

Chapter 1

"Breaking news. A UFO has been spotted at the local air force base. It is the same one that has been showing up around the world. Before Air Force pilots could shoot it down, it simply vanished into thin air, in a flash of light."

I looked up from my bowl of cereal and at the TV.

"This has got to be the 10th spotting of it." I said.

"And what's weird is it has been showing up mainly in governmental places." Dad replied.

"Bah! The news always makes things up, exaggerates, underestimates, or whatever the case may be, and we never get the true story! I mean, did they get a *good* picture this time? I mean really, Bigfoot, the yeti, and UFOs are always fuzzy, zoomed out, or just something to make it unclear. And how can something just vanish into thin air?"

"Maybe that's one of their 'exaggerations'." Dad made quotes with his fingers. "Now finish up, you're going to be late for school."

"I'll tell you if I see any flying saucers, or other alien activity." I said sarcastically.

"Hardy har-har. Don't forget your homework, like you did last time..."

"It's in my bag. If I forget it, you can eat my dessert tonight. And I do *not* want to miss out on that leftover pumpkin pie from thanksgiving!"

The Unidentified Flying Object that the news lady was talking about was a blue ball, with what looked like three fins on it. In some pictures it had what looked like Gatling guns on either side, with satellite dish like things on rods protruding from the front. At other times, these objects that were thought to be weapons weren't there. This alone was enough to cause suspicion. Why are there these details changing all the time?

On the bus, my friend Josh walked up to me and asked, "Hey, did you hear about the UFO sighting at the Air Force base just down the road from here?"

"Ya, I heard about it, and I still don't believe it. This is just someone trying to get people to think that aliens are attacking the governments of Earth."

"I don't think so." Josh replied. "My Dad was one of the pilots, and saw the thing for himself."

"Oh really? This is worse than I thought. Now, either your Dad is being forced to lie to you, or he's in on it as well."

"But he seems so concerned about it."

"Great! He's good at faking emotions."

"You're such a skeptic Luke."

"I am, and shall remain one for the rest of my life until I see this thing for myself."

"What if I was to show you a picture of it?"

"If you can take a good picture yourself, I will be more than impressed. Now, I'm stopping this subject now. I'm tired of talking about UFO's and alien life forms. This is real life, not a book."

"Ok, let's talk about how much trouble you'll be in if you forgot your homework." Josh said in his joking voice.

"I have today's, and last week's assignments on why Mars has no life, what happened to the Nazis after World War two, and everything else. If I don't turn these in, Dad's going to eat my leftover pie from Thanksgiving."

"Don't tell me, you gambled with him again. What happens if you win?"

"Actually, we haven't talked about that. I guess I'll have to eat his pie."

"Sounds fair enough."

The bus stopped and we got out.

"Warning, Jenifer alert!" Jenifer was a bossy girl a grade above us. She has got to be the rudest life form on the face of the Earth! Constantly throwing insults at everyone, I wonder how she comes up with them so fast. However, she isn't what I would call the school bully. Jenifer has blond hair, and always wears some kind of jewelry. She also wears makeup, and a full shopping list of beauty products. She wears only the latest fashions, and if anything ranks above her, it's that. I sometimes wonder if a choking necklace came into style, if she would wear it.

"Oh, hey there Luke. You better have brought your homework." Jenifer snapped.

"Is everyone going to say something about that?!"

"Yes, and you will be remembered as the boy who forgot his homework for the rest of your life at this school!"

"Right, and you didn't almost forget yours last year. If not for your Dad, you would have forgotten your midterm."

"That is entirely different! I am the principal's daughter, and I did bring it!"

"But only because you were reminded."

"One in power cannot be expected to remember everything." Jenifer somehow thought that since her Father was the principal, she was like the princess by default. Also, she thought that we were all her subjects. The strange thing is that she doesn't even like princess things. I guess she just likes power. Anyway, she is an absolute brat.

"Whatever. I have my homework that I forgot, and what was assigned last time."

"You better. If you don't, my Dad will make you fail this grade." She walked off to her class, and Josh and I did the same.

Later at lunch, I walked outside to a bench to eat. I like to eat outside, and listen to the birds. Sometimes I feed them by walking a distance and dropping some bread, then walking back to my spot to watch them. Then, the real school bullies, Zack and Brad came out. They were these two older boys that are a grade below the average for their age. They should be a grade above Jenifer. Brad had brown hair, and wore darker colored clothes. Zack was black haired, completely black clothed, and looked like a teenage thug. He was real bully, and insults were just a lit match next to a fuse. Brad seemed to be more forced into being Zack's minion. I almost felt sorry for him. Jenifer

was the verbal bully, and Zack and Brad were the physical ones. It is however, quite enjoyable to see her throw her insult bombs at the physical ones, and how badly Zack tries to insult back. Vocabulary is not his field of expertise.

Zack pointed at me, and Brad kind of shook his head. Zack pushed him, and it was clear that they were having some kind of conversation involving me. Then they walked right toward me. I wondered if I could get inside in time to avoid them, but I wasted time considering, and they got to me a lot quicker than I thought they would.

Zack started, saying, "Look who we have here, all alone with no one to save you. Tell you what, I'll make a deal. We'll leave you alone if you give me all the money you have on you."

"And what if I don't cooperate?"

"Then Brad here will pound the living daylights outta you."

I looked to see if I had anything on me, but all I found was a penny on the ground in front of me. I handed it to him.

"What, is this some kind of a joke?" Zack was not impressed.

"I don't have any money on me."

"Uh oh, wrong answer!"

Zack proceeded to grab me by the shirt and was about to punch, but in the nick of time, someone was passing by.

"Hey! What is this all about?!" He yelled. Zack let go of me, and started to run away. However, the guy chasing Zack was much quicker and overtook him soon enough. Zack and the man that had randomly come from nowhere, were on the ground, with the bully under him, pleading for mercy. All Zack got was a slap in the face, and the bully slapper pulled him up and pushed him away saying, "Don't EVER let me catch you doing this again!" Zack slunk off and the victor walked over to me.

"Are you okay?" He asked.

"You got here just before he could do any harm."

"I never will understand why people get some kind of infernal pleasure by making others miserable. It's repulsive!"

As he talked, I could see his eyes changing with expressions. Asking me if I was alright, and his eyes seemed soft and filled with concern, then talking about the infernal pleasure some people get, and they seemed filled with disgust. His eyes were blue, and he wore a light blue shirt. Well, it was more like a light turquoise. Unlike Zack and Brad, his clothes were light colored. The only dark feature was his hair, which was naturally black. He looked to me to be about lower thirties.

"Well thank you for saving me from those two, err, what's the right word? Well you know what I mean. Next time I need to carry some money to appease the monster."

"That's what that was all about? Money?! Great Swelltonia! People and their love of money."

"Great Swelltonia?" I asked. I had never heard that before.

"Oh, it's an expression...where I come from. You probably won't hear it ever again."

"Where are you from?" I asked. I wanted to know what this strange expression was all about.

"Oh, well, you wouldn't know of it. It's not found on any map."

I was getting suspicious. He had a nervous look in his expressive eyes.

"How long will you be here?" I asked

"I really don't know." The nervous look had gone. 'At least I know he's telling the truth.' I thought.

"Well, as long as you're here, do you think you could come by this place around this time? You know, to fend off those, those, animals?"

"I'll see what I can do. However, I will not be able to help you forever. I'm not sure how long I'll be around this area, maybe a month or so."

"Thanks Mr. ..." I reached out my hand for a hand shake, and waited for his name.

"Jake, Jake Pulsar." He gave me his hand.

"Luke." I didn't give him my last name. "Pulsar, Interesting name. He's named after a type of star." I thought.

"Well, I really must be going. See you tomorrow."

"See you tomorrow Mr. Pulsar."

"Oh, please call me Jake. No Mr. I'm not that fond of titles. They just don't feel right to me for some reason.

"Alright, see you tomorrow Jake."

"That's better."

Jake went around the corner of the school. "Where is he going?" I thought. I decided to try and follow him. Not too far though, as the school bell would ring any moment. I went around the corner of the building a few seconds after he had, but he was nowhere to be seen. "Where did he go?" Just then, the school bell rang and I had to go back to class.

Day after day, the same thing happened. I would go outside to eat all alone, except for Jake and sometimes Josh. Jake would stand around casually on his phone. Sometimes Zack and Brad would come out to find someone alone to pick on, and every time, there was Jake, and they left, not wishing to pick a fight with the guy who had become my bodyguard. Every time, when it was time to go back to class, he would leave. I tried to pretend to go inside, then follow him once or twice, but again, he disappeared around the corner the same way he had done the first time. I thought to myself that he must just be quick on his feet. But really, *that* fast? It was like he teleported away.

One night, a particularly cold one, I was in the car on the way home from dinner at a friend's house. We were driving down the road, when we saw Jake wearing just a short sleeve shirt, just like the one when I first met him, and it was freezing cold.

"What is he doing out there in the freezing cold with short sleeves?" Mom said.

"Oh, that's Jake. Remember, the guy that saved me from Zack a few weeks ago?"

"So, you know him?"

"Not entirely."

"Stop the car honey." Dad stopped the car, and Mom rolled down the window.

"Hey! What are you doing out here without a jacket? It's freezing outside! I'm wearing a jacket, with a seat warmer, and hot air blowing on me, and I'm still cold!"

"I like the cold." Jake said. He didn't seem to be shivering.

"Are you sure you're okay?"

"I'm fine."

"I want the truth. Do you need somewhere to stay?"

"I'm staying in a place just a few blocks from here."

"Do you have family or friends you're staying with? Luke said you're not from here."

"No, it's a bit hard to explain, but I have a decent place I'm staying in."

Mom looked at Dad, and whispered to him. Jake was a good enough distance away, so he didn't hear what was said.

"Honey, do you think he's trying to keep us from thinking bad of him, and that he's poor and homeless, or do you think he's telling the truth?"

"I really don't know. But if that's your way of asking if we can take him in for the night, then yes. If he steals anything, we can call the police on him."

Mom looked back at Jake.

"Get in this car, you're coming with us. I don't care where you're staying, but at least let us take you in tonight. If you refuse, I'll have a guilty conscience thinking that I let someone in need refuse my kindness just to preserve his dignity. Not that there's anything undignified with being homeless, no offense intended."

"Fine, but you have the wrong idea about me."

Dad pressed a button that opened the side car door, and Jake got in.

When we got home, Mom lead Jake to the guest bedroom, and showed him where the bathroom was. She asked if he was hungry, but Jake refused. "Alright, but I expect you to eat breakfast. And don't even try to tell me that you skip breakfast, it won't work."

The next morning, we had a bigger, more formal breakfast than normal. I was sure it was because Mom thought that Jake was homeless, but somehow, I thought he was telling the truth, but in a way somehow hiding something. There was one interesting event at the breakfast table. Mom had fixed bacon and eggs, with some toast, but Jake wouldn't eat the bacon.

"Is this made from pig?" He asked.

"Well, yes, what else would bacon be made of?"

"But, pigs have a parasite in them."

"Oh that? That was all destroyed by the heat when I fried the bacon."

"No, it wasn't. Nothing can annihilate the parasite living in the pig."

Nothing we could say would make him eat it. Still, he did eat the rest, so Mom wasn't able to fuss at him about not eating anything. Breakfast continued, without anything else weird. I say weird because, well, it's bacon! Who doesn't love bacon?!

That afternoon, Jake left. He said he had business to attend to. Again, I tried to follow him to see where he went, and again, like always, around a corner he went, and vanished. "Something's up." I thought.

Next week, I was at Josh's house. I was spending the day with him while Mom and Dad were out shopping for clothes and other stuff. I hate shopping. It takes forever, and I get extremely bored. Thankfully, I was able to convince them to let me stay with a friend. Josh lived at the air force base where the UFO sighting had been at a while back. Since then, the suspected spacecraft had been seen at about twenty-seven other places, but I still didn't believe it.

While I was at his house, Josh and I decided to race to see who could get to a tree-house that was in the nearby woods the fastest. He was an extremely fast runner. However, I had more stamina. This is why we were racing in the first place. We were running along a path that lead through the woods.

Josh was miles ahead of me. I tried to catch up by taking a small detour, thinking we could include ingenuity as a contributing factor for winning, but then I ran into something invisible. From my spot on the ground, I momentarily saw a round blue object, and then it disappeared. "Am I seeing things? I hope I don't have a concussion" I thought. It looked just like the UFO from the news. "Maybe I hit my head on a tree branch and now I'm having a concussion. But there's no branch up there! Are squirrels throwing rocks at me? No, why would squirrels be throwing rocks at me?" I began to stand up, and bumped my head on the invisible object again. Sure enough, there it was, and then it vanished. Suddenly, I heard footsteps behind me, and I scrambled to hide behind the trees. Jake came walking up, then without him touching it, the UFO became visible again. A door opened out of the back of it, but not on hinges. It didn't even slide open. A hole just opened up, and a floating staircase materialized in front of it. Jake ascended the stairs and into the floating blue ship. Not thinking, I snuck in behind him, and into the ship, hiding behind a boxy object.

Inside, the small ship was a one room control center, about twelve feet in diameter. There was a control panel that went around almost the entire front half of the UFO with buttons, levers, and other things that I didn't know what they did. Jake sat in a seat floating in the front. He pressed some buttons, and there was a tone, which I took to be like a phone's ringtone. The ringtone stopped, and a hologram showed up in front of Jake. He then started talking to the hologram man.

"Greetings Trakeso, I hope you have some good news." Said the hologram. "So, your name is Trakeso, not Jake." I thought.

"I do Strengen. I have found the stolen starships. Both ships were stolen by two different Earthian governments. The Americans have the cargo ship in a top-secret location, known as Area 51, and the Germans have the fighter at the south pole of the planet. The exact location however, is unknown." Said Jake, AKA Trakeso.

"Well do hurry. The Earthians are evil creatures and must not have this technology. Let them wreak havoc among themselves, but they must not take their wars off their planet!" Demanded Strengen.

"Actually, I have found that there are some good Earthians. A family took me in thinking I was a homeless one that was hungry, and had nowhere to stay the night."

"And you accepted their offer?!" Strengen was clearly not happy.

"I didn't really have a choice. The mother would not let me go." I resisted the urge to chuckle. "If they tried to harm me, I would have frozen them in time, and escaped."

"Do not let this act of kindness go to your head Trakeso. You are on Earth to keep the Earthians from spreading war across the galaxy, and quite possibly taking it over. I tell you, they will be most tyrannical if that happens."

"Of course sir."

The hologram faded, the door opened in its strange way, and he walked out. I zipped out just as it was closing. Thankfully he didn't see, or hear me. "Next time I see you, you are going to explain everything."