

Chaos Hearts

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Submitted: February 16, 2018

Updated: February 16, 2018

Worlds are in danger from a new threat. But Sora is busy with the old threat of Xehanort! It's up to a new Keyblade master, setting forth from the fanfic world of Sonic GeneX, to help protect these worlds from the forces of darkness...and chaos!

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Chapter 1 - Beyond the Door	2
Chapter 2 - Keyblade Training	7
Chapter 3 - Power, Wisdom and Courage	14
Chapter 4 - Game On	22
Chapter 5 - True Memories	31

1 - Beyond the Door

Chaos Hearts

Chapter 1 - Beyond the Door

World - GeneX Prime

Note: Sonic the Hedgehog and related characters are (c) SEGA and Sonic Team. You knew that, right?

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A dream. Endless falling. Some sort of stained glass structure below. "Don't be afraid!" a voice says. Lucky the cat is terrified. He braces for impact. "HEY! Wake up!!" "MEEE-yow!!" Lucky jumped as Zeke the dragon stood over his bed, looking frustrated with him. "You've been dozing since the war with Eggman ended." he said in his raspy voice. Lucky sat up. "Well, gee, I'm a cat. Isn't napping what cats do?" he said sleepily. Zeke pointed defiantly at him. "I hereby challenge you to a duel! You don't get to keep being useless, kid! If Eggman or GUN comes bangin' at our door, you'd best be ready to fight!" he warned. Lucky laid back down. "Maybe later... I'm drowsy right now..." he sighed. Zeke crossed his arms and rolled his eyes. "Did you have time to be drowsy when Robians were banging down our doors!? Get up!" he snapped. "You'll take care of it. You love that fighting and stuff." Lucky murmured. Zeke yanked his tail and started to drag him. "Yow!! Oww!! Lemme go!! Alright, I'm coming!!" Lucky yelped, jumping out of bed while holding his poor hurt tail. "C'mon. I'll try not to burn you to cinders." Zeke grunted. "You're enjoying this. Admit it!" Lucky whined. "Yes I am. I spent that stint in the Hopebringer Center 'cuz of you and Tails, remember?" he growled. "That was more Zipp's fault, wasn't it?" Lucky wondered. Zeke smacked him in the back of the head. "They only stepped in because you were fool enough to be in my way! I was after the bounty on Sonic, and Tails woulda led me to it... Not that it matters, I heard it was bogus anyway..." Zeke groaned. Lucky rubbed his head. "I think I'd rather Tails was training me..." he muttered.

Outside, somewhere above the Mystic Ruins, a small, blocky-looking ship shakily flew across the sky. "Mayday, mayday! We're goin' down! Ughhh!! Heeelp!!!" a voice cried from within the cockpit. The ship was smoking. It swerved, heading for the jungle, and then it dropped, crashing amidst the trees and startling the main resident of the area; Big the cat. "...What's that thing? A ship? ...Think there are people hurt inside, Froggy?" Big mumbled, cautiously approaching. Inside the ship, a tiny creature with wings and a big pom-pom over its head was stumbling about, holding its nose. "Some air bags... Looks like I'll have to make some repairs, kupo." the creature groaned, glancing over at a person wearing a black coat and hood. He glanced at the small creature. "You do that, Winston. I'll take a look around this world we've landed in." he stated. Winston looked up at him. "You sure that's wise? That coat isn't exactly inconspicuous. What about the world order?" he questioned. "If it's the wrong kind of world, this face might be more troublesome." he said, taking off his hood to reveal the face of Miles "Tails" Prower. "Don't you think?" he asked. Winston shrugged. "Dunno, kupo. Just be careful. My world's riding on your success, too." he said. Tails walked out of the ship before putting his hood on, which gave Big cause for

confusion. "...Tails? ...Why's he wearin' a disguise? Well...at least he seems to be okay..." he murmured, figuring he'd probably best leave the situation alone.

Lucky was busy dodging Zeke's flame breath in the room used as Shadow Arcangel's entry hall when it was buried in the earth. "You said you wouldn't use fire!!" he cried. During this, Whisk the Divine was walking in. She glanced at them. "Need help, Lucky?" she called. "This is a training exercise!" Zeke insisted. Bucky the rat and Vortex the chameleon were quick to meet Whisk. "I-it'sss great to ssssee you! I feared you lossst during the war..." Vortex stammered awkwardly. Bucky nodded. "Are you alright, Whisk? Can you remember anything?" he asked. Whisk nodded. "Yes... I do remember. I'm here for a place to stay... During the war... I was taken in by these...other divines. They went by Zodiac names, and they wanted to train me to join their ranks; become their 'Virgo.' They figured since I was a divine, their type of power would come easy to me..." she stated. Bucky nodded. "It didn't, because I made you..." he realized. Whisk nodded back. "But they helped me a lot. Their magic fixed my memory... or at least, I don't forget anymore. They also taught me wand magic!" she said, taking a Chaos-Stone Wand from her pocket. It was like Gemini's, but with a yellow gem on the tip. "But since I couldn't learn magic without the wand, they cast me out..." she sighed. Vortex pat her shoulder. "We're happy to have you back, Whisssk..." he smiled. "This is temporary, Vortex. I haven't forgotten why I left!" she said, swatting his hand away. "Blasst..." Vortex sighed. "Do you remember whippin' Zeke's butt!? Care to help me?" Lucky shouted, yelping as his tail was singed by fire. "Umm... I don't remember that, really. But maybe I could tag in to train you instead?" she asked. "Don't go easy on the wimp!" Zeke grunted. "No, please go easy on the wimp!" Lucky chuckled awkwardly.

Bucky had left while they were talking. He was actually in the middle of something when Whisk had arrived. By now he'd combed every inch of Shadow Arcangel, and knew it pretty well. However, something had appeared in the containment cell that everyone would know full well wasn't there before. Bucky walked past the remnants of the makeshift war room that was still left in there and crept into the cell, finding a door placed at the back of the cell, with a large keyhole in the center of it. This door wasn't there before, and more curious, Bucky knew there was no sign of this door on the other side of the containment cell wall. What was the door's purpose? Was it a sort of interdimensional gateway? Such a thing seemed preposterous a few years ago, but the rat had seen much ever since he created his experiments. "No doorknob... No key... Where did you come from, and why are you here?" he whispered, grasping at the edge of the door. He had to see if there was anything beyond it. Something compelled him to find out. Pulling the door open, he immediately felt a sense of dread, like it was a mistake. It seemed to become darker around him. Out of the shadows, small faces with yellow lights for eyes emerged! "Well, that triggered something..." he grunted, spinning around and zapping the creatures with his lightning! "...I have a bad feeling about this..." he murmured.

Zavok had had enough of his self-appointed understudy, Zim the Zeti. The little blue nuisance had gotten it in his head that he could actually join the Deadly Six somehow. It was laughable, as far as Zavok was concerned, but the humor had passed. He lifted Zim up and glared at him. "Hehe, hey boss!" Zim grinned. "While you've followed us, we've been bested time and again. We've been enslaved by Eggman twice. These things didn't happen before you came along." he growled. "Kinda makes you glad I'm here helpin', huh?" Zim chuckled. Zavok wound him up like a ball and threw him into the distance. "Get out of my sight, and don't come back!!" he shouted. Zim tumbled a distance away, finding himself just outside the Mystic Ruins jungle. Dizzily picking himself up, he spotted a cloaked figure sneaking out

of the woods, a familiar pair of tails trailing under his coat. "Hm? ...Two tailed mutt... Where do I know a two-tailed... Oh!" Zim gasped, "Master Zavok must've tossed me here as part of a secret mission! The hood, the tails, the mystery... I'm to follow him and find out what he's up to! For the glory of the Zeti!" he shouted before noticing that the hooded fox was getting away from him. "Egad! He's on to me! I must follow in stealth and secret!" he whispered, scampering after the fox while darting from bush to bush, trying to stay out of sight. Tails scratched his head and kept moving. He was sure a little critter like Zim couldn't make too much trouble...

In the meantime, the strange shadow creatures had spread through Shadow Arcangel, forcing those aboard to fight back against them. Vortex teamed up with Zipp the hornet, and were soon making their way to the control room, blasting any shadows in their path with Chaos-based attacks and guns, respectively. "Where'd these critters come from? Are they some new breed of Lost One??" Zipp shouted. "Who caresss, they're not taking thiss ssship!" Vortex hissed. Whisk was back with Lucky and Zeke. Their training session would have to wait, as she turned her new wand on the shadows. "Leave us alone, creatures! Fire!!" she cried, casting a bolt of flame to eliminate a shadow. Zeke watched the twitching masses of darkness curiously. "What's that little guy? You wanna be my minion?" the dragon mumbled. "Hey, Zeke! Help, before they eat me! They look like they wanna eat me!!" Lucky stammered, looking around for anything he could fight back with. Zeke sighed and took to the air, dropping flames on the nearby shadows. However, they slipped into the ground itself and hurried towards Lucky! He stumbled backwards, but crawled back a bit. "Wh-what do these things want??" he yelped. "Maybe a hug?" Zeke chortled, "Well, nice knowin' ya, Luckless!" the dragon snickered while Whisk was too distracted to notice his plight.

Tails had boarded Shadow Arc during the ruckus. "I'm detecting darkness here... Heartless??" he gasped, stepping into the room with Whisk, Zeke and Lucky. His gaze fixed on Lucky, who was nearly surrounded. "I... I'd better help!" he gasped, running after the Heartless. However, as Lucky raised his hands to protect himself, there was a flash of light, and a large key-shaped weapon appeared in his hand! "H-huh?? What's this??" he stammered. The light seemed to startle the Heartless for a moment, and Lucky could swear he heard voices repeating "Keyblade... Keyblade..." However, he didn't seem to understand what to do with a Keyblade, and the Heartless started coming for him again. So, Tails jumped between them, holding a small metal handle that, with a click of a switch, extended pieces of a shield from each side, emitting a bit of energy to power it up. "Stay back, cat! I got this!" Tails said, tossing the shield like a frisbee, which cut down the Heartless before arcing back to be caught by him! As Zeke watched in surprise, Zim stepped next to him. "Well, that's a cool gizmo." the Zeti remarked. "Yeah, I didn't know Tails had a thing like that... Hey, where'd you come from??" Zeke stammered. "Uh oh! Gotta regain my cover!" Zim gasped, dashing into the ship's corridors. "Get back here, runt!" Zeke shouted. Tails pulled the hood over his face and headed for the same corridor. "Come with me, kid! Bring that key! We'll need it!" he said. Lucky nodded. "Uhhh, sure, Tails!" he stammered, following him. Whisk turned to see everyone leaving. "Huh? Hey! Come back!" she cried, teleporting over to them and joining in the rush.

They arrived at the containment room, where Bucky was struggling to pull the door closed again between stopping to zap Heartless. "I don't have to be a genius to realize we don't want those things getting in this door!" he said. Tails had a sort of smart-watch on his wrist, which he examined now. "According to my readings, the Heartless haven't touched the heart of your world yet. Cat! You have to seal the door with that Keyblade!" he said. Lucky looked at Tails funny. "I'm Lucky... You know me,

Tails..." he murmured, holding up the Keyblade. "There's no time to explain, but I don't know you. I'm not the Tails you know." the fox stated. Whisk scratched her head. "Are you the Tails I know?" she questioned. Lucky gasped as the Keyblade tugged him towards the door. The tip of the Keyblade glowed, and emitted a beam that struck the door, causing it to shut suddenly as the large keyhole on it sparkled and disappeared! "Gah! ...What in...? Lucky, I'd like to examine that key..." Bucky stammered. "Can I borrow it?" Zeke asked as he and Zim arrived, "I bet it could open as good as it could close, hehe..." the dragon snickered. "No way, it poofed into MY hand!" Lucky stammered, "I'm not gonna let you rob a bank with it!" Tails sighed. "That wouldn't work anyway. Only you can use it." he stated. With the door sealed, the Heartless had apparently fled. Everything seemed okay now. Until the door burst back open!

Bucky was quick to grab the edge of the containment cell as the door started to suck everyone into it like a vacuum! Lucky was the first to lose his footing. "Meee-yooooow!! Now the DOOR wants to eat meeee!!" he wailed. "Hang on, Lucky!!" Whisk cried, flying in after him only to have Tails smack into her head as he was drawn in, too! Knocked out, Whisk couldn't teleport away! Zim dove into the door after them. "You won't get away from me, foxy! I'll find out your secrets for Zavok!!" he proclaimed. Zeke was desperately trying to fly away, but he heard a voice call to him. "Meet me on the other side... Power and fortune awaits you..." Hearing this, Zeke calmly ceased resisting and let the door pull him in. "Bye bye, Bucky! See ya!" he chuckled before the door shut on his nose! "Ow!!" he could be heard groaning. The door then vanished as Bucky watched in astonishment. "M-my experiments..." he babbled. Winston came scampering into the room the next moment, pursued by Vortex and Zipp. "Hold still ya little stuffed animal!" Zipp warned. "I'm a Moogles, kupo!" Winston protested, "Oh, dear! Where's Tails?" he gasped. Bucky glanced back. "Sucked into a door... Who are you?" he questioned. "Where'ssss Whissk?? I thought I heard her voice on the way here..." Vortex murmured. Winston cleared his throat. "Don't worry... Your companions are okay, as is mine. But I'd best get back to my ship, or they'll be stranded..." he babbled. "Stranded WHERE?" Bucky asked, "What exactly was that door?" Winston looked up at the intense eyes of the rat and shivered. "W-well, that's a long story. But once it was sealed, I surmise it became a portal of sorts..." he muttered. "I'll ask again...to WHERE??" Bucky grunted.

Lucky and Whisk awakened in a strange place. Certainly different from anywhere they'd been. They were in a quaint little town, which seemed maybe a tad old-fashioned at face value. A bell could be heard ringing in the distance. "Well, guys... Welcome to Traverse Town." they heard Tails say. Sitting up, they found him standing near a crooked looking street light. "Traverse Town? What happened to the Mystic Ruins...?" Lucky murmured. "And who hit my head?" Whisk sighed, rubbing it. Tails looked a bit bashful about that. He wasn't wearing a cloak anymore, and it was a bit more clear that he wasn't exactly their Tails. A belt held his shield handle, his shoes and gloves were a tad more colorful, and there was that smart watch on his wrist. "Yeah... That door pulled us into another world. I hope my ride can find us. And I'm sorry you got dragged into this..." he muttered. "Dragged into what exactly?" Whisk asked. "ANOTHER WORLD?!" Lucky yelped. Tails nodded. "There's lots of other worlds. I'm from a different world from yours...and I've been searching the worlds for our Sonic. He's...missing." he explained, looking a bit sad. Lucky and Whisk glanced at each other, and then at Tails. "Well, since we're here, guess we'll help find him for you!" Lucky offered. "Aw, gee...thanks guys." Tails smiled. "No problemo... Except if we're stranded here." Whisk chuckled. Tails offered his hand out. "So, I'm Tails..." he said. "I know...and I'm Lucky!" Lucky added, putting his hand on top. "And I'm Whisk!" Whisk added, putting her hand on top of Lucky's. "Guess we're a team now! ...Anybody hungry?" Whisk chuckled.

Zeke and Zim landed together in a nearby district. Zim was peering through the door at them. "A conspiracy!" he declared. "Aw, shut up! Now, where was that guy? ...I hope I didn't imagine that voice..." Zeke groaned. "Oh, you didn't..." Zim and Zeke both turned and gulped to see a large man in full medieval armor, with a flowing cape trailing behind him. He was an imposing figure. "My name... is Garland. I require some...minions... to help command my forces across various worlds." he stated, raising his hand to summon dozens of soldier Heartless behind him. "You will gain command over dark power beyond your wildest dreams... So, what do you say?" he offered. Zim stepped over beside Zeke, both of them smirking. It appeared a second team had been created at Traverse Town as well...

To be continued...

2 - Keyblade Training

Chaos Hearts

Chapter 2 - Keyblade Training

World - Traverse Town; Neverland

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"Trust in me, just in me...

Shut your eyes, and trust in me." - The Jungle Book

Thinking of you, wherever you are...

Last time, while Lucky the Cat was undergoing training in case Dr. Eggman puts the world in jeopardy again, Whisk the divine arrived home to Shadow Arcangel, where she explained what had happened to her the past several months. She'd been taken in by the Zodiac Council, who intended to train her as their new Virgo. They gave up on her, though, when it was found she could only use wand magic. Meanwhile, a ship crash-landed in the Mystic Ruins, carrying a Moogle named Winston and an alternate version of Tails. As this alternate Tails roamed around, Zim the Zeti spotted him and decided to tail him, thinking Zavok would want intel on what Sonic's sidekick was up to.

During all this, Bucky found a strange door in the containment cell of Shadow Arcangel. Opening it, he somehow caused a swarm of Shadows to invade the ship! While Lucky and Whisk were trying to fend them off, a Keyblade appeared in Lucky's hands, just in time for Tails to arrive on the scene. Using the Keyblade, Lucky sealed his world's keyhole, but then the door pulled in Lucky, Whisk, Tails, Zeke and Zim, dropping them in Traverse Town! While Lucky, Whisk and Tails get their bearings, Zeke and Zim encounter a man named Garland...

Now, let us journey to a new world...

Lucky, Whisk and Tails looked around the First District of Traverse Town for a bit, and soon came across a pair of humans. Lucky recognized one of them as Gator, the goofy guy in the alligator costume that occasionally butted in on people's adventures back in his own world. With him was a young man with messy dark blue hair, brown eyes and a tan coat with black pants and a light green cape. "What are...you doing here?" Lucky asked Gator curiously. "Did you get sucked into a weird door, too?" Whisk asked. Gator tilted his head. "Uhh... Not in the last eight minutes..." he babbled. The other man cleared his throat. "Don't mind him. My name is Travis. I was sent here by Master Yen Sid to meet you. He was responsible for your arrival here. He apologizes that he couldn't draw you all the way to him, but the distance to your world was far." he stated. Tails scratched his head. "Yen Sid... Why do I know that name?" he murmured. Travis pointed to Lucky. "It should hold meaning for him, as he has been chosen by a Keyblade. You see, Master Yen Sid was also a Keyblade master long ago, and now he acts as a bit of a mentor for new Keyblade masters." he stated. Lucky materialized his Keyblade and looked at it.

"This thing...chose me?" he murmured. Travis nodded. "Lucky... There's a war coming. A Keyblade war..." he stated. Lucky jumped. "Seriously!?! But I just finished fighting in a war back home!" he whined. Gator shared his sentiment. "Me too... Except that's not really my home, and YOU locked me in a bunker!" he said, pointing at Tails. "What? No I didn't!" the fox babbled. "Different Tails, I think." Whisk stated. Travis loudly cleared his throat to regain their attention. "No one expects you to fight the Keyblade war. You're too new to the Keyblade, and there's no time to give you a Mark of Mastery exam." he stated. "A what?" Lucky murmured. "Never mind. Despite that...the other Keyblade wielders are going to be busy. Thus, cat... You may be the only one who can defend countless worlds from darkness as it attempts to take advantage of the diversion of the Keyblade war. We need your help." he said gravely. Lucky stared at his Keyblade in disbelief. What was he getting himself into now?

"I knew you would be here...for I have come back from the future, and seen events unfold." Garland said to Zeke the dragon and Zim the zeti. Zeke groaned. "Ugh, time travel? I've been through that. Can I go home?" he grumbled. Garland stabbed his sword into the ground hard, his eyes glaring from under his helmet. "I took great pains to be here, and see that you begin on your destined path ahead of schedule. For my plans to succeed, I need you both to embrace the darkness, and find me in the present day..." he said insistently. Zim looked up at him with a smirk. "Embrace the darkness? I think I've done that!" he sniggered. Zeke scoffed. "Destined path? What's this rubbish?" he grumbled. Garland's body was starting to fade before their eyes. "I cannot linger in this time much longer. You may not believe me now, but I promise you that your destiny is set. Before I leave you... I grant you power...to summon the heartless." he said, extending his hand and covering Zeke and Zim in a dark energy. As the pair of them gasped and basked in the darkness, Garland's eyes were beaming. "One last thing... Our enemies are here... The feline with the key and his friends. I suggest you try to deal with them..." he said before fading away. Zim jumped and waved as Garland vanished. "Hey, thanks, knight dude! Zim feels mightier already!" he cackled. Zeke stared at him. "You're not gonna refer to yourself in the third person the whole way, are you? Ehh... Well, let's see about these heartless that guy mentioned..." he smirked.

Lucky pushed open the gate leading out of the first district and into an area outside of town. "I don't want to fight a war, or whatever it is you're actually asking of me. C'mon, Tails, I'll still help you find your world's Sonic. He'd probably love to take this Keyblade off my hands and do all the fighting for me!" he stated, glancing back at the group. "You can't simply give the Keyblade away. It chose you, and you alone. It's going to stay with you no matter what." Travis told him. Tails sighed. "Lucky... If we go looking for Sonic, we may get caught up in more heartless trouble anyway. It's best if you're prepared to use that key. Our lives may depend on it." he said seriously. Lucky turned around, letting the gate close behind him. "What...are the heartless going to chase us?" he asked. Travis shrugged. "They seek the heart of Keyblade wielders above all others. They are the only ones that can destroy heartless, truly... Others who destroy heartless simply cause the hearts within to respawn as heartless elsewhere." he said. "So...it was useless for me to destroy some with my magic back home?" Whisk sighed. "Not really... they tend to respawn in another location entirely. It at least gets them off your back." Travis stated, "When you destroy a heartless with a Keyblade, though, the heart inside is freed." Lucky still seemed overwhelmed with all of this. "Quit being mopey! We're gonna train you, kid!" Gator said with a goofy grin. "What do you know about Keyblades, Gator?" Lucky asked. Gator held out his hand, and a green Keyblade appeared in his grip! "I had some training from an old guy... Merlin! He had to use some weird time trick to get my training done this millennium, though..." he stated. Travis chuckled softly. "I'll try to help as well. Why don't we get started straight away?" he asked. Tails nodded. "We might as well... We

can't go anywhere until my friend finds us and brings his ship here..." he said. "Friend? Ship? ...I thought we were traveling through warp doors." Lucky babbled. "Focus, kitty! Get out that key and let's practice the basics!" Gator ordered.

Zeke and Zim were now in the second district, across from the fountain that once concealed the world's keyhole. They had been experimenting with summoning heartless now that Garland had given them the ability to do so, but hadn't called forth much beyond some shadows and soldiers. "These little guys aren't that impressive." Zim murmured. "One might say that about you..." Zeke scoffed, "But, yeah, we need more darkness... Maybe we can call something with more oomph!" he smirked. In the meantime, Lucky was practicing his Keyblade swings, while Tails held up a beeping device, a look of alarm on his face. "What's that? Are you late for an important date?" Whisk asked. Tails shook his head. "This is a darkometer. I can detect the presence of the heartless with it... and it's going crazy! There's heartless here in Traverse Town!" he stammered. Travis glanced in his direction. "Where? This could be a chance for some practical training!" he said. "Ulp... Do I have to?" Lucky gulped. The group were led by Lucky into second district, where they found Zeke and Zim surrounded by shadows, soldiers and tornado steps! "Oh no! They were pulled into the door with us, and now they're in trouble!" Whisk cried. Zeke glanced in their direction and flew up above the action. "Oh... The cat with the key is here to mess up my new friends, huh? We'll see who gets messed up, luckless! Get 'em, heartless!" he ordered. "...Hey, half of these heartless are MINE!" Zim protested. Travis produced a spear while Gator clutched his Keyblade. "They're bad guys! Don't worry, kitty cats! I'll tackle 'em!" Gator cried, running in to attack the heartless with Travis behind him. "Was Zeke always able to call the heartless?" Lucky wondered. Whisk pulled out her wand. "Who cares! We should try convincing him it's a bad idea! Fire!!" she shouted, flinging a fireball from her wand to destroy a soldier as it came at them! "...I hope it doesn't pop back up nearby..." she babbled. "Travis said it doesn't work like that! Don't worry, just fight!" Tails said, getting his shield ready.

Zeke growled as his heartless minions were getting destroyed. "You punk! You think you're so big now that you got that key? Well... How's THIS for big!!" he snarled, a dark aura surrounding him before suddenly, a heartless comprised of several parts crashed down from the sky! Its hands, feet and head separated from its body and approached each member of the group separately. It was a guard armor! Travis struck the body with his spear. "Lucky! Gator! Deal with his limbs!" he shouted. Gator blocked with his Keyblade as the heartless' feet kicked at him. "Stupid shoes! I'll give you the boot!" he shouted. Lucky ran in terror as the hands formed a crazy propeller to try and attack him. "Meee-yow!! This is too much, too soon! L-little help, guys!?" he shouted. Tails was busy with the remaining smaller heartless, while Whisk was trying to zap the guard armor's head as it stalked around her. "You creep! What are you staring at!?" she growled. Those hands were closing in on Lucky, looking ready to grab him, so he had no choice. He slashed his Keyblade at them, and they vanished with ease. "Huh...? Hmm... That was easy!" he babbled. Gator was just finishing up with the feet at that moment, too. "Don't get too excited, the hands are the weakest part!" he stated. Lucky frowned, but then joined Gator and Travis in taking on the body as the head joined it, and it started firing large bolts of energy at them! Meanwhile overhead, the Gummi Ship was arriving, piloted by Winston the Moogle. He could see the battle below through his window. "Well, I'm not landing there... Dear me, that's a big heartless..." he babbled. Tails noticed the ship overhead, too. "Great, our ride's here. Let's wrap this up, then. Whisk! Do you know Stop magic?" he asked, glancing at Zeke and Zim. "Hey, what are they up to?" Zim murmured. "Stop!!" Whisk cried, freezing the dragon and Zeti in place! Meanwhile, Lucky and Gator slashed at the guard armor together, causing it to collapse and release its captive heart. "Well done!" Travis sighed, "We'll make a master of you yet... Or at least a hero." he said.

Zeke and Zim were soon tied up aboard Winston's ship, the Galestrom. Travis scratched his head awkwardly. "You sure you wouldn't rather I take them? I'm going to see Master Yen Sid to update him on your progress. He'll know what to do with those two." he said. "No prison can hold ZIM!!" the Zeti howled. Lucky shrugged. "They belong in my world. I should take them home next time I'm there." he said. "Whenever that'll be..." Whisk sighed. Tails nodded. "Apparently we're quite far from your home now. We might as well look for Sonic on the way." he stated. Winston stood at the entrance to his ship. "It's going to be awfully crowded in here if you're all coming. I wonder if this town still has a gummi business so I can expand the ship a bit..." he murmured. "It'll be fine, Winston. Besides, we need Lucky. His key will come in handy." Tails stated. Travis nodded and started to leave, but Gator stuck around. "You kids still need more training! I can't send you out like you are now!" he babbled. Travis glanced back at Gator to see where he was going with this. "No offense, but I think I can practice random swinging all on my own." Lucky said. Gator didn't seem like a really good teacher in all seriousness. "Now, now! It'll be fun! I'll train you like a proper pirate! And I know just the world to do it!" he grinned. Whisk looked intrigued. "You'll take us to another world? Sounds interesting...maybe we should give it a shot!" she said to Lucky. Travis nodded. "Alright, I know where HE wants to go. I'll pick him up with my ship after I've been to see Yen Sid so...do me a favor and leave him there." he said, heading off. "Wait! Where are we going?? You can't just hijack my ship!" Winston babbled as Gator stormed into his ship anyway. "I'm captain now! Hey, you don't have a warp gummi? Well, I was gonna eat mine, but I guess you can have it..." Gator babbled. Tails, Whisk and Lucky squeezed onto the ship, too, Lucky looking somewhat bewildered by everything that was happening. "Don't lose your head, kid... Because then the heartless get your heart!" Zeke grinned. Lucky inched away from him in his seat. "Don't make us regret not sending you to get punished by a wizard." he muttered, "Hey, what's a warp gummi, anyway?" he asked...

The warp gummi sped them to their destination, those unprepared for the speed of the trip letting out screams as they were thrown from their seats! The ship arrived at a beautiful collection of islands surrounded by clear waters. "Neverland ahoy! Drop anchor, poof-head!" Gator said to Winston. "...Anchor?" Winston mumbled. Lucky groaned as he struggled to get out from under Tails and Whisk, who'd fallen on him. "Why doesn't this thing have seat belts?" he groaned, "And, uh... if we can go that fast, what's to stop us from taking Zeke straight home?" he asked. Gator shrugged. "Not a thing! But since we're here, we might as well get some training in!" he grinned. As the ship landed, Tails turned to Winston. "Guard the prisoners, I guess..." he said. Winston had an awkward look. "Seriously? You need to start paying me munny, kupo..." he muttered.

Gator led the group to a grand looking pirate ship. He was quick to bring them aboard, where they found the captain looking rather indignant to find intruders aboard his vessel. "James Hook, old pal! Are you taking good care of my ship??" Gator giggled, shaking the red coated pirate's hook hand. Lucky stared at him awkwardly. Captain hook had both a comical and imposing image all at once, with frilly, fancy clothes, a pointy mustache, and a hook hand along with a sword at his hip. The captain looked pretty miffed at Gator, too. "YOUR ship?! How dare you! Smee!! Help me with these-" Before he could finish speaking, Gator continued. "I've brought these kids here, they're wet behind the ears but I figured some good 'ol pirate training would get them in fighting shape!" he stated, elbowing the captain much to his annoyance. The paunchy Mr. Smee rushed out. He was an even more comical-looking fellow with his striped shirt and bulbous nose. "Capp'n? Should I get the boys an' have this riff-raff walk the plank?" he asked. Hook rubbed his head under his hat with his good hand. "Hold, Smee... Fighting shape, you say?" he asked, the wheels in his head turning. Lucky turned to Whisk. "Does he look like a guy who'd

be a good trainer to you?" he asked. Whisk shrugged. "Better than Gator, maybe." she reasoned. Hook got a wide grin as an idea formed. "Right, mates! What say we go ashore and you show me what you can do? Maybe by joining forces we can take care of a little problem I've been having for quite some time..." he said, glancing at Smee with a knowing wink, "Some extra help could be the end of that blasted Peter Pan!" he whispered to his first mate, who nodded in agreement.

However, once they went ashore, it quickly became apparent that Captain Hook wasn't too interested in having anything to do with Lucky and company's training. He instead put that task to Mr. Smee, while he went off to "secure the perimeter," which could be code for any number of other pirate shenanigans. Smee set up some dummy targets for Lucky to train against, all oddly dolled up in green outfits with feathered caps. "Let's practice some swashbuckling basics. Your friends can borrow some of our swords, too. Let's start off with some simple thrusts! Aim for the heart and...begin!" Smee instructed. Tails held a pirate sword awkwardly. "I don't wanna be a pirate..." he muttered. "What kinda attitude is that!? Go on, matey, get stabby!" Gator said, pushing him forward. Lucky bashed the target clumsily with his Keyblade. "No, no, no! That's not right! Like this!" Smee shouted, comically flailing his arms without a sword to properly show anything. During all of this, a red-headed boy was looking down on the action, held up only by happy thoughts. He wore green clothes very similar to the targets Lucky was badly attacking. "Hmm... 'Ol Hook's found some new stooges. Not doing so well against fake Peter Pan, so I guess it'd be a yawn for me to go against them in person!" he muttered. A small fairy girl in a green dress flew up to Peter, glowing with the light of pixie dust. Her speech sounded like a light ringing, but Peter could understand her. "What's that, Tinker Bell? Prisoners? Tied up...? Hmm... Sounds like more of Hook's kinda trouble. Lead the way!"

The fairy soon led him to the Galestrom, and Peter landed near it with a curious look on his face. "This ship... Isn't it the same kinda ship Sora used? Hm, but not quite the same..." he said, checking inside. Winston was asleep at the controls, so Pan brought a finger to his lips, signalling Tinker Bell to be quiet. He whispered to Zeke and Zim upon finding them. "Are you two alright? Who did this to ya?" he asked. Zim was about to no doubt say something stupid when Zeke nudged him quiet. "Brave boy... We were captured by dark beings, seeking to bring evil to your world! But if you release us, we will help you stop them!" he said. "We will?" Zim babbled. Pan rubbed his chin. "Well, alright. Hook's bad enough without other bad guys. Help me out here, Tink!" So, Pan untied Zeke while Tink worked on Zim. Once freed, Zeke promptly tied up and gagged Winston! "Scout ahead, boy... We'll be along!" he told Pan. He nodded and left with Tinker Bell. "You stink, Zeke. I didn't know you were a HERO!" Zim snapped. Zeke rolled his eyes. "We're not heroes, I said that so he'd untie us! C'mon...it's time for some payback!" he grunted. Zim stared as though this were a revelation. "Ohhh... I have much to learn from you!" he said.

Hook had returned after a while, and was notably frustrated with the lack of progress Lucky's group was showing. "Come on, you bilge rats! Can't you do any better than that!? Why, if Peter Pan were here, he'd..." he babbled. "He'd probably do this!" came a voice before Hook leapt up with a yelp, his bottom poked by a small knife. "Yaaaah!! P-p-pan!! You meddling brat!! Boys, get him!!" the pirate shouted. Smee scrambled to the ship, aiming to rally Hook's actual pirate crew, but until then it was up to Lucky. "Wait a minute... This guy's just a kid." Lucky muttered. Just then, pirate heartless came charging into the area from behind Pan, making Hook jump in fright! "H-heartless, too!? I thought I was rid of those disgusting things!" he shivered, rushing toward his ship as well. Tails and Whisk parried the swords of the pirate heartless with their own training swords. "Yikes!! D-do you think that Pan kid summoned them?" Whisk stammered. Peter Pan ignored the heartless for the moment and flew over towards Lucky. "So...training to take me on, huh?" he asked in a taunting voice. Thinking he was going to attack, Lucky

struck with his Keyblade, only to be blocked by Pan's knife! "Hah! You gotta do better than that!" he smirked. "Call off the heartless!" Lucky shouted, pushing back against the knife and sending Pan tumbling backward! Tinker Bell flew up behind him and gave him a kick in the head. "Ow!! What the...fairy?" he babbled. More pirate heartless started bearing down on them, and Lucky and Pan stared at each other a moment with tense expressions before both turned and slashed their blades at the heartless, destroying a couple! "...You didn't call the heartless! Then who did?" Lucky wondered. "That's what I'd like to know!" shouted Hook, returning from his ship with Smee in tow. It seemed his crew was too afraid of the heartless to come ashore. "I'll deal with ye later, Pan... Expelling those beasts from Neverland takes precedence!" he declared. Pan crossed his arms. "Huh... Never thought I'd agree with you, Hook!" he chuckled. Tails scratched his head. "You don't think Zeke and Zim could've gotten loose?" he asked. Tinker Bell hid behind Peter with a look of sheepishness on her face. "Uhh... Were they tied up in a... funny-looking ship?" Pan asked. Hook scoffed before walking off. "Blast that Pan. I knew he'd be somehow responsible for this!" he grumbled.

Searching along with Peter Pan, Lucky's group eventually tracked Zeke and Zim to a skull shaped islet, where they were calling forth more pirate and air pirate heartless. "Ugh. You got away from the first wave. Well, we'll get you yet!" Zeke grunted. "Yeah, nobody ties us up!" Zim added. Pan crossed his arms as he floated above them. "Hey, boys, whatever happened to helping me stop the 'dark beings?' Looks to me like you're the ones bringing them here!" he noted. Zeke chuckled. "Bit slow, kiddo. Now we'll take you out, too!" he shouted. "Oh, no you won't!" came the voice of Hook, stepping out between Zeke and Pan. He drew his sword. "Peter Pan is MINE!!" he declared. Shrugging, Zeke began to flap his wings to fly off, Zim jumping on his back. "Catch us if you can, kids!" he chuckled, escaping through the eye of the giant skull. Lucky turned to chase them, but found heartless in his path. Tails brought out his shield and Whisk took out her wand. "Enough of this pirate stuff! Let's stop the heartless AND Hook!" the fox said. Hook was already locked in a sword battle with Pan. "Today's the day!! I feel it! Prepare to face revenge for feeding my hand to that crocodile, Peter Pan!!" he declared. Lucky blocked an air pirate's kick with his Keyblade, and ran over to help Peter Pan with Captain Hook. His rage seemed to be drawing the heartless to their battle specifically, and Pan would need the backup. "No...ganging...up!!" Lucky yelled, swatting the swashbuckling heartless with his key while Pan maneuvered Hook off-balance with his airborne swordplay. "You think you have me cornered! Ha!!" The captain tried to keep Pan's knife blocked with his sword and strike with his hook, but Tinker Bell flew in and knocked off his hat, startling him! "Blighted pixie!! Stay out of this!!" he growled, scrambling for his hat. Pan took the opportunity to poke his bottom again. "Yoooooww!! You scurvy cheating codfish!!" he shouted. Lucky's group were taking out the last of the heartless at this point, and as the tide turned against him, Hook's mustache twitched as he swore he heard a ticking. "Tick...tock... Is that...the clock? Aaaaaahhh!! Th-the crocodile!!" he shouted, leaping into a run for the exit to the cavern, where Gator was walking in. "Hey! I'm no croc!! Geez, what a jerk..." he grumbled, holding up a timer once Hook was gone. "Training time is up, guys! You'd better get a move on!" he said. Lucky panted and nodded. "Well, we've survived some fights with heartless... Maybe we'll be okay." he smiled. Pan lowered near him and patted him on the back. "You all did pretty good! For pirate-trained, that is!" he smirked. Lucky chuckled softly. "I think I'm done with pirates!" he grinned. Gator pouted. "Hmph! I see when I'm not wanted!" he snapped, prompting everyone to chuckle.

Zeke and Zim weren't sure how to leave Neverland. They couldn't fly the Galestrom even if they entertained the notion of stealing it. As they roamed the world, it seemed for a bit that they were stuck. However, they soon found Garland, looking over a breathtaking waterfall. "A place where children don't

grow. Where men don't wither and die. This is a world where time has stopped. In the grand scheme, what use is there for such a world? Where nothing can ever be changed..." Garland mused. Zim bowed before him. "Dark master! We've found you!" he said. Garland turned to them and stared. "...Who are you?" he asked. Zeke pulled Zim to his feet. "We're a couple of guys that can call the heartless, lookin' for a job." he smirked. Garland stood silent for a moment. "Pledge your service to me. There is much to do. Bow down, like your friend... Now!" he ordered, his piercing glare frightening Zeke enough to obey. Garland looked back out at the waterfall. "I require suitable sources of three powers. One of light... one of darkness... and one of chaos." he said, glancing at them. Zim tilted his head. "Uhhh... I think we only got darkness covered." he stated. Garland clasped his hands behind his back. "Not for what I'm planning. If we find suitable examples of each power... I shall use them to create a new power... one that can reshape all worlds to my will... I will call it... Chaos Hearts!"

To be continued...

3 - Power, Wisdom and Courage

Chaos Hearts

Chapter 3 - Power, Wisdom and Courage

World - Hyrule Kingdom

Note: Sonic the Hedgehog and related characters are (c) SEGA and Sonic Team. You knew that, right?

GeneX and related fanchars are (c) 2BIT (TheGreatGator), the author.

Kingdom Hearts is (c) Disney & Square Enix. Related elements belong to their respective companies.

The Legend of Zelda is (c) Nintendo.

"Like the sun, I run, into the heat of day!

Like a knight, I'll fight, until the fight is won!

In a rage, I'll save, each and every, each and every, each and everyone,

'till this war is won!" - Knight of the Wind, Sonic & the Black Knight

Thinking of you, wherever you are...

In Traverse Town, Lucky was informed that Master Yen Sid was the one who secured his transport to this new world. Travis and Gator, on Yen Sid's behalf, arrived to train Lucky to wield his keyblade, so that he can protect the worlds while the other keyblade masters deal with the looming threat of a Keyblade War.

After defeating a newly-darkness empowered Zeke and Zim, Gator brought Lucky's group to Neverland via Winston the Moogle's ship, the Galestrom. Once there, Gator convinced Captian Hook to help train Lucky in combat, but the pirate had his own plans for his trainees. Meanwhile, Peter Pan came across Zeke and Zim tied up and freed them, soon to regret it as they unleashed Heartless upon Neverland. As Lucky teamed with Pan to try and catch Zeke, Hook tried to take the opportunity to take out his nemesis, only to be defeated.

Zeke and Zim encountered Garland, whose future self traveled through time to imbue them with dark power and set them on their path. Finding present-day Garland, Zeke and Zim pledged themselves to his service in exchange for passage off Neverland. Garland needs three sources of power; one of light, one of darkness and one of chaos. Combined, he plans to use them to create a new power; Chaos Hearts!

Now, let us journey to a new world...

Garland sat upon a great throne as Zeke and Zim stood before him. "Seems pretty successful... What's he need us for?" Zim murmured. "Quiet, don't tick him off..." Zeke whispered. Garland glared at them from the darkness under his helmet. "You need to be focused for our task. I will send you to scout out worlds and sow chaos, while I seek openings to take what I need..." he told them, holding out his hand and using darkness to project an image. It appeared to be a trio of golden triangles, forming a yet larger triangle. "There is a great source of light in the world I am sending you to. It might be perfect for my designs... I want you to scout out this world. Seek out this 'Triforce...'" he commanded, raising his other

hand to open a corridor of darkness nearby for the pair of them to travel through. Zim hurried to the dark pathway with enthusiasm. "A new world for Zim of the Zeti to conquer! Gya ha ha ha!" he cackled. Zeke scoffed and headed over to join him. "Try not to get in my way, kid. But hey, without Lucky and his twerps to bother us, this should be cake." he snickered. Garland sneered at them. "Do not lower your guard. Darkness has a way of drawing in light to oppose it..." he warned as Zeke and Zim entered the portal. Garland then stood up, slowly approaching the portal himself. "The Triforce is likely too powerful... But this is a good test mission for those two fools..." he mused.

Lucky's group had landed in a vast and beautiful kingdom. Winston told them the name of the kingdom was Hyrule. The Moogle joined them as they roamed the vast field connecting the different areas of the kingdom, planning to gather supplies for their coming journeys. "The bushes here are often filled with Rupees, which I can exchange for Munny in certain places..." Winston stated. Tails was busy tweaking the device he used to detect the presence of darkness. "Too bad Gator had to leave us. I feel like we could've used more training... Wait, what am I saying?" he mumbled. Gator's training wasn't great. Whisk looked a bit overwhelmed by the vastness of their surroundings. "So...where do we go?" she asked. As if in response, heartless emerged to surround them! "Uhh, we stay here for now!" Lucky gulped. These heartless were like goblins, carrying great clubs and having a thorny heart symbol on their chests. Lucky gripped his keyblade and struck at one of their clubs, grunting as he pushed against it. "Yaaah! They're strong!" he yelped. Winston ducked into a bush to hide. "Have at it, kupo! I'm, uh... right here if you need me!" he stammered. Tails equipped his mechanical shield and blocked a club attack as it came at him. "Wanna try some impressive magic, Whisk??" he asked. Whisk twirled her wand. "Fire!!" she called, burning a nearby goblin and causing it to leap around in a panic as it tried to put the flame out. Lucky jumped away from the club strikes of the other goblin and gritted his teeth. "You gotta teach me magic, Whisk..." he sighed, "Meee-yow!! If I live!!" he gasped as a couple goblins came at him quickly! Before they could pummel him, someone dashed onto the scene, slicing a sword in a wide arc through both goblins! The blade seemed to glow briefly, and the goblins groaned before their darkness dispersed and the hearts they contained flew into the sky. Lucky glanced at the person who saved him; A human boy with blonde hair, wearing green clothes complete with a floppy hat. The hero then turned to the other goblins, a fairy flying ahead of him to suggest his next target. "Over here, Link!" the fairy called. With a crash of his sword, Link felled the beasts one by one, making Lucky's group look like amateurs in the process. "...I feel so inadequate..." Lucky sighed. "Aw, I'm sure you'll catch up." Whisk said, patting his shoulder. Tails picked the cowering Winston up out of the bush before glancing at Link. "Uhh, thanks... But who are you?" he asked. The fairy seemed eager to do all the talking. "My name is Navi, and the boy who rescued you is Link... Wielder of the Master Sword and hero of Hyrule!" she announced.

Link looked a bit bashful at how Navi played him up, but there was no time for that. "Um, so... Are heartless a common thing around here?" Whisk asked. Navi glanced at her. "Hmm, you mean those shadow creatures? No, they appeared quite recently, along with the revival of the King of Evil... Ganondorf." she said ominously. Winston gulped. "And with that, I'll wait at the ship now..." he said, rushing off. "King of Evil does sound pretty bad..." Tails said. Link nodded, and Navi continued. "Ganondorf seeks the ultimate power of the Triforce, a relic that can grant any wish its holder desires. But it was split in three pieces the last time he tried to use it, and Ganondorf only has the Triforce of Power. He needs all three pieces to complete the Triforce and make his evil wish...and to that end, he is hunting Hyrule's princess, Zelda." she explained. Lucky scratched his head. "Yeahhh... Sounds like a long story behind all of this, but the gist of it is that we gotta protect the princess, right? We'll do our best

to help you with that, Link!" he offered. Link looked a bit surprised, and Tails took Lucky aside. "Do we have time for that?" he asked. "Well, this Ganon...dork... is using the heartless, right? Shouldn't we put a stop to that?" Lucky reasoned. Navi seemed to be conferring with Link at the same time, and the verdict was in once Lucky turned back around. "Okay, we'd be glad for your help!" the fairy said, "We were just on our way to Death Mountain. A mysterious ninja named Sheik told us that the key to defeating Ganondorf might be there." she told them. Whisk let out an intrigued whistle. "Mysterious ninjas... This world is exciting!" she said. "Uhh... DEATH Mountain?" Lucky murmured. Link pointed off in the distance. A volcano with a ring of smoke around it could be seen. Tails nudged Lucky. "Still think this is a good idea?" he asked. Lucky watched as Link started in the direction of the volcano, and he steeled his nerves. "If a hero like Link is willing to go there, I should be willing to try too! Let's go!" he said, trying to sound tough as he followed after the hero of Hyrule. Whisk and Tails glanced at each other awkwardly. "Are we biting off more than we can chew?" Whisk asked. "Almost definitely... Hopefully Link can carry us..." Tails said.

The group passed through Kakariko Village on the way, earning stares from some of the villagers as they went. "Are we maybe supposed to be in disguise?" Lucky asked Tails. "Hmm, there is the whole world order thing, but I think we'll be good if we don't stay long." he stated. As they headed for the trail to Death Mountain, Zeke and Zim stood atop a cliff watching them. "Boss was right! Those twerps found us! Ugh!" Zim groaned. Zeke snickered. "Well, we can slow them down pretty easy... RAWR!!" The dragon's roar drew the group's attention and stopped them in their tracks. "Zeke? Oh, just what we need..." Whisk sighed. Goblin heartless appeared beside Zeke and Zim, each of them grabbing bombs that appeared to be growing out of the cliffside like flowers. "Uh oh... Watch out! Bomb flowers!" Navi warned. The group backed up as the bombs were detonated against the cliff, causing a rockslide that blocked their path forward! "Haha! Try to catch us now, losers!" Zeke taunted, flying away with Zim on his back! Lucky laughed. "Ha! We can just have Whisk teleport us across! Right?" he asked with a grin. Whisk's ears drooped. "I, uh... never learned that spell." she sighed. Tails frowned. "Well, now what?" he wondered. Link looked around curiously, and then gasped as he spotted something...or someONE standing atop the rubble! It was a girl in ninja attire, her face covered by bandages. "Hey...that must be Sheik!" Whisk gasped. Sheik was strumming a harp as the group looked at her. "The cruel march of time seems to take more than it gives. Doors close around us, and it becomes hard to uncover new opportunities sometimes..." she said. Link watched her, intently listening. He seemed like he almost knew who was behind those bandages, but couldn't put his finger on it. "The brave and clever do not dwell on these losses, but instead look to what they have." Sheik continued, "Hero... There is a passage to Death Mountain through the aquatic caverns of Zora's Domain. Alter your course and you will still reach your goal." she told them, "May we meet again safely..." With that, Sheik stowed her harp and tossed a deku seed, its blinding light distracting the group for an instant, long enough for her to vanish. "Wow... She is awesome!" Whisk smiled. "I feel MORE inadequate..." Lucky sighed. "Yeah... I don't think you'll ever be that cool." Tails shrugged.

Unfortunately, the heartless were already at Zora's Domain. Goblins and blue rhapsodies were chasing the fishlike Zora people to and fro as they panicked. Amidst the chaos was a dark man with wild red hair and a flowing cape. It was Ganondorf, and he let out a sadistic laugh as he watched the Zoras flee. "Your cowardice is amusing. But enough of that. Who among you desires to live enough to tell me what I wish to know? Where is Zelda!?" he shouted. Garland stood behind him in the shadows, looking unimpressed. "This show of power is pointless. If we try things my way, I can gather the pieces of the Triforce for you by the evening." he said, "...Besides, this show of force isn't working." Indeed, one Zora

among the rest had stood up to fight. Using attacks that were like dancing with the water itself, the Zora princess, Ruto, was pushing back the Goblin heartless to the best of her ability. Ganondorf smirked at this. "This is perfect... Someone important to make an example of." he sneered, glancing at Garland, "Leave me, vermin. There's room for only one King of Evil in this land... And I'm not fool enough to expect Hyrule handed to me on a platter for nothing!" he snarled. At that moment, Lucky and the others dashed into the area. "What the... the water is frozen!" Lucky stammered. "Link!!" Navi gasped, looking across to Ganondorf. "That must be them...whoa! The darkness detector is going haywire from those two!" Tails gulped. "Who's the other guy?" Whisk asked. Garland took the opportunity to duck into a corridor of darkness. "See you later, key bearer..." he whispered. Ruto looked to Link and gasped. "The Master Sword! ...Very well...let's work together!" she said. Ganondorf grunted and pointed straight at them. "My dark legions will devour you, boy! And your friends, as well!" he said with a heinous laugh. The heartless started coming at them, and Lucky gulped. "Well, if we stop him here, maybe we won't need to go to Death Mountain..." he muttered. Ganondorf smirked. "Death Mountain, is it? Could that be where your precious Zelda is?" he grinned. Whisk scowled at Lucky. "Uhh... Ooops..." he chuckled softly. Ganondorf started to walk away at this point, his escape covered by his heartless minions! Link began to strike at them with the Master Sword, but he couldn't destroy them fast enough to catch the evil king! Lucky batted his keyblade at the blue rhapsodies, having an easier time defeating them, and Whisk, Tails and Ruto also pitched in to make quick work of the heartless, but Ganondorf was already gone.

Tails sighed. "Next time, don't mention where we're going to the bad guy..." he told Lucky. The cat really felt down now. "Maybe I shoulda waited on the ship with Winston..." he sighed. "Don't despair." Ruto told them, "I can lead you to a shortcut to the Goron City in the heart of Death Mountain." she stated. Whisk smiled. "Great! Good thing we ran into you!" she said. Ruto gave Link a longing gaze. "It has been a long time... You do remember your vow to marry me, don't you?" she asked, making Link gasp and blush. Lucky had a completely stunned look as well. "Guuuh... He what?" the cat babbled. Navi fluttered about nonchalantly. "That, uh... is between the two of them." she stated. Link rubbed the back of his head awkwardly, and Ruto giggled at him. "I understand. Your destiny lies elsewhere. At least permit me to aid you on your quest... Take this, Link." she said, handing him something. It appeared to be a sort of spring-loaded...grappling hook? Link turned and lifted it over his head like it was an amazing, incredible prize, and Navi boldly proclaimed "You got the hookshot! Using this, you can grab onto faraway objects and pull yourself across chasms!" Lucky, Whisk and Tails glanced at each other like the hero and fairy were a little nuts, but Lucky shrugged. "He's the big hero." he said. Ruto then motioned for them to follow, taking them to the secret path that would lead them to Goron City. They had to swim a bit, which left Lucky and Whisk a bit annoyed. "Nobody told me I'd have to get wet..." Lucky groaned. "My wings are waterlogged..." Whisk sighed. Tails dried off his darkness detector once they were on the other side. "Good thing my gadgets are waterproof... Uh oh, I'm picking up a signal..." he gulped, "It seems like the heartless are already loose in the Goron City!" he warned. Link's eyes narrowed, and he ran off ahead. "Aaaand there he goes... Kid doesn't talk much, does he?" Lucky murmured. "Well, come on! He might need our help!" Whisk said, following after him. "...Your help, maybe..." Lucky sighed.

The Goron chief, Darunia, was busy whirling around a giant hammer to smash the Goblin heartless surrounding him. Sheik had joined the fray as well, using various ninja tricks to keep the heartless at bay. Link arrived to find that they were fighting on a high cliff of the multi-leveled Goron City, but the hero was pretty low. He pulled out the hookshot and fired it to pull himself higher while Lucky and co. arrived. "Hey! How are we supposed to follow!?" Lucky shouted. "...Take the stairs..." Tails sighed. "Sorry, the stairs are occupied!" shouted Zim, as he hopped out with an entourage of soldier heartless joining him!

Zeke dropped down with a pair of wyvern heartless at his side as well. "This city's ours, chumps! Why don't you run along home?" the dragon smirked. Lucky gripped his keyblade angrily. "I'm not going home without taking you with me!" he shouted. Tails charged at Zim with his shield, smacking aside soldiers on his way! Zim pushed back against the shield easily, demonstrating his deceptive strength. "Think I can't take you, pipsqueak?" the zeti smirked. "Thunder!!" Whisk cried, zapping Zim and enabling Tails to knock him over! "Who are you calling pipsqueak?" Tails muttered. Lucky leapt at the wyverns, trying to strike them with his keyblade only for them to rise out of reach and drop back down to kick him! "Ow!! Coward! Get down here and fight fair!" he yelled. Navi flew over to one of the wyverns at that moment. "Hey!" the fairy called to Link, who shot his hookshot to grab and pull the wyvern to him, slicing it apart easily! "...I wanna do iiiit!!" Lucky whined. The battle above seemed to be going well, with Link and Darunia proving to be real powerhouses together. "Ha! I had this covered, but well met, brother!" Darunia grinned, glancing at Link. Suddenly, everyone heard a shriek come from Skeik! "Okay, up those stairs!" Lucky grunted, running right past Zeke. "But, but... I'm the big, bad dragon... Don't ignore me!" Zeke growled. As Lucky arrived overhead, he saw Sheik entrapped in some sort of crystal, Ganondorf stepping behind her. "You thought you could conceal yourself, but I can smell the Triforce of Wisdom on you... Princess!" he said with a sneer. As Sheik struggled, a glowing triangle appeared on her hand, and in a flash, the ninja was replaced with a delicate-looking princess! Link stared in shock, and Navi responded in kind. "Sh-sheik is actually... Princess Zelda!?" she gasped. "...I knew that." Darunia remarked, though turning to see her trapped, his expression turned appropriately worried.

Link charged at Ganondorf. He couldn't let the evil king get away with this! The dark lord smirked and created a barrier of darkness before him. "Even the Master Sword can't contend with the Triforce of Power. Give it up, boy." he taunted. Link struck at the dark barrier, his blade bouncing off it. Frustrated, he struck again, shouting in desperation. His courage unwavering, a glowing triangle mark soon appeared on the back of his hand, too, empowering him to shatter the dark barrier! Ganondorf gasped, but then started to wear a wide grin. "The Triforce of Courage... right under my nose..." he smirked. The dark lord reached toward Link, but then noticed Darunia, Lucky, Whisk and Tails advancing on them. Fighting all of them in this confined space was not the most favorable odds he could gain. Ganondorf rose up into the air, taking Zelda's crystal with him. "Are you listening, boy? You have something I want, so I'll make you an offer. Make haste to my tower within the day. Do this, and you can prolong your precious Zelda's life!" he declared. With a great flash of dark energy, Ganondorf and Zelda were gone, leaving a worried Link behind. "...We need to hurry to Ganondorf's Tower! Quick, Link!" Navi said. Lucky looked around. "Hey, where'd Zeke go?" he asked. Whisk shrugged. "Maybe that Ganon-dude scared him off." she suggested. Darunia saw Link looking for the nearest exit and stepped after him, setting down his massive hammer. "Hold on, brother. You'll never make it in time like that. Zelda led you here for a reason. She'd entrusted me with something that I think will help you out a great deal now." he told him. Link turned to Darunia curiously, and he smirked. "This is the royal family's secret treasure! Guess Zelda thought only the Gorons were tough enough to keep it safe! Now I'm countin' on you to tough it out from here, brother!" he said, handing something to Link. Once again, the hero lifted it high over his head, so Lucky could see what it was. It...appeared to be some sort of fancy flute. Navi looked quite excited. "You've got the Ocarina of Time! Its melodies have special powers! Perhaps these powers will lead us to Ganondorf?" she asked. "...Everyone keeps giving him presents..." Lucky murmured. "Where does he keep all this stuff?" Whisk added.

Darunia got out some bongos in a moment. "Zelda also taught me a melody. It should get you to Ganondorf's Tower in a flash." he said, starting to teach Link the song. During the music lesson, Lucky and his friends got in a huddle. "We shouldn't let him go. He's playing right into Ganon-donk's hands."

Tails stated. Lucky frowned. "But we have to go! He's gonna kill Zelda! ...And without Link, what chance do we have of winning? I'm useless..." he sighed. Whisk patted him on the shoulder. "Cut it out!" she said before socking that same shoulder. "Ow!" Lucky yelped. "You're not useless. You can do things Link can't." she said. Lucky groaned, rubbing his shoulder. "Like get beat up by a girl?" he frowned. Tails sighed. "She's right, Lucky. Have more confidence. We need you, buddy." he said. Finally, Navi flew amidst the trio. "Are you coming? We're ready to go!" she said. Lucky nodded. "...We don't have to sing backup for you, do we?" he asked. Link shook his head and brought the Ocarina to his lips as the others came over. As he played a haunting melody, the group was whisked away by a magical light, carried off to Ganon's Tower, which they soon saw was a tall and foreboding tower on a dark and ominous mountain. They could faintly hear organ music within. "Not too late to turn back..." Tails murmured. Link clutched the Master Sword and approached the massive doors. Lucky raised his hand with a question. "Hey, we magicked ourselves here, how did Ganon-doofus get here so fast?" he asked. "...Uh...magic..." Whisk murmured with a dumbfounded expression. With that "plot hole" sorted, the group opened the doors and crept into Ganon's Tower...

The tower was occupied by Ganondorf's own forces rather than the heartless. Skeletal Stalfos warriors were the primary threat as Link led the others through the tower. Lucky set his focus on downing the easier enemies, the Keese bats that would fly down to get in their way. "Don't just settle, Lucky. You won't improve if you don't take risks." Tails told him. As Link found his path barred by a trio of Stalfos, Lucky considered those words. "Alright, I guess I should try..." he said. However, before they could do anything, a group of Goblin heartless leapt on the Stalfos from behind and began to beat them into a pile of broken bones! "Huh...??" Whisk murmured, turning to find Zeke and Zim walking into the room. "No need to thank us, kids. Run along ahead..." Zeke grinned. Link gave them a confused look, but then turned to continue his trek up the tower. "Wait!" Lucky stammered, "...Why are you helping us, Zeke?" he asked. Zim took issue with that. "We're not helping YOU, you pitiful feline, we are working on a glorious scheme--" Before he could say more, Zeke picked him up and covered his mouth. "He's just hyper, ignore him. I've had a change of heart, buddy... Don't you believe me?" he smirked. Tails stared at him, eyes narrowing. "You guys must be after the Triforce for yourselves for some reason... So you want to make sure all three pieces come together. You're hoping if we beat Ganondorf, you can take the complete Triforce from us!" he reasoned out. Zeke dropped Zim and growled. "Why does every version of you gotta be so smart? Alright, let's smash 'em!" he growled. Whisk turned to Lucky. "...Go catch up to Link! We can handle these two clowns!" she told him. "You sure?" Lucky asked, a bit concerned. Whisk nodded. "Trust me, like I'm trusting you... Also, look out!" she yelped, teleporting aside as a Goblin came at them, whirling its club! Lucky jumped out of the way with a "Meee-yow" and started towards the stairs Link had gone up. Zeke cackled as he fled. "That's it, pipsqueak, run away! That's all you'll ever be good for!" he taunted. Whisk called back to him as he hesitated. "Go, Lucky! Don't listen to Zeke! You can help more at Link's side! Believe in yourself!" she told him. Lucky took a breath and nodded, going after the hero. He wasn't sure how he'd help against the King of Evil, but he knew he had to try.

Ganondorf was the one playing the organ when they arrived at the top of the tower. Zelda was trapped in the crystal near him. Lucky caught up to Link as he approached the Evil King slowly. "All right, you! You're gonna let the princess go!" Lucky shouted, clutching his keyblade. Ganondorf let out a chuckle, slowly getting up from his seat. "I have a counter-offer, kid... The hero will throw down the Master Sword right now, or he will watch me pry the Triforce of Wisdom from Zelda by snuffing out her life! Then, I will do the same to you... So think of your future. Give up the Triforce willingly and live, or put up a fight, and I promise you Zelda will die before you reach me!" he sneered. As Lucky listened to Ganondorf's threats, he looked around the room nervously. What could he do here? His eyes thought he saw an odd flash of

light for a moment... a keyhole. It was faint, but it seemed to be on the front of the crystal. Like it was calling out to him. Lucky defiantly pointed his keyblade. "Here's my counter-counter offer!" he said, a beam of light passing from his keyblade to the crystal, unlocking Zelda's prison and causing it to vanish! As Ganondorf looked in shock, Zelda lobbed a deku nut to distract him! In the next instant, she was by Link's side! "You've lost, Ganondorf! Now that we are united, it is two Triforce pieces against one! You can't overcome us!" Zelda warned him. Ganondorf wiped his eyes free of light and started to cackle wildly. "Heh heh heh... Heeeeh heh heh ha ha haaaa!! You foolish children! This changes nothing! I can still pry the Triforce from your cold dead bodies!" he shouted, raising his hand to show the glowing mark of the Triforce of Power! "I have more than just Power! I am fueled by darkness itself! So use all the trinkets you like! In the end, I will bring death and calamity to you all...and Hyrule will be MINE!!" Lucky backed up nervously, seeing darkness overtake Ganondorf's body, only the Triforce of Power glowing as a source of light upon him. From the darkness, Ganondorf began to transform, but also the tower started to rumble! "Th-this place is going to fall apart!" he yelled. "Link! Let's get out of here!" Navi suggested. Link and Zelda both nodded, and they all started to flee. "Whisk, Tails!! Run for your lives!!" Lucky called down. Ganondorf's voice roared after them. "There's no escape!! I will be your demise!!" he declared.

As everyone sped outside, the tower crumbled into a pile of rubble. Looking back, Lucky and Link saw Ganondorf emerge from the rubble, now taking a monstrous form! He was a massive beast, some sort of hulking boar clutching a pair of massive blades! Link and Lucky hurried back towards the beast despite Whisk and Tails' hesitation. "Th-that thing'll pound you into the dirt! Come back!" Tails gasped. Zelda went to join them, holding a great bow. "They'll need my help..." she said. Once they got close, a wall of flame blocked Whisk and Tails from approaching, as well as Zeke and Zim. "Well, guess we should watch the show..." Zeke sighed. Ganon snarled at Link and Lucky, swinging his huge blades at them and forcing them to block with their own blades, straining to hold him back. "Urrrrghhh!! Man, what do they feed you??" Lucky groaned. Zelda stood back and produced a glowing arrow of light, aiming it at Ganon's head. "This will weaken him..." she said, shooting the beast right between the eyes and causing him to double back, roaring in pain! Link took the opportunity to slash at his chest, while Ganon reacted by kicking him back! He then swatted Lucky with the broad side of his sword, knocking him over! "Yaaaahh!! Ughh... He's too big..." he groaned, holding his arm as he stood up. While Ganon and Link traded sword strikes, Lucky glanced over and saw something peculiar about the beast's tail. It seemed to be glowing. A weak spot? Lucky ran at him to try a strike at his tail, but Ganon swung his second sword at him, forcing him to leap backwards over it! Zelda saw what he was doing and nodded, adjusting her position to aim her arrow at his tail. "We'll see if this knocks him off-balance..." she said, letting her arrow fly! Ganon swiftly leapt into the air, kicking Link and swatting away the arrow with his blade! The arrow fell to the floor near Lucky while Link fell onto his back! "Hurry, Link! Get up!" Navi cried as Ganon raised his blades over him. Link positioned his sword to block as Ganon started to bring the blades down... Then, the beast roared in pain, falling to his knees! Lucky had plunged the light arrow into his glowing tail, wounding Ganon! "Now, Link! Strike Ganon with the Master Sword! And once he's weakened... I'll finish this!" Zelda cried. Link stood up and found Ganon struggling to do the same, the beast's eyes glaring with hate. It was now or never!

Moving fast, Link plunged the Master Sword into Ganon's forehead, making Tails and Whisk look away. "Eeew..." they grimaced. However, Ganon was so pulsing with dark power that he would not die. So, Zelda focused the magical power of the Triforce of Wisdom and set to her task. "With all the magic power I can muster... Ganondorf... I seal you away so that you may never threaten Hyrule again!!" With a brilliant flash of light, Ganondorf vanished, appearing somewhere else...somewhere he couldn't harm them... "Curse you, Zelda!! Do not think this seal...will hold me forever!!" he cried. As the wall of flame

died down and Zeke realized what had happened, a corridor of darkness appeared nearby to take him and Zim from Hyrule. "Aw, wait! We can fix this!" Zim protested. Zeke lifted him up and sighed. "No we can't. The Triforce is out of our reach now. We'll have to find another light source for Master Garland..." he murmured. Tails and Whisk ran to Lucky's side, looking relieved. "Boy, I thought you were a goner, Lucky!" Tails sighed. "Gee, thanks a lot!" Lucky chuckled. "No, I would've teleported him out if he got in real trouble..." Whisk chuckled. Lucky stared at her. "Why didn't you teleport in to HELP??" he stammered. Link chuckled softly, smiling at them. Zelda smiled as well. "Hyrule is grateful for your aid, travelers. You have proven yourselves heroes... Just like our hero." she said, looking at Link. "They could still use some guidance though!" Navi stated, "Maybe I should go with them now!" Lucky, Whisk and Tails chuckled awkwardly. "Uhh, I don't think that'll be necessary." Lucky said. "But speaking of, I think it's time to go..." Tails noted, "The darkness in this world has been defeated, and we still need to find Sonic." he pointed out. Zelda nodded. "We wish you safe travels. Do not worry for the fate of Hyrule... We can handle it from here." she smiled, as Link smiled next to her. Lucky grinned. "I'm sure the kingdom will tell legends, of its hero Link and its princess Zelda!" he said. "...Legend of Link...? Hmmm... Ehh..." Whisk murmured, unimpressed with how that sounded.

Soon, Lucky and friends were back aboard Winston's Gummi ship, the Galestrom. As they soared away from Hyrule, Lucky looked out the window and sighed. "You guys think I'll ever be a great hero like Link?" he asked. "Nope." Winston blurted as he steered the ship. Lucky frowned. "Tell me what you REALLY think..." he sighed. Whisk placed her arm around him with a smile. "Aww, don't worry about it. I'm sure you'll do great, Lucky." she said. Tails sat back, tinkering with his shield weapon. "And if you never get any good, we can always turn to Sonic... If we ever find him..." he murmured. None of them were sure where their journey would take them next, but they'd do their best to follow Link's example and face their challenges with courage, like true heroes.

To be continued...

4 - Game On

Chaos Hearts

Chapter 4 - Game On

World - Game Central Station

Note: Sonic the Hedgehog and related characters are (c) SEGA and Sonic Team. You knew that, right?

GeneX and related fanchars are (c) 2BIT (TheGreatGator), the author.

Kingdom Hearts is (c) Disney & Square Enix. Related elements belong to their respective companies.

The Legend of Zelda, Mario, etc are (c) Nintendo

Pac-Man is (c) Bandai-Namco

Other characters & items belong to their respective companies.

"Switch on the sky and the stars glow for you.

Go see the world 'cause it's all so brand new.

Don't close your eyes 'cause your future's ready to shine.

It's just a matter of time, before we learn how to fly!

Welcome to the rhythm of the night!

There's something in the air you can't deny!" - When Can I See You Again, Owl City

Thinking of you, wherever you are...

In Traverse Town, Lucky was informed that Master Yen Sid was the one who secured his transport to this new world. Travis and Gator, on Yen Sid's behalf, arrived to train Lucky to wield his keyblade, so that he can protect the worlds while the other keyblade masters deal with the looming threat of a Keyblade War.

After defeating a newly-darkness empowered Zeke and Zim, Gator brought Lucky's group to Neverland via Winston the Moogle's ship, the Galestrom. Once there, Gator convinced Captian Hook to help train Lucky in combat, but the pirate had his own plans for his trainees. Meanwhile, Peter Pan came across Zeke and Zim tied up and freed them, soon to regret it as they unleashed Heartless upon Neverland. As Lucky teamed with Pan to try and catch Zeke, Hook tried to take the opportunity to take out his nemesis, only to be defeated.

Zeke and Zim encountered Garland, whose future self traveled through time to imbue them with dark power and set them on their path. Finding present-day Garland, Zeke and Zim pledged themselves to his service in exchange for passage off Neverland. Garland needs three sources of power; one of light, one of darkness and one of chaos. Combined, he plans to use them to create a new power; Chaos Hearts!

In the land of Hyrule, Zeke and Zim sought the Triforce to grant Garland a source of light. Teaming up with Link, Lucky and co. fought the Evil King Ganondorf, who also sought the Triforce and was powered by a piece of it; the Triforce of Power. With the aid of Princess Zelda, they sealed Ganondorf away, putting the Triforce out of Zeke's reach.

Now, let us journey to a new world...

As the Galestrom flew in the realm between worlds, something began to seem strange about the space around the ship. It began to feel darker...almost like a flat blackness. Yet somehow not dark. "We're flying through...something..." Winston murmured, looking around. "Did you get us lost?" Lucky gulped. Everyone looked out the windshield and saw...a triangle? Something triangular, to be sure. It pointed at them, but then slowly turned away, moving aside. "...What the heck was that?" Tails asked. Whisk pointed ahead. "Look out...asteroids!!" she cried. Winston squinted to see them. It appeared to be...the outline of an asteroid? In fact a couple. The triangle suddenly turned to the "asteroids" and fired a tiny laser at them, causing them to break down into smaller asteroids! "Oh, sweet Christmas, they're solid!" the moogles yelped, grabbing the controls and weaving the ship to avoid them! "What kind of crazy asteroid field is this!?" Lucky shouted as the ship tilted desperately to dodge the incoming asteroid fragments. Little did they know that, somehow, they were inside a giant arcade cabinet, and from outside their ship appeared as flat and triangular as the other triangular ship. There were too many asteroids coming at them, and soon the gummi ship was struck, sending them bouncing into another asteroid and spiraling out of control! "Mayday!! Mayday!! D-do we have a distress signal on this thing!?" Lucky shouted. "It's Gummi! We're lucky it flies!!" Whisk retorted as the group all held on tight. The ship tumbled to the edge of the screen, and into what appeared to be a sort of landing station. "Perfect! We're saved... Huh?" Winston murmured. As they looked for a place to land, they were suddenly sucked into a high-speed transport...the power cable of the arcade cabinet. Shrieking as the ship was propelled through it at high speed, the group collapsed in a heap as the ship was ejected, landing in a vast open space with several exit points, all leading to even more arcade cabinets...not that they had any idea about that. Shakily standing back up, they looked outside to see various people gradually entering from these different exit points. There was such diversity, creatures and beings of all shapes, sizes and types. Some cute, some fierce, some heroic and some downright evil-looking, all mingling together as though it were totally normal. "...Where in the worlds are we?" Tails murmured. They could hear a PA announcement overhead. "Welcome to Game Central Station! The arcade is now closed; Feel free to mingle as you wish!"

As they exited the ship to look around, an odd blue fellow in a police uniform appeared nearby and poked Lucky with a baton. "This spaceship yours? You know you can't park that here." he said with a serious tone. Lucky started to babble. "I, err... didn't..." he murmured. "You guys just flew in from Asteroids? Funny, I thought their plug was pulled. What were colorful characters like you doing in there? Not going Turbo, are ya?" he asked, producing a clipboard and looking like he was going to write a ticket or something. Tails ran up with a nervous expression. "Terribly sorry, officer, it was all a big mistake. We'll have our ship out of here just as soon as we fix it up!" he stammered. The officer glanced at Tails with a look of surprise. "Ahh... Well if you vouch for these guys, I guess I'll let you all off with a warning. As a Surge Protector, though, I'll be sure to check back on your progress at regular intervals. You'd better be putting effort into fixing up that ship!" he said before heading on his way. "...Surge Protector? What kind of strange world have we landed in, kupo?" Winston murmured. "I dunno but he seems to respect Tails..." Whisk said with a puzzled look. "Don't look at me, I've never been here." Tails shrugged, "Fix the ship, Winston. We're gonna look around." he added. As the trio headed into the station, Winston sighed. "Wanna come, Winston? No, no, someone has to fix up the ship, kupo..." the moogles babbled in a sarcastic tone. Lucky and Whisk gasped as they looked around them, walking through the area. So many varied creatures, and exits seeming to lead to various worlds. "Look at those destinations... Tapper... Street Fighter... Hero's Duty... Paperboy... Sugar Rush..." Lucky murmured, "They don't sound like places. Are we sure this isn't a big theater?" A boy on a bike suddenly whizzed past them, newspapers in his basket, and pedaled into the Paperboy gate. "I'm getting a sense of what this place

is..." Tails murmured. "Yeah? What? ...Is that a T-REX!?" Whisk babbled, glancing behind them. Lucky glanced back. Yeah, T-Rex... but it seemed remarkably calm and uninterested in eating anybody. "It's like... All these guys are just people...even if they look like monsters..." Lucky observed. Some odd white paddles passed them by, knocking a small box back and forth. "...If I didn't know any better, I'd say we just walked by Pong..." Lucky mumbled. "...I think we did." Tails stated. "What are you saying?" Whisk asked, "That this is some kind of...world of video game characters?" she wondered. Tails nodded. "Potentially. Didn't those asteroids seem strange?" he stated. Lucky gasped. "But...but...HOW? How could this even happen? It doesn't make any sense!" he stammered. Just then, he walked smack into a zombie, and witnessed its head fall off as a result! "MEEE-YOOOW!!!" Lucky shrieked as the zombie picked his head back up. "Argh, watch it... Even zombie don't regenerate outside zombie's game you know!" he grunted, shuffling by. Lucky shivered, glancing around slowly. "...We're in a video game world... How'd we get here? How do we get out?" he stammered. Tails chuckled. "Your keyblade can find the pathways between worlds for us. It probably let us in here without us realizing it." he stated.

They were still reeling from these revelations when they spotted a familiar blue spiky form ahead. White gloves. Red sneakers. It was unmistakable. "Sonic! It's Sonic!" Lucky shouted, starting towards him. Sonic's ears twitched at hearing his name called. "It's not my Sonic, Lucky..." Tails babbled, slipping on his black cloak and trying to hide his face. Whisk was also running up to meet Sonic. "We've been looking everywhere for you!" she said. Sonic glanced at Lucky and Whisk curiously. "...Do I know you? ...Hey, Tails, what's with the getup?" he asked, seeing the fox's twin tails poke out of his cloak. "Rats, my disguise has failed me..." he babbled, "I'm, uh... I'm Tails from another...game. Yeah." he said. Sonic scratched his head. "What? Has another Sonic game been plugged into the arcade? Oh, great, I've seen Pac-Man deal with this. Everybody mixed them up, it was a nightmare to be Pac 1 and Pac 2..." he murmured. Tails chuckled softly. "Ah, well... I have it on good authority that this is just a temporary stop for us..." he said. Sonic sighed. "Alright, whatever. Guess I'll give ya the tour, since you are technically my little buddy...sorta." he smirked, "So, this is our station, nonstop travel to any game in the arcade! You know that jazz. You can visit other games when the arcade is closed but avoid dying outside your game, 'cuz that's a permanent game over! Here in this arcade we call it 'going Turbo' when you try and jump to another game during arcade business hours. There's a little story behind that, but how 'bout the rundown of what game worlds you can visit?" he asked. Lucky was scarcely keeping up with all this, looking around casually until his eyes fixed on something. Something with the unmistakable symbol of the heartless upon it. It looked like some kind of hovering robot, a strafing heartless. It turned and started to head into a game called "Fix-It Felix Jr." Lucky pointed and stammered. "G-guys... Heartless! Going in there!" he said. Whisk and Tails glanced. "Huh? Well, I guess we know now why your keyblade led us here." Whisk said. Sonic looked as well. "What's a heartless?" he asked. Tails frowned. "Let's just say it'll do worse than just going Turbo if we don't stop it." he said as he, Lucky and Whisk headed for Fix-It Felix. Sonic sped ahead of them. "I should give 'ol Felix a heads up, then! C'mon, guys! Hurry up!" he shouted, racing into the game. "What kinda game gets a title like 'Fix-It Felix' anyway?" Whisk asked. "I'm guessing stuff breaks easily in there?" Lucky shrugged. They'd soon find out as they found their way to the train-like vehicle that would carry them from the station, through the power cable and into the arcade cabinet...

Zeke was standing over a diminutive man in a blue uniform, a gold hammer attached to his belt and the letters "FF" upon his hat. Zim was still shorter than him, but doing his best to intimidate the man with a threatening glare. "Uhhh, w-what can I do ya for, fellas?" the man asked nervously. Zeke looked around calmly. "This place looks awfully peaceful. You wouldn't happen to know where we could find some chaos, hm?" he asked. "Yeah! Talk!" Zim snapped. The man flinched a little, glancing as the train-like

vehicle was arriving at the small station. "Oh, my land, more of them..." he muttered, "Look there...there's no chaos here! If there was, I would fix it! C-cuz I'm Fix-it Felix Jr...you know..." he babbled. Zeke looked back to see Lucky, Whisk, Sonic and Tails headed their way. "Sonic? ...Oh, now I see..." he muttered. Zim grunted. "Huh? See what? Bah! Sonic!! I'm gonna smash him for Lord Zavok!!" he shouted. Tails sighed as the group closed in on them. "Again, not your Sonic either... What are you two doing in a video game world anyway?" he asked. Zim stomped angrily. "Don't try to confuse us with games! You're goin' down!" he shouted. "You okay, Felix?" Sonic asked. "I can't say I know what's going on..." Felix muttered. While all this was going on, a pile of bricks across the way started to rustle. A hulking man with messy hair, tatty red shirt and overalls, and giant hands rose from under the bricks and stretched. "Bricks are especially bricky today... What's all the yelling?" he mumbled sleepily, looking around. The large man started to clumsily bound his way toward them, and Lucky's mouth went agape when he saw him. "Th-that guy's humongous!" he stammered. "We just saw a T-Rex. Chill, Lucky." Whisk sighed. "Oh, hey, Ralph..." Felix waved. Ralph stood up straight, using his large hands to fix a crick in his back while he glanced down at Felix. "Hey, buddy. What's goin' on here?" he asked. Zeke smirked as he looked over the new arrival. "Hmm, you'll do..." he said while Sonic was calmly holding Zim back by his forehead, the small Zeti trying to tackle the hedgehog but failing to gain any ground. "Are you helping or what, Zeke!?" he grunted. Zeke turned to Ralph and raised his hand. "Let's see what happens when I give you a good dose of darkness..." he chuckled. A dark energy surrounded Ralph's head, and he started to act woozy. "Whoa...gettin' cloudy here... Who...turned out the light?" he babbled, lightly swinging his arms as he stumbled about. "Easy there, Ralph! Are you glitching? I can fix it!" Felix stammered, chasing after him. Lucky watched in puzzlement. "What's happening? Is Zeke doing this?" he mumbled. Suddenly, Ralph stood up again, his eyes glowing yellow. "Rrrraaaaaaaahhh!! I'm gonna WRECK it!!!" he shouted in a rage! Zeke then picked up Zim and started to fly away. "Have fun with your little dose of chaos here, I've got bigger chaos to catch!" he cackled, flying to the station! Everyone jumped back as Ralph pounded his fists hard into the ground, leaving imprints in the dirt! Felix gulped. "Well, new guys, let me introduce... Wreck-it Ralph..." he said nervously. Lucky materialized his keyblade and whimpered. "Hi, Ralph. I'm thinking of changing my name to Un-lucky..." he said.

Ralph was snarling, and did not look like he'd listen to reason. "Ohhh, what am I supposed to do? We haven't had a glitch in decades! Remember your debug training, Felix!" the little guy said, wringing his hat in his hands as Ralph decided to stomp towards the nearby skyscraper! "Ahh! Hold up, Ralph! C'mon, Tails, help me hold him back!" Sonic shouted, speeding into Ralph's path. "Uhh... Sure, you can boss me around like I'm your actual sidekick, why not..." Tails grumbled, grabbing his shield and rushing to help Sonic. As Ralph slammed his fists toward them, Tails tried to block with his shield, but it broke and he fell backward! "I know! Deep freeze!" Whisk cried, casting Blizzard Ralph's way. He shivered a bit but powered through, and swatted Sonic away as he tried to homing attack him. "You're gettin' wrecked! Arrrrghh!!" Ralph shouted, pulling back his fist to punch at the building. "Ha! He'll wear himself out punching a brick wall!" Lucky sighed. "Uh, oh..." Felix gulped. With a great slam, Ralph punched a huge hole in the building, earning panicked screams from the residents inside. "Exit the building in an orderly fashion! Ralph's, uhh... havin' a li'l temper tantrum at the moment, hehe..." Felix babbled. Lucky stopped to help Tails up on his way to where Ralph was busy wrecking the building. "C-can we even do anything against this guy?" he asked. Sonic sped over to Felix. "The name of the game is fixing, so hop to it, Fix-it Felix!" he suggested. "Well, alright, but I don't think winning the game will fix a bug in his brain..." he said, holding his hammer and racing to the hole in the wall. It just took a couple taps to fix pieces of the damage Ralph caused. "Grr, stop that fixin'!" Ralph grunted, turning towards Felix. However, Lucky dashed into his path, blocking his huge fist with the keyblade! "Aaaahh!! Urrrgh!!" he grunted, pushing back against Ralph's mighty fist. The keyblade wouldn't break like Tails' shield, but

Lucky couldn't hold him back. "Hang in there, kid!" Sonic shouted, leaping up to bonk Ralph on the head! He stumbled back a little, creating another hole in the wall as he fell into it! "Aaaaarrgh!!" he yelled, bursting out and flailing his arms! Lucky frantically backed away, trying to avoid his fists. "E-enough!! Snap out of it!!" he yelled, pointing his keyblade up at Ralph and loosing a beam from it that struck Ralph in the face, knocking him flat on his back! "...Lucky!!" Whisk cried, making him stop hiding his face in fear and gasp. "D-did I do that?" Lucky babbled. Ralph slowly sat up, rubbing his head. "Ugh... What happened? What's this taste in my mouth? Why am I cold?" he shivered, looking around. He saw the damage to the building and gulped. "Hoboy... I feel like somethin' messed with my code just now. Just what I need. As if I'm not hated around here enough..." he sighed. "It's not your fault, Ralph." Sonic told him. "Sure! I'll explain everything!" Felix shouted as he was busily fixing the building. Ralph let out a sigh. "It's just me bein' the bad guy one more time... What else is new? Uhh, thanks for helpin' me get my head on straight, you guys. I dunno what you did, but it beats bein' bugged out." he chuckled. Tails sighed. "Yeah, sure... Hey, I wonder if Felix can fix this?" he asked about his shield. "Probably not. It's not from this world..." Lucky shrugged.

The group couldn't stick around, they had to go after Zeke and Zim. Sonic accompanied them as they left the Fix-it Felix game. "So, uh... What's the story with that shield?" Sonic asked as he watched Tails try to fix it himself. "...Things aren't the same between me and my Sonic. I can't depend on him all the time. I've needed to rely on my tech more, to keep myself safe..." he said. Sonic looked at him sympathetically. "Whoa, is that the future of our series? Sorry, bro..." he murmured. Tails rolled his eyes. "I'm not your bro... Um, err... Think of it as a spin off." he babbled. Sonic patted his head. "Tails is always my bro. No matter what." he smiled. As they walked into Game Central Station, Lucky looked around with a frown. "Where'd Zeke go?" he sighed. A big yellow ball suddenly came toward them, its big mouth flapping open and closed like it was planning to eat them. "Meee-yow!! Don't bite me!!" Lucky gasped, jumping back. "Yo, Pac-Man." Sonic waved. An orange ghost floated beside Pac-Man. "Sonic! We've been looking for you." the ghost said. "Wow, Sonic knows everyone..." Whisk murmured. Pac-Man started to speak in a language that sounded like "Wakka wakka" over and over. "He says that he saw Dr. Eggman get attacked by a couple strangers." the ghost translated. "That sounds like Zeke and Zim all right." Tails said. Pac-Man continued, and the ghost translated. "Naturally Eggman didn't take abuse too well, and it seems like he's gone a little nuts. Last seen, he was headed to the other end of Game Central Station, that way... You might wanna talk him down, Sonic." he suggested. "Talk Eggman down? Yeah, right..." Lucky scoffed. "Thanks, Pac-Man, and you too, Clyde. I'll look into it!" Sonic said with a sigh. Clyde nodded. "Best of luck. Remember, Bad Anon is there if he needs it..." the ghost stated. Lucky watched Pac-Man and Clyde leave with a shrug. "Okaaaay... Let's get moving then!" he said, following after Sonic as they headed for the area Eggman was last seen...

They soon found a commotion outside a particular game's entrance. Several characters were looking to get in, but a Surge Protector was holding them back. The colorful cast was somewhat familiar to Lucky... princesses and turtles and guys in overalls. He glanced up to see the name of the game. "Mario Kart..." he mumbled. Whisk groaned. "Looks more like heartless kart..." she mumbled. Zim was blocking the entrance, and had a number of heartless on wheels at his side. They looked built for ramming, and certainly fit in with the digital gaming world. They were magnum loaders, but to Sonic they just looked like glorified motobugs. "Lemme through officer, I got this!" he grinned. "I wouldn't go in there! Those critters aren't normal game enemies!" the Surge Protector warned. Tails stood back. "My shield's still busted... I hope you guys can handle this without me!" he murmured. Lucky materialized his keyblade and ran ahead with Whisk following. "We've got Sonic with us! What could go wrong?" he chuckled. "Plenty could go wrong for you! Like MORE heartless!" Zim cackled, summoning some soldiers to ride

atop the magnum loaders! As the heartless charged at them, Lucky braced for a sudden impact, only to see a familiar yellow ball dive in front of him and give the heartless a good chomp, clearing his immediate path! "Pac-Man? How'd he catch up so fast?" Lucky murmured, looking to see this Pac-Man stand up. "Wait, he's got arms and legs!" Whisk babbled. "Ah, Pac 2! Good timing!" Sonic shouted as he leapt from soldier to soldier, knocking them off their rides swiftly. With Sonic and Pac-Man joining the fight, a frustrated Zim decided to run into Mario Kart and catch up with Zeke. "I think those two have this covered... Let's catch up with Eggman and Zeke." Lucky suggested. They motioned for Tails to follow, and attacked only the heartless in their path as they made their way to the game's entrance. The others waiting behind the Surge Protector were getting into the fighting spirit, too, dashing past him to attack the heartless! "Oh, fine... As if I could keep those Mushroom Kingdom thrill racers from any action..." the Surge Protector mumbled. "Man, I feel like we're missing a good show back there..." Lucky sighed as he hopped into the tram that would take them to the Mario Kart game. "Are we missing the point if Lucky doesn't fight the heartless?" Whisk asked. Tails shook his head. "Better to stop them at their source...Zeke." he pointed out. He was right, Game Central Station was absolutely filled with heroes to beat back the heartless. They were needed where Zeke and Zim were.

They arrived on a fairly simple race track, the Mario Circuit. Just beyond the starting line, they could see Zeke, with Zim rushing to join him. He was holding up a Chaos Emerald while Dr. Eggman hovered in an Egg Mobile in front of him, looking quite flustered. "Yooou!! Give me back that emerald! I was going to use its power to strengthen my weapons and...and conquer the whole arcade!!" he cackled. Sonic ran in behind Lucky's group and heard Eggman's plan. "Oh, great... He's goin' Turbo." he groaned as Pac-Man raced in to catch up. Zeke flapped up out of Lucky's reach and chuckled. "I was looking for a power of Chaos...what better than a Chaos Emerald?" he stated. "Hey, let's stay and watch Eggman smash them!" Zim snickered. Lucky stuck out his tongue. "Why would he smash us? You took his emerald!" he teased. Sonic stepped forward, knowing he had to talk Eggman down. "Hey, doc... About this plan... I know it might be frustrating being programmed to lose to me all the time, but you know you're still important, don't you?" he stated. Eggman growled. "Important for what? Inflating your massive ego?! It's time gamers learned who was always meant to be the real hero! ...True story, look it up. But whatever, I don't need the Chaos Emerald to delete your code!!" he shouted, dark energy surrounding him! It seemed to transform his Egg Mobile a bit, adding a menacing laser to the front! "Farewell, hedgehog!" he cackled, only to have his aim messed up when someone leapt up and kicked the laser aside with both feet! "Yahoo!!" As Eggman spun out a bit, who should land at Sonic's side but Mario himself! Pac-Man also stood at their side, and Tails let out an impressed hum. "Well... Sonic, Mario and Pac-Man teaming up... Are we even needed?" he asked. Whisk shrugged. "Maybe I should look for popcorn." she chuckled. This turn of events seemed to annoy Zeke. "Really? You're gonna hesitate over a plumber!? Fine, I'll help you out, yeesh..." he said, summoning a number of strafers, magnum loaders, soldiers...and a black fungus heartless or two, probably just because it was the Mushroom Kingdom. Lucky frowned. "Now we're needed. Happy, Tails?" he grumbled. "No... I still haven't finished fixing my shield, haven't had time..." the fox gulped. "Well, what would you do before you built that thing?" Whisk asked him, rushing in to help Lucky fight. Tails looked at his busted shield thoughtfully, and looked at Sonic fighting off a soldier. "Yeah... We were a team once, weren't we?" he mumbled, and dashed in Sonic's direction. However, a giant robotic leg crashed into his path! The Egg Mobile was pulsing with dark energy, and had used it to grow into a giant, weaponized spider! "Ho ho ho ho! Say hello to the Arachnoegg!!" he laughed. "It's been done!" Lucky shouted. Eggman scratched his head. "Really? ... How about I add a pincer and make it a Super Crabmeat?" Sonic shrugged and tapped his foot. "Whatever, just pick something. And don't step on my friend!" he said, running to Tails' side to make sure he was okay.

Zim and Zeke backed up, their heartless blocking the path to them. Mario and Pac-Man weren't too bothered by them, though, leaping into action! Whisk decided to join them, leaving Lucky torn between the heartless and Eggman. "Gaaah... Maybe Sonic can stop Eggman without me..." he stammered, heading over to take out some heartless, too. Mario tried to jump onto a black fungus, but bounced off as it formed a protective barrier around itself. "Look out, Mario! That's like a poison mushroom!" Whisk warned as sure enough, poisonous gas started to spew from the evil mushroom. Mario gulped, but then started to spin rapidly in place, using his Mario tornado technique to blow the gas away! "Well... how does that even work?" Lucky babbled. The nervous mushroom tried to wobble away as its shield faded, but Lucky was quick to strike and take it out! Meanwhile, Tails found himself flying Sonic over the thrashing legs and newly added pincer of his transforming machine. "It's been a while since I did this; were you always this heavy, Sonic??" he grunted. Sonic laughed. "If you think this is tough, try lifting Eggman!" he snickered. Eggman growled and added guns to the sides of his Egg Mobile. "This darkness is amazing...it can do anything...even obliterate Sonic the hedgehog!!" he cackled, firing missiles their way! "Look out!" Tails gasped, tossing Sonic out of the way and flying up as the missiles came at him! Sonic then went into a homing attack and smacked the missiles back one by one, only to see Eggman block with the machine's giant pincer! "Ha ha! You can't beat me now, hero!" he taunted. During this, Pac-Man was taking some time to throw fruit at the strafers, knocking them over while Lucky took the opportunity to strike them with his keyblade! "Hey! How'd you get fruit past the surge protectors??" Sonic shouted from where he was battling Eggman. Pac-Man just shrugged. Meanwhile, Whisk was carrying Mario above some magnum loaders. "Bomber 1, we're in position, ready to drop the payload!" she smirked. "Let's-a go!" Mario nodded as she dropped him! He flipped in the air and came down hard, ground-pounding onto the magnum loaders and smashing them to digital bits! "Why did we think we could take Mario and yellow-ball-guy?" Zim groaned. "Patience, let's see how Eggman fares..." Zeke sighed. Tails managed to fly Sonic up and enable him to whack the Egg Mobile with a spin attack, but Eggman was unfazed. "You can't penetrate the darkness with little jump-attacks! It's over, Sonic!" he sneered, grabbing the hedgehog in his pincer as he dropped from his attack on the cockpit! Sonic yelped in pain as Eggman began to squeeze. "Once you die here, you're finished...game over!" he snickered. Tails landed on the cockpit and started to swat Eggman with his twin tails in retaliation. "You let him go! L-leave my best friend alone!!" he cried. Another pincer suddenly emerged and grasped Tails, pulling him away from Eggman! "Best friend? You're not even the same Tails from our game!" he laughed. Lucky saw what was happening and gasped. "Tails... Hang on!!" he cried, rushing over to their aid. Eggman saw him coming and smirked. "What are you gonna do? You need help getting hits on the minions over there!" he taunted. "Pfft, well you're just a big target! Hiyaaaaa!!" Eggman moved his pincers to block Lucky's strike, but he was counting on that, and swiftly slashed at the hinges of each pincer! The keyblade smashed the darkness-born attachments with ease, freeing Sonic and Tails! "What!? That doesn't make any sense... Well, I can still create more!" he sneered. "Oh, yeah? Just try to keep up with us!" Sonic grinned. The three of them went on the move in different directions, Sonic dashing around the machine to confuse Eggman, Lucky slashing at its legs to throw it off-balance, and Tails flying back up to the cockpit! "What!? You!!" Eggman gasped. "You know, Eggman... You should really strap in!" Tails chuckled, grabbing the doctor's arms and pulling him right out of the cockpit! "Hey!! Let me go! Unhand me you second-rate sidekick!" he yelled, flailing in Tails' arms as the fox strained to carry him. "Ugh! Sonic wasn't kidding! He's HEAVY!!" he gasped. Lucky then flung his keyblade at the cockpit as Sonic ran back for cover, and the machine exploded in a flash of lights as the darkness was banished, allowing the true Egg Mobile to collapse onto the ground in a heap! All that was left now was Zeke...

Eggman looked around as Tails dropped him on the ground. Sonic offered a hand to help the doctor to

his feet. "Feel any better after that vent, doc?" he asked. Eggman could barely look at him. "I... I'm sorry, Sonic... All my jealousy over your popularity... it seemed to fill my code with darkness..." he sighed. The other Mario Kart characters were making their way onto the track now, as well as Felix and Ralph, who hurried over to Sonic and Eggman. "Everything okay?" Felix asked. "Ahh, fell off the wagon, eh, Eggman? What do they say now, one game at a time? Right?" Ralph said, patting his back. Eggman nodded. "Back to Bad Anon for me... Guess I can go with Bowser..." he muttered. Meanwhile, Mario, Pac-Man and Lucky's group were closing in on Zeke. "Whatever. We have the Chaos Emerald!" he declared. Just then, a corridor of darkness opened behind him and Garland stepped out. "Hm... The feline with the key. Seems we are fated to clash." he said, stopping Lucky in his tracks. "You're the one pulling Zeke and Zim's strings! What is it you want?" he asked. Garland ignored him and took the Chaos Emerald from Zeke's hand. He then squeezed and shattered it to pieces, much to everyone's shock! "Our detection of chaos energy was fooled by this pale imitation. It's a falsehood, a lie... Nothing in this so-called world can serve my purposes... Nothing here serves any purpose at all..." Garland sneered. Lucky gritted his teeth. "Don't you dare say that!" he shouted, "This world may be made up of data...or something...but the people here still feel things. They still hurt, they still laugh, they still dream... They all have hearts, so there's no way they can be useless!" he declared. Tails glanced at Sonic, his own hand resting on his heart. "He's right... real or not, I feel it... their hearts aren't fake..." Tails murmured. Zim scoffed. "Heart schmart, still useless..." he grunted. Garland nodded, and started toward the corridor of darkness. "Hearts are weak things. I will cure them of that weakness when I complete Chaos Hearts..." he mused, disappearing into the corridor followed by Zeke and Zim. The villains gone, everyone breathed a light sigh of relief. "Now that was a real method-acting kinda bad guy, eh?" Ralph chuckled. "Where'd they go?" Sonic wondered. Lucky shrugged. "No idea but I think we'll have to deal with him again sometime..." he sighed. "Eh, bring him on! Nice speech by the way, Lucky. Very sappy!" Whisk chuckled. "...What's that supposed to mean?" Lucky stammered, glancing at her with a light blush.

Sonic, Ralph and Felix stopped by the Galestrom to see Lucky and co. off. Sonic gave Tails a little hug to say goodbye. "Don't forget me, little buddy. Maybe when you find your Sonic, things will start feeling normal again." he smiled. Tails nodded. "Thanks for all your help..." he smiled. Ralph was admiring the Gummi ship from a distance, worried he might wreck it again. "That's quite a ship, there. Must be a wild game you're from." he chuckled. Winston shook hands with Felix. "Thanks for the fix assist, kupo..." he said, Felix having briefly lent his hammer to help finish repairs. "Shucks, it's nothin! Just glad to help!" he said, tipping his hat. Ready to leave, Lucky, Whisk, Tails and Winston got aboard the ship. "Now what?" Lucky asked. His keyblade suddenly flashed, and a small wormhole opened up in the pathway to Asteroids. Winston shrugged. "Buckle in!" he stated, sitting at the controls and starting the ship up. As Sonic, Ralph and Felix watched, the ship turned to the wormhole and blasted off through it! Now they found themselves back in the normal space between worlds. Lucky was soon rubbing his chin, pondering things. "Just what is Zeke's boss after? Feels like this whole thing is bigger than us..." he murmured. "I'm sure it'll be fine, especially if we can find Tails' Sonic to help us." Whisk said, "...but where can he be?" No one seemed sure about that, and Tails himself was busy thinking over something else. "That game world was so strange. Heroes and villains living together like fighting one another is just a job... Good guys and bad guys kinda being friends off the clock... There's a weird sort of harmony there, which was only disrupted when Zeke started messing around... Don't you think it's weird?" he asked. "Don't think about it, kupo." Winston shrugged. Lucky glanced at Tails and nodded. "Yeaah, I'll admit seeing Eggman say he's sorry to Sonic was pretty weird. But who knows...maybe all bad guys are like that deep in their heart. Kind of like Ralph... He's a bad guy, but, he's not a bad...guy." he chuckled. "Do you even know what you're trying to say, Lucky?" Whisk giggled, "What happened to your great

speech-giving skills?" she teased. Lucky stuck out his tongue. "Maybe you're just not smart enough to get me!" he teased back. "I don't think that's it." Tails said, laughing along with Whisk.

As the Gummi ship soared through the sky for a few hours, Lucky suddenly jumped. "Gaah!! What day is it, anyway!?" he stammered. Tails looked at them funny. "Why? I didn't know we were on a clock..." he mumbled. Whisk's eyes went wide too. "Ohh, you're right, Lucky! We might be late!" she said, stepping over to Winston at the pilot's seat. "Late for what??" Tails stammered, "What aren't you telling me? I thought we were a team..." he babbled. Whisk muttered something to Winston and the moogles nodded. "Okay, kupo. Setting course back to home...well, your home." he stated. Whisk chuckled softly. "Cool, this is the first time I really remembered something important!" she cheered. Lucky saw the puzzled expression on Tails' face and smiled. "Hey, we have a plus one... You can come with us, Tails, hehe!" he chuckled. Tails scratched his head. "Plus one? Are you going to tell me where we're going??" he asked. Lucky was smiling as he strapped himself in for the upcoming warp. "Our fellow experiment is getting married. He's kinda like my big bro... So, Whisk and I have gotta be there for Punchy!" he said cheerfully. Winston nodded and went to engage the warp gummi. Our heroes were off on a detour back home. Surely it would be a good opportunity for a rest, right?

To be continued in: Sonic GeneX: the Series Season 4 - Episodes 7-8: Musical Matrimony!

5 - True Memories

Chaos Hearts

Chapter 5 - True Memories

World - Halloweentown

Note: Sonic the Hedgehog and related characters are (c) SEGA and Sonic Team. You knew that, right?

GeneX and related fanchars are (c) 2BIT (TheGreatGator), the author.

Kingdom Hearts is (c) Disney & Square Enix. Related elements belong to their respective companies.

"I am the one hiding under your bed,
teeth ground sharp and eyes glowing red!
I am the one hiding under your stairs,
fingers like snakes and spiders in my hair!" - This is Halloween; The Nightmare Before Christmas

Thinking of you, wherever you are...

Lucky, Whisk and an alternate version of Tails have been traveling from world to world, honing Lucky's keyblade skills while keeping Zeke and Zim from collecting powerful objects for the evil lord Garland. After an adventure in Game Central Station, Lucky's group set course for home where they were to attend the wedding of Punchy and Rainbow. The excitement was turned to danger when Richard Gunner brought troops to siege the chapel, seeking to arrest Copter the fox due to his recent turn as the villainous Aries. During the conflict, Felicia the wolf's glass eye was damaged, and seeing her damaged face jarred her into remembering her previous self; Fera.

Succumbing to darkness, Fera sent heartless to attack the city, forcing Lucky to combat them with his keyblade while others battled GUN and tried to talk Fera down. After repelling the threats, the wedding was moved to Rainbow's former home, restored to its pristine state with a bit of magic from Timothy the fawn.

Now that the wedding excitement is over, Lucky returns to his world-hopping adventures...

Now, let us journey to a new world...

Zeke wasn't invited to any wedding. He had no reason to return home. He did get a light scolding from Garland for his lack of efficiency, as did Zim. Then, the pair were sent to a new world, this time to seek a source of great darkness. Failure was not an option, it seemed. So, since Lucky didn't seem to be around, Zeke and Zim took to asking around directly. Why would the residents not want them to take their world's darkness away, anyhow? At any rate, the world they found themselves in seemed pretty dark itself, but Zeke and Zim didn't feel too out of place as they walked among monsters; Zeke being a dragon and Zim being a Zeti. "Yo, seen anything real DARK, dude?" Zim asked a rather scary-looking clown on a unicycle. "Hehe, how about this?" he asked, tearing off his own face to show a dark void beneath! Zim stared with wide, shocked eyes before the clown replaced his face and cycled away. "Uh... Not what we're lookin' for..." he babbled. "Hey, seen anything dark?" Zeke asked a small, smiling man with a ribbon that clearly stated he was the mayor. His entire head spun around, revealing a second,

more frightening and upset-looking face. "Dark? What do you mean, dark? Isn't scary or creepy enough? We don't need anything like Oogie Boogie's sort of shenanigans around here..." he whimpered. Zeke rubbed his chin as the mayor hobbled off. "I can't talk now, lots to prepare for next Halloween!" he babbled. Zeke glanced at Zim. "C'mere... I think we're lookin' for an 'Oogie Boogie..." he murmured. "I don't dance." Zim grunted. A young voice spoke up. "Oogie Boogie? What do you wanna know?" Turning around, Zeke and Zim saw a boy in a devil costume. He was followed by a girl in a witch costume and another boy in a skeleton outfit. Their names were Lock, Shock and Barrel, respectively. "We know ALL about Oogie Boogie!" Barrel offered. "Shh! See what they'll give us, first!" Shock insisted. "Oh, it's extortion is it, ya little brats!?" Zim sneered. Zeke yanked Zim aside by the tail. "Please, don't be rude. These children may be entitled to a reward...but it all depends on the value of the information they offer. Tell me, would this Oogie Boogie know anything about sources of darkness?" he mused. Lock nodded. "He's the darkest dude around! Or... he was." he sighed. "Stinky old Jack Skellington and his friends destroyed him..." Shock stated. "We've been so bored without him." Barrel added. Zeke nodded slowly. "Tell me more... Maybe I can do something special for you..." he said with a smirk.

The Galestrom landed at what appeared to be the outskirts of a graveyard. Stepping outside, the group saw a dark and foreboding vista leading to a very spooky town up ahead. "Do we have to land here...?" Lucky murmured with a shiver. "I'm picking up something... Zeke might be using heartless here." Tails said, looking at the darkness detector. Whisk held up her wand. "Right! This world seems like no place for cuddly critters like us! My magic will help protect the world order!" she said, and in a flash of light, their group transformed! Lucky suddenly felt a bit shaggier, and grunted as his teeth seemed to sharpen and grow to stick out of his mouth. He'd become...a Werecat! Whisk took on a black and pink fur scheme, her wings turning black as well and losing a bunch of feathers. Her outfit took on a gloomy grayed color scheme, too. Tails received the most drastic change. His body seemed more reptilian now, his fluffy tails replaced with two large snake-headed tails. His body was still yellowy, but he now had greenish stripes up his arms, and what appeared to be spider legs replacing his bangs. He did not seem amused. "Couldn't I just have worn a cape and gone as a vampire?" he grumbled. Winston stumbled out of the ship as well. "Who wrapped me in toilet paper!?" he grunted, having not escaped the spell and finding himself an over-wrapped mummy. "Sorry, hehe... My magic seems stronger here." Whisk stated. "Yet you barely changed..." Lucky murmured, scratching his furrier body as though it had fleas. Before they could discuss this further, Whisk clasped her head. "Ahhh!!" she gasped. Winston pulled the mummy cloth from his eyes. "What's wrong, kupo?" he stammered. "...My memory only works now due to my magical powers. Before I was taught magic by the Zodiac Council, I had trouble retaining any memories at all... But here, with my magic power strengthened... I just had the weirdest memory flash." she explained, a frightened look in her eye. "Geez, what did you see, everyone dying?" Lucky joked. Whisk stared at him. "...I saw the world in pieces... The sky distorted... Everyone gathered, looking down. They see Sonic's friends... and in the midst of it all, Sonic is lying there. He seems to be dead." she described. Tails raised an eyebrow and Lucky tilted his head. "That uh... That never happened. You can't see the future, can you?" he asked. "I don't think so... That was weird." Whisk stated. Winston shrugged. "Maybe it's not a memory. Maybe it's something more to do with the nature of this world." he suggested. "Maybe..." Whisk said, looking unsure. Lucky smirked. "Well, no sense standing around here! Maybe we'll find the answers while we explore! At any rate, now that Tails is a monster, there's nothing to be scared of; he'll scare everything first!" he chuckled. "Very funny! Have you looked at yourself in the mirror, Lucky?" Tails retorted as they started to walk away. Winston hopped into the Galestrom and activated its computer. "Hmmm... Check records for Lucky and Whisk's world... Has it been destroyed in recent memory, possibly by a temporal anomaly?" he wondered curiously. The

records he found astounded him. "This world's been through so much time manipulation it's not funny!" he gasped.

Lucky, Whisk and Tails soon arrived at the town square. It was indeed pretty much as dark and spooky as the graveyard. A sign at the entrance read "Halloweentown" and the decor seemed appropriate for suck, skulls and pumpkins among the imagery. There was a fountain spewing greenish liquid into a well in front of them, but overall the square appeared deserted at the moment. "If a bunch of zombie bust out of the ground, I don't care if they start dancing, I'm bolting." Lucky whispered. Just then, they heard the fountain start to churn, and shivers went down their spines as they thought something was about to leap out. But the churning stopped. "Let's keep moving..." Tails suggested, "My darkness detector's picking up a big reading..." he murmured. "Daaaarkness? There's darkness...eeeeverywhere!" an eerie voice called out. The trio jumped, looking around cautiously for the source of the voice. "Who's there? Are you with Zeke??" Whisk stammered. Suddenly, the limited street lights went out, and all they could see was a grinning skull before them. "I'm with the darkness! Rrrraaaaarrgh!!" it growled, causing Lucky to jump in alarm. "Mee-yow!! Back, heartless! Get back!!" he shouted, his keyblade popping into his hand as he stumbled backwards in terror! "Ow, you stepped on my tail...snake...ugh!" Tails whimpered. The lights came up, revealing a smiling skeleton in a black and white striped suit before them. He extended his bony hand to help Lucky up. "Great reaction. That's exactly what I wanna hear! Hey...that key looks familiar..." he murmured as Lucky nervously stood up. "Y-you're a... um..." he babbled. "Jack Skellington, pleasure to meet you!" he said, shaking his hand. "That's Lucky. I'm Whisk and he's Tails." Whisk said. Tails was distractedly looking at the detector, while Jack looked at the keyblade. "Hmm... I wonder if you know that other boy with a key... Oh! I totally forgot! I was on my way to see Dr. Finkelstein! He's working on an intriguing experiment. Something about true memories or something..." he muttered. Whisk's eyes widened. "True memories?" she asked. She then gasped and held her head again, undergoing another unexpected memory flash. "Vortex is gonna kill her! You have to come with me so we can clear her name!" a familiar voice sounded in her mind. Jack glanced at her. "My, that's a frightened look on your face. What's wrong?" he asked. "I... I need to unlock my true memories. I need to know what's missing..." she said urgently. Lucky nodded. "Alright. Let's see this doctor, then!" he smiled, twisting the keyblade around to scratch his back. "...You don't have fleas, do you?" Jack asked him. Tails let out a sigh. "You all go, then. I'm gonna check out the signal and see if I find Zeke. This spike of dark energy is worrying..." he stated. "Sounds exciting. Maybe we'll catch up with you later!" Jack said with a look of interest. Lucky looked more concerned. "Be careful, Tails. Come find us if you get in trouble." he said. "Let's go before my head explodes..." Whisk murmured. So, they split off to go their separate ways...

Dr. Finkelstein's lab was dark, gloomy and full of creepy books and experimental equipment. It felt oddly like home to Lucky and Whisk. The doctor himself was busy at a chemistry set. Confined to a wheelchair, he was a small fellow with a bit of a large cranium. Beady eyes covered by dark glasses rested above a bit of a large mouth, and under a larger forehead which...seemed to have hinges? Beside him was a tall, living rag doll with reddish hair and a patchwork body. "Doctor, are you sure we should continue with this experiment? The last test subject ran off in such terror..." she warned. The doctor lifted his head by the hinge, revealing his own brain underneath, and gave it a thoughtful scratch before mixing some chemicals and closing the hatch again. "Nonsense, stop my experiment? Any science worth doing ALWAYS comes with wonderful, terrible risk!" he stated. Lucky stared for a bit. "This guy reminds me of Bucky... Except for the whole...brain thing..." he babbled. Jack stepped over to the rag doll with a smile. "You worry too much, Sally... I'm sure that last fellow is fine, wherever he got off to." he murmured. Whisk looked around awkwardly. "Umm... Doctor? Could you maybe tell us about this

experiment?" she asked. The doctor spun around his wheelchair to get a look at the visitors. "Hmm... Good to see more young minds taking an interest in science! Well, you see, the mind has its way of remembering things. Over time, our recollections of events tend to change do to how we choose to perceive them. Some memories become uglier, others become more beautiful... And some become fuzzy and difficult to even see. True memories, you could say, are what actually happened. Unfiltered by our nostalgic lenses... And uneroded by time. I'm seeking to create a potion that will show us our true memories. My hypothesis is that one who sees their true memories will at the very least undergo a change in personality...and at the very worst, their heart will become unbalanced when their emotional link to memory is broken..." he explained. Lucky looked nervous as he listened to this. "I, uh... I think I'm with Sally. Kinda sounds like a dangerous and unnecessary experiment." he murmured. Whisk frowned. "Says the cat who never had trouble remembering anything. Can this potion recover lost memories?" she asked. The doctor took another scratch at his brain. "...In theory..." he stated. Whisk nodded. "Then I want to try it! So many of my past memories are still out of reach... I want to know my own life..." she said. "Oh, my... To live in such uncertainty... I can't imagine." Sally said. Jack frowned. "Yes... Sounds uncomfortably frightening. Not the kind of scare I strive for. I hope we can help you." he added. Seeing their reaction, Lucky looked at Whisk and sighed. "They're right... I'm here for you, Whisk! All the way!" he smiled. He then scratched behind his ear. "Thanks Lucky... but stand back, will ya. I don't want fleas." Whisk murmured.

In a dark woods, Zeke took on the ultimate test of his dark powers. Using what darkness he could muster, he managed to do the unthinkable, and once more rebirth the evil bag of bugs known as Oogie Boogie! It was this spike of dark energy that Tails had been detecting, and he hid behind a tree as he found Zeke, Zim and the three kids standing around the reborn Boogie-man. "Ooog... W-where am I? Come to think of it, WHO am I? What even am I?" Oogie Boogie babbled, looking around in utter confusion. "What's wrong with him?" Shock asked. Zeke scratched his head. "You try bringing someone back from oblivion! I probably couldn't get his memories back..." he shrugged. Zim gave Zeke a poke. "Doesn't that mean he's useless to us?" he muttered. Tails peered out from behind the tree. "No way... They brought someone back from the dead??" he gasped. Zim glanced in his direction and growled. "Hey! Get that punk!" he shouted, prompting Lock, Shock and Barrel to jump into action! Tails got up to run but found himself quickly surrounded by the kids! "Trick or treat!" Barrel sneered as Lock and Shock jumped at Tails, pinning him to the ground! Barrel then tried to grab his tails only to get bit by the snakes. "Yow!" he grunted. Oogie Boogie stomped around to get a look at what the kids had caught. "Yah ha ha!! You little guys could be useful... I needed a snack after whatever it is I've just been through!" he cackled, licking his lips with a snake for a tongue. Tails looked up at him in terror. "Y-you're gonna eat me!?" he babbled. Zeke tapped his foot in annoyance. "Eat him if you must but we need to get your memory back. I need to get some info out of your bug brains." he growled. The kids teamed up to lift Tails over their heads. "Eat up, boss! Maybe you'll feel better with a full belly!" Lock suggested. Desperate, Tails blurted what he could think of. "Wait, there's another way to fix your memory!" he stammered. Oogie hesitated. "Wuzzat? Out with it, short stack!" he ordered. "W-well... There's this memory experiment going on in Halloweentown. This doctor that Jack Skellington knows..." he murmured. Oogie stood up straight and narrowed his eyes. "Jack? Jack... Why does that name kill my appetite and make me wanna smash stuff!?" he snarled, "That's it! I'm gonna nab this memory-whatsit from Jack and find out! And then... Then, I'll be back to finish this morsel! Eh heh heh heh!!" he laughed, bounding away from the area. "Oogie! Halloweentown is that way!" Lock shouted, letting go of Tails and giving chase while Shock and Barrel wobbled and dropped him! "Yeowch!! You klutz!" Shock shouted at Barrel. "Sorry..." Barrel sighed. As the kids ran off, Zeke and Zim stood over Tails. "Well, he'll want you

here when he comes back, won't he?" Zeke sneered, "Let's tie him up like his friends tied us up on the trip to Neverland..." he snickered.

Dr. Finkelstein soon completed his memory potion, turning to the group with a smirk. "Success! Who's ready to try it out?" he asked. Sally looked nervous, but didn't say anything as Whisk approached. "The answers you seek could be right in this flask... Don't be nervous. Frightened, maybe. Who knows what you'll find out?" the doctor said ominously. Whisk glanced back, seeing Lucky smile softly at her. "I'm right here for you, Whisk." he said. She nodded and took the flask. "Here goes..." she said, nervously taking a small sip. She gagged on it a bit. "Ughhh... what's this taste!?" she stammered. "What? I added worm's wart for flavor..." the doctor said indignantly. Whisk gasped softly. "Wait... I'm remembering something..." she said. "Ohh! A true memory?" Jack asked, "Can you tell us?" he wondered, "I mean, if we're not prying..." he added awkwardly. Whisk nodded. "Well..." Whisk murmured.

"I dunno... I'm holding a Chaos Emerald. I'm surrounded by GUN robots. It looks like they're after me. But then, when they're about to catch me... FERA of all people is there, protecting me. I...don't get it. Why was I holding that emerald? Why did she help me...?"

Whisk looked at the flask. "Maybe if I drink more I'll get the answer..." she murmured. "Well, too bad, girlie! I need a swig of that more than you!" boomed a voice through the lab. Suddenly, the flask was poked out of Whisk's hands from below and caught by Lock, Shock and Barrel dashing out from under her! "H-hey!" she gasped. "Oh, those brats again!!" the doctor growled. "That voice... Could it be?" Jack gasped. They chased the children to the door, only to find thin, mummified heartless appearing in their path; wight knights! Lucky gripped his keyblade and growled like the wolf he looked like. "Outta the way!" he shouted. Whisk zapped the heartless with a bolt of thunder magic before Lucky could do anything. "There, they're outta the way. Let's go!" she shouted. However, opening the door, they found the streets of Halloweentown teeming with heartless. "Jaaaaack! Do something!!" the mayor could be heard shouting. "That's funny. Oogie was never actually able to call the heartless..." Jack said curiously. "This has Zeke written all over it. And where's Tails?" Lucky said with concern. "Never mind, fellas! We've got to help the town! Follow me!" Jack said, marching into town with a look of purpose on his skull.

The Wight Knights had nasty claws, but Lucky's keyblade had no problem striking back at them. Whisk had to manage to fly with her low-feather wings in order to take on some airborne gargoyle heartless. "Boy, you guys don't look like the gargoyles back home..." she murmured as she shot blasts of fire to attack them. Jack took on some warping Search Ghost heartless using a mix of his own bony claws and some magic of his own. The battle wasn't incredibly easy, but Tails soon arrived to lend a hand. "Oh, you guys are dead! Time for my upgraded shield!" he said, pulling out a new shield he'd built after a certain "bad guy" had wrecked his old one. Winding it up, he gave it a whirl, and the shield spun off its handle, spinning rapidly as it flew at the nearest heartless and zapped it with electrical energy! Then, Tails used a magnet in the handle to call the shield back! "Ha! Bullseye!" he smirked. Before long, the heartless swarming the town were dispatched, and Lucky went to hug Tails in relief only for the fox to back away. "Fleas! Fleas!" he groaned. "Well... Splitting up was a disaster. I got caught." Tails told them, looking sheepish. "Well, you're safe now." Jack stated. Tails nodded. "This bag of bugs that Zeke called upon was gonna eat me after getting his memory back... Fortunately these snake tails actually came in handy chewing through the ropes Zeke and Zim tied me up with..." he said with a chuckle, "Sorry, I told Oogie Boogie about the experiment to stop him from eating me..." he frowned. Whisk sighed. "Well, I don't want you eaten so I guess I forgive you..." she said, "Can you track him down with your detector?"

she asked him. Tails gulped. "Uhh... Zeke took it from me..." he said nervously. Lucky frowned. "Let's never split up again. Geez, that's like rule one for horror movies and we fell for it in Halloweentown." he groaned. Jack didn't seem discouraged. "We'll find them, don't worry. Oh, Zero!!" he called. From the shadows, a ghostly canine with a glowing pumpkin shaped nose flew over to greet them, barking cheerfully at Jack. "Oogie Boogie is back again! Can you sniff him out, boy?" the skeleton asked. With a cheerful bark, Zero lit up his nose and started to fly off in search of Oogie Boogie. "I'm holding off on saying 'Now I've seen everything.' I see more crazy things every other month it seems." Lucky murmured. "Follow that spirit!" Whisk shouted. With Zero leading them, they'd find Oogie in no time!

Zero led them back to the graveyard, to a place where they could see a large hill ending in a strange spiral ahead. There stood Oogie, holding the potion and staring up at the moon. "Aaah... All that runnin' around's made me thirsty!" he snickered. Lock, Shock and Barrel tried to block the group's way, but Jack simply made a terrifying face at them and they yelped, scrambling out of the path. "So, you're Oogie Boogie..." Lucky murmured as they approached him. "Monster! You robbed the doctor and tried to eat Tails!" Whisk shouted. Oogie glanced at them with a look of mock confusion. "Hmm? Sorry, I can't recall a single thing. Maybe this little brew will jog my memory!" he snickered, fumbling with the cork that he'd stuffed in it to prevent spillage while running. Jack shook his head. "The doctor can brew more potion, I'm sure. But threatening the little guy like that... Seems no matter how many second chances at life you get, you'll always be an utterly deplorable bag of bugs!" he shouted. Oogie chuckled as he unpopped the cork. "I don't know 'bout that. Why don't we see what my memory says, eh? ...Maybe then I'll remember which one of you is Jack..." he babbled before lifting up the flask, "Down the hatch!" The group winced as they watched him sloppily gulp the potion down, licking his lips with his snake-tongue. "Mmmm... worm's wart... Not bad... Wait...what's this!" he gasped, freezing in place. Jack watched him curiously. "Does a resurrected Oogie even have any true memories?" he wondered. Oogie suddenly held his head and wailed, frightening off Zero and making Lock, Shock and Barrel even more nervous in their hiding places. "What's happening to him?" Lock wondered. "I died... and died... and died!? Ohhhh, the pain!! Aaaahh...the horror!! Rrrrrraaaaauuuugh.... The ANGER!!" he shouted. His body pulsed with dark energy, and he seemed to be growing in size. "So much darkness... What's happening?" Tails gasped. Oogie's bag turned a shadowy black, his eye holes glowing yellow. "Yeah, I think that potion was past its expiration date..." Lucky stammered. Oogie glared at the group and cackled. "Jaaaaack.... Wanna gamble? This time with your life, hmmm? I don't have any lives left myself... I'm a heartless monster!!" he roared. He had about doubled in size, still not as big as a house but certainly terrifying. Lucky was shaking as he held his keyblade. "So... He's a heartless now? Does that even make sense?" he asked. Whisk nodded. "The doctor was right... the potion unbalanced his heart way too much..." she said. "Talk talk talk! You kids are dull! I know what'll get you on your feet! A slick roll of the dice!" Oogie snickered, holding up some rather large and glowing red dice in his pointed fingerless hand. "Umm... Unless your bones reassemble, I'd suggest you run." Jack told them. They nodded and took off in different directions as Oogie gave the dice a toss!

The large glowing dice rolled around the area, before exploding upon stopping! Fortunately the gang had already moved out of the way, but unfortunately more Halloweentown heartless emerged to keep Tails and Whisk busy, leaving just Jack and Lucky to deal with Oogie Boogie. "Jaaaaack! You wrecked my house! You trashed my game room! And you stopped me from... uhhh... Well, even with true memories I got no idea what I was aimin' to do at Christmas Town, but you stopped me again!" Oogie growled, leaping at Jack to try and body slam him, only succeeding in toppling a couple gravestones as Jack slipped out of the way. "Maybe that potion doesn't work after all; I'd think you'd know what you did!" Jack retorted. As Oogie struggled to get back to his feet, Lucky pointed his keyblade at him threateningly.

"You did what to Christmas Town??" he growled, his werecat eyes glowing red. Oogie looked at him with a chuckle. "Aren't you scaaaary... Well, boogie to you!" he laughed, spitting several creepy crawly bugs at Lucky from his mouth as a distraction as he leapt to his feet! "Gross, gross, gross!!" Lucky yelped, swinging the keyblade wildly to try and swat the bugs away! Oogie Boogie then produced another set of exploding dice. "Maybe if I blow on 'em for luck, I'll roll a jackpot!" he sniggered, giving them a little blow before hurling them at Lucky! Jack tried to get his attention by hitting him with one of his magic spells, but it didn't seem to do much good on the powerful heartless Oogie. He turned to Jack with a smirk. "That tickles... What's wrong? Can't just yank a string and rip me to pieces now? Ha ha ha! I'm held together by darkness!" he teased. However, the boogie-man gasped as he was struck by an explosion! Lucky laughed as Oogie turned with a growl. "Throw me another pitch! I'm on a hot streak!!" he laughed, holding the keyblade like a bat. Oogie realized that Lucky hit the dice back at him and growled. "You stinkin' cheat! That's not how you play the game!!" he shouted, "I'll squash you flat!!" he growled, his dark energy seeming to grow in power, and making him grow even larger in size! "...Eeep." Lucky gulped. "Look out!" Jack shouted as Oogie moved to flatten him. "Ah! Lucky!!" Whisk gasped, witnessing what was happening. She gritted her teeth and vanished from where she was, appearing next to Lucky and then teleporting them both away as Oogie Boogie crashed down to body slam the ground below! Whisk emerged high in the sky above, her and Lucky's silhouette's blotting against the moon. "I'm gonna drop you now, Lucky." she whispered. Lucky was looking into her eyes in a confused daze. "...Wait, what?" Then, he was falling, but he thought fast and twisted in the air, pointing the keyblade down at Oogie Boogie. The speed of his fall powered up his strike, and Oogie let out a wail as the keyblade penetrated the darkness of his shadowy bag! "No... nooo, not again!! What have you done!!" He howled as creepy crawlies went fleeing from his insides! "My bugs!! My buuuuugs!!" he wailed repeatedly, his voice heightening in pitch until it faded. Tails gave the final bug a stomp as it tried to scurry away. "Eat me, will you?" he scoffed.

They took a moment to look for the three kids, but they'd fled by now. Jack reasoned that they wouldn't cause any more trouble now anyway. "We could head back to the lab. I'm sure the doctor could whip up more potion." he said to Whisk. She shook her head. "I saw what it did to Oogie. Maybe it's best I let the answers come to me naturally...if they ever do." she sighed. Jack nodded. "Very well. After all, a bit of uncertainty can keep your life full of surprise and excitement!" he grinned. Tails heard footsteps and turned around. "Huh... is that...?" he muttered. "There you are!!" Of all people, Gator was heading their way...and accompanied by a reindeer no less. "What is Gator doing here??" Lucky babbled. The reindeer hovered up to the group really quickly, shaking everyone's hands with his feet gliding just off the ground. "Hey, fellas! Name's Booster! Good to see ya! I brought Gator along with me from Christmas Town!" he chuckled before stopping at Jack, "I needed to see you anyway on behalf of Santa." he smirked. Jack looked up sheepishly. "Ah, how is Sandy? I was thinking of visiting him after Halloween, maybe..." he murmured. "Just so long as you're not thinking of 'making Christmas' again..." Booster smirked. Lucky looked at Gator jealously. "...You know Santa? As in... Claus?" he babbled. Gator nodded. "Silly, everyone knows that guy. But I was looking for you! Important message... Uhhh... what was it again?" he babbled. Tails frowned. "Maybe he needs the memory potion..." he murmured. "Speaking of remembering things, should we try to track down Zeke?" Lucky murmured. Gator shook his head. "We gotta go! Let's find your ship and I'll captain us where we need to be!" he declared. The group turned to Jack and Booster briefly. "It's alright. The doctor will be disappointed I'm sure but there are other experiments!" Jack told them. "You kids keep being good! Christmas isn't too far away!" Booster chuckled. Lucky smiled and nodded. "Neither is Halloween. Happy Holidays you guys!" he said, waving to them. "You're welcome back anytime!" Jack waved back. The group then started slowly on their way back to the ship, and as they went, Whisk stopped to scratch herself briefly. "Oh shoot... You did have

fleas, Lucky!" she groaned. "Your dumb magic gave them to me. Your magic should fix it!" he growled, scratching himself. "I kinda appreciate that your spell took away my fur to make me less appetizing to the buggers." Tails chuckled softly, "But change us back soon, please." Gator glanced at them in confusion. "Change you back into what? Isn't this how you normally look?" he babbled. The others groaned a little in response...

Zeke had made good use of the darkness detector during all the drama with Oogie Boogie. It led him and Zim to a place outside Halloweentown proper, secluded and foreboding. The rubble of Oogie's old manor still cluttered the landscape here and there after a time when the power of darkness had fused the torn bag with his own manor, and a brave keyblade master defeated him with Jack's help. The detector was going bonkers in this area. Zim sat in an odd crawling bathtub while Zeke searched around the rubble for the source of the signal. "We're probably wasting our time again. I wanna go home before master Zavok forgets all about me..." the Zeti complained. "You are absolutely no help. We'd be out of this cobweb infested nut house if I could just find whatever this glorified metal detector was pointing us to..." he grunted before tripping over something. "Ick! What did I almost step on!?" he grunted. The detector was going haywire, so Zeke moved some rubble. What he found was...a sort of heart-shaped container with a big lock on it. "What the holy heck is this? Is this it...?" he babbled. Zim jumped out of the tub to get a look at it. "Hmm... A heart of darkness?" he asked. "You might say that..." came the voice of Garland, stepping through a corridor of darkness. Zeke turned and handed the heart to the knight, bowing to show his respect. "I found it, boss, all by myself!" he proclaimed. "Lies! It was Zim's brilliant idea to steal the device from the usually-a-fox-but-not-today boy!" Zim protested. Garland accepted the heart, holding it up to examine it. He ignored their petty competitiveness. "The denizens of this town thought that giving the heartless a heart would enable them to control them. But they had no understanding of what the heart is. The heart is glorious chaos... All they could forge is darkness... Especially once their creation was consumed by the darkest denizen of this world." he stated, glancing at Zeke and Zim briefly. "This trinket is steeped in deepest darkness, even years of neglect could not strip it away. It will serve my purpose well. You two are finally showing some promise...but we have two power sources still to claim." he told them, turning to the corridor of darkness, "Come...while I begin preparing this trinket for its final purpose, we can determine which world you two will search next..." he stated. Zim smirked. "Promise. He says Zim has promise!" he bragged. "Shut up, Zim..." Zeke groaned as they followed their master through the dark corridor...

Changed back to normal and taking off aboard the Galestrom, Winston fought over the ship's controls with Gator for a bit while the others wondered what their next destination was. "Gator! Stop it! Deep breath... Where are we going?" Lucky asked. "He can't even reach the pedals!" Gator shouted. "It's still my ship, kupo." Winston retorted. "How does he reach the pedals?" Whisk asked Tails. He just shrugged in response. Gator then stood up suddenly. "I remember! I had a message from Master Yen Sid!" he shouted. "Mee-yow!! Don't shout like that, we're all right here!" Lucky yelped. "Who's Master Yen Sid...?" Winston asked. Gator shrugged. "Well, his name spelled backwards is Disney. And he's an old guy. He used to train keyblade masters." he stated. Lucky tilted his head. "You should have led with the last thing." he muttered, "But I do seem to remember Travis mentioning him..." he added. Gator nodded. "Master Yen Sid wants to meet with whichever one of you guys has the key, to check your progress with it! Or something! So, we gotta go see him at Twilight Town!" he explained. Everyone took to their seats as Winston turned to the controls. "Twilight Town it is, kupo... Hang on..." he muttered. Lucky looked a bit nervous. "No one said I'd be graded on my keyblade skills..." he sighed. "Maybe you can learn a thing

or two from him Lucky. Keep an open mind." Whisk said. Tails nodded. "Besides, without my darkness detector we'll have to rethink how we track Zeke and Zim." he stated. Lucky sighed again. "All right... At least I got you guys with me." he smiled. "And me!" Gator butted in, grinning. "Uh... Yeah..." Lucky replied awkwardly. And so our team was on their way to Twilight Town... the place where another keyblade wielder had also met with Master Yen Sid quite recently, to be set on his fateful path that would determine the fates of all worlds...and Kingdom Hearts itself. But that's a story largely separate from this one...

To be continued...