way to the end. I've seen movies where you never expect someone to be lurking in the shadows. Well I most definitely wouldn't expect someone coming out and scaring me in a brightly lit building. Shadows would be everywhere right? I would see them right away. I look all around me and I don't see my shadow or reflection. How can that be?

It must be the lighting. Why wouldn't I have a shadow? What kind of light is coming out of the walls and ceiling? As I walk down the hall towards the door an alarm

goes off. Red lights are flashing and I stop right where I am. It must be a restricted area or something. I wait five minutes looking around everywhere. No one is coming to get me. What's going on?

*Danielle it's not you. I mean I tried to leave my room. That's why the alarm went off.*

I hear Trent in my head again. I relax now.

*Where are you Trent? I ask myself knowing he's listening. How come you can't meet me?*

*It can't work that way. I've been trying to teleport out of here, but I'm just too weak. They have this power negation serum and power negated room too.*

I think about this. How is it possible that he's using his telepathy if he can't use his other powers while he's under the power negation? What's going on?

*I tried to read other people's minds but it doesn't work. I was thinking maybe you have...*

This is all I hear besides the alarm going off. *Trent are you okay?* I try to reach him somehow.

"Danielle if you would please make your way to the cafeteria; your food is ready!" Bandele shouts on the intercom.

It's hard to put aside thoughts of Trent. Why didn't he finish his thought? I have what? Ugh, it's just hard. Alright I guess I'll go to the cafeteria to eat. I'm starving!

Somehow I find my way to the cafeteria. There are a few people in there already. Some are eating Mac and Cheese, and some are chatting. I go up to the lunch line and a woman hands me my enchiladas. She points to the salad bar. I put lettuce on my tray. While I'm adding all different kinds of toppings I have the feeling people are watching me. I don't dare look at those in the room. They don't need to know I'm paranoid. Every sound and everything I see makes me flinch. This place isn't exactly growing on me. I've been here for what, two or three weeks? That's not long enough to get used to living or being somewhere.

"You're Danielle right?" A guy says from behind me. "Bandele talks about you a lot."

“What does he say?” I turn around with my tray in hand. As I walk to a table he follows.

“He said you’re an alien. Is it true?”

“No, I’m not an alien. I’m just as human as you are.”

“It’s amusing you would say that, because I’m not human.”

“Well where do you come from?” I don’t know what to say. I don’t even know if I can trust him either.

“I used to live on Planet Alera, but it was dangerous there. Another race came and fought off a lot of our people.”

“You mean that’s why we, *you* were sent to earth?” I try to smooth that out. If he’s from Alera, does he know me?

“Yeah, that’s part of it. You’re an alien, Danielle and you’re from Planet Alera too.”

“What makes you say that?”

“We were sent to earth. That’s what you said. Bandele talks about you all the time, because you are alien. He wouldn’t talk about you otherwise.”

“Does he know you’re alien?”

“No, he doesn’t. I don’t plan on telling him either.”

“Why are you here then?”

“I’m a Secret Agent and my name is Nathan Holland.”

“Well I guess you already know who I am.” I look away from him and pick up my enchilada. As I take a bite, Nathan sighs.

“I’ll let you eat. We’ll talk again later.” Nathan is probably in his early forties. He seems nice, but who knows. He gets up and walks towards the other people. “Danielle I forgot to say: don’t ever let Bandele persuade you. He will by no means be on your side.”

“I won’t.” I whisper. Nathan is talking with the others and I feel like I know him. He’s from Planet Alera; my home. The home I don’t remember.

## Chapter TWELVE

They gave me a room to sleep in. It has a bed and dresser. There's no mirror, and no bathroom. I have to ask to leave and when I do they follow me. It's like a prison. Maybe they're on high patrol because Trent tried to get out. I'm not going to try anything right now. I don't know this place very well yet. First I need to look around and figure out what's going on here.

"Danielle if you would come see me." Bandele says calmly over the intercom. "The guards will lead the way."

They open the door and I stand up tall. I won't look weak in front of them. I walk behind the guards and in front of them, since there are four of them around me; two in front and two behind. I guess they're afraid I'll try escaping. The closer I get to Bandele's office, the tenser I become. The guards sense it and they edge closer to me as we walk. I take in a small slow breath and think about how strong I am on the inside. It doesn't matter if my body isn't quite as strong as it should be. I can be determined to heal.

As I'm thinking this I feel resolute, sturdy in mind, heart, and body. Maybe I can heal those nerves that became afraid of change. Afraid of what could happen to me.

"If you would step inside this room." One of the guards says and they create path to the door of the room. I slowly step inside. There's another door that I have to open in order to officially be in the room. I pull on the handle and as soon as I open it, I'm pulled in.

"Danielle, sorry. I didn't mean to scare you." It's Nathan. "Bandele does need to see you, but I told the guards to stop by here on the way."

"Let me guess you're second in command or something?" I ask not sure the guards would listen.

"Something like that. I wanted to share something with you."

"What is it?"

"Your friend, Felicia, is in danger. I'm sending people outside of this agency to find her first."

"Aren't you going to do anything about it?"

“I can’t let Bandele suspect anything. If the guards or Bandele asks why you talked to me...”

“I’ll tell them it was a question about the food.” I’m kidding.

“No... you can tell anyone that asks that it was because you realized I dropped something when I spoke with you last.”

“Did you drop something?”

“I didn’t exactly drop it, I put it on you.” He looks at my wrist. “This bracelet belongs to me.”

“You met me before didn’t you?”

“Yeah and that was the last time I saw you. Nine years ago, I gave it to you.”

“So you gave me this bracelet because...?” Does he know me personally?

“I gave it to you so that if you ever came back I’d know it was you.” He looks me in the eyes and takes my wrist. “I knew you were from Alera and I didn’t want anything to happen to you.”

Nathan takes the bracelet off and puts it on his wrist. He looks me in the eyes and sighs. After he opens his mouth, but doesn’t say anything, he sighs again.

“Are you alright?” I ask putting a hand on his shoulder.

“It’s a memory is all, but it will have to wait another day.” Nathan directs me towards the door. “I’ll talk to you at breakfast tomorrow.”

“Alright, and you’ll tell me this memory of yours?”

“Yeah...I’ll tell you.” He opens the door and the guards straighten up; two in front and two in back.

“Sorry for any inconvenience.” I say trying to make it look like what we talked about wasn’t a big deal.

“No problem; have a good day.” As soon as Nathan shuts the door the guards push me towards Bandele’s office.

I try to be discreet in looking around the place. I want to remember how I get there. If ever I have the need to, it would be good to know.

It seems to take forever, I'm scared, and we finally reach Bandele's office. He is standing there waiting.

"So what took so long?" Bandele asks. He obviously didn't know that Nathan was going to talk to me.

"Someone wanted to talk to her." One guard says.

"Who was this?"

"Agent Holland, Sir."

"Hmm, I'll speak to him later. As of right now I will speak to Danielle alone." Bandele opens the door and we step inside his office. There's a desk with an intricately nice chair behind it. He gestures for me to sit in an uncomfortable looking chair. I sit down and he does the same. It seems that for about six minutes Bandele just stares at me. "Want to know why I called you down here?"

I nod, not wanting to speak. Probably going to ask me a question. It's no guess on my part.

"Where is the box?" Bandele asks not taking his eyes off mine.

"Where's Trent?" If he won't tell me, I can see no reason why I should tell him where my box is.

"Safe and sound I can assure you of that." He looks away for a brief second. "Where is the box?"

I scoff, "You'll never know."

"If you don't tell me, Trent will take another beating."

"Yeah I don't think you'll do that. You're a liar."

"Fine, I'll just have to show you what he looks like." Bandele picks up a remote and a big television screen turns on. I turn my head and see Trent. He doesn't look good. His skin is pale, he has bruises all over, and he looks skinny. But the one thing that catches my eye is a huge gash in his leg. It looks infected.

"Why haven't you fixed his leg?" This is all I can say to keep the tears from streaming down my face.

"Trent hasn't cooperated with us to deserve that kind of treatment."

“I’m not going to tell you.” Felicia has to stay safe. How could they know that she has it? How can I trust Agent Holland?

“I’ve never known you to be stubborn.” He stands up and keeps the screen on. “I guess what I’ll have to do is cut Trent’s leg off.”

“I’m not telling you.” I clench my teeth. “I really can’t anyway.”

He sits back down, picks up the phone and dials a number. “Cut Trent’s leg off and...”

“No!”

“Hold on. What is it?”

“Let me get the box.”

“Leave Trent alone.” Bandele puts the phone down and smiles. “We’ll let you get the box, and we’ll send someone to come with you.”

“Who is going with me?”

“Well, since Agent Holland has taken a liking to you, he’ll go. I’ll be in a van along with some other agents to follow.”

“No, I won’t go if you follow.” I stand up, put my hands on his desk and lean in close. “Let me and Holland go and when I have the box he’ll call. You can pick us up wherever it is we are.”

“Fine!” Bandele picks up my hands and throws them off his desk. “Tomorrow we’ll go.”

I walk towards the door. I look at the television screen one last time. Other than the fact of Trent looking way worse off than me, I can see him. It makes me yearn for him more. He surely has changed. Bandele sees me watching the screen and he turns it off.

“If you bring the box back, I’ll let you see Trent.”

## Chapter THIRTEEN

I take a jacket they have given me, because it's a little chilly today. I'm also hoping that I can officially say goodbye to Felicia. They blindfold me before I go into the dark blue van with tinted windows in the back.

I don't mind being blindfolded, but they had to tie my hands behind my back too. They told me it was until I was far enough away from the Secret Agent Base, and then they would take the blindfold off and untie me. It's driving me nuts to have my arms behind my back.

"Are we there yet?" I ask softly. "I can't wait to be free of this blindfold and cuffs."

"There?" Nathan asks. "We're just getting away from the Agent Base. We don't even know where there is. You have to lead us."

"Sorry, I keep thinking you guys know." I shake my head. "Nathan are we going to be followed, because I don't want anyone to know where it is."

Nathan moves around and it sounds like he's talking to himself.

"What are you doing?" I whisper.

"Disconnecting myself from the ear piece. So they won't know what we're talking about."

Nathan moves again and I feel his presence next to me. He touches my head where the cloth covers my eyes. I feel it loosen as he slips it away from my eyes.

"I like looking at someone's eyes when I'm talking to them." Nathan says as he goes back to his seat across from me. "Is the box at the Rosé Street Orphanage?"

I don't say anything, just stare at Nathan. Did he really turn off his ear piece? Are they still listening in on our conversation? I close my eyes and think about Felicia. I can't risk her life.

"Felicia won't get hurt. I promise." Nathan's eyes are still on mine.

"How do you know that?"

"I sent guards remember?"

“Yeah, I remember.” I look away from him, because he’s kind of making me nervous. “How do you even know about Felicia?”

“I’ve kept tabs on you, to keep you safe.”

“You acted like you met me for the first time when we met in the cafeteria. Did I meet you before?”

The van stops and Nathan turns his earpiece back on. He reaches back up by my eyes and takes the blindfold completely off my head. The back doors open and the sunlight is bright.

“You can take off the cuffs now.” Bandle says. “Remember Danielle why you’re getting the box.”

I nod. Nathan looks at me with a serious expression. He wasn’t so serious before when we were in the van. Why is he now?

*He won’t follow us.*

“You sure about that?” I say to Nathan.

“Sure about what?” Nathan still looks serious.

“What’s going on? Let’s get a move on.” Bandle sits down at the bumper of the van.

“Come on Danielle, let’s go.” Nathan grabs my arm firmly but doesn’t hurt me.

I realize that we’re only about a mile from the Orphan House. I wasn’t so far from my “home”. Did they know this? I looked at Nathan as we walked towards the Orphan House. He was still very serious.

When we were probably about ten minutes away from the other Agents, Nathan said something. I mean I thought he said something. I was looking at him, but his lips weren’t moving.

*Danielle when you get your box, do not try opening it.*

“What?” I whispered.

*You heard me. Good. I’ll explain more when the time is better.*

I nodded realizing that the one reason he was talking to me with his mind was because he didn't want Bandele to hear.

Nathan must have heard something from the earpiece, because he said "No everything's fine."

The Orphan House came into view. I wanted to walk faster, but didn't want to act suspicious to others. Nathan glanced at me and frowned. He put out his arm.

*Slow down! They can see us now.*

I flashed worried eyes at him. They can see us? I almost stop walking. I can't keep Felicia safe. I can't keep anyone in the Orphan House safe. Nathan must hear my thoughts because he grabs my arm gently. He pulls me behind a tree.

"Where's the box?" He asks, but then he sends me a thought. *You need to calm down. I'm trying to help you. Give no recognition of me talking to you.*

"Follow me." I say as I nod in understanding.

"Well let's hurry." We walk fast, but not too fast. There are people walking the streets, but they don't look at us.

We reach the backyard of the Orphan House. I edge closer to the secret passageway, when I stop. Can they see us?

*Danielle it's okay.* Nathan takes out his earpiece and switches it off. He puts it in his pocket and starts talking. "Danielle we need to find the box, but we can't open it. I can't explain it all right now. I will tell you this: I did know you before we met in the cafeteria. I knew you ever since you were a baby."

"Really...how come I don't remember anything?"

"That's for another time. We don't have time to talk."

I step into the bush that hides a small crawl space door. I open it and crawl into it. Nathan doesn't follow. I'm crawling for about two minutes. I reach the end and there are stairs that come up through the ceiling and into the dorms. I walk up them slowly. When I reach the top I put my ear to the ceiling. I hear voices talking. Shoot!

I lift the ceiling/floor tile slightly and remember there is a rug on top of it, so no one would really notice me. I try to keep my head low, while still being able to see.

“It’s been two weeks since we’ve seen her.” One girl says. “It’s like she disappeared.” They’re talking about me.

“Yeah, Felicia found a letter from her, but won’t show it to me.” The other girl says. “It must say something about where she went.”

“Felicia hasn’t spoken since the incident, and she won’t hang out with anyone.”

I put the tile back down and see my box hidden slightly under the very top step. Before I can grab it I hear footsteps nearing me.

## Chapter FOURTEEN

I didn't move a muscle. I'm afraid they'll hear me. They continue talking instead now about what they want to do when they get out of the Orphan House. It sounds like they are getting ready to leave.

"If Danielle can leave, I can't see why we shouldn't?" One girl says.

After a while it seems they are going to leave the room. It isn't until I hear Felicia's voice enter the room do I really tense up. It takes a lot of self-control to stay still. Oh how much I want to rush up out of the floor and run into her arms. This feeling of urgency running through me makes me bump my head on the floor above me.

"What was that?" one of them says and I hear footsteps coming closer.

"I don't think it was anything." Felicia says her voice sounding anxious.

"Felicia are you alright?"

"Yes, I was coming in here to get my hat."

"Were you going to go outside?"

"Yes, I thought it would be nice."

"Is it alright if we go with you?"

"Sure, could you wait outside for me?"

"Yes we'll wait outside." The girls leave and shut the door behind them.

As soon as the door shuts Felicia runs to me. She slowly opens the door in the floor.

"Danielle you came." Felicia climbs down here with me and shuts the door behind her. "What have you been doing?"

"Oh Felicia I missed you so much. What have I been doing?" I think about what I should tell her. I don't want to scare her. "Felicia I got a job and I found a place to live. I'm living with Emily Garland and her sister Carla."

"So you're fine without me." Felicia frowns.

“No, I’m not. They told me things I didn’t have a clue about.”

“Like what?”

“We have powers because we came from a different planet, Planet Alera.”

“Are you being serious?” Felicia looks at me skeptically.

“Yes, I am. I had a dream about my Planet’s sun. It’s different than here. I think it was a memory.”

“So you’re an alien?”

“I guess you could say that, but I look human. I still feel like I should be normal.”

“Why did you come here?”

“Felicia this might be the last time I see you. I found Trent.”

“I thought this would happen.” Felicia looks down. “You found Trent and now you’re leaving me.”

“I am leaving you, but it’s not that. There is a Secret Agent base that has Trent.”

“What...is he alright?”

“No, they hurt him quite a bit. The reason they let me go, was because I needed to get my box.”

“They captured you? They want your box even when it doesn’t open?” Felicia looks so confused.

“Yes they captured me one night when I was on my way home to Emily’s.” I look at Felicia and I’m not sure if should be telling her this. “They weren’t nice to me, when they kept asking me where my box was.”

“What did they do?”

“It doesn’t matter what they did. It matters now that I go and try to get Trent out of there.”

“I understand. I will miss you Danielle. I’ve been lonely since you left.”

“I know. I heard some girls talking about you. They want to be your friend.”

“Really?”

“Yes, but in order for them to be your friend you have to accept them. You have to forget that I’m not here. Always remember me, but not that I’m gone. I will always be in your heart.”

“Thank you Danielle. I won’t ever forget you.”

“Bye Felicia.” I kiss her forehead and take my box. I don’t take another look back as I head down the small narrow stairs. When I get to the bottom I hear the floor above close and the shuffle of her feet. I take a deep breath as I crawl out back to reality.

“Danielle what took you so long?” Nathan whispers to me. “Come on let’s go.”

“Why are you whispering?” I ask him.

“They followed us, despite what you asked.”

“Do they know where we are?”

“No they don’t but if they trace the signal of this earpiece they will.”

“It has a tracking device inside?” I didn’t want them to know where I got the box from. They could hurt Felicia.

“Danielle they are not going to hurt Felicia. Remember I said I would send agents to find her?”

“Yes, are they coming now?”

“They followed us, but I was afraid of Bandele catching on.”

“Felicia won’t know what’s going on. She’ll think the people who captured me are after her.”

“No they won’t because you’re going to tell her to go with them.” Nathan has a hand on my shoulder. “Do it quickly Danielle. Tell her to come down with you and I’ll signal one of the agents to come.”

I run back to the hidden passage, crawl into it and run up the stairs. Now I don't even care if anyone is in the room. I push the floor up and see Felicia on her bed. She sees me and jumps.

"Felicia come with me." I try to say it calmly, but I can feel the urgency in my voice.

"Why what's wrong?" Felicia is standing now.

"There are a couple of real agents who are going to keep you safe."

"No Danielle, I don't want to."

"Felicia, please I want you to be safe. The bad secret agents followed me here. They know about you."

"What does it matter?"

"They might use you against me. They might...hurt you."

Felicia walks towards me and reaches her hand out. I grab it and pull her in. I put her down and we start down the stairs. When we get outside Nathan reaches slowly out to Felicia.

"Felicia this is Agent Sarah and Agent Christopher. They are going to take you to a safe house." Nathan explains and Felicia nods.

They take her away into their van and I can't help but watch her go. Nathan grabs my arm and picks up the box.

"Let's go Dannie." Nathan whispers and we start to walk back to the vans.

## Chapter FIFTEEN

It doesn't surprise me that he called me Dannie. Maybe that's what everyone called me. It makes me feel like I don't know anything about who I am. I'm just following orders to save Trent. Who is going to save me?

"Danielle, why are you walking so slowly?" Nathan asks.

"Sorry, just thinking about things."

"You are going to be fine. I told you before, that I would explain what's going on."

"Did you turn your earpiece on?"

"Good idea; don't want them to start worrying." Nathan takes his earpiece out of his pocket, fidgets with it and puts it in his ear.

After about five minutes I want to ask Nathan something. I want to ask him how it was he knew me since I was a baby. Everywhere I go people know who I am. Am I really that oblivious to everyone recognizing me? I want answers to what happened to me. For nine years I decided to forget about trying to remember what could have happened. I wanted to be a new person I guess.

*You'll have answers soon enough.*

"Why do you do that?" I say angrily.

"Do what?" Nathan says pointing to his earpiece.

"Never mind."

*I'm sorry. It's been a while since I've been in contact with people from our planet.*

I walk faster because I'm afraid of being from somewhere else other than earth. I always thought that movies like that were fantasies. People who are in N.A.S.A. and other space programs want to see if there are other planets like earth. If they found out that we were from Planet Alera, they would take us and study us. I would never have the life I deserve. All my friends and the people I knew wouldn't want to talk to me. They would think I'm a freak.

"There is Bande. You ready to go back Danielle?" Nathan grips my box in one arm. He looks at me and winks.

"No, but do I have a choice?" I look behind me and inhale a deep breath. "I'm ready to face what's next. As long as I get what I wanted; Bande made a deal."

“We’ll see what happens.”

I nod and we continue walking towards the other agents and Bandele.

Bandele comes forward and takes the box from Nathan.

“Agent Holland what took so long?” Bandele says, but he is looking at me.

“It was farther than we thought it was. Did you want us to run and draw attention?”

“I see, but I don’t like your sarcastic comments.”

“You have no sense of humor Bandele.” Nathan walks to the van and takes my arm with him. “She’s ready to go back.”

“When you get there put her in the cell.” Bandele smirks and Nathan nods submissively. I can tell though he doesn’t like the idea of putting me in a cell. When we get to the van he pushes me up gently.

“I’m not putting cuffs on you, but I have to put the blindfold on. Sorry Danielle.”

“I know.” I close my eyes so he can put the blindfold on me. “When will you tell me everything?”

*I’ll tell you right now. I’m speaking to you telepathically so that no one hears.*

I nod.

*The first thing I have to tell you is about myself. I grew up on Planet Alera. When I was about 24 years old I was elected as executive to the counsel of our town. This means I had the responsibility with communicating back and forth to the counsels of every town on our planet. There are around one hundred towns. Our planet is smaller than earth.*

“Ok.” I say aloud.

*We realized that there was an epidemic spreading. I had contacted other towns. Eighty towns had reported that their town was getting sick. If you ever heard of Cholera, it was worse. People were starting to cough up blood. It was awful. We decide that we needed to put those who were sick in quarantine. We had to separate others who thought they might have the disease from those we knew weren’t sick. It took a while, but we finally figured out who was all sick. At least that’s what we thought. The quarantine wasn’t enough. We decided to take those we were absolutely sure about not being infected. We took few things with us and were going to come to another planet suitable for us. I know this may seem like a lot, but that’s only half of it. The other reason we had to leave was because we found out that there was someone aiming to destroy our home, Alera. The ones who were going to fight against them stayed. Whereas the rest being the mothers, children and some of the fathers boarded the ships.*

“Were you one of the fathers?” I whisper.

*Yes I was. There were other people on board that didn't have families. Some were counselors and a lot of them were elderly. It is unfortunate though, most of the elderly died on the way here to Earth.*

*Are any still alive?* I try asking him by thinking.

*Very few are. I know one man who is in his 90's. Recently he has become mental. He has been saying he's from a different planet. Of course no one believes him, and he is now in a nursing home. I visited him last week. I wanted to convince him not to talk about where we came from, but he wouldn't listen. That man has always been stubborn. Ha, ha. Sorry, the memories of who he was before we came to Earth are hilarious.*

*Do you know if I'll ever see Trent again?* I ask him.

*I'll make sure that you do. Danielle I'm sorry things haven't worked out so well. There are so many things I want you to know, and I don't know how to explain. It's been nine years and I still don't know how to tell you.*

*What is it?* I fidget in my seat.

*I can't tell you right now. It's not the right time. Let me tell you though what happened when we came here to Earth. Someone must have messed with the Engines or something, because when we had just come into Earth's farthest atmosphere we came down crashing fast. That's why we crashed onto an Island. We tried steering where no or little people were. Fortunately this Island was deserted. Unfortunately quite a few of our people got hurt. Some people died. There are some Alerarians that have abilities to heal. So they healed as many people as they could. It was counted and thirty-five people died. You were one of the people trying to heal others. You did a swell job too.*

*I healed people?* I didn't know I could do that. *I don't know how to though.*

*You haven't tried that's why. Are you saying you didn't know you had abilities all this time?*

*I knew something was different about me, but didn't think it was far from the normal. I didn't understand what my abilities were for, that's why I didn't think anything of it.*

*Danielle everyone on our planet is born with abilities. Depending on what the Mother and Father have, the abilities vary. For example my Father had Telepathy and it passed onto me. Usually it's the Father's powers that get inherited. Either it is just one power or multiple. There are few people who have telepathy. Our family was blessed with having this, because it helped to know who was lying to us. It was one reason why I was Executive for the Counsel.*

*Do you know what my parents' abilities are?* I wonder what powers I'm going to uncover.

*No, I mean I do, but it's hard to explain.*

*Are you alright?* I wonder what he's been through.

*No I'm not. It's been so long since I've seen anyone from Alera. It's been hard on me since I knew your parents very well. I knew your Mother like I know the back of my hand.*

*So you were really close. Is that why you knew me since I was a baby?* I smile because at least someone knows me.

*Yes that is why I knew you. Your Mother and I saw each other almost every day. We worked together on occasion. We had been best friends since childhood. I guess that's why we were so close.*

*I'm glad.* The van starts slowing down and I know our talk has to finish.

*We are here now. I will try to talk with you more. See you at breakfast.*

I nod as the van comes to a stop. Nathan comes over and pulls off the blindfold.

"Here we are. Let's go inside." Nathan says out loud. I jump out of the van and feel cold. It wasn't this cold when we were walking to the Orphan House.

"Why is it so cold?" I ask Nathan.

"It's the jacket you're wearing. They altered it. It has temperature readings on it; which means that if you start to feel hot it puts out a current to make you cooler."

"Well I'm not hot right now; I'm feeling a bit chili."

"Not all inventions are perfect. Actually none are. We aren't perfect so how could things we make be perfect?"

"I guess you're right."

We walk inside and Nathan walks me to the cafeteria. There are a lot of people in there. From the looks of it, they all look like either agents or doctors. Nathan walks up to the lunch workers and tells them what he wants. I'm right behind him. As I watch the people in here I see that a lot of them glance up to look at me.

"What would you like?" one lunch worker asks me. "We have spaghetti, mash potatoes, and pizza.

"I'll have mash potatoes." I say, not really thinking much about food.

"Do you want gravy and chicken strips with it?"

“Yes.” The lunch worker puts mash potatoes on a tray. After she pours the gravy onto the potatoes she puts two chicken strips on the tray.

“Here you are. Salad bar is over there.” She points to the salad bar and starts cleaning up the area.

“Thank you.”

“No problem, have a good day.”

I doubt I’ll have a good day. So far it’s been pretty good. I’m dreading what Bandlele is going to say when they can’t open the box. That’s when my good day will come to an end. He’ll ask me to open it and I don’t know how to. I remember Nathan told me not to open it. Does he know what’s inside?

I walk over to see what they have on the salad bar. Nathan is still over there getting salad and strawberries.

“Nathan you said you would see me at breakfast, did you mean lunch?” I ask.

“No I meant what I said. I can’t draw attention to myself. I always eat lunch and dinner in my quarters. So I will see you again tomorrow at breakfast.”

“What if I don’t? I mean what if Bandlele doesn’t let me go to breakfast tomorrow?”

“Why wouldn’t he?”

“He said to put me in the cell.”

“Well he isn’t going to be here for a while. He’s taking your box to a different base.”

“How far?”

“It’s about ten hours away.”

“They’re going to drive ten hours just to take my box somewhere?”

“Yeah it is strange, but let me tell you this. One day we are going to get our boxes back. They can’t open them, so everything in them will be intact and safe.”

“They have your box? Do they know it’s yours?”

“Yes they do have mine, but they don’t know it’s mine. I told them I found it next to a dead body we found along a shore of one beach near the plane crash. They didn’t suspect anything.”

“So you just handed over your box?”

“No I didn’t. Bandele saw me taking it in here. I meant to keep it hidden in my quarters, but I didn’t make it there in time.”

“Oh.”

“I best be going now. I might talk to you later. After you eat come by my office. You remember how to get there?”

“Yes. See you later.”

Nathan picks up his tray and walks out of the cafeteria. I finish getting what I want from the salad bar. As I look around for a table to sit at I see that they’re all full. There isn’t one empty chair. No wonder Nathan didn’t eat in here. I decide to go outside and eat. There are a couple of benches and a few tables. None of them are occupied. I sit at one of the tables and eat.

## Chapter SIXTEEN

It's been a couple of hours since I ate lunch. I can't help but wonder what will happen next. I want to see Trent. I do remember how to get to Nathan's office. As I walk around the building checking it out, it seems the agents don't really mind me being there. There were a couple of areas they didn't want me in, but other than that I could go anywhere.

I reach the hallway that Nathan's office is in. As I'm nearing the door I hear yelling. I don't know where it's coming from exactly, but I walk closer and closer to Nathan's office. The yelling becomes louder. It has to be coming from his office. I'm not sure if I should go in there.

Turns out who was yelling comes running out and in my direction. It's Nathan! He doesn't see me until he runs into me.

"I'm sorry Danielle. This isn't a good time." Nathan rushes off towards the medical department.

I have no idea why he would act like this. How could I know anyway? I've only 'known' him for a day. What happened to him? He always seemed so calm, and this was the complete opposite. I take multiple steps toward his office's outer door. The door handle is loose and there is a key inside the lock. I open the door and then open the inner door to see papers askew all over the place. Chairs are knocked over and the printer is on the floor in pieces. As I look around the place something sticks out at me. There is a flash drive poking out of the desk chair.

What's on it? I pull it out of the chair and go to the computer. The computer is on, but when I turn on the monitor I see that there is a password. Ugh, of course there is. I decide to try a couple of words. I try Planet Alera, Alera, Holland, and password. None of them work. How well do I know Nathan? We live on the same planet; he was really close to my Mom. That's how he came to know me. He knew who I was when I came here because I had the bracelet he gave me. He called me Dannie. Obviously he was close to me. He did say he worked with my Mom a lot. So I guess he worked with me a lot. Who else calls me Dannie: Trent, Liam, and Bandele? Well I know that Nathan wouldn't have a password having anything to do with Bandele. He hates that guy.

I can't seem to figure out what his password could be. There are so many things I don't know about him. I think about it for a few more minutes. I hear footsteps heading towards the door. What should I do now?

I still have the flash drive in my hand as I look around the room. There is a closet directly behind his desk. It's the closest place I can hide, so that's where I go. As soon as I am in the closet and I shut the door, the office door opens. It's Nathan. I

don't move or make a sound. What if he goes on his computer? I might be able to see the password he puts in.

"Ugh, Danielle I know you're in here." Nathan says as he nears the computer desk. "You can come out of the closet."

"Are you alright?" I ask as I open the closet door. "I thought you were someone else that's why I went in there."

"I am not alright. Danielle you could have just given me the flash drive and I could have shown you what was on it."

"You read my mind."

"Yes I did. I'm sorry. It comes so naturally to me, I've had a lot of practice." Nathan looks like he's in pain.

"What's wrong Nathan?"

"Nothing, why do you ask?"

"You look awful; like you're hurt."

Nathan sits down and pulls off his dress shirt revealing the blood leaking through his t-shirt around his shoulder.

"What happened?" I come over to him. "Did you get shot?"

"Not recently, but while I was rummaging through my office today I think I tore the stitches. I was a little angry."

"Can I see the wound?" Maybe I can heal it. Nathan pulls off his t-shirt groaning in the process. The wound looks infected. "Did you stitch this yourself?"

"Yes."

"It's infected." I touch it with one hand. I try to think about the sense of family. People I love are close. Even if they weren't, they're in my heart. I close my eyes and think about the peace and unity that brings family together. My chest feels warmer thinking of that love.

"Danielle you did it." Nathan whispers. "You healed me."

I open my eyes and look at the wound. I did heal him and it felt good.

"I did heal you." I whisper.

"Thank you, I got that wound a couple weeks ago. It's been hurting for a couple of days now. I didn't know it was infected."

“You’re welcome. Are you going to show me what’s on the flash drive?”

Nathan lets out a breath. He looks at his computer and types a password in.

*Danielle Amy.* I can hear his thoughts.

“My name is your password?”

Nathan doesn’t say anything.

*You read my mind?*

“Yes, but I can’t believe you would use my name.”

“Your mother and I were very close. It’s hard to say this and I don’t know why it is. I married your mother. I’m your father, Danielle.”

I’m speechless. Is he telling the truth? The only thing that comes to mind is the dream I had of my Father taking me to bed. What his voice sounded like was much like a father. It was calming and gentle.

“I’m sorry I didn’t tell you earlier. I hope you understand why I didn’t.”

He is my father. It sounds like him. “Time for bedtime.”

“I remember hearing your voice once.” I say to break the silence. “You told me it was time for bed.”

“Yes, that is probably the one memory you have of me.”

“What do you mean?” One memory of him?

“I was busy a lot for the counsel. I rarely came home in time to tuck you in.” Nathan/my Dad puts the flash drive into the computer. After he opens up the file I see a picture of him and my mom and a baby. It’s me. “This was the day you were born. I was overjoyed.”

“How old was I when we had to leave?”

“You were five.”

“How come I don’t remember anything about coming here?”

My dad looks away from me. He shows me another picture. It’s one of our family on a beach. I see another little girl with us.

“Alima, isn’t it?”

“Yes, you remember her?”

“Yes. How could I forget?”

“You loved her, more than anything. I remember one time that your mother needed to take a vacation. We went to Rexton beach. It wasn’t really warm at the time, but we still had fun. You kept trying to get Alima to go in the water. As you were chasing each other around you ended up knocking your mother onto the sandy ground. It really is a great memory of our whole family together.”

“I remember that day. I remember being there, but I don’t remember you being there.”

“I know.”

“What do you mean? You know why I don’t recognize you?”

“Yes, but I’m not sure if I should tell you right now.”

“Why not, Dad? I’ve waited so long to find someone I knew. Someone who is of my own flesh. You have to tell me.”

“I can’t tell you. Don’t call me Dad. Not now.” He gets up and starts cleaning up his office. He picks up all the papers and places them on his desk.

“Promise me you’ll tell me when you’re ready?” I beg him.

“I promise in due time I will tell you. It’s just that not all my secrets can be spilled in one time.”

I nod and pick up the tipped over chair. After I push it in front of the desk I leave. I met my father. Where’s the rest of my family?

## Chapter SEVENTEEN

He put me in the cage like Bandele told him to. About an hour later Bandele came back and checked up on me. Turns out the cage is more like a brightly lit room that turns dark every four minutes and thirty seconds. The floor opens up at certain times too. There's water underneath. I figured they don't want me to sleep. If I slept I would fall in. The walls move closer when this happens too. When this happened the third time I noticed two rungs of a ladder. It was probably two or three feet from the ceiling. It's too high for me to reach. I have a feeling that it's there for a reason. Maybe for the person who is in this "cage".

"Hello Danielle." Nathan/Dad says from above. "Sorry I had to put you in here."

"You are my Father, and I do feel that you should protect me. Why does Bandele think I'm a bad person?" I say craning my neck to look at him.

"He doesn't think you're a bad person. He knows you're an alien."

"What does he have against us then?" I shout.

"They don't like what they don't understand." Nathan/Dad looks away for a moment. "I have to be going, but I have to warn you. This room fills up with water that's what the ladder rungs are for. There are footings in the wall to get to it. Don't tell anyone I told you."

"Thanks Dad." I whisper, even though I know he didn't hear me say it out loud.

*You're welcome, just stay alive.*

*I will.*

*Good, cause it gets worse.*

*Worse? My heart races.*

*Sometimes everything that happens in that room happens all at once.*

*Tell me when. When is it supposed to happen?*

*It's random, so I don't know. I really must go now. Bandele is texting me.*

*Wait! Something is happening now! The water in the hole is bubbling.*

*Stay away from it. It's steam and it will burn. Danielle you have to be cautious.*

*Is that all? I try sending a last thought to him, but all I get is a pain in my head.*

“What was that?!” I grasp my head with my hands. I forget that there is steam until it touches my foot. “Ah, stupid.” I pull myself closer to the wall.

This doesn't help much when the walls start to move. The steam stops, but the water continues bubbling out. The room is filling up. I look around and see the footings in the wall. I only have one chance while the walls keep moving closer and closer together. I grab hold of the first footing. I have to jump onto the wall in order to get a hold of the next footing. The water is only a foot up the wall, but it seems to be getting stronger and faster. I advance up the wall slowly.

I'm almost to the ladder when I get punched from something coming out of the wall. I have one hand on a footing. The water is nearing my waist now. If I fall I could drown. This wall is probably 10-15 feet.

“I can do this.” I say to myself. I pull my feet up to put them in a footing. This time I have to feel for it because I can't see anything. The room goes dark. The walls start moving and I feel steam hit my face. I have to move my head. After five minutes I feel steady on the wall. I reach out to feel where the next footing is. There are no more. I can't feel any. Blindly reaching up for the ladder I feel the metal rung. I squeeze my hand around it.

“Great...” I hear a voice. That's when the walls start moving again. Instead now in the opposite direction. They move farther from each other. I don't let go of the ladder rung. With one foot on the wall footing and one hand holding the ladder rung. I feel like I'm going to fall. “Doing very well for your first time in here. How did you know what to do?”

I search in my mind where the voice is coming and see it's Bandle. I send him a thought. *Bandle! I'm observant to my surroundings.*

“I see...”

I gave him a shock. I don't know where he is, but it isn't in this room. So he wouldn't be able to hear me even if I screamed, right? I throw my other arm up and grab the next rung. The water went down a little, spreading out with the walls getting farther apart. My feet are slipping as I try to pull myself up.

“Danielle there's one thing you didn't analyze.”

The lights turn back on, but this time there is something in the water. A creature of some sort. It swims back and forth, looking at me through the water. The eyes remind me of something. I can't stop looking the creature in the eyes. This memory comes flooding in my mind.

‘Come on Morti. Let's go for a swim in the pool.’ He comes waddling into the room. He is sort of like an alligator and lizard combined. After he looks at me for the third time we both run and wattle as fast as we can without slipping. We jump in the

pool making a splash. The pool is only three feet deep, because I'm only five years old. Morti likes to look me in the eyes a lot. He splashes water at me a lot too. After we play in the pool for an hour or two we go back to my room to hang out.

*Morti?* I try sending a thought to this creature that looks so much like the one I had as a pet.

*Danielle?* He responds in thoughts with me. I gasp! I can talk with him? *Where did you go? Do you want to go for a swim?*

*You want to go for a swim? I remember you. Did we always go to the pool?*

*Yeah, up until we had to leave.*

*I don't remember much of home. What happened to you?*

*They captured me after we crash landed. It was probably a week or two later.*

I climb down the ladder and let myself fall into the water.

"What are you doing Danielle?" Bandele's voice fills the room.

"Nothing you'd understand." I say when my head comes back out of the water. I forgot I knew how to swim. The water is warm. Is it supposed to be? I swim on my back in circles. Morti swims and splashes me. "You remember going swimming with me."

Morti splashes me again. *I remember.* He sends a thought to me.

"Do you always talk telepathically?" I ask.

*Yes it's the only way you'd understand me.*

"Do you think that's why some of us have telepathy?"

*Yes, that's probably one reason.*

"I want to know something. Where's my family?"

*Are you asking me, Morti swims away from me, because I don't know?*

*What happened to my Mom and my sister? How is it I don't remember being here with my family?*

The water is getting lower. I don't have to keep myself afloat much longer. Wouldn't that also mean Morti has to go back into the hole?

*Morti try to stay up here with me.* I grab hold of him.

*I can't. They injected something in me that disables me from being out of the water. If I'm not in the water I become weak.*

*I wish you could stay. Do you know what else happens in this room?*

*I'm sorry I don't. See you later.*

*See you later.*

Morti swims back into the hole and I sit back against the wall soaking wet. How is it that I am getting my memories back now? It's been nine years since whatever it is that happened to me. Wouldn't that mean it was something traumatic that my mind can't bear to feel, see, or hear again?

*Bandeles what happened when I was first here? I send Bandele a thought. Who else was there?*

*Hmm, you almost died.*

*How? What were you guys doing to me? Bandele seems to be hesitating on thinking. I haven't quite figured out how to read deeper into people's minds.*

*You didn't take the truth serums well. It made you pass out. I think when you woke up you had forgotten everything about your life.*

*That's why you tried to find me again. You thought I would remember didn't you? When you tried the truth serum again did you think it would work?*

*No. I knew though, with other tactics you would give me what I wanted. I noticed there were some things you remembered.*

Trent. He went after him hoping to get me. He wanted to know everything about us by using us on each other.

*Like what? I ask him.*

*Your best friend Trent. As well as your sister Alima.*

He knows about Alima?

"What do you know about her?" I yell out loud. Can he hear me? I don't know.

## Chapter EIGHTEEN

“Now isn’t the time to talk about this Danielle.” Bandle’s voice is stern. “You’ll just have to wait it out. Pay attention to your surroundings Danielle.”

The lights turn off and then back on. With that flash I see something crawling up out of the hole in the floor. Then the lights turn off again. I stand up and reach along the wall to find the footings. I reach for the other wall unsure where it is. All I grasp is air. I feel something crawl onto my shoe. It jabs me with something and this makes me jump. I feel it attack my other foot and I fall down not expecting to be hurt again. The lights flash back on and I see possibly the whole room full of scorpions. They jabbed me with their stingers; their poisonous stingers. I can heal though. This can’t hurt me can it?

I’m still dripping with water as I try getting up. I decide to take off my t-shirt. I have an undershirt on still and my jeans. I try reaching for the wall with the footings again. The lights flash on for about two seconds and turn off again. In those two seconds I see the wall, as well as the scorpions all around. The wall is probably eight feet away from where I am standing.

I move one foot about an inch. The scorpions attack my feet again. I move my other foot probably two inches and get attacked again. Since I can’t see anything I close my eyes and guide my feet forward. With every step the scorpions lurch and attack their stingers into my feet and legs. I can feel the poison coming into me. It makes me feel weak and small. I still edge towards the wall with the footings.

“Danielle remember, pay attention to your surroundings.” Bandle’s voice echoes into the room. “Scorpions and you’ll see what else.”

“What else...,” I mumble, “my lips feel numb.” The effect of the scorpions’ poison is getting to me. The lights are on again, but this time they flicker. As I reach forward again for the wall I stumble and fall through the floor. I come out of a wall on the other side of the room. What just happened? Did I go through a portal or something?

I still feel numb, but now it’s spreading from my feet to my legs. I try to take a step forward, but fail to move. Instead I fall on my arms and knees. I sense all of the scorpions coming in my direction. When I look up I’m surrounded face to face with them. With the lights still flickering I move my right hand slowly away from the scorpions. Then I move my left hand slowly away. I crawl away as fast as I can.

I don’t know much about scorpions but they just keep coming at me. I wish I had some power to make them go away. Wait a minute! It would make sense if what I fell through in the floor was a portal; I could go through it in the wall to get back to the floor. As I move towards the wall I feel my knees starting to go numb. I turn and go through the wall and it turns out I’m right. It is a portal. I’m still far away from the

footings in the wall, but I can get myself there. Once I get there I wouldn't be able to put my feet into them.

I must heal myself. To do this I think about what Trent said; the feeling of family. That love that I have all around me makes me feel good. I close my eyes and ignore what's happening now. I will find Alima, and Trent. I know they love me. Liam told me Trent wanted to tell me he loved me. Even though we were only children, that connection was there. My family is all I need to survive.

I open my eyes. I feel the tingling feeling of my legs again. It motivates me even more to get out of this room. To get away from these terrifying creatures. To talk to my Father. To find Trent and Alima.

"Bandeles are the least of my worries." I whisper to myself. The scorpions are still around me, but now I try leading them back into the hole. I urge them with my feet. It's a good thing I have shoes on. It takes about thirty minutes to get all of the scorpions back into the hole.

I don't waste time; I run up to the wall and start climbing. When I reach the ladder the lights go off again, but I already have an estimate of how many ladder rungs there are. All I have to do is feel for them and know when I'm at the top.

"Something is going to happen right?" I say loud enough for Bandele to hear me.

"Maybe." Bandele responds.

I reach for the next ladder rung and feel the steam again. I don't let it bother me, because I know I can heal myself. Confidence is something I haven't had in a long time. Now I can't let myself go back to being a lonely and lost girl. I reach the top ladder rung and grab hold of the floor above. It's slippery, but I pull myself up. When I'm over I sit down away from the edge. Rest is what I need. I'm not used to all this commotion.

## Chapter NINETEEN

“Danielle?” I flinch and open my eyes. I was drifting off when I heard a sound. Someone was saying my name. I try reaching out with my mind to see who it is.

“Who is it?” I say my voice low and quiet. I start to get up and my head bumps the ceiling. “Ow.”

“You alright?” It’s a male voice.

“I’m fine. Who are you?”

“I’m Trent.”

“Really? You are really here?”

“Yes, but...”

I crawl forward reaching out and feel a smooth wall.

“Where are you?”

“In here.” The lights come on, on the other side of this wall. The wall is transparent. Trent is sitting in a chair right in front of me. His right leg is in bandages. He has scars on his face. Probably from getting hit in the face.

“Are you alright?” I ask, even though it’s a silly question.

“No. I’ve missed you. They took everything I have ever loved and cared about. My parents are gone. I’ll never see them again. I wish I could have saved you.” Trent looks away with his hands in his lap. A tear runs down his cheek and off his chin.

“Trent, what happened?” I want to know what really happened to his parents. How did they die?

“I don’t know exactly, but I saw them lying there. As if they were tossed without care. That’s when they caught me.”

I look Trent over. He is so distraught. Another tear comes down his face. I picture the first time I have seen him like this. That TV screen in Bandele’s office. Trent in pain with a gash in his *left* leg. I look at Trent’s right leg now. It’s in bandages.

“Trent I want to see your leg.” Trent turns towards me to reveal his left leg perfectly unharmed. “Does it hurt?”

“Yes, why do you ask?” Trent looks at me as another tear runs down his other cheek.

“I wish I could heal it somehow, but I’d have to be touching you.”

“Dannie are you alright?” Trent looks me in the eyes.

“No, I’ll never be alright again. At least not until you, and I, are out of here. Along with the rest of my family.”

“Don’t worry, we’ll get out of here.”

“I’m not worried, just a little confused why this all happened in the first place.” I look down because I can feel my eyes starting to water. I don’t want to show Trent, because I have this feeling that he isn’t really there. “Trent why did we come to Earth in the first place?”

“Our planet was being attacked. It was awful. I remember your father leading me into the ship. He was so protective so unlike my father. My father wasn’t brave, or physically strong. He wasn’t there for me, until the last time I saw him did I realize he tried to protect me. I didn’t realize who my father was until I saw him dead. I can’t believe he did it for me, for my sisters and my mother.”

“Trent I’m sorry.” I put up my hand to the wall. Trent puts his hand there too. I can’t feel the connection though. The wall separates us from sensing touch. At least I can see him face to face. That’s all I wanted.

“Don’t be. You didn’t start this. It’s all Christopher Mendez fault.”

“Who is he?” That name didn’t sound right.

“He was the leader of the people who attacked our planet.”

“Oh.” Christopher Mendez? Wait! Nathan told me *‘Their leader was Christopher Hernandez.’* This cannot be Trent. It’s not real. I may have lost my memory of the past from nine years ago, but I have not forgotten the most recent.

“You seem perplexed. What’s wrong?”

“I’m trying to make sense of why we would come to Earth.”

“It’s obvious isn’t it?”

“No I understand. It’s just that why not attack Christopher Hernandez?”

“You mean Mendez.”

“That’s what I said, Mendez.”

“You said Hernandez.”

“Oh, well that’s not what I meant.”

“Why not attack their leader? Let’s see, he had like an army of people with him. Their weapons were way more advance then we could imagine.”

“How do you know all of this?”

“Your father told me.”

“Really, when?”

“On the ship.”

“I was hoping you would say when we were here on Earth already.” I’m disappointed to find that I’m not looking at the real Trent. I reach out with my mind and I get nothing. This is all an illusion or a hallucination.

## Chapter TWENTY

“You aren’t real.” I say to the illusion. “Bandeled I know it isn’t real.” I reach out again with my mind. I can feel Bandeled struggling. In his mind I can see Trent just as I saw him now. “What is going on?”

“Dannie you have to save me. Save me before it’s too late.” The voice sounded like Trent at first, then it faded into Bandeled’s deep persuasive voice.

“Did you create this illusion?” I gasp. “You did this to me before. You pretended to be Trent before. Is Trent even in this building?”

“Danielle go to that door and come up here.” Bandeled coughs violently. “I need your help.”

“Why, what’s wrong?”

“I need...you to do some...thing. I can’t brea...the.” Bandeled’s voice is raspy.

I look around but can’t see anything. The lights are off. I feel for the wall and stand up. My head doesn’t hit anything. There never was a low ceiling.

When I reach the door and find the door knob, I open it. I’m surprised it’s not locked. There are stairs and lights once I open the door. As I’m running up the stairs I hear something coming up from behind me. I turn around to see it’s just a mouse. I continue up the stairs and there is another door at the top. Before I open it, I take a deep breath and find Bandeled’s mind.

*Gasp, can’t breathe. Gasp.*

He really can’t breathe. I push open the door to see Bandeled lying on the floor almost unconscious. His eyes are closing. I rush over to him and instantly put my hands on his chest. I don’t even think about it this time as I help him breathe. I heal whatever it was ailing him, but he doesn’t open his eyes. He starts breathing again and I stand up.

“Thank you.” Bandeled whispers. I take this as my cue to leave. As softly as I can I leave the room. “Where did you go?” I hear him say just before the door closes.

I descend the stairs and look around for another door. At the bottom of the stairs there is another one; it’s on the ceiling. How in the world do you get into it? I stand on my tippy toes and grab the door handle. When the door opens I have to jump out of the way because a ladder comes out.

“Danielle you made it!” A loud voice with an arm comes out and grabs me.

“Ahh, who are you?” I ask.

“It’s me Everest.” the man says. I quirked my eyebrows. Everest; I don’t know who that is. “It’s been a long time. You don’t remember me do you?”

“Nope.”

“I’m Trent’s dad.”

“You’re not... dead?” I look away.

“Dead? Did Trent tell you that?”

“No he didn’t. Not exactly, I’ll explain it later. Can we get out of here?”

“Sure. I was actually on my way to get all Alerarians out of here.”

“Do you mean there’s actually more than just Trent, my sister, and me?”

“Yeah, the Secret Agents caught a lot of our people.” We stand up and go out another door that leads into the hallway. “Now it’s important to not act suspicious. We are heading to the cafeteria.”

We walk down the hallways and pass some Agents along the way. They don’t ask anything of us. It’s like they don’t even see us. Everest puts his hands into fists whenever they come by. I’m not sure why he does it. Maybe in case he has to protect himself.

After we arrive at the cafeteria Everest paces a few times. Then he goes into the cafeteria. He orders some food and gets a salad. I can’t say I’m not hungry. I go in and before I can blink my eyes I’m surrounded by about twenty people all holding hands.

“Danielle I’d like to introduce you to your family.” Everest says with a tray of food in his hands. “These are only some of the Alerarians that are here. The rest are either locked up or worse...no longer with us.”

“It’s nice to meet you guys. I don’t mean to be selfish, but does anyone know where my sister would be?” I ask anyone who might know the answer. “I’m sure all of you want to find your family too.”

“Danielle we are all a big family.” One woman says. “We will find everyone we can and get out of here.”

“With all of our abilities we will get out of here.” Everest says. “We stay strong when we’re together. I don’t know why we had to leave in the first place.” He mumbles that last part.

“Everest,” I whisper, “are you saying we shouldn’t have left Alera?”

“No I wasn’t talking about leaving Alera. I meant we shouldn’t have left the safe house.”

“There’s a safe house?”

“You really don’t remember do you? Well you were fairly young; six years old.” Everest looks to the others and they all disappear. There are no longer any people around me. Everest is the only one standing there. He’s eating the food he ordered. “Yes there is a safe house. This isn’t the place to tell you where it is.”

“Well you don’t have to say it out loud.” I whisper.

“You received your Father’s Telepathy ability? Awesome!”

*So where is this safe house?*

*Mari Papua New Guinea. The address is 4340 Mari Lake. It’s right off of the water. You know where that country is right?*

*Yes, I learned about it in school.*

“I don’t know if you’re hungry or not, but I’ll wait for you to eat before we find everyone.”

I go over to the food line and pick out some of my favorites.

## Chapter TWENTY-ONE

A little while after I eat, Everest and I head out of the cafeteria to find out where everyone is. Turns out Everest told the Alerarians helping out to split up. He didn't tell me anything about their powers. I'm curious what others can do. How is it we were born like this anyway?

"Everest what's your plan?" I ask.

"My plan is to get everyone out." Everest says bluntly.

"I meant besides that. Like how? Aren't we going to set off alarms and get caught?" Like on cue alarms start going off. Red and blue lights flashing as if we got caught by the police.

"We have powers Danielle, they don't know us like they think they do." Everest grabs my hand and I realize how we went through the halls without anyone seeming to notice. He and I both are invisible. I guess he doesn't have to be in contact to turn other things invisible, but it's easier. That's why he clenched his fists; he was concentrating that way.

"Cool. They won't be able to see us, but still they can hear us. They also have sensors." I look at my hands as if I recently discovered them. I can still see myself, but others can't.

"No need to worry about that. We have a couple technopaths with us." Everest pulls me forward. "You really don't know anything?"

"I know some things." I feel like I'm in the way. I mean what can I do to help, besides heal people?

*What happened to her? She always was so energetic and smart.* I hear Everest's thoughts and I know he's thinking about me. It hurts, but I know it's not my fault that I can't remember anything. Therefore how could I be the same as I used to be when I was younger. I don't remember that aspect of my life.

*This way Danielle.*

"Where are we going first?" I ask knowing Everest forgot that I was telepathic. He wanted to check to see if I was still reading his mind. I didn't want him to know that I was.

"To find my wife." *Tiffany.* Sniff.

"Are you crying?"

“No. Let’s go.” Everest starts walking faster until we come upon a door with no windows. “Who is in here?” Everest tries opening the door. It’s locked. *We need someone strong.*

“Who’s strong?”

“Ekon. He’s short, but he can knock down anything.”

“Is he here?”

“Yeah, are you going to try and find him?”

I nod and close my eyes. *Ekon. I search in my mind for anyone I can find. Let’s look this way. We might find Danielle over here. Wait. Check the sensors.*

“Where are the sensors Everest?”

“I don’t know. What’s wrong?”

“They’re looking for me and they’re checking the sensors.”

“Let’s go into a closet.” We walk further down the hall pulling on every door until we come to one that isn’t locked. We walk into a dark room unsure if it’s a closet or not. It seems small. I don’t wait to concentrate on finding out more about where Ekon is.

*We should put out smoke bombs. Someone is coming.* A female voice thought.

*Whoever you are do you know where Ekon went? It’s Danielle.* I send a thought.

*Hang on. I have to hide.* I wait a few minutes. All I get from their mind is the frantic inside voices of them trying to hide. *Ekon went to the far end of the building. It’s five to ten minutes from the cafeteria.*

*Okay. Thanks. Be careful I want to be able to meet you again.*

“He’s about ten minutes away.” I whisper.

“That’s right he went to the East side. We’ll have to figure something out ourselves. What’s in this closet?”

“I don’t know. I can’t see anything. Is there a light switch?”

“No that could trigger a sensor. We’ll just have to let our eyes adjust and feel for things.” Everest puts his hand out and feels my arm. “Okay you go away from me.”

“Okay.” I reach out and feel a shelf. On it it feels like probably cleaning supplies. I’m not sure. It could be anything. Bottles of bleach or something else.

*I have light. Always.*

“Did you say something Everest?” It didn’t seem like him.

“No, did you read something?”

“Yeah I heard: I have light. Always.”

“Light? Well we are in the dark. Calista?”

*No. You always get my name wrong. Celeste.*

“It’s Celeste.” I say to Everest.

*How do you know what I’m thinking?*

*I have telepathy. I can read and talk with my mind.*

*It’s kind of creepy.*

“I’m sorry. Everest how do you know Celeste?”

“I’ve known her since she was a baby. Almost everyone knows her. Celeste show your light.”

The room glows like light from a computer monitor. Everest and I both look in the direction of Celeste. Her eyes are closed; her cheeks are red and puffy. I reach out to something behind her. It’s a small hammer.

“Do you need my help?” Celeste says out loud. Her voice is quiet, but genuine.

“We could use all the help we can get. We could use your light.” Everest says and puts his hand out. “I’ll try not to forget your name.”

“You always forget. I could list all the times you’ve forgotten, but that would be a waste of time.” Celeste takes his hand while I go back to seeing if there is anyone around.

*Let’s check in the closets in the East hall. I checked the closets here already.*

“They overlooked this closet.” I say. Did they really? I think we should wait before getting out. “Let’s wait a little while.”

“Do you think they even looked in any of them?” Celeste asks. “I doubt it.”

“Celeste how old are you?”

“Sixteen.”

“You’re the same age as me.”

“When were you born?”

“2015.”

“I meant what month?” Celeste frowns.

“I don’t know.”

“You don’t know?” She’s confused.

“I’ve forgotten a lot of things that happened when I was a child.”

“Something bad happened to you right? Did they take you and lock you up in a tight box where you felt like you couldn’t breathe?”

“I don’t know. That’s the thing. I don’t remember.”

“They erased you?”

“I remember bits and pieces. Recently I have acquired more of my memory.”

“Danielle I think you need to stop talking and start listening.” Everest interrupts.

*Check this closet. That sounded close.*

*Make us invisible Everest.* Everest touches both of us and Celeste makes the room completely dark. We squeeze as close as we can to each other.

*How long has it been? I can’t seem to move.*

*There are others out there somehow freezing the guards in place. They can’t seem to move.* I send this thought to both Everest and Celeste.

*Let’s just make a run for it.* Celeste lets go of Everest and becomes visible again. *They won’t be able to see me anyway.*

*I’m coming with you.* I pull Everest with me. “Come on we’re making a run for it. We have to sooner or later anyway.”

*Danielle promise me you won’t leave my sight. I need you...alive.*

*I won’t leave. I promise.*

## Chapter TWENTY-TWO

We've gotten about fifteen Alerarians out. I don't know any of them, they all seem to know me. Most of them are probably in their late twenties or early thirties. One girl though makes me wonder. She doesn't look at anyone or say anything. Her eyes are swollen and red. She looks as though she is twelve or thirteen. I tried talking to her but she never looked up at me or gave any recognition of hearing me.

*What's your name?* I ask a few questions with my telepathy to see if I can get something.

*I...I don't know.*

*Are you sure? Well my name is Danielle.*

*Oh. Are a forgotten one too?*

*What do you mean?*

*No one came for me in nine years. I've been trapped inside a dream. They let me go yesterday, but everything seems the same. I forgotten what's real. It's like I'm not really here.*

*I know you're here. "I can help you. Would you like that?"*

No response. No eye flickers or movement from the rest of her body. She only responds with my telepathy.

*Can you hear me when I speak out loud?*

*Aren't you speaking right now?*

She must be deaf. Can she see me?

*Are you blind?*

*No, I can see you. You have beautiful blonde hair and blue eyes.*

*Did you know that your eyes are closed?* I touch her shoulder and she turns her face away.

*I thought they did something to me. My eyes hurt. I can't tell if they're open or not. You are here though, right?*

*Yes I am. I'm here with my blonde and blue eyes. Is it alright if suppose something?*

*Sure.*

*I think your main power must be that you don't need your eyes to see. You can see anything around you with your eyes closed.*

*There was something I thought I dreamed, I guess it must have been real. The people who ruined my eyes said something about me being clairvoyant.*

*That makes sense. Well we can talk more later. Let's go!*

We rush to find other Alerarians. It seems so easy to get everyone out. I'm surprised we haven't been stopped yet. No one has tried to stop us. That's what doesn't add up. How come Bandlele hasn't sent anyone after us?

*Danielle watch out!*

*What?*

It's too late when I realize I see Bandlele come out of nowhere shooting at me. I start to lose my balance and everything starts splitting in two. The girl I just met still beside me holding her head. I can't think straight. All I have the feeling to do is run. I run away down the hall in the opposite direction.

"Danielle? Is that you?" I hear Trent's voice echoing in my mind. "Danielle I've been looking all over for you."

I try to find him. My vision starts to blur. I feel myself falling to the floor. Before I hit though I go unconscious.

"Danielle, what are doing just standing there?" Everest says pulling my arm. "Come on we have to go. There coming after us."

"How long have I been standing here?" I blurt out.

"I don't know, but come on that doesn't matter. Let's go!"

"Where's Trent?" I suddenly realize I must've been hallucinating or it was another illusion.

"He's by the doors waiting for you. I'm not going to say this again. Let's go!"

“Okay I’m coming.” I let Everest lead me to the exit. He’s right; Trent is waiting for me. Trent’s eyes lock on mine as I feel my feet run faster. As I reach Trent Everest lets go of my hand and Trent grabs hold of it. “Hi.”

“We’ll have time for that later.” Trent says pulling me out the door. The sunlight blinds me as I see the open fields leading to the bridge. We’re halfway to the bridge when it hits me. I stop and look back.

“Where’s my Dad?” I cry out. I look at Trent with pleading eyes. He closes his eyes and it seems he is trying to do what I had done. He’s searching through all the minds to see where he might be. Trent opens his eyes after ten seconds.

“He’s still in there.” Trent pulls on my hand, but I let go. “Danielle what are you doing?!”

“I need to find him. I can’t lose him!” I run back towards the Secret Agent building.

“No! Danielle Bandele set off a bomb of some sort. I saw him do it. He won’t let those in the building escape. Please don’t risk yourself.”

“I can’t just leave him to die.”

“No please! I don’t want to lose you too.” Trent tries begging with me.

I don’t think about it anymore. Without looking back I run towards the building.

*He’s in a power negated room in the center of the building.* Trent tells me.

*Thanks, I’m glad I got to see your face again.* I blink back tears as I think this.

*Don’t. Don’t act like it’s goodbye.*

## Chapter TWENTY-THREE

The door is still open when I get to it. Alerarians are running out and I have to push my way to get in. They all ask me what I'm doing; I don't have time to explain. I have to get to a power negated room. Bandele must have put my Dad in there. I try to find him with my telepathy.

*Hurry up! We only have five minutes!* I hear Bandele thinking. He probably was saying it too.

*What a mistake I made bringing her here.* It's my Dad's thoughts. I can see him thinking about me. He brought me here?

*Dad. Listen to me. I'm coming to get you.*

*Where are you?*

*I'm coming.* I don't say anymore. I focus on finding the room. I search my Dad's mind because he should know how to get there. I follow the doors along the right wall and see the signs on them. It's a map. Could it really be that easy? Right in the middle of the map it's labeled Power Negation Center.

I close my eyes and look inside my Father's mind again. He's somewhere in the center, but I can't tell which room. I don't have much time. I run towards the middle hallway. It's like a maze.

*Dad where are you?*

*Get out while you still can Dannie.*

*No! You come first. Where are you?*

*Room 10. It's the second entry on the left.*

I run back the way I came and see which entry I should take. The second entry comes and I take it. The hallway becomes dark and alarms start going off. Like it should matter now. The whole building is going to be gone in a couple minutes. As I trace my hands on the walls as fast as I can, I hear someone breathing.

*Are you reading my mind?*

*Celeste?*

*Good. I made it seem dark in here. The lights are still on, but I made them seem off.*

*Where are you?*

*Right in front of you.* I realize I feel her breathing now. She takes my arm and pulls me exactly where I need to go. Room 10 is right there. I try the handle. Of course it doesn't budge; it's locked.

*I don't suppose you know how to open locked doors?*

*There is a code next to the door.* Celeste lets the light come through again. I look at her and see that she put up with a fight. She has scratches and bruises forming. I reach my Dad's mind and see if he would know the code.

*6430 My Dad's thoughts enter my mind. Danielle listen if you are. 6430 hurry.*

I push 6430 into the key pad. The door beeps and opens slightly. I pull on it and immediately feel a breeze. It's cold. There's another door. When I walk towards it I look through the window. My Dad is shivering in a corner. Celeste stays by the door to make sure it doesn't close. The other door has a simple lock on it. I turn the lock and grab the knob. Before I can turn the handle I feel something go down on my head.

I wake up. My immediate reaction is to reach up and feel my head. I can't do this though, because my hands are tied. The room is tremendously bright. I hear voices echoing. One of them sounds like my Dad. The other sounds like Bandede.

"Danielle are you okay?" My Dad comes up to me. "Bandede turned the the bomb off just in time."

"Why?" I ask because that makes no sense. "Didn't he want all of us to die?"

"He said that there were some important people of his still in the building. They weren't even close to making it out."

"Untie me, Dad."

"No, don't call me that. Have we known each other all your life? No so don't call me Dad."

"Well are you going to untie me Nathan?"

"No." My Dad leaves me in the blinding light.

"Let me go! Trent's waiting for me!" I shout out. He comes running back.

“Trent isn’t who you think he is. He’s an idiot boy who thinks he loves you. I’ll make you forget everything about him.”

“What?” Realization hits me. Has he done this to me before? Is this why I don’t remember my past? “Dad don’t do this. I need to remember my life. Trent’s a part of me.”

“There’s something you should know. While I was on the council for our planet Alera, our enemies wanted the firstborn of everyone on the council. I hid you. Instead I let them think Alima was the firstborn. Alima isn’t my daughter anyway. She’s your sister, and your Mother’s daughter. She’s not mine. Your mother was raped. Just thinking about it makes me cringe. Alima will never be my daughter. She looks nothing like me and she sure doesn’t look like your Mother. She looks like the guy who raped her. Do you think I would sacrifice you when I could allow her to go instead?”

“You’re sick. I don’t care if she was brought into the world like that, you can’t blame her for anything. Alima is a sweet little girl. Where is she now?”

“Somewhere you’ll never know. Danielle I thought I could trust you. You never believed me when I told you Alima wasn’t coming back. All I ever wanted was to be your father. You never wanted to get close to me. Why don’t you love me? This is why I’m making you forget. We need to start over. It’s going to be just you and me.”

“What’s Bandele have to do with this then?”

“He was with me this whole time. He doesn’t know you’re my daughter though. He knows I’m from planet Alera and he knows everything about what went down. Why we came to Earth? I told you the truth on that.”

“Please don’t make me forget. I won’t ever be the real me again.”

“I’m sorry. It’s the only way for you to be with me again.” My Dad steps toward me and puts his hand on my head. It feels like a jolt of electricity. I flinch.

“No! Stop.” He pulls me towards him and I can’t control myself. “Dad? I...don’t understand what’s happening.” I fall limp into his arms.

“Dannie wake up.” My Dad says while rubbing my face.

“Dad?” I say and reach my arm up to touch his hand on my face.

“Are you feeling alright?”

“I’ve never felt better. Where are we?”

“We’re home. I found a new place to live. There’s someone else living with us, but he won’t be a bother.”

“Oh. I’m confused.”

“What’s wrong?”

“Are we on Earth?”

“Yes.”

“Where’s Mom? Is she here with us?”

“She didn’t make it.”

“Oh. So it’s just us?”

“Yes.” My Dad smiles. “It’s just the two of us. We’ll be fine. Let me make you something to eat. Then we can go to the movies or to the park for fresh air...”

My Dad starts rambling on while I continue thinking. I feel like something is missing. Why can’t I recall the trip here?

*I need to remember my life... a part of me.* What’s a part of me? A person, if so who? Did something bad happen? Is that why I can’t remember?

Danielle wasn't sure of her past. She always believed that your childhood is what forms you. It's what makes you, you.

However, she doesn't remember anything. All she remembers is her best friend, Trent and her sister, Alima.

Danielle believes that she's orphaned, because she has no clue what happened to her family.

But ...

One day changes it all. She remembered something, this takes Danielle's life to a new level.

What happened to her 9 years ago? Right now, she's changing. It seems Danielle has developed certain abilities. Are they powers?

Danielle is 16 years old, when she realizes that life isn't always as it *seems*.