

## THE GOLDEN ORB: PRELUDE – VOL. 1

### CHAPTER TWO

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A group of high school and junior high students mixed together stand on a public park's sports field. Kepler and the other students in his soccer elective class used to come over to this particular field in the public park for their co-ed soccer practice. But this time they were here for a different reason. Due to their P.E. teacher being absent, their English teacher reluctantly took over. Only a fraction of the P.E. students were there due to them being back on campus, a result of a lack of communication or students wanting to stay with their friends during their off period or other extracurricular. Furthermore, the rules on dress code were not as stringent as allowed by their uncaring teacher. The teacher with salt-and-pepper hair has his face hidden behind a newspaper and sits on a foldable camping chair on the field sidelines, right beside the group of students. Students from a high school close by used the field for their own soccer practice and even an American football club used it for their practices later in the night. There were two fields side-by-side each with un-netted goals that doubled as field goalposts with their uprights.

The students are lined up in rows and columns as if they were a military squadron at attention. One student walks in between the members of this squadron holding a squawking toy rubber chicken. He walks around squawking the rubber chicken in the teenagers' faces in a comedic fashion as he attempts to make them laugh. When a person fails and laughs they get down to the ground and complete ten push-ups. Various iterations of this pass.

Beside Mr. Isaac, at the sidelines, sits the junior high student, Nolan Luna, his crutches right beside him and a medical boot on his right foot. The student with the toy chicken gets to Kepler. He squawks it. Kepler does not laugh but does smile despite his best intentions.

"Hey, that counts," the student with the toy chicken, Marc, says while he points at Kepler with the head of the rubber chicken.

"No, it doesn't," Kepler responds.

Marc shoots him a look. "Really?"

"I didn't laugh."

"Yes, you did."

"No, I didn't."

"Yes-"

"Alright, hold it!" says a hard-bitten voice from beside them.

Kepler and Marc look over at the English teacher. Mr. Isaac lowers his newspaper revealing his face.

“What’d I say when we first started?” Mr. Isaac says, “The one with the rubber chicken is the leader and lays down the law. Do not argue with him, he is the boss. If you mess with him then you mess with me.”

Marc turns back to the opposition cockily. “Hear that boy? Get down and give me ten.”

Kepler takes a moment to compose himself. “What if the leader is an idiot?” Kepler tells Mr. Isaac.

“Really, Alfonso? I’m here, chilling, reading my newspaper, and you are arguing with me,” Mr. Isaac says, beginning to lose his temper.

“We have the internet for that, sir. Get this man out of my face before I do.”

“Alfonso!”

“He’s telling the truth Mr. Isaac,” Nolan mentions.

“Mr. Isaac, I’m supposed to laugh, and all I did was smile,” Kepler continues. “This idiot here” – he extends a hand toward Marc – “can’t tell the difference between the two.”

“Kepler, I’m not going to tell you again!” Mr. Isaac nearly growls.

Kepler does not stop. “Look we all have to work with idiots sometimes. I get it. Like take yourself, you had people tell you to cover for the P.E. class when you are an English teacher. I get it.”

Nolan laughs right beside Mr. Isaac. The English teacher shoots him a look.

“You know what Nolan, give me ten,” the pissed teacher tells.

“But, Mr. Isaac, my foot’s hurt,” Nolan reminds him.

“Your stomach works. Give me ten sit-ups,” Mr. Isaac orders.

“Aw, man,” Nolan whines.

Nolan begins to do his sit-ups.

“You know what?” Mr. Isaac scowls as he speaks at the pinnacle of his anger. “Leader and Kepler both of you give me ten for messing up my morning.”

“You should’ve just done the push-ups, man,” Abby Soto, who stands behind Kepler, says aloud.

Kepler shoots a look to us, the observers, then he turns to look at his friend behind him. “Gee, thanks, Abby.” Kepler drops to complete his ten push-ups.