

Serenity opened her eyes, but immediately felt a wave of disorientation. She did her best to shake it off, then glanced around in an attempt to figure out where she was. Despite her best efforts, she seemed to have issues recalling the events leading to that exact moment.

Wherever she was, she realized she was surrounded by light. In every direction for as far as the eye could see, there was nothing but light. Everywhere seemed to glow, yet there was nothing there.

She took a few steps forward, but with nothing in the room, assuming it was a room, there was no frame of reference to know how far she had traveled.

“Hello?!” she called out, hoping to hear an echo, but her words simply dissipated into the air.

There was no way to determine what the source of the light was, or what its power source could be. With very few options available to her, she found herself thinking outside the realm of reasonable conclusions.

*What if I'm dead*, she asked herself. Her parents hadn't raised her with much in the way of supernatural belief, but she tended to lean towards a more scientific explanation.

*I remember hearing that once you die, the mind is active for a full seven minutes*, she thought. *So if dreams occur within the last few moments of sleep, and dreams can feel like days or even weeks, maybe I'm dead and this is my last seven minutes*, she speculated.

If that were in fact the case, and everything was happening in her mind, it took to reason that she would be able to control the situation. She reached out with her mind, trying to do something, do *anything* really, but without success.

Her next thought, though she was skeptical and hesitant to accept it, was that she was in fact dead, and she was in one of three places. *This is heaven, this is purgatory, or this is the other place*, she sighed inwardly.

No matter what the case was or the circumstances surrounding her arrival, she had accepted that she was there, and was ready to accept whatever fate she had earned.

Still trying to make sense of everything, Serenity noted that there didn't seem to be a temperature of any kind; she wasn't hot or cold, warm or chilly, comfortable or uncomfortable...

... she just was.

It also struck her as odd that there were no smells, no scents of any kind. In fact, she couldn't even be sure if her sight was working correctly as there was nothing but light in every direction.

Other than the sound of her own voice, she realized there were no sounds. Not even the sound of her feet walking was present, which wasn't too hard to accept as, if she looked straight down, there did not seem to be anything she was standing on. She reached down, realizing her hand went down much further than her feet did.

*So what am I standing on?* she wondered.

It wasn't something she was accustomed to; normally there was a problem, and she was able to work through it to find a solution, but she didn't even understand the question much less comprehend any answers that may have come.

*She is confused. Unaware.*

Serenity glanced around, trying to see where the voice had come from, but there was no one around. She did, however, recognize the voice.

"Ella?" she called out.

*She thinks small. Limiting.*

"Okay, so you're *not* EI. Okay. Then who are you? Where are you?"

*Her thoughts are linear. Nothing is linear.*

This time the voice was different. This time, the voice belonged to Lt. Commander Nik Martin. Her father.

"Dad?"

*She assigns designations where they do not apply. She is small.*

Serenity couldn't understand where the voices were coming from, but at least someone or something was attempting communication. She decided to run with it as much as she could.

"How should I be thinking? How can I not think small?" she asked.

*Relinquish preconceived notions of comprehension. Expand, not expect.*

She nodded. "Okay, I'm getting it. I *expect* the voices to be coming from somewhere, or someone. But its not... it's... it's all in my mind," she speculated

*She still tries to comprehend instead of understand. She is small.*

“That was way too articulate to be Garr,” she paused. “But if it were in my mind, it wouldn't have just sounded like Garr, it would have used the same inflections. It isn't Garr. It isn't any of them,” she said.

*She attempts but fails.*

*There is no attempt. This is only execution.*

*She is incapable of expansion. She is unworthy.*

“Okay now you guys are just talking to yourselves, am I crazy?” she paused. “No, there is a method to this. What am I not seeing?”

*She applies 3 dimensional logic to 16 dimensional construct. She will never comprehend.*

“16? I thought there were 4 dimensions to the known universe. Height, length and width. The 4th is time. Time is a dimension all its own,” she paused. “The only way to get to 16 would be...” she glanced around. “The world I know is simply a reflection of the *actual* world. There is more out there. Wait... there is more than one *out there*, isn't there?” she snapped her fingers. “This is the many worlds theory!”

*She struggles with constructs beyond her level of comprehension. She is not ready.*

This time, she recognized the voice as Nathaniel. She wanted to reach out, to hold him, but she realized it wasn't him.

“There are worlds... galaxies... no, the entire cosmoses, one on top of another. My world exists on one plane, but these other dimensions, other planes, they're out there. This is one of them.”

*She revels in her arrogance. She expects to bring order to random convergence.*

She nodded. “I get it. This is some sort of alternate reality, a parallel world.”

*She implies separation where none exists. All is none. None is all. Nothing is linear.*

“The past, present and future are all the same things. Time is... it's all the same thing. I've been trying to figure out where I am and how I got here, but those are the wrong questions,” she said, putting it together slowly.

*So where are you?*

She recognized the voice immediately, it was her own. She turned around and saw herself, but she was wearing her SPD uniform.

"I am here."

*She's learning.*

*No. She is grasping at straws. Clinging to concepts. She does not comprehend.*

"Now you guys are just talking about me like I'm not here..." she paused. "Because I'm *not* here," she realized.

*So where are you?*

"I'm not. All is none, and none is all," she said.

"Very good," a voice said. It was a male voice, and it was one she didn't recognize.

She turned her head only to see the other version of her had been joined for an entire group of... of her. Each of them seemed to be from a different point in time, a different stage of her life. Some were older than her, some were younger. Some where the red SPD ranger, some were pink, there were even a few purples, and others who were not rangers at all.

In front of them was a man wearing a white uniform. There were some darker trim around the wrists and collar, and he had on a pair of deeply tinted sunglasses.

"Are you... God?"

"Far from it," he paused. "Though I suppose it would depend on one's definition of that word."

"You're doing this," she said, pointing at him.

"No, you are. It was always you," he said.

"You aren't me, or any version of me, but if you're not doing this to me... I'm doing this to myself, and you're here to see how I react," one by one, the other versions of her began to fade away.

"They were all here trying to put this together, but I've got it now," she said.

"Oh you do?"

She nodded. "This is a test, a puzzle for me to solve. You have been trying to teach me to think differently... bigger. You've been trying to show me there is more than what my senses tell me, that's why everything is white. White isn't a color, it's the absence of color. It's the absence of everything. It's white so I don't focus so much on where or how. I'm here. I've always been and I always will be. All is none. And none is all," she explained.

“You're getting warmer.”

“This is about time travel. Not just time travel, but interdimensional travel. Different worlds, but the same. Other times, but the same,” she said.

*She is ready.*

There was a flash of light that required her to shield her eyes. When she reopened them, she found herself in a small room. It appeared to be an infirmary, or a lab, and there was a man standing next to her as she layed on an examining table.

The same man she'd seen earlier.

She quickly jumped off the table and to her feet, only to collapse under her own weight. The man helped her back up, assisting her in sitting down.

“Temporal displacement can be a little disorienting. You'll need to give your muscles a chance to recalibrate themselves. From their perspective, you haven't used them in centuries,” he warned.

“So this is the future.”

He sighed. “You did so well in the simulation. Don't get so hung up on concepts like where or when.”

“Because it's all happening at once. Once I figure that out, going forwards or back are concepts I can let go of,” Serenity said.

“Getting warmer.”

“Who are you?”

“My name is Alex.”

“Alex what?”

“We tend to shy away from last names. They imply lineage, which do not exist. My name is *just* Alex. I am an agent of Time Force.”

“I remember hearing about Time Force rangers back in 2001. Something about mutants from the future,” she snapped her fingers, pointing at him. “You worked with Alyssa Enrile and the Wild Force rangers in 2002. Nate told me that story.”

"I'm sure at some point I will do that. As an agent, sometimes we experience things out of what you would consider order," he brought up.

"I get it," she slowly slid off the table, taking a moment to let her muscles adjust. "You haven't done that yet."

"Or perhaps I have *somewhere* else. There is no way to be sure."

"So why am I here?"

"Your life ended in defence of your world, your friends. Passing through a dimensional rift and emitting a pulse the way you put you on the radar, so to speak, so a test was constructed to see if you could understand the basics of time travel," he said.

"What test?"

"The Vorhsoth. That event was critical in the creation of Time Force, and allowing you to travel back and participate in those events molded you. Going back in time and introducing Anubis Cruger to the concept of SPD molded you. Discovering who your parents were molded you. You handled yourself well."

"But I died *after* doing all those things, how is that a..." she stopped herself. "... I experienced them out of order," she said.

"Everything that has happened or will happen will happen as they are meant to. You recalling the sequence of those events have no bearing on the events," he explained.

She nodded. "It's like binge watching an entire season of Helicopter Zombies out of order. Just because *i* watched them out of order doesn't mean that's how they happened," Serenity added.

"Crude analogy, but accurate."

"So why all the tests? Why have me jump through hoops?"

"Every agent in Time Force is subjected to the same sort of test. Only those who can alter their way of thinking are offered positions," he said.

"So you want to offer me a job?"

"Right now, there is a lot happening. Someone or something is attempting to alter the course of events. We have reason to believe it is someone *within* Time Force."

"But if everything is happening at once, shouldn't you *know* who it is? Assuming it's a who at all," she mentioned.

"So you understand why this is so troubling. I have no explanation for this occurrence as it is happening within my timeline. If something were to be altered, I would have no way of knowing. This is why we needed someone outside of the agency, someone exposed to enough thoron energy that you would be immune to alterations," Alex said.

"So you want me to join Time Force and hunt down a time fugitive? Sounds like a Men in Black plot."

"No. I don't want you to join Time Force. You must remain impartial, separate. You and your team will figure out who or what is causing these changes and put a stop to it."

"My team?"

He nodded. "Yes, the D-Squad, as you call them."

"But how? You said it yourself, I died. How will we be able to team up?"

"You were pulled from that shuttle one nanosecond before it exploded. From the world's perspective you are dead, but you mustn't keep thinking in such linear terms. Needless to say, each of them has passed a similar trial and are qualified to join you."

"So... you want us to work outside of your agency to hunt down what's causing this? But stay a part of Space Patrol Delta? Like some sort of SPD: Elite Force?" Serenity asked.

"You've been training for this all your life. It is what you were born to do, or *will be* born to do, depending on one's perspective," he mentioned.

"And once I'm done, then what?"

"Then you and your friends will be returned to the exact moment you were taken and allowed to live out your life to its natural conclusion."

"But you said you got me like seconds before I died. You'd be sending me back to a death sentence," she brought up.

"If you think in linear terms, yes. But you should have seen enough to know that there is no order to things, simply things in order."

"Count me in. When do we get started?"

“We already have,” Alex told her.