

Chapter 1

My body hit the ground, hard. I moaned and sat up. Maggie offered me her hand, which I gladly accepted. A couple months ago, I would've waved her off and struggled up myself. That was before we had begun training, and before I discovered her uncanny martial arts ability. Maggie's mom, our trainer as well as our academic tutor, said we were both pretty good learners, but Maggie seriously picked the stuff up way faster than me.

"Let's go again." She rolled her shoulders and placed herself into attack position.

I moved my hands up in a slow-down motion. "Can we just chill for a minute? I need to catch my breath."

She relaxed, plopped down on the floor, and reached for her cell. "You had another dream last night, didn't you?"

I lowered myself back to the ground, slowly. "How could you tell?"

Maggie put her phone down and hugged her knees. "Because you're like always distracted the morning after a dream. What happened this time?"

"That's just it." I frowned. "This dream was almost exactly the same as the last one—Grandma reminding me that the Restoration is coming and that we need to keep training. I told her we'd been learning Jiu Jitsu, but she just nodded and said to train harder." I rested my head on my hand. "I got the weirdest feeling, like she didn't mean *this* kind of training."

When Maggie and I formed the K-CIA, I started having these dreams about my grandma. Except, they weren't exactly dreams, they were more like warnings. Every time either me or my dad was in trouble, I had a "Grandma" dream. But lately, I'd been having the same kind of dream over and over—one where she warned me about something called the Restoration, and told me to train.

Maggie frowned. "Then what kind of training could she mean?"

I shrugged. "I don't know. Maybe we're supposed to be training for a hot dog eating contest or something."

She rolled her eyes. "Ugh. Why do your thoughts always revolve around food?"

I grinned and rubbed my stomach. "Because I'm a growing boy and all this training makes me hungry." I jumped up and reached out my hand. "Come on! Let's go grab a snack."

Grabbing her phone, Maggie half-smiled then took my hand. "All right, pig-boy, let's get you something to eat before you die of starvation."

We folded up the mats, placed them in their cases against the wall next to the other suitcases, and then moved the bed back to its original place, so housekeeping wouldn't complain. I grabbed a bag of Cheetos and headed for the living room sofa.

My dad worked for the CIA as a "computer tech." At least, that's the cover story he told me. But I discovered the truth. He's a consultant, the person the CIA brings in to help figure out problems, so, wherever they send him, we end of staying in a hotel. Now that he completed his assignment here in Paris, he was being sent to Dublin, Ireland.

The door opened and her mom walked in and waved at us. "How did your training session go?"

"Great," Maggie said. "I think JJ is finally learning how to fall properly."

I narrowed my eyes at her. "Ha ha. Very funny."

Ms. Hernandez placed her purse on the coffee table. "Learning how to fall is the most important aspect of martial arts. Falling incorrectly can lead to serious injury."

"See, JJ?" Maggie said. "All our lessons are just new ways of teaching you how not to get injured."

Ms. Hernandez smiled. “Aside from the falling, how did the training go?”

I nodded. “Really good. I think we’re ready for some new moves.”

“Very well. Perhaps, once we settle into our hotel in Dublin, I can show you some more maneuvers.”

“Cool.” I crumpled the empty bag and threw it, basketball style, into the wastebasket. A perfect shot. “Boo-yah! Is Dad on his way?”

She nodded. “Yes. He should be here soon. Are your suitcases ready?”

We both nodded.

She picked up the phone and asked for a bellman, then disappeared into her bedroom.

My phone dinged. I checked the text. “Hey, it’s from Orion.”

Orion had become a sort of part-time K-CIA agent, and our tech guy. If we had any questions, like, you know, how to disarm a nuclear bomb or something, he was our man. He was also a UFO chaser. He and his dad traveled around exploring possible UFO sightings.

“What’d he say?” Maggie asked.

I read the text aloud.

HEY DUDES. YOU STILL IN FRANCE? I’M CRUISIN TO THE EMERALD ISLE.
SOME CRAZY PARANORMAL STUFF HAPPANIN OUT THERE.

Maggie sat up. “Hold on. Did he say he was going to the Emerald Isle?”

I double-checked the text. “Yeah. So?”

“So, the Emerald Isle is the nickname for Ireland!”

My eyebrows shot up. “No way.” I texted back that we were heading to Dublin tonight.

RIGHTEOUS, DUDES! I’M THERE TOMORROW. WE TOTALLY HAVE TO
HANG. I GOT SOME NEW COOL STUFF FOR YOU GUYS.

I grinned at Maggie. The last time Orion gave us some *cool stuff* it turned out to be a tracking device that we used to track the bad guys through the streets of Geneva.

Dad walked in. “Hey, you two. How’s it going?” He smiled, but I could tell it was forced. Then he ran his hands through his hair, a sure-fire sign that he was stressed.

“Awesome.” I pointed to my cell. “Orion just texted that he’s going to be in Dublin tomorrow.”

Dad looked surprised. “That’s great. Maybe you guys can get together. But,” he paused, and his face became stern, “no sneaking off to chase UFOs.”

I moved my index finger in an “X” figure across my chest. “Promise. No UFO chasing.”

He grinned and his face relaxed a little. He rubbed his hands together. “All right, let’s get out of here.”

The flight only lasted an hour and forty-five minutes. We walked into our hotel less than an hour after landing.

Once the adults checked us in, the four of us made our way to the elevator. Dad handed me a card key. “You need to be careful with this, son. Don’t lose it.”

I frowned. I had never lost a hotel key, not even once, in the whole time we’d been traveling. “Um, okay.”

He laughed. “Sorry, I guess I should explain. This key is more than just a door key.”

My eyes knit. “Is it a magic key?”

“Sort of. Wait till we get to the room and I’ll show you.”

Well, now he had me totally curious. We stepped out on the fifth floor and the adults led us to our rooms. Maggie and her mom were in room 810, and Dad and I were right across from them in 811. We all agreed to meet in half an hour for dinner.

Dad used his key to unlock the door. “After you,” he said and smiled, a twinkle in his eye.

I walked in and flipped the light switch. Nothing happened. I flicked it several more times. “Uh, Dad, our lights aren’t working.”

“Maybe we need to use magic. Try your key.”

“Okay.” I waved my key at the room. “Abracadabra. Let there be light.”

Dad ruffled my hair. “Son, you are a strange one.”

He placed his key card inside a dimly lit slot on the wall. Immediately, the light above us came on. “See? Magic.”

I nodded slowly. “So, the key has to be inserted to turn on the light?”

“Not just *this* light.” Dad reached into the bathroom to flick the switch. “All of them.”

“That’s kinda cool.”

He agreed. “It’s an energy saving idea. Since you have to take your key out when you leave, there’s no way to leave the lights on while you’re gone. It’s quite ingenious, actually.”

A half hour later, we met up with Maggie and her mom and made our way to the lobby.

“Where are we going for dinner?” I asked.

Dad sighed. “Unfortunately, we’ve got to make it quick because I’ve got to head to the embassy. Luckily, there’s a pub right next door.”

I stopped short. “A pub? Isn’t that a fancy word for a bar?”

Dad motioned for me to keep walking. “Sort of. But here in Ireland, pubs are where most people, including families, go to dine out. They’re not exactly like the bars back in the States.”

“I thought pubs were like a British thing,” Maggie said.

“Ireland was part of the British Empire for many years,” Ms. Hernandez explained, “until the 1916 Rebellion sparked an independence movement, an event you will learn about tomorrow during your history lesson.”

I groaned. Ms. Hernandez took the prize for toughest tutor on the planet. When she said history lesson, she really meant a super-long reincarnation of the History Channel.

“Here we are.” Dad stopped. The place was literally right next to the hotel.

I looked up at the name. “O’Malley’s Pub? Is that an Irish name?”

Dad nodded as we walked in. “Probably named after the original owner.”

“I wonder if he owned an alley cat.” I grinned and started singing. *“Everybody wants to be a cat, because a cat’s the only cat, who knows where he’s at.”*

Maggie giggled at my Disney reference, then shushed me. “You better stop before you offend the entire Irish culture and get us thrown out of the country.”

As the hostess led us to a table, I looked around, admiring the place. The smell, like onions and meat cooking together, made my stomach growl, and the walls had all kinds of sports decorations covering them, from pictures signed by athletes, to various jerseys and newspaper clippings. I sat down and glanced at the headline of the clipping closest to me, it looked fairly recent. WATERFORD AND GALWAY PREPARE FOR CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

I read a little more, then frowned. “Dad, what’s hurling?”

He grinned. “Something we definitely need to go see before we leave here.”

Ms. Hernandez must have noticed the confused expression on my face because she added, “It is the official sport of Ireland. Don’t worry, you will enjoy it. The matches are quite exciting.”

If Ms. Hernandez found the sport exciting, then it must be uber-amazing. She's not exactly a sports fan.

By the time dinner came, I had already eaten about a hundred rolls, which I found out were called blaa and were unique to the city of Waterford. Apparently, this pub served many dishes with Waterford recipes, including the Sheppard's Pie I had ordered, which had lamb as well as beef smothered in super creamy mashed potatoes. Maggie and her mom both ordered stuffed pork, and Dad ordered Irish stew, which looked really good.

After dinner, Dad took a cab to the embassy and the rest of us returned to our rooms. After a while, Maggie came over and we played *Zombies vs. Aliens* for a while before going to bed.

I fell asleep as soon as my head hit the pillow.

Forest trees surrounded me. The sound of running water came from somewhere close by. I was in Brianhead, Utah, a place my grandma used to take me back when she was still alive.

I ran to the creek, and there she stood, wearing long, flowing white robes.

"Grandma!"

I ran up to her, and she pulled me in for a hug.

"JJ," she said in a low voice and then pushed me to arms' length. Grandma was the one who had given me the nickname JJ because she didn't want people to confuse me, Jeremiah, Jr., with my dad, Jeremiah, Sr. "Things are unraveling quickly. You cannot do this alone. Seek out allies, they can help, and together you must stop the Restoration."

"What *is* the Restoration, Grandma? Can you at least tell me that?"

Her body began to fade into a mist. "The world is in danger. You must not fail."

She was gone.

I woke up, confused as always. Maggie and I had tried every search we could think of to figure out what the Restoration was. We came up empty. This time Grandma said we needed allies. Could she have meant Orion? He did say he had something to give us. Maybe it would help us save the world.

The clock read six-thirty, too early to get up. I wasn't supposed to meet Maggie and her mom until seven-thirty for breakfast. I grabbed my phone and began doing a search of cool places to see in Dublin. After making note of a number of places to go check out, I found a live web cam of an area called Temple Bar, supposedly a pretty hip place full of pubs and restaurants. Sounded like a great place to go for lunch.

The live footage was fun to watch, with people walking on cobblestone streets, probably on their way to breakfast. Ms. Hernandez said the Irish were famous for their breakfast, which I would be sampling in about a half-hour. My stomach growled.

A group of kids on the screen caught my attention. They all looked about my age, but they seemed very intent on finding something. They kept looking up at the buildings and then down at the tallest kid's cell phone.

I stared at the monitor. The boy facing me—I could swear it was Viktor, the evil Russian spy kid from our first mission back in Prague.

Then, my heart stopped. There she stood, right next to him. I zoomed the camera on the kids. Their faces filled up my monitor. Sure enough. It *was* her. Ivana, here in Dublin.

I took a screen shot of their faces and sent Maggie a text, then watched as the kids walked out of camera range. I leaned back on my bed. If the P-KGB was here, then Dublin could be in more danger than Dad and the CIA knew.

Maggie texted back.

NO WAY! WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE???

Whatever it was, we had to figure it out. And fast. The last time we encountered Ivana and her crew in Berlin, she tried to set off a nuclear bomb!

