

Make a Difference

Von Nevaeh

Kapitel 24:

"They're not really friendly here, are they?"

Goten smiled and nodded slightly. He didn't quite know what to make of his new acquaintances. *Yet*. Though it hardly mattered. What mattered was finding out if he could contact Vegeta-sei through them or if he could hitch a ride with them. Currently, he still had money. He had nicked Cilek's credit card or whatever it was called while he had planned his getaway and it hadn't been deactivated yet. He didn't want to use it too thoughtlessly, but it would need to work until he knew where Bra was. Until then...

"Are you all on vacation?" Goten looked at them encouragingly. Obviously that was not the case, but he wanted to know if they were going to lie or not.

Beere snorted. When Daikon's mother had brought him to their table, there had been two other adults. Tarin, a medium sized man with light brown skin, small eyes and absolutely forgettable features and Beere, a young and very pregnant woman with a shock of black curls on her head. She also had a little son, Brom. So far, Goten hadn't heard anything about an actual war being announced on the news, but the little troop looked a lot like fugitives. And if he wasn't very mistaken then Daikon's mom, Avo, was a soldier.

"Beere..." Avo looked at her accusingly. "We're not on vacation. We needed a change of scenery." The stare she gave Goten made it clear that he better not continued with the questions. "And you, Gohtin? That's an unusual name. Are you from the colonies?"

Goten shrugged, taking a sip of his drink. It tasted like chai latte. "No. I grew up outside of our territory. My mother wanted to stay with the locals, but when she died... I went back to the home planet."

If he told them he was mixed he could just as well announce his presence with a neon sign. It was believable enough, anyway.

"The colonies are nice. I wouldn't stay at the main, never liked it there." Tarin laughed, but it sounded forced. After that, they finished their meal with meaningless chatter, about the current flight schedules and how the food was on the station and when Beere was due. Very soon, which made Goten even more curious. They knew

something he didn't and he very much wanted to change that. Luckily, meeting people from the same place always formed some kind of bond. An experience that seemed universal even for the saiyans... which meant when it was time to go, Avo stared down at Goten: "We've got a spare bed in our room. You wanna stay with us?"

Goten looked at her, then at Tarin who shrugged and said: "It's safer, y'know. You said you wanna leave tomorrow anyway, just like us. Should stick together."

"Thank you. That is very kind." He said, softly. If they thought he was weak and helpless... well, he wouldn't try and change their minds. Beere immediately grabbed his arm, smiling brightly. "Great, we can talk some more there! I would love to know about your home planet, you know I never got around much and I watched all travel documentaries and..."

Daikon grabbed his other hand and it seemed he was occupied for now.

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It was, in fact, a four-bed room. The two boys must've shared the fourth bed, but they didn't seem to mind that Goten got it now. Well. Considering saiyen child raising practices, they probably didn't dare. He put his bag down, waiting for Avo to finally spit it out.

"Why you wanna get away, Gohtin?"

"From where?" He smiled pleasantly and decided to play dumb for now. "'s nothing here in this solar system."

Tarin laughed, but it didn't sound very amused. Beere had disappeared into the bathroom with the two boys... the interrogation had started. Fine by him. "Listen, I don't think you're still serving, so you probably understand that I just want to pick up a friend from Vegeta-sei and get lay low somewhere."

"So you're a soldier?" Tarin looked him up and down. "Don't look like one."

"I'm not. I was working as a secretary." Diplomat was way too pompous...

"Ah. The ship controlling the neighboring sector had been destroyed a couple days ago. Do you know something about that?"

He stared at Avo for a while. He couldn't quite put a finger on it but she gave him a bad feeling. "No. I was here the whole time. What could I have to do with that anyway?"

"You could bring trouble." Tarin got a step closer, looming over him. Goten almost laughed but suppressed it barely. How *cute*.

"What about you? Are you deserters? Is that what you're afraid of?"

He felt a spike in Avo's ki. Look at that...

"Listen, pal, we're not gonna get dragged in a war that is none of our business!" Her eyes widened dramatically. "If someone from Vegeta-sei is after you, we'd like to know. We're not taking the risk for some disgraced, tailless piece of shit!"

How the hell had they noticed that... Goten stared at them for a moment, long enough for Beere to come out of the bathroom without the boys. "They're in the shower. So?"

"No one is coming for me. But I need to call Vegeta-sei urgently. Are you any help with that or not?"

Tarin opened his mouth but Avo cut him off brusquely. "No. We're not."

"Fine then. Guess I'll go back to my own room then."

Beere immediately grabbed his arm, saying: "Wait a second, if you're no trouble you can still stay here. It's safer, isn't it?"

She looked up at Avo and after a moment of consideration, she nodded. "Whatever. Daikon likes you."

Tarin and Beere both seemed content with that, both sharing a relieved look.

A couple hours later, Goten was lying in bed, listening to the other occupants sleep. Daikon had insisted to sleep next to Goten, and his little tail had wrapped around Goten's wrist. It was... kind of cute. They had so much wasted potential... Goten only hoped that they used at least a little of it, so that not everything they had done would go to waste. If he could just reach Bra, they could get away and forget all this. They had done their part. He snapped out of his drowsy thoughts when Beere got up. Pregnant women had to pee so much. He knew that well from Trunks' wife, which made him... smile a little. Beere had told him that she and Avo and Tarin had been neighbors on one of the colony worlds and only left to avoid getting drafted. They hadn't exactly spelled it out but he guessed that they really were deserters who didn't want to get back to the army. If they would even survive being found out. And so all the misery started, with the first fugitives. He wondered if Yasai had ever considered that when she had decided to murder Freeza on a whim.

Beere came back from the bathroom and stopped for a second next to Goten. "Hey, wanna fuck? Helps sleeping."

Goten opened his mouth and stared at her for a moment. "I... no. I'm good. Thanks."

He would never get used to these weirdos...

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His little group of travel companions left him at the next station. Daikon actually cried a little and thankfully no one had slapped him for it. His dad had simply picked him up, which seemed so normal that Goten needed a moment to get the tight feeling out of his chest.

The new station was far enough away from any saian territory that it was actually no bother to call Vegeta-sei, which meant that Goten had to take a few precautions. If Bra wasn't available anymore under her old number, he'd have a few options, but that meant he'd have to use Cilek's ID and that of course would alert them to his miraculous survival. So he had only limited time.

Before he made the call, he had already booked a new flight, exchanged his wardrobe and booked an appointment at a hairdresser's. He'd have to get some money on his next location, but that could wait. Taking a deep breath, he stepped into the public phone booth, inserted Cilek's card and dialed Bra's number. It gave a busy signal, which was odd, but it could also mean that Bra made some friends. After five minutes he tried again and got another busy signal. Another five minutes, same result. He huffed and rubbed over his face. Unfortunately, time for option b...

*"Royal service desk, military section, please hold the line."*

They didn't play music... of course not. Goten nervously stared at the timer in his booth while the seconds ticked by slowly and the automatic message repeated itself over and over. *She's fine, she's fine, they gave her her own communicator or a new job or something, there's no need to worry, Yasai wouldn't allow that...* Of course that was a big lie he had to tell himself not to go crazy, but if he was wrong... he didn't want to think about it. Not yet. Not right now. Bra was *fine*.

*"Royal service desk, military section. What do you want?"*

Ah, the saiyans. Friendly as ever. "This is diplomat Goten. I need information about engineer Bra. I wasn't able to reach her at her previous number. She is employed at one of the royal..."

*"How is that spelled?"*

Goten swallowed. Stupid cow on the line, he shouldn't tell her to fuck herself, he should... "B-R-A." He heard typing in the background and waited for another tense minute until the bitch on the phone said: *"Currently not on the planet. Call flight coordination for more information."*

He stared at the phone for a moment, stunned that she had simply hung up on him. "Not on the planet?" Why wasn't she on the planet? What... what was even the number of flight control?

A couple minutes later he had called another service desk for the number of the service desk of all flight control centers on Vegeta-sei until he finally got the damn number he needed.

*"Flight control Vegeta-miyako, how can I help?"*

Goten closed his eyes. He wouldn't snap at the next unfriendly woman on the phone. He needed the information. "This is Diplomat Goten. I was informed that engineer Bra

has left the planet and I need to know where she was headed." There was a pause on the other end of the line and Goten was ready to spit out the insults when the voice said: *"This information is confidential."* And hung up. She... had hung up, just like that. For a moment Goten stared at nothing trying to process what the fuck had just happened.

"Are you SERIOUS??" He slammed the phone down, trying to think of what to do now. Someone had to know where Bra was. Maybe... he picked the phone up again, landing back at the service desk. He needed quite a different number right now...

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Esse stared at her phone. She had lied and was sure Bra's friend knew that as well. That hadn't been confidential and in a few moments someone would come and pick her up and ban her from the planet or... or... but no one came. She hadn't... it had been a spontaneous answer. Of course she had promised Bra to tell her friend where she was, but she hadn't told her it was a diplomat. That guy had to be a high ranking saian and if Bra thought he was her friend... he was definitely taking advantage of her. He would drag her back to the planet and put her in the military and she would have to fight and... Biting her lip, Esse looked around if anyone had noticed and went back to work. It was better like that. Bra deserved better. She was safe on that supply ship. And when she came back... Esse would try to find out how she had met that diplomat friend of hers.

By the way, she hadn't texted Bra yet. She figured it was good for Bra to have a friend she could talk to. Being lonely was... the worst.

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*"Yes, Yasai speaking."*

"Oh thank god... I mean, it's Goten. Where is Bra?"

Another tense silence. There were footsteps in the background, and it sounded hollow. She was probably on her ship again, not that he cared...

*"Gohtin? Why are you still alive?"*

"You owe me, you fucking bitch! Where is Bra?" He was done playing games and if she didn't tell him he would... he would... what could he do? His spiral down into despair was interrupted by Yasai laughing loudly at him.

*"Finally grew some balls, Gohtin? I don't know where you're little friend is. Not on Vegeta-sei anymore? Maybe some commander wanted her in his collection and took her onto his ship!"*

"This isn't funny! You have to find out!"

*"I don't have to do anything, Gohtin. You know, being the sole survivor of such a vicious*

*attack... sure makes one wonder."*

"Don't threaten me."

*"I trusted Cilek. You know what that means?"*

Goten swallowed. "No."

*"It means you should pray we never cross paths again. They will come for you. I only give you a warning because you helped me a lot. But I won't look away a second time."*

"Don't hurt Bra."

Yasai laughed again, a shrill, shrieking laugh that didn't fit her at all. *"Don't worry Gohtin, she'll manage that by herself."*

She hung up, and Goten slowly put the phone down. It was time, it seemed. He had to get away and he had to figure out how to find Bra without any help from the saiyans. He would've laughed if he hadn't felt so much like crying.

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Three hours later, his beard was gone and his hair was buzzed off, making sure he looked unrecognizable and he was sitting in the shuttle to his new destination. He didn't book any other flights, since he was sure Vegeta-sei could track it if he paid with Cilek's credit card. The only option left was to get a ride quickly and... he had a plan how to do that. Everything else would have to wait until he was safe.

What a joke, really. He leaned back and fell into a light slumber that didn't do much to get rid of his bone-deep tiredness.

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He hadn't had any opportunity to do some research, simply for the lack of knowing who was on the station, but Goten figured he would have to use what he knew and his natural charm would do the rest. In the end... people were people, right? And the bar looked decently expensive, so some lonely person would take pity on him. Goten sat down, ordered a cheap drink with the last cash he had extracted of Cilek's card before he had thrown it away and tried his best to look a little melancholic but still handsome. It had worked on Earth, there was no reason not to work in space.

Twenty minutes later, he was halfway through his bowl of dried fruit when a tall woman with blueish skin and a drink in hand stopped right next to him. He looked up and she waved her hand. "Follow me."

"Ok."

Well, if someone sent a lackey... they must be rich. *Something* could work out for once, he thought, and when they stopped in the back of the room, he nodded to himself. The woman, he assumed, didn't look very old, but that didn't mean a thing. She had pale, yellow tinted skin that didn't fit well to her blond hair. A flowy dress,

quite a few rings and long fingernails. *Almost human.* She did smell like cheap flower perfume, though, and he was quite certain it was her own scent. Definitely... not human.

"Sit down, boy."

Oh well. Maybe not that young. He hadn't been called a *boy* in a while... The blue woman handed him the drink and positioned herself for a good view over the bar. Another blue man was standing on the other side. No real threat for him, but... it made their positions clear.

"You looked thirsty. What's your name?"

"That's very kind of you. I'm Sento. What's yours, if you don't mind me asking?" He smiled at her and leaned a little forward. He had read the name on one of the advertisements and hoped it was common enough...

"Sento... I'm Anjana." She smiled back, showing him a row of tiny, yellow teeth.

"Anjana... what a pretty name. I haven't met a lot of people on this station yet, so..."

Anjana waved her hand. "Cut the crap, boy. You don't have to insult my intelligence. Tell me what you want."

His eyes widened a fraction but he got himself under control quickly. Obviously *this* worked the same everywhere as well. "I need a ride from here. I don't care where to."

"Hmmm..." She leaned her head on her hand, rubbing her index finger over her lips. "And what do you offer for that?"

Now that was tricky. He wouldn't bring the most obvious choice on the table if he not absolutely had to, but his other option was a huge gamble. "I worked in public relations. You look like an entrepreneur, I'm sure you can use someone like me who has a knack to talk to people." *And smile. Please take the bait.*

Anjana leaned back and took a sip of her drink. Very, very slowly. "Sento, next time do some proper research, hm? Good thing you're cute. You can come on my ship."

Breathing out slowly, Goten tried not to jump up and scream that at least *that* had worked. "Thank you, Anjana. I was somewhat limited in my resources lately, but I'll make up for it."

"Whatever you say, boy."

The rest of the evening went by with mindless chatter, which was something Goten could do with half a brain cell. When he went to bed, he felt content, slightly buzzed from the drinks and in possession of a free ride that would finally set him... free.

