



SPINNING TIME

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Prologue

Present Day, ATTRA Lunar City

Charlie watched Monica, the Commander of the Alien Time Travel and Research Agency (ATTRA) unsheathe a nine-inch, pencil-thin, razor-sharp knife. Monica casually walked around her desk to stand in front of the new female recruit kneeling on the shiny black marble tile and slit the woman's throat.

Turning to face Charlie, Monica narrowed her eyes and said, "I caught this whore hacking into my personal computer system. Dedria denied it, but I walked in, and my screen was up."

Charlie stood at attention with her hands clasped behind her back. Her heart was pounding at the brutal death of the innocent woman. Charlie had hacked Monica's system and been summoned to the gateway before she had time to replace the screen into the sleeve of the wall. Monica returned early from her mission and caught Dedria in her office and assumed the worst, slitting her throat before Charlie could confess to the crime.

Monica stepped over to her oblong glass desk. She pulled a tissue from her drawer, then wiped the blood off the knife and returned it to its sheath that hooked on the belt of her uniform. Taking a seat in the ergonomic white leather chair, she said, "Charlie, you have real potential. Are you up for a challenge?"

"Yes, Commander." Charlie stared out the wall of windows facing the Milky Way. She'd arrived at Lunar City shortly after tripping on acid at Woodstock in 1969. She apparently fell through a time portal on the farm.

Charlie wished she could remember what happened the day of the concert, but she'd been too wasted. Not that it mattered because she was on a permanent trip now, like something right out of a science fiction novel.

During Charlie's ATTRA training, she'd learned that after the Lord Supreme had created the Earth, the moon was brought in and placed in perfect orbit to stabilize the planet. The magnificent city within the interior structure of the luminous silver moon housed several thousand people working for the organization overseeing humanity, tracking Time Spinners, negotiating with alien interlopers, while deflecting debris catastrophic to Earth's existence. ATTRA worked to coordinate parallel universes and alternate realities to keep Earth's path on course to a future utopian society.

Charlie had been placed under Monica's authority, and with ATTRA's strict protocols, it made interference on the injustice she'd just witnessed impossible. Earth was approaching a critical time shift based on the Time Trackers' paradigm coming in from around the world.

Monica motioned for Charlie to sit in the white chair opposite of the desk. "Zane has informed me the Lord Supreme recently assigned Ruben to monitor a Spinner crossing the threshold on June 15, 1948 at 1500 hours."

Charlie straightened her spine in the chair at the mention of Ruben, her friend, and mentor.

Monica said, “The Spinner’s name is Julia Boatwright from North Carolina, born May 5, 1927. She’ll give birth to a son, the first human physicist to break the barrier of the space-time continuum into the distant past. Ruben’s assignment is to protect Julia. He’s unaware of the child. Your assignment is to kill Ruben and bring me the girl.”

Monica swiveled back and forth in the chair with a glazed look in her eyes. “The Plates of Prophecy state the time machine developed by Julia’s son will travel into the far distant past. If I can train the boy, I’ll control the historical events on Earth and use the information to barter with the more advanced civilizations in the galaxies. General Agriaous and I have set up colonization of a new planet, Veetreous, from the Andromeda Galaxy, and I need more Spinners.”

Charlie’s eyes widened. She leaned forward placing her right hand on the desk. “You’re talking about the lives we’ve sworn to protect. And kill Ruben? He’s one of our best Trackers.”

With a wave of her hand, Monica scoffed, “For space sake wipe off that lovesick expression. I admit Ruben is very good-looking, and well, not bad as a lover. Oh, I’m sorry. I thought you knew we slept together. Do you want to end up on my marble floor, Charlie?” A slow smile crept across Monica’s face as Charlie’s cheeks reddened.

“No, ma’am. But if the Lord Supreme learns of you and General Agriaous using Spinners as slave labor, it’ll be your head on the floor.”

“Silence! May I remind you that you’ve sworn allegiance to me.” Throwing her hands up, palms out, Monica said, “Look, Charlie, Ruben’s a threat to me. He wants my job, and I won’t allow it. That girl and her child are not only my ticket to a seat on the council but will also make me the Queen of Veetreous. If you play your cards right, you’ll have more power than you’ve ever dreamed possible. I’m issuing you a direct order, Charlie. Be discreet and make Ruben’s death look like an accident after he meets Ms. Boatwright, and I’ll consider making you the new Commander.”

Charlie clenched her teeth and then replied, “Yes, Commander.”

Monica motioned to the sliding glass doors. “Pick up the details of your assignment with Zane outside, then send him in to clean up this mess. You’re dismissed.”

Charlie turned on a dime and marched out of Monica’s office. She grabbed the assignment chip and raced down the corridor, ducking into an alcove to gather her wits.

Charlie had to warn Ruben. But how? Last she’d heard, Ruben had traveled in the Needle-Horn to 1950. Betraying Commander Monica Adams meant immediate execution, but Monica was out of control, and someone had to do something to stop the power-hungry maniac.

Charlie headed to the gateway for a quick trip to 1950.