

### Episode 3- Crossing the Line

I woke up next to Hunter and smiled. Last night really had been amazing. If I could get him to help me fight the Sailors all the better. My Hunter would have no qualms about helping me but this Hunter was different. He didn't care about power the way my Hunter did. It was a little disgusting how weak he was, but using him would drive my counterpart insane and that was really the whole point of this.

I heard a knock at the door. Hunter rolled over but didn't wake up. I got out of bed and put one of his shirts on. I opened the door and saw Tommy. He looked so different than the Tommy on my world...Drakkon as he was known. I'd discovered long ago that Drakkon was my brother but aside from agreeing to make a deal with me he never really showed me any affection. He didn't kill me and let me align with him. That was kind in his book. This Tommy was decidedly very, very different. It took me a second to remember I needed to continue pretending to be my counterpart.

"Tommy, what are you doing here?" I asked.

Tommy looked at me suspiciously. "I came to warn Hunter."

"About the Empress? Yeah, me too." I said.

"Oh yeah? I thought you asked Wes and I to do that." Tommy said.

"This is Hunter...he's different. I needed to tell him myself." I said.

"You didn't mention that." he said.

"And risk Rocky finding out?"

Tommy looked at me. He seemed to be pondering if he believed me. "Did you tell him the code word?" he finally asked.

I nodded. "Of course."

"I'm glad you remember...I was going to text Wes. I forgot it. What was it again?" he asked.

I paused. This was clearly a trap. "How could you forget something so important?!" I cried trying to stall.

"I know, I know...but you know how forgetful I am. Always have been. I promise, I'll remember it this time. What is it?" he asked again.

I took a breath. It was probably something random if my counterpart was anything like me. "Eggplant." I said hopeful.

"Oh yeah! That was it. Thank you so much. I promise I'll remember it this time. Are you sure you're ok Mich? Being here and all?" Tommy asked.

I nodded, relieved I guessed right. "I'm clearly fine...just please don't tell Rocky."

Tommy nodded. "Look, I don't agree with you being unfaithful but that's between you and Rock. You're my baby sister. I always got your back. I will always protect you. From anything."

I tried not to gasp. I hadn't had affection like that since I was a little girl. Zachary used to be like that with me. Until he turned on me. It felt weird. "I know." I finally said.

Tommy hugged me. "I promise you...everything will be ok. I should go warn the others...I'll check on you soon. I love you."

I hugged him back awkwardly. "I love you too."

He turned and left. I closed the door. This world was so damn weird.

Michelle

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I was sitting in the office at home trying to figure out my next move when my phone rang. My caller ID said it was Tommy.

"Hey bro." I said answering.

"We have a huge problem." he said.

"Another problem? What now?"

"I just went to warn Hunter about the Empress and she opened the door. I knew it was her because she got the code wrong. I played it off and made her think she got it right because Hunter was asleep with no idea he was with her. We have to find some way to warn him." Tommy explained.

"She's with Hunter? Oh crap. I have to get to him!" I cried.

"Actually that's the last thing you need to do. We have to find a way to warn him without tipping her off." Tommy said.

I sighed. "If she hurts him I will end her."

"I know you're upset but you have to keep calm."

"Where is he?"

"New Tech City."

"The home of SPD...can we get SPD to help us?" I asked.

"Um...are you sure you're not the Empress? Did you seriously just say you want to ask SPD for help?" Tommy asked.

"Desperate times call for desperate measures."

"As happy as I am you're even considering accepting SPD I really don't think they should involve themselves in this. We have to be strategic here so she doesn't hurt Hunter." Tommy said.

I nodded. "OK, fine. Do you have a plan?"

"At the moment, no...but I'm going to stay close until I think of something. Don't worry. I promise you, Hunter will be safe. Sit tight and let Wes know what we're dealing with. We have the upper hand. We know where she is and she doesn't know that." Tommy said.

"Fine. Keep me updated every step of the way." I said.

"I will. I promise. I love you." he said.

"Love you too." I said as I hung up. I put my phone down and sighed. I looked up and Rocky was standing at the door.

"What happened now?" he asked.

"Empress is pretending to be me with Hunter. He has no idea what's really going on." I explained.

Rocky sighed. "We have to do something. I may not like Hunter but he's still a Ranger and we stick together."

I nodded. "Tommy is monitoring the situation. He told me to stay away. Let the Empress think she fooled him too and this way we know where she is."

Rocky nodded. "Great idea. We should tell the others."

I contacted the other Sailors and filled them in on what Empress was up to. After that I sent a message to Tommy. I needed to know what was happening and that Hunter was still safe.

Empress

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After Hunter woke up we spent some more time in bed. He held me close playing with my hair.

"I've missed you so much Mich...I've missed this...us." he said.

"I missed you too." I said.

"Is there hope for us?" he asked.

"Maybe. If I survive. We have to stop the Sailors first. If you help me save myself then yes, there is absolutely hope for us." I said.

He nodded and held me tighter. "Of course I will help you. I won't let anything happen to you Mich. Ever."

I smirked. "I knew I could count on you."

"I still have my morpher. If I have to use it and fight at your side I will."

"Oh Hunter, that would help me so much. You know they will lie. They will try to turn you against me." I said.

"Michelle, I love you...I would never turn against you." he said kissing my head.

"I know. Let's finish this then so we can move on with our lives." I said

He nodded. We got out of bed and I changed into my battle gear. He looked me over. "That's new."

I nodded. "Yeah...they tried to strip my powers. This is all I have right now."

"We're going to end this now." he said pulling his Morpher out. "Thunder Storm, Ranger Form!" he called as he morphed into a Crimson Ranger form.

We teleported to downtown Angel Grove.

“Let’s finish this now Sailors!” I cried.

A couple of minutes later I was blasted from behind by Venus’ Crescent Beam. I fell forward.

“Mich!” Hunter cried.

I stood up and saw all the Inner Soldiers. “I’m ok. I told you they are after me.”

“Hunter, listen, this isn’t our Michelle. She’s from another Universe. Not here.” Venus said.

“I told you they would lie. You had me baby...you know it’s me.” I said.

“Leave her alone!” Hunter cried as he pulled out his blaster and shot at the Inners.

“Hunter, stop! You know we’d never hurt our Michelle but this isn’t her!” Jupiter cried as she dodged.

“I know Venus has tried to take her out before. How did she get you to help her this time?” Hunter asked as he attacked them again.

“Crap...ok yeah, there was that but that was different Hunter. I’m not after our Michelle this time...just this poser.” Venus said as she fought back.

“How can you guys do this to me? I thought we were friends.” I said.

“Stop lying you bitch.” Mars said as she shot at me with her fireball. I fired lightning off in return.

“I’ll never let you hurt her!” Hunter cried as he fought for me.

“Saturn Ice Crystals Charge!” we heard as I got hit with a bunch of ice shards. I looked up and saw the Outers. Looked like I was about to be busted.

Michelle

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I got a call from Amara that there was an attack. Empress was fighting the Inners and she had the Crimson Ranger with her. I transformed and rushed to the battle. I was pissed now. When I saw her I fired off my ice crystals at her. I hit her dead on and she was knocked forward.

“How dare you!” I cried.

“Saturn?!” Hunter asked, clearly confused.

“She’s not me. Well, she is....but not really. Hunter, she’s from a different universe. She’s trying to take over our universe.” I tried to explain.

Empress smirked. “Oopsie. Did I forget to mention that part?”

Hunter took a step back. “You really are a different Michelle?”

“Yeah...sorry...not sorry. I did have fun with you though. Hey Saturn, he’s fabulous in bed...shouldn’t have let him go,” she smiled.

I felt my heart drop and my blood start to boil. “You slept with him? You little....ARGH!!!!!!” I screamed as I fired off lightning at her that was brighter and more purple than I could usually muster. She’d gone too far. She tried to dodge

but it hit her knocking her back hard.

She struggled to get up. "Did I strike a nerve? This isn't over Saturn. I'm just getting started. Before I'm done I will make your life such a living hell that death will seem like a welcomed out." she said as she vanished.

Hunter turned and came over to me. "Saturn, are you ok?"

I nodded. "I am. I'm so sorry for what she put you through."

"It's ok...it's my fault. I should have known you wouldn't want me back...I guess I just wanted it so bad that I believed her...I should get back to New Tech...I have a race. Good luck stopping her...if you need anything let me know." Hunter stammered as he turned to leave.

"Hunter, wait....we should talk." I said.

"There's nothing to talk about. Tell Harley hi for me. I'll take her riding next time I'm in town." he said as he ninja streaked away. He knew Harley idolized him. He was her favorite rider. If he only knew she was also his daughter.

I sighed.

"Are you ok?" Trista asked.

"No...that bitch just messed with the wrong person. She is going down...she wants me to be vicious like her...she just got her wish." I growled as I reached a new level of fury. It was on now and now I had no doubt. I...would...win.