

THE RISE OF THE LEGENDS

Chapter-by-Chapter Summary

Prologue: The Portal

A tall, thin, pale man dressed entirely in black enters a room where scientists have assembled around a horseshoe-shaped portal device. The gathered technicians, dressed in unusual seamless clothing, appear nervous or excited. One technician confirms the portal is operational but untested. The man in black, wearing outdated clothing he acquired from a museum, dismisses concerns with confidence.

Dr. Kamaehu Paeniu enters, escorted by security guards. He questions whether the others are willing to betray their reality for wealth and power, suggesting they can't trust the man in black. The countdown begins, and the man in black approaches Dr. Paeniu, suggesting he lacks the "fortitude" to stop him. Before stepping into the blue static of the portal, the man makes a veiled threat to "take care of" Dr. Paeniu as well.

Chapter 1: Moving Day

Thirteen-year-old Mikaela Kadono wakes from a nightmare about being trapped underground amid blue electricity, fearing for friends she doesn't recognize. It's moving day—her family is relocating to Good Harbor, making her the new kid at school for the third time in her young life.

Her father, David Kadono, is enthusiastic about the "fixer-upper" house he's purchased for a house-flipping project, while Mikaela's eight-year-old brother Tony seems indifferent. Mikaela is dismayed by the old, run-down appearance of the house with its peeling paint, dormer windows, and stained glass.

Her mother tries to comfort her, suggesting "great things are going to happen here." Mikaela is skeptical but will soon discover her mother is right in ways she can't yet imagine.

Chapter 2: The House

Mikaela explores her new bedroom, where most of her belongings remain packed. She chose this room because of a kanji symbol (将) painted above the closet door—the same symbol she's seen at significant moments throughout her life. She learned it means "leader" when it appeared on a karate headband she earned.

Through her window, she notices a boy across the street controlling a drone. Choosing exploration over unpacking, she examines the house and discovers a strange wrought iron staircase between the bedrooms. Climbing it, she finds a small attic room with a

stained-glass window that creates colorful light patterns reflected by a convex glass mounted on the wall.

In the backyard, she finds her mother gardening near an old gazebo covered in rose vines. Inside, she appreciates the living room with its bay window and fireplace, thinking perhaps the house isn't so bad after all. Across the street, the boy (George Mendoza) notices Mikaela and wonders if she knows she's moved into what the neighborhood considers a haunted house.

Chapter 3: A Practical Joke

The next morning, Mikaela is awakened by mariachi music coming from George's house. Her mother is making crepes, and they discuss helping in the garden. While working outside, Tony notices a drone overhead.

Realizing George is spying on them, Mikaela devises a prank. She retrieves Halloween decorations from the garage, including a fake severed arm and a potato sack. With her mother's help, they dig a grave-shaped hole and pretend to bury a "body" (the stuffed sack with the fake arm sticking out).

George, watching through his VR goggles connected to the drone, panics when he sees what appears to be a murder and burial. When Mikaela suddenly appears beside him in his garage, he screams in terror. She reveals the joke, introduces herself, and they become friends. George shows her his workshop, repairs his drone, and teaches her to fly it. He mentions a school club called "Drone Legends" and invites her to join.

Chapter 4: First Day

On her first day at Benjamin Franklin School, Mikaela observes her classmates during English class. She notices a boy wearing noise-canceling headphones and another hunched boy in a black jacket who seems suspicious.

The teacher, Ms. French, assigns a short essay about something learned during summer break. Mikaela writes about moving and making a new friend who taught her to fly a drone.

While students turn in their essays, the hunched boy orchestrates the theft of the headphone-wearing boy's notebook. When the victim (Collin) notices it missing, the teacher asks if anyone has seen it, but no one admits to taking it. Mikaela, having witnessed the theft, retrieves the notebook from under the thief's backpack and returns it to Collin.

When she passes by the thief, she sees his face clearly for the first time: pale, thin, with dark eyes and jet-black hair. This is Malcolm Avar, leader of the "Chaos Club," who now has a new target for his malice—Mikaela.

Chapter 5: Drone Club

After school, Mikaela meets George at the computer lab for the Drone Legends club meeting. He reveals the club is small—only him and one other student. Kendall Fontenot, an energetic girl with shoulder-length dreadlocks and special blue-tinted glasses, arrives enthusiastically.

Kendall explains that her great-grandfather was a Tuskegee Airman, showing Mikaela a photo of him with his P-51 Mustang fighter plane. She wants to break barriers in aviation like he did. When Kendall mentions Mikaela's "haunted" house, George quickly tries to cover up the comment.

Their teacher, Mr. Singh—a Sikh who wears a turban but speaks like a surfer and drives a restored VW microbus—arrives. He introduces Mikaela to drone programming basics, explaining how they'll use coding, geometry, and physics principles. Unknown to them, they're being watched through a hidden camera disguised as a smoke detector.

The footage is monitored by Malcolm Avar, who was previously expelled from the club and now harbors deep resentment toward Mr. Singh and the Drone Legends.

Chapter 6: Chaos HQ

The chapter details how Malcolm discovered and converted an abandoned cellar into his secret headquarters. He found the property through his parents' company's building permit files and, with the help of Thomas Grant (a physically imposing boy who serves as his enforcer), discovered a hidden cellar entrance behind a hedge.

Malcolm has outfitted the headquarters with high-gain Wi-Fi antennas, surveillance equipment, and a computer system. He's installed cameras throughout the neighborhood by hacking people's security systems and uses a VPN to hide his activities.

Thomas does the physical labor while Slick, another Chaos Club member who has an uncanny ability to blend into the background, handles stealth operations like picking locks and sneaking into buildings. Malcolm manipulates his followers, exploiting their weaknesses while using their skills to advance his schemes.

The headquarters features a periscope for watching the street and a hidden entrance. Malcolm feels powerful controlling his minions and planning his revenge against Mr. Singh and the Drone Legends.

Chapter 7: Sabotage

Malcolm plots to sabotage the Drone Legends' first mission at Sparks Park. He sends Thomas to spy on them as the group hikes to an open area beneath some power lines.

Each member programs their drone for a simple mission—George's to fly around a tree, Mikaela's to the playground and back, and Kendall's to circle the tree and take their picture. Using frequencies he copied from Mr. Singh's drones while still a club member, Malcolm hijacks Kendall's drone mid-flight.

He sends the drone careening toward the high-voltage power lines. As the drone approaches the wires, Kendall desperately tries to regain control. The drone narrowly misses the lines, but electricity arcs from the wires to the drone, causing it to explode. The electrical current follows the connection to Kendall's remote, putting her in danger.

Suddenly, a mysterious drone intercepts the electrical charge, taking the hit instead. The explosion creates a shockwave that knocks the Legends to the ground. Thomas, watching from above with Malcolm, feels guilty but follows Malcolm's order to leave without calling for help.

The Legends recover and find the mysterious damaged drone. It's unlike anything they've seen—made of an unknown translucent material with swirling colors inside. They bring it to Mr. Singh, who promises to investigate.

Chapter 8: Legendary Discovery

Jaswinder Singh examines the mysterious drone on his boat home (named He'e Nalu). He connects it to voltage meters and discovers it emits patterns similar to human brain waves—specifically theta waves associated with deep sleep.

Suddenly, the drone activates and displays images on his computer monitor. The scenes show a futuristic world with advanced technology, a space station, a Mars colony, and various news clips. To his shock, Singh recognizes older versions of his students in these scenes: Kendall as an astronaut on Mars and Mikaela as the President of the United States.

The realization that his students will become influential figures in humanity's future both amazes and terrifies him.

Chapter 9: Gimbal

The activated drone, now displaying red swirling colors, rises and points targeting lasers at Singh. Three distinct voices emerge from it—an aggressive male, a soft spoken British male, and a female—debating whether to erase Singh's memory or enlist his help.

The drone identifies itself as an "Anthro-Cyborg Transneural Integrated Aerial Vehicle" with a quantum processor containing replicated brain structures of its developers. It explains it was sent to protect "The Legends" but won't reveal much more, citing timeline concerns.

Singh questions whether the drone is alive or sentient, which it neither confirms nor denies. He names it "Gimbal" after a drone component and agrees to introduce it to his students while keeping its true nature secret.

Chapter 10: A New Friend

Two days later, Mr. Singh introduces Gimbal to the Drone Legends. The drone now appears as a solid black machine with no swirling colors, trying to blend in. Singh explains that Gimbal has three personas and can respond to voice commands.

The students are amazed as they test Gimbal's capabilities. Mikaela questions who owns the drone, and Singh fibbs that he's contacting authorities to find the owner. The group decides Kendall should be the first to take Gimbal home.

Meanwhile, Malcolm watches through his hidden camera and plans to steal the unusual drone that night.

Chapter 11: Kendall's House

The Legends walk to Kendall's house with Gimbal flying silently above them. George comments on how quiet the drone is, and Mikaela finds it strange that no one is looking for such advanced technology.

At Kendall's house, the group experiences the family's embrace of cutting-edge technology: a self-driving lawn mower, facial recognition door locks, an AI housekeeper named "Alice" (modeled after the character from *The Brady Bunch*), and a holographic chef. Kendall's father is in a VR business meeting, while her mother prepares dinner with the holographic chef's guidance.

Kendall's older brother generates power by pedaling a stationary bike to stay within his "energy budget" for playing video games. Kendall explains that despite all their

technology, the family maintains a low carbon footprint through solar panels and wind turbines.

In Kendall's room, Gimbal settles on the dresser and folds away its rotors. When George asks if it needs charging, Gimbal claims to have "dual Type C Fusion Micro Reactors" before the personas argue with themselves about that technology being available yet. Gimbal then corrected itself to say it has a long-lasting battery and photosensitive skin.

Chapter 12: Break In

That night, Malcolm sends Thomas and Slick to Kendall's house to steal Gimbal. They wait an hour after her bedroom light goes out before Slick removes the window screen and sneaks in.

As soon as Slick enters, the AI housekeeper sounds an alarm. Simultaneously, Gimbal activates, turns red, and shoots a blue streak of electricity that envelops Slick, who screams and falls to the floor. He manages to escape through the window while Kendall's father rushes in to check on her.

Kendall explains someone tried to steal Gimbal, and her glasses recorded the intruder as he fled.

Chapter 13: Smackdown

The next day at school, Mikaela, Kendall and George are eating lunch on the quad. Malcolm is there, furious that his plan failed, he instructs Thomas to steal Collin's headphones.

Kendall's glasses recognize Slick as the intruder in her bedroom. The group wonders why someone would target Gimbal and suspects Malcolm.

Across the quad, they see Thomas, Slick, and other Chaos members tormenting Collin by taking his noise-canceling headphones. Mikaela intervenes, returning the headphones to Collin. When Thomas threatens her, she uses her karate skills to flip him onto his back in front of everyone, humiliating him.

Malcolm slips away during the confrontation, avoiding direct involvement as usual.

Chapter 14: Ground Rules

Concerned about the incidents involving his students, Mr. Singh summons Gimbal to discuss boundaries. He expresses worry that Gimbal's presence is putting the children at risk, citing Kendall's near-electrocution and the break-in at her home.

Gimbal insists it is protecting the students, not endangering them, and refers to them as "The Legends." When Singh questions how they know the Legends needed protection before these incidents, Gimbal points out that its actions have only demonstrated its ability to keep them safe.

To prove its credibility, Gimbal predicts the outcome of the evening's baseball game. Singh reluctantly agrees to let Gimbal continue its mission but insists it keep its distance from the children and monitor them remotely.

That night, the baseball game ends exactly as Gimbal predicted, convincing Singh further of its authenticity.

Chapter 15: The Attic

One evening after dinner, Mikaela examines her closet and notices an oddly placed hook on the back wall. Trying to remove it, she discovers it's a latch that rotates, revealing a hidden door. Behind the door is a ladder ascending to what appears to be a hidden space in the ceiling.

With her phone as a flashlight, Mikaela climbs the ladder and pushes open a trapdoor, uncovering a secret attic filled with cobwebs. Inside she finds a large chest, wooden boxes, jars of dried plants, a crystal radio, and cryptic symbols painted on the walls.

In the chest, she discovers a leather-bound journal titled "My Journey" by Emily Brandt, dated July 1962. Excited but cautious, Mikaela takes only the journal, planning to return later to explore more thoroughly.

Chapter 16: The Journal

That night, Mikaela reads Emily's journal. It begins with a dedication to her husband Charles and daughter Charlotte, mentioning "The Oracle's messages" and "visitors who will bring peace and love to the world."

The journal details Emily's life in the early 1900s: meeting and marrying Charles, his death in World War I, and raising their daughter Charlotte alone. Emily describes spending time in the mountains, appreciating nature, and learning about Native American culture.

Most intriguingly, Emily writes about encountering "The Oracle of the Spring" while sitting by a bent oak tree near a mountain spring. This spiritual entity told her to prepare for five "travelers" from the future who would save humanity. Emily was instructed to leave coded messages and tools for them to find.

Chapter 17: A New Member

The next morning, Mikaela sees Collin in the school hallway and invites him to join Drone Legends that afternoon. At the club meeting, the group welcomes him. When Collin approaches Mr. Singh's aquarium, all the fish gather at the front glass, and even the shy eel emerges. Collin somehow senses the water temperature is too warm, surprising Mr. Singh.

Mr. Singh distributes components for the students to design and build their own custom drones. Collin plans a micro drone to observe birds' nests, Kendall designs a racing drone with night vision, Jorge creates a utility drone with tools and grasping mechanisms, and Mikaela develops a relay drone to extend the range of the others.

Unknown to them, Malcolm watches through his spy camera and plans to steal the components to sabotage their projects.

Chapter 18: Mysteries in the Attic

The Legends meet at Mikaela's house to brainstorm drone designs and investigate the secret attic. Using George's lantern, they explore the space more thoroughly. They discover a crystal radio set, a sextant (an old navigation tool), and jars of dried herbs with Latin names.

On the wall are Greek alphabet symbols (Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta) alongside a series of Roman numerals. Collin takes a book titled "Medicines and Recipes of the Native People" to study. The group realizes they need to understand these items and their connection to Emily's messages.

Chapter 19: A Plot to Steal

During lunch, the Legends discuss both their drone designs and the mysterious attic findings. Mikaela shares riddles from Emily's journal related to "the oracle" and specific dates. Malcolm, watching from across the quad, reads Mikaela's lips to gather information about their discoveries.

Malcolm sends Thomas and Slick to steal one of Mr. Singh's drone microchips. They create a distraction by hacking Collin's headphones and playing painful sounds that cause him to collapse in the hallway. While Mr. Singh and the others help Collin, Slick sneaks into the classroom through the ceiling and steals a microchip and drone body.

Chapter 20: Baldwin's Hobby Shop

The Legends visit Baldwin's Hobby Shop to purchase components for their custom drones. Jerrod, the eccentric clerk who resembles someone from the 1980s, helps them

select the right parts. Jorge shows him a picture of the crystal radio from the attic, and Jerrod identifies it, explaining that it doesn't require batteries because it draws power from radio waves.

Unknown to the group, Slick has followed them to the store. While they're distracted, he steals additional components and a crystal radio kit based on the Legends' conversation. The Chaos Club continues to monitor and counter the Legends' activities.

Chapter 21: A Legend

The Drone Legends gather in Mikaela's secret attic to decipher Emily's riddles. Mikaela reads a poem about "the legend" appearing on the winter solstice, when a "sailor's tool" will point the way.

George identifies the sailor's tool as the sextant they found previously. Through discussion, they determine that the riddle refers to using the sextant at 11am (four hours past dawn) on December 21st, pointed at 146 degrees southeast.

When they align the sextant in this direction, it points to the colored montage on the wall. George discovers the montage is removable, revealing a convex lens behind it. They summon Gimbal, who shines light through the stained-glass window in Mikaela's house, projecting a pattern onto the wall.

The projection creates an abstract map of Good Harbor, showing the sea, islands, city, and mountains. The Greek symbols on the wall (Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta) now align with specific locations on the map. They also notice Roman numerals stenciled below.

Reading another of Emily's riddles about a "siren's song from across the sea," George realizes they need to use the crystal radio during high tide. Kendall calculates that accounting for sea level rise since Emily's time, they should be able to receive the signal during any high tide—including right now.

George puts on the headphones and hears a woman's voice through the static. Emily's recording tells them "the pilot's lucky number will make the difference" for deciphering a code. The group determines Kendall is "the pilot" and her lucky number is 111.

Using this number to decode the Roman numerals on the wall through subtraction and converting to letters, they get "ANUHE"—which George recognizes as one of the Five Sisters Islands from Native American legend. The group realizes they need to visit this island for the next clue, but must decide whether to involve Mr. Singh and his boat.

The chapter ends with Mrs. Kadono discovering Gimbal hovering outside, shining light at the house, but the group successfully covers up their activities.

Chapter 22: George's Plan

Unable to sleep, George contemplates the message from Emily's radio recording. The phrase "beckoned the sailor" resonates with him personally, as he's been passionate about sailing since age eight. Having saved up to buy his own small sailboat, he formulates a plan to sail alone to Anu-hé (Santa Ines) island to find Emily's next clue.

Looking at his clock, he notices it's 1:11 a.m.—the same number that Kendall considers her lucky number—and wonders if she might be awake seeing the same time.

Over several weeks, George meticulously prepares for his solo voyage. He studies nautical charts of Anu-hé and identifies a small protected beach where he can land his boat, which has a centerboard keel allowing it to beach safely. He plans his route from Good Harbor Bay, calculating how to navigate through the perpetual fog surrounding the islands using his compass, speed tracking, and a sailing app on his smartwatch.

George realizes he'll need to time his landing carefully, as the beach disappears during high tide. The night before his planned departure, he gathers essential supplies in a watertight dry bag: compass, charts, rope, knife, flashlight, energy bars, and water.

He struggles with whether to tell Mikaela about his plan. Though he recognizes it would be safer to inform someone, he doesn't want to put her in the position of having to lie for him. He ultimately decides to keep the mission to himself—a decision he'll soon regret.

Chapter 23: Anu-hé

George implements his plan to sail to Anu-hé island. After having his father drop him off at the boat launch, he tells a small lie about meeting friends, then gets help from a dockhand named Vick to launch his boat. Sailing conditions are perfect as he navigates using coastal landmarks and his compass to establish his position through triangulation.

Upon reaching his calculated waypoint, George turns west into the fog bank surrounding the islands. Using dead reckoning navigation, he reaches Anu-hé on schedule and finds the small protected beach he identified on his charts. He skillfully beaches his boat, securing it with a rope and metal bar wedged into rocks, aware he has about two hours before high tide.

Following a compass bearing of exactly 111 degrees (Kendall's lucky number), George climbs the steep terrain to the summit. After resting, he searches for "Poseidon's Fountain" and discovers an antenna protruding from rocks. Below, he notices an unusual water pattern—waves crash on rocks, followed by delayed water spouts higher up the face. This is the "fountain" he seeks.

George enters a cave system leading to a tidal pool. He discovers an ingenious mechanical system: a float mechanism connected to a battery, capacitor, and radio transmitter powered by both tidal action and wind generation. This system has been broadcasting Emily's message for decades. He retrieves a blanket-wrapped package, a book of plans, then disconnects the radio, believing its mission complete.

Noticing air flowing through the cave and realizing he won't make it back to his boat before high tide, George attempts to find a shortcut through the mountain. His journey becomes increasingly dangerous—climbing a sheer wall, crawling through tight tunnels, losing his flashlight, and becoming briefly trapped between boulders in total darkness. He perseveres through absolute terror, eventually seeing daylight and emerging on the opposite side of the island.

Racing back to his boat, George finds it rocking in the surf as high tide has arrived. He manages to board it but is immediately capsized by a large wave. Although he retrieves his dry bag with the discovered items, his boat is lost. Stranded, wet, exhausted, and hypothermic, George begins searching for shelter as night approaches.

Unknown to George, Gimbal has been monitoring his entire adventure from above, nearly intervening when he capsized but holding back when he surfaced on his own. The drone's three personalities debate the unexpected turn of events and decide they must get Mr. Singh to help rescue George.

Chapter 24: Marooned

As evening approaches, Mr. Mendoza arrives at the marina expecting to pick up George. Growing concerned when he sees George's empty boat trailer, he speaks with Vick, the dockhand, who reveals that George sailed out alone rather than meeting friends as claimed. The worried father asks Vick to contact harbor patrol.

Meanwhile on Anu-hé island, George finds shelter in a small grove protected by large rock slabs that block the wind. He examines the contents of his dry bag, disappointed to find his compass smashed during his escape through the tunnel. Inside the blanket-wrapped package he retrieved from the cave, he discovers three important items: a leather-bound book containing detailed maps of Good Harbor and the San Cristobal Mountains, illustrated instructions for harvesting island food (titled "Island Fare of the 1st People"), and primitive survival tools.

Initially dismissing a rock and metal bar as useless, George accidentally strikes them together and realizes they're flint and steel for starting fires. After several unsuccessful attempts, he uses a small tuft of dried material from the package as tinder and successfully ignites a fire. The warmth brings him momentary joy in his dire situation.

Remembering the cookbook's instructions, George collects mussels from the rocks near where he beached his boat. He roasts them on a flat stone in the fire and enjoys what he considers perhaps the best meal he's ever had. Still thirsty, he notices condensation forming on his dry bag and devises an ingenious water collection system using his water bottle and the bag.

As George stares at the night sky, he has an epiphany about humanity's existence on Earth—we are all essentially "stranded" and must be "toolmakers" to survive. He realizes he wants to devote his life to inventing tools that make the world better. His thoughts turn to his worried parents, bringing feelings of guilt for his reckless adventure. He falls asleep planning how to signal for rescue and return home.

Chapter 25: Keeping a Secret

While relaxing on his boat, Jaswinder Singh notices Coast Guard and news helicopters hovering overhead. Turning on his marine radio, he hears a "Pan-Pan" alert (indicating urgency short of a mayday) about a missing 14-foot sailboat named "Wanderer" with a thirteen-year-old boy aboard—immediately recognizing it as George.

His first instinct is to launch his Zodiac to join the search, but he hesitates and decides to contact Gimbal instead. To his shock, the drone calmly reports that George is safe on Santa Ines Island (Anu-hé), currently "eating mussels" and having an experience that is "formational for his character."

Singh is outraged, arguing that a thirteen-year-old boy's disappearance is causing tremendous distress to his parents and the community. Gimbal's three personalities debate with Singh, with the alpha persona insisting they are "witnessing, not creating history" and that George "had this experience" in their timeline.

When Singh challenges whether Gimbal existed in the original timeline, the drone maintains they "cannot be wrong" because they've seen the effects and are "ensuring that the cause occurs." The British voice acknowledges Singh's concerns but insists the experience will be valuable for George's development and that he will return safely.

Singh suggests alerting the Coast Guard anonymously about George's location, but Gimbal forbids this, insisting Singh must be the one to rescue George to prevent authorities from discovering what George found on the island. Gimbal emphasizes Singh's importance to the Legends' future, saying decades later they will all speak of his impact on them.

Though reluctant to participate in this deception, Singh ultimately agrees. Gimbal instructs him to contact the other Legends before they learn about George's disappearance (as they might reveal secrets in an attempt to help find him) and to set sail for Santa Ines in the morning.

Singh disconnects without acknowledging Gimbal's instructions but begins implementing them anyway, calling Mikaela's parents first.

Chapter 26: Search

The chapter begins with Mikaela being woken by her mother, who informs her that her friend George is missing. Mr. Singh (also called Jazz), a teacher, has invited Mikaela and her friends to join him on his boat, He'e Nalu, to search for George. Mikaela asks if they can pick up Kendall and Collin, and her mother agrees.

Mr. Singh is conflicted because he actually believes George is safe, having received that information from Gimbal, but he can't share this with the Legends or authorities. Somehow he has to make an excuse to get to the island where George is marooned.

Once aboard the boat, Mr. Singh teaches the children sailing and navigation skills as they head out to sea. Mikaela asks Mr. Singh if he's heard of "Anu-hé," which is revealed to be the Native American name for Santa Ines island. She explains finding a radio message in an attic that mentioned this place, suggesting George might have gone there. This gives Mr. Singh the excuse he needs to sail to Santa Ines.

Meanwhile, on Anu-he, George wakes up in his makeshift shelter. He collected water overnight using condensation collected with his dry-bag, and is determined to get off the island. He studies his chart and decides to cross to the northeastern side of the island where passing boats might see him. Without a compass, he cleverly creates one using a magnet, needle, and water to establish direction.

As George hikes across the island's mountain, he grows increasingly dehydrated and exhausted. The narration reveals that high above, unseen observers called Gimbal (including characters referred to as "the Brit," "the female," and "the alpha") are monitoring George but have decided not to intervene, believing his struggle is part of his development.

Near exhaustion, George encounters a seagull. Back on the boat, Collin (who appears to have the ability to sense animal thoughts) interacts with this same seagull when it lands on their boat. Collin tells the others that the bird has seen George and that he's tired, hungry, and thirsty but okay. The seagull flies west, and the group follows it toward the north side of Santa Ines island.

The chapter ends with Mr. Singh asking Collin about his ability to communicate with animals. Collin explains it's not actual speaking but more like sensing feelings and thoughts, suggesting animals are more sensitive to these things because they don't have language like humans do. Mr. Singh tells Collin and the other children that someday they are going to change the world.

Chapter 27: Rescue

George reaches the summit of the island and spots a sailboat that appears to be heading his direction. He descends to the beach, finding fresh water along the way, which revives him. On the beach, he builds a signal fire, creates smoke by smothering it with grass, and gathers mussels to eat while waiting. A seagull keeps him company.

On the boat He'e Nalu, Kendall spots the smoke signal. Mikaela and Kendall deploy their drones to confirm it's George—Mikaela's smaller drone serves as a relay for Kendall's faster scout drone. When the drone reaches George, they communicate through a special maneuver they dub the "Drone Legends wave."

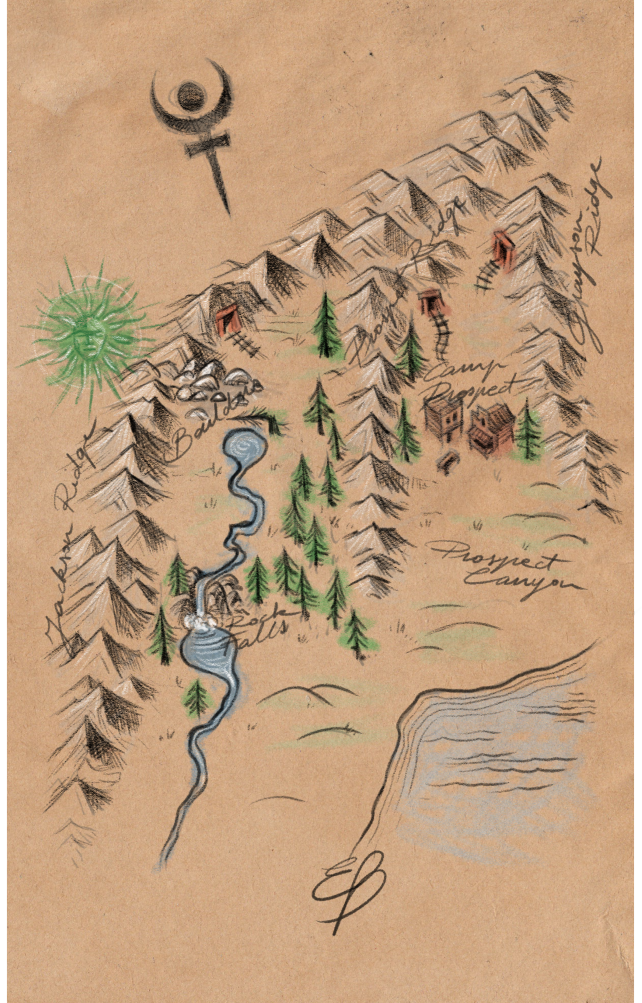
Mr. Singh sails close to the beach, instructs Kendall to pilot the boat in circles, and takes a dinghy to rescue George. After reuniting with his friends and receiving both a scolding and praise from Mr. Singh, George shows everyone what he found on the island—a book of maps.

The first map shows an old version of Good Harbor with strange symbols, including Masonic symbols with a lightning bolt near what they identify as the location of an old power plant. Another symbol resembling the U.S. Coat of Arms is marked near Red Oak Street, which is close to where Mikaela and George live.

The second map shows the mountain canyons with two notable symbols: Sol Invictus (a Roman sun god) and the scepter of Hades (Greek god of the underworld).

The group remembers Emily's message from the attic about following "the order" and connects it to the Greek letters (Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta) they saw projected on the wall. They theorize they need to find these symbols in a specific sequence, with the ocean (Alpha/blue) being first and the mountains (Beta/green) being next. However, George suggests investigating the Red Oak Street location first since it's close to home. They agree to do a drone flyby to check it out.

Maps Found on Anu-hé



Chapter 28: A Father's Perspective

When the boat returns to harbor, George is greeted by his parents, Coast Guard, paramedics, media, and concerned onlookers. The Coast Guard informs him they've recovered his damaged boat. At home, the Mendoza family hosts a celebration with relatives and friends, and George's mother prepares his favorite dish, Oaxacan Enchiladas, which tastes especially delicious after his ordeal.

Later that evening, George sits alone in his room feeling guilty about the lies he told about his adventure. When his father Cesar joins him, George breaks down and confesses everything about the attic, journal, and radio message (though he omits mentioning Gimbal).

In response, Cesar shares his own life story that George had never heard before. He reveals how at sixteen, he left Mexico against his parents' wishes to pursue his dreams in America. He describes the dangerous border crossing, working construction jobs, and eventually making his way to Good Harbor where he met "Tio Robert" Marquez and later George's mother.

Despite his success, Cesar explains he was tired of hiding his true identity and needed to reconcile with his parents. He made the difficult decision to return to Mexico, make amends with his family, and spend five years obtaining a green card to legally return to America, while George's mother waited patiently.

Cesar expresses pride in building his business and family, becoming an American citizen while still honoring his Mexican heritage. He encourages George to understand that America is a blend of different cultures and traditions, and that following one's heart while using one's head is the best path to take.

The father offers George a deal: honesty between them in exchange for his willingness to listen, though he makes clear he'll still need to be a parent who sometimes says "no." He decides not to punish George since George is already punishing himself and paid the price with his damaged boat.

After his father leaves, George reflects on his parents' sacrifices and decides to honor his heritage by using his Spanish name, Jorge, and learning to play mariachi music.

Chapter 29: Recon

The Drone Legends gather in Jorge's garage (note that George has now chosen to go by his Spanish name, Jorge) to plan a reconnaissance mission to Red Oak Street. Mikaela takes the lead, suggesting they use Kendall's DLR X900 race drone for initial survey and prepare Collin's micro drone for ongoing surveillance.

Jorge helps Collin outfit his micro drone with a solar panel and motion detection chip while Kendall launches her drone. Flying over Red Oak Street, they spot several houses with American flags, a clue noted on the maps. They focus on one particular home with an unusually large flagpole in the backyard flying an American flag, a US Marine Corps flag, and a POW/MIA flag. The property also has a large antenna on a small outbuilding behind the main house.

Collin positions his surveillance drone in a tree that has a good view of the property. As they observe, someone emerges from the house—to their shock, it's Thomas, the bully who has been tormenting Collin. Thomas begins doing yard work while listening to music on earbuds, occasionally breaking into dance moves that amuse the watching Drone Legends. They initially joke about recording his embarrassing dancing to use as leverage against him.

The situation takes a dark turn when Thomas's father, a man with a buzz cut, emerges from the house. He harshly criticizes Thomas's work, pointing out missed leaves and other supposed flaws. In a shocking display of cruelty, he dumps the can of collected leaves back onto the yard and orders Thomas to redo everything perfectly, threatening that he won't be allowed to join the family for dinner until the job is done to his standards.

The Drone Legends watch in silence, their perspective shifting dramatically. Mikaela observes that Thomas is likely treating others the way his father treats him. The group has a moment of moral reflection, deciding to delete all their recordings of Thomas and establish a principle that "Drone Legends don't break people down; we lift them up." They realize that spying on people this way is wrong, and they'll need to find another approach to investigate the house.

Chapter 30: Diplomacy

Mikaela encounters Thomas at school and takes a surprising diplomatic approach. She apologizes for throwing him down during their previous confrontation, explaining that with her black belt in karate, it wasn't a fair fight. She also warns Thomas that Malcolm is using him as muscle while avoiding personal risk, suggesting that Malcolm isn't a true friend. Thomas is caught off guard but privately acknowledges there's truth to her words.

After school, the Drone Legends get permission to take a bus to "Old Town" to investigate the lightning bolt and Square and Compasses symbol from the map. Unknown to them, Malcolm has recruited Slick to follow them, equipped with spy glasses that transmit video back to Malcolm's "Chaos HQ."

Meanwhile, Thomas is beginning to question his role in Malcolm's group, which he now sees as a tyranny rather than a team. He envies the genuine friendship among the Drone Legends, realizing that Malcolm only values his physical strength, not him as a person.

In Old Town, Slick deploys Malcolm's "Chaos Utility Spy Drone" (built with parts stolen from Mr. Singh) and sets up a relay system that allows Malcolm to control it remotely. The drone captures images of Jorge showing the maps to his friends. Malcolm screen-grabs the Good Harbor map but only gets a partial view of the mountain map.

The Legends locate the old power plant at 1854 Concord Street, matching the location of the Square and Compasses with lightning bolt symbol on their map. However, they find the building locked up with "No Trespassing" signs indicating it's managed by "AVAR, INC."

The group is disappointed by this setback and heads back to the bus stop, unaware that Malcolm Avar has a significant advantage—his father's company manages the power plant, giving Malcolm easy access. Malcolm hacks into the security system, setting up a 24-hour loop recording of the security cameras to cover his planned break-in the following day. He reminds Thomas not to tell anyone about his plan.

Chapter 31: Power

Malcolm goes to the old power plant the day after setting up his security camera loop. He easily enters using his father's company code and begins exploring the large turbine room, searching meticulously but finding nothing of interest at first.

Eventually, he notices a conduit leading to a door marked "Control Room." Inside, he finds a wall of electrical panels with switches, dials, and gauges. After thoroughly examining the control panels, he checks an adjacent utility closet and discovers a Masonic Square and Compasses symbol embedded in the floor tile with a small hole at its apex.

Returning to the control panel, Malcolm finds a knob with a tiny yellow lightning bolt symbol. When he turns it, he hears a faint humming from behind the utility closet wall. While examining the knob further, it comes loose in his hand, revealing it might be a key. He inserts this "key" into the hole in the floor tile and turns it, hearing two clicks—one from the door (which locks) and another from the back wall.

Malcolm discovers the back wall rotates like a turnstile, revealing a secret room. After entering, the wall closes behind him, momentarily trapping him until he finds the switch to reopen it. Nearby, he discovers a second switch that activates an elevator, which descends about 40 feet into a vast underground space.

In this underground area, Malcolm finds doors marked "Boss" and "Bunkhouse," along with a ladder leading to a catwalk. The space is filled with enormous wooden spools of

green, crusty cable and racks of what appear to be railroad tracks. As he explores, he encounters a terrifying swarm of rats fleeing from something even more frightening—a massive anaconda that begins to pursue him.

Malcolm barely escapes, leaping into the elevator and activating it just as the snake crashes against the gate. After returning to the surface, he collapses in the utility room, taking time to recover from his harrowing experience before leaving the power plant.

Chapter 32: The Mountains

On a beautiful fall Saturday morning, Collin's mother drops him off at The Grotto Trail for a hike. This is a familiar trail that Collin has hiked many times, and his mother allows him to hike it alone while she goes to Hillside Nursery for about an hour. Collin has an ulterior motive for this hike. He's noticed connections between their discoveries and this specific canyon: the illustrated book of Native American plants from Mikaela's attic chest describes plants he recognizes from this area, Jorge's map notes "The Grotto," and Emily's description of a spring where she encountered "The Oracle" seems familiar to him.

Feeling a desire to contribute to the Drone Legends team as Mikaela and Jorge have done, Collin believes his connection to nature makes him uniquely suited to find answers hidden in these mountains. As he hikes, he experiences what seems to be a special awareness of the natural world around him—sensing the emotions and activities of various creatures like hummingbirds, bees, a banana slug, and mourning doves.

Meanwhile, several miles away, Thomas and Slick (members of Team Chaos) are on a mission from Malcolm. They've hiked to a summit to deploy the Chaos Spy Drone and remote relay system. Malcolm, believing he has an advantage after discovering the underground room at the power plant, wants to find the significance of the symbol of Hades shown on the mountain map.

Thomas notices that Malcolm's drone has "Drone Legends" stickers on both sides, but when he questions this, Malcolm dismisses him. The drone takes off, controlled remotely by Malcolm from his headquarters. The boys settle in for what they expect will be a boring afternoon of surveillance.

Malcolm's plan is to search locations old enough to have existed when the map was created (which he estimates to be at least 80 years ago). He has overlaid historical maps of the San Cristobal Mountains onto current topographical maps to guide his search. His primary goal is to find the clue, but he also has a mysterious "Plan B" that's described as "absolutely evil."

Chapter 33 Sol Marks The Spot

Collin hikes up to The Grotto, a popular swimming hole, but it's merely a landmark for him today. His real goal is to search higher in the canyon where few hikers venture. He passes some teenagers at The Grotto and climbs up through granite boulders like a mountain goat, eventually reaching a small spring that he's visited before. Deciding this isn't the spring he envisioned from Emily's description, he continues higher.

Meanwhile, Malcolm is using the Chaos Spy Drone to search for the symbol of Hades, flying over an abandoned rock quarry and Camp Prospect. Finding nothing, he continues to The Grotto where teenagers throw rocks at his drone when it flies too close. Malcolm maneuvers the drone away but makes sure they see the "Drone Legends" sticker he's placed on it. Thomas and Slick, watching the video feed from the mountaintop, laugh at this interaction.

As Collin continues upward, he reaches a clearing with a small pond that feels oddly familiar. He finds a large oak tree bent at a right angle just as described in Emily's journal - a tree that Native Americans shaped to create a natural bench by the spring. Looking at his photo of the map, Collin notices the bent tree is actually drawn on it, and the Sol Invictus symbol (a sun with a face) is just to the left. He realizes the tree might be pointing in the direction he needs to go.

Malcolm spots Collin from the drone and is surprised to find him there. He watches as Collin follows the direction the tree points, heading west along an overgrown path. In a rocky clearing, Collin discovers a boulder with the Greek letter "Beta" etched into it. Above this boulder, he finds a small cave opening.

Squeezing into the cave, Collin discovers walls covered with Native American paintings. Among them, he finds a rectangular rock with the Sol Invictus symbol. Using a tree branch as a lever, he manages to pry this rock out of the wall and takes it outside to examine it in better light.

On the back of the rock, Collin finds an etched message: "Ye who watch this creeping shadow will better realize the passing of time 7 16 22." As he contemplates this message, Malcolm maneuvers the drone closer to get a better view.

Collin senses a hawk's thoughts about the drone and looks up, initially smiling and assuming it's his friends. When he notices the "Drone Legends" sticker and the drone's aggressive dive, he realizes someone is impersonating his group. He quickly hides the rock in his pack and starts running.

Malcolm orders Thomas to intercept Collin, but Thomas refuses. Collin, realizing he might be caught before reaching safety, stops and memorizes the message on the rock.

Then, in a dramatic move, he runs to the edge of the ridge and throws the rock off the cliff, where it shatters on the rocks hundreds of feet below.

Malcolm, stunned by this turn of events, tells Slick they're moving to "Plan B."

Chapter 34: Plan B

Thomas realizes Malcolm plans to use a drone disguised as a Drone Legends craft to start a forest fire near Camp Prospect, framing Mr. Singh and the club. When he refuses to participate, Malcolm proceeds without him, adding a fire-starting device to his drone and sending it toward the dry brush on Prospect Ridge.

After Malcolm disables Thomas's phone, Thomas must decide whether to try stopping the fire himself. Knowing the mountains well from hiking with his father, he races across the ridges to warn a group of campers he spotted earlier

Chapter 35: Unhappy Campers

After learning about Malcolm's plan to start a fire, Thomas resolves to save Camp Prospect in Prospect Canyon from the potential danger. Rather than heading directly to the camp, he decides to climb to the backbone ridge and follow the fire road to reach a group of campers he had seen on a scavenger hunt, knowing they would have a counselor with a radio.

Thomas reaches the backbone ridge and runs along the fire road, drawing on his experience from trail running with his demanding father (who expects Thomas to follow his path into the Marines). Initially, the wind is calm, which Thomas considers fortunate since wind would worsen a fire. However, when he reaches Prospect Ridge, the wind shifts to blow from the northeast.

Thomas spots a small wisp of gray smoke rising from the western slope of the canyon. While this direction seems initially good for Camp Prospect since the wind would push the fire away from it, Thomas realizes with horror that the scavenger hunt group would be directly in the fire's path. In just minutes, the smoke increases significantly.

Racing down to intercept the hiking group on Vista Loop Trail, Thomas nearly collides with them. He warns the adult counselor (Ben) about the fire, who immediately uses his radio to contact the base. They learn that the fire is already visible from Camp Prospect and moving quickly in their direction. The base advises them to head for the fire road rather than continuing downhill.

With the air filling with ash and the sky turning orange-gray, the counselor orders everyone to leave their bags and run uphill. Thomas leads the way while the counselor brings up the rear. When two smaller children struggle to keep up, Thomas carries one

child while Ben carries the other. They manage to reach the fire road, where Ben radios their position and thanks Thomas for saving them.

As they rest, Thomas notices with alarm that the wind-driven fire is now crossing the ridge into Jackson Canyon, potentially cutting off Collin, who is hiking there and likely unaware of the danger. Despite the counselor's objection, Thomas runs off down the fire road, planning to follow the backbone to the next ridge and then descend into Jackson Canyon to find Collin.

Chapter 36: Panic!

Collin, hiking down from the spring, suddenly feels growing panic that he recognizes isn't his own. His ability to sense animals' emotions becomes overwhelming as he feels the terror of every creature fleeing the approaching fire.

The sensations are so intense that he loses his normal self-awareness, becoming "another frightened animal running for its life." He abandons the trail, crashing through the underbrush, overwhelmed by the collective fear of the forest.

Chapter 37: Out of the Frying Pan and Into the Fire

Thomas races through the burning forest to find Collin. Crossing ridges and canyons, he eventually finds Collin stumbling up a trail, disoriented and exhausted. When Collin collapses, Thomas carries him on his shoulders.

Realizing they can't outrun the fire, Thomas spots a mine entrance with the symbol of Hades (from Emily's map) above it. They break through the boarding and enter the abandoned mine shaft.

Inside, they find an old ore cart on rails. With the fire approaching the entrance, they ride the cart deep into the mountain, but it's brakes fail and they careen deeper and deeper underground before plunging into an underground pool of water. Above, Gimbal debates with itself whether to intervene. Realizing Thomas and Collin have been in the mountain longer than they should have, they decide to act. The boys get out of the water, but have lost their lights and are in complete darkness, they hear something approaching, and see a strange glow—it's Gimbal.

Gimbal leads them to an air shaft that takes them to safety on the opposite side of the mountain from the fire. Firefighters find them and take them to the hospital.

Chapter 38: R.I.P. CHAOS

In the hospital waiting room, family members and Mr. Singh await news about Collin and Thomas. The mood is lighter after doctors reported both boys were in good

condition despite some cuts, bruises, and dehydration. Thomas's father, Mr. Grant, sits with arms folded across his chest, covering the Marine Corps logo on his T-shirt, and is clearly upset that his son lied about working on a school project.

Ben, the camp counselor from the scavenger hunt group, arrives and surprises everyone by describing Thomas as a hero who saved him and his campers from the fire, and then went to rescue his friend in Jackson Canyon. This new information leaves everyone, especially Mr. Grant, stunned as it contradicts their assumptions about Thomas's actions.

Collin's mother expresses heartfelt gratitude to the Grants for raising a boy who saved her only child. Thomas's mother embraces her, while his father stands tall with newfound pride.

When the families are allowed to visit the boys, they find Collin and Thomas in good spirits despite being on IVs for rehydration. Thomas's father tells his son he's proud of him, causing Thomas's eyes to momentarily glow with emotion. When Mr. Singh asks how they ended up together in the mountains, Collin tells his story, omitting details about the mission, the rock, being spied on by Chaos, and Gimbal's rescue.

Two firefighters arrive specifically to meet Thomas, calling him "a legend." This praise pushes Thomas to confess the truth. He reveals that the fire was started deliberately by Malcolm's drone and explains his own unwitting role in the plot to frame Mr. Singh. He concludes by stating he's not a hero but is responsible for what happened.

Surprisingly, Thomas's father responds with even greater pride, acknowledging that his son made bad decisions but showed true courage by risking his life to save others and taking responsibility for his actions. The firefighters contact the police, who take Thomas's statement about Malcolm's operations, including the spy camera in Mr. Singh's classroom and the Chaos headquarters.

The chapter ends with police raiding Malcolm's hideout and arresting Malcolm and Slick, effectively ending Chaos "once and for all."

Chapter 39: The Rise of the Legends

With Malcolm and Slick in juvenile detention awaiting trial, Mikaela arranges a meeting with the group, including Thomas, at Thomas's house. This gathering serves two purposes: to discuss their past and future, and to potentially search for the missing clue at Thomas's house.

The group enjoys sandwiches and lemonade prepared by Thomas's mother. Thomas tells them that the police and city attorney determined he wasn't liable for the fire, and he apologizes for his past bullying behavior. The group readily accepts his apology, noting that his heroic actions in the mountains more than compensated for his past

behavior. Thomas mentions that officials want to give him an award, but he feels undeserving and uncomfortable with the attention.

Mikaela makes a heartfelt speech about what it means to be legendary—not about fame, but about becoming the best version of oneself and positively impacting the world. She invites Thomas to join their group, which he humbly accepts. She also reveals that they witnessed his father's harsh treatment of him, but Thomas explains that his father has been easier on him since the fire incident and was just trying to make him tough. Collin finally gets to share the details of his mountain adventure and reveals the message he memorized from the rock: "Ye who watch this creeping shadow will better realize the passing of time" along with the numbers "7 16 22." Thomas immediately recognizes the inscription from the sundial in his backyard.

The group rushes to examine the sundial, which Thomas's mother said has been there for 50 years and can't be removed "for some reason." They confirm the inscription matches what was on Collin's rock. They speculate on what the numbers might mean—a date, a combination, or some other code.

After applying lubricant to the rusted mechanism, they use the numbers as a combination, turning the dial to the Roman numerals VII, then IV, then X. They hear a distinct "click."

With further effort and more lubricant, they manage to rotate the entire bronze sundial, revealing a dark hole with a ladder descending into darkness. Though apprehensive about exploring another dark tunnel, all five insist on going together.

They decide they need to prepare properly with flashlights and equipment. Thomas suggests they return on the first Saturday of the month, two weeks away, when his parents will be gone all day at the flea market. Despite Kendall's impatience, the group agrees this will give them time to be "100% ready for whatever we find."

The chapter ends with the group anticipating many sleepless nights imagining the mysteries that await them beneath the sundial.

Chapter 40: The Juve

Malcolm meets with his parents and their lawyer at the Good Harbor Juvenile Detention Center, known as "The Juve." Rather than showing sympathy, Malcolm's father berates him for being a "fool" who damaged the family's reputation, and for trusting people he couldn't control. He coldly advises Malcolm that he should only bring people into his confidence if he has damaging information to hold over them.

The lawyer explains that Thomas and "Slick" (Jason Walters) have provided evidence against Malcolm, with Slick cooperating for a reduced sentence. The District Attorney

wants Malcolm detained until he's eighteen, but the lawyer believes he can arrange for Malcolm to attend an out-of-state military school instead. Malcolm's father immediately agrees to this option, stating "the further away from here, the better."

While awaiting the final plea deal, Malcolm spends his time at the detention center contemplating revenge—not against the Drone Legends or his former accomplices, but against his father. He wants to destroy the Avar business empire that his father loves more than him.

During his detention, Malcolm makes two significant discoveries. First, while polishing a World War I memorial plaque, he realizes the green patina on the copper is identical to what he saw coating the large spools in the underground room beneath the power station—they must be massive amounts of copper wire. Second, he meets Ivan Gal, another detainee whose uncle Tibor is involved in criminal activities.

Ivan suggests that his uncle could help Malcolm avoid military school for the right price. Despite initial reluctance, Malcolm decides this might be better than military school and agrees to meet Tibor.

On laundry day, Tibor arrives disguised as a laundry service worker and offers to substitute another boy who wants to attend military school in Malcolm's place, complete with hacked records and photos. Tibor initially asks for \$10,000, then raises it to \$15,000, and finally settles on \$20,000, threatening Malcolm if he can't pay.

Three days later, Malcolm's lawyer excitedly announces that the DA has agreed to a deal: Malcolm will attend Maine Military Academy, his father will pay a hefty fine, and Malcolm can await his transfer under home detention rather than staying at the juvenile center. When Malcolm asks when the lawyer learned about the deal, he says it happened just an hour ago—confirming Malcolm's suspicion that Tibor has significant influence and "really does seem to be everywhere."

Chapter 41: The Shelter

The day after Malcolm's release to house arrest, the Drone Legends gather at Thomas's house while his parents are away at the flea market. They review their gear before exploring beneath the sundial: Kendall provides LED headlamps with infrared capability and special glasses to see in the dark; Mikaela brings glow-in-the-dark chalk to mark their path, along with a compass and city map; Jorge supplies water and energy bars; Thomas brings tools and rust-dissolving spray.

The group debates whether to contact Gimbal for help but decides against it, worried the mysterious quadcopter might prevent their exploration. Instead, they plan to leave Mikaela's relay drone at the surface for emergency communication if needed.

Thomas quickly opens the sundial hatch, and Collin sends his micro drone down first to clear cobwebs and scout. The drone discovers a circular metal hatch at the bottom of the shaft. Thomas descends first and easily opens the ship-like bulkhead door, revealing what appears to be an underground shelter or office.

When Jorge flips a light switch, fluorescent bulbs illuminate a cylindrical steel room about 20 feet in diameter with wooden plank flooring. The space contains:

- A metal rack with radio equipment and three synchronized clocks labeled "GMT," "DC," and "GH"
- Maps mounted on tracks along the wall
- Shelves stocked with old canned goods and supplies
- A single bunk and toilet

Thomas realizes the large antenna on his family's garage must connect to this radio. Mikaela discovers a journal belonging to Gordon Ambrose, which describes an encounter with a hovering machine that instructed him to build this underground shelter as a "command center for the forces of freedom in the struggle to come." The group immediately recognizes similarities to Gimbal and Emily's "oracle."

Thomas examines the maps, finding an old world map showing the USSR, a "GH Tunnel System" map, and transparent plexiglass overlays. When aligned properly, the overlays reveal tunnel entrances throughout Good Harbor (marked with green circles), including one at the old power plant. Another overlay with red paint covers communist countries on the world map.

The group discovers a vault-like door that should lead to the tunnels but finds it locked with a combination. Using their infrared lights, they reveal a hidden message on the metal rack: "CS Delta Lima Tango Base 001 14th and 28th 2300 GMT."

They deduce this refers to radio contact instructions—they need to use the radio to call "Delta Lima Tango Base" on the 14th or 28th of the month at 11:00 PM GMT (3:00 PM Good Harbor time) to get the combination. Since it's only the 1st of the month, they must wait two weeks for the next contact window.

Despite this delay, the Legends plan to use their time wisely, potentially exploring other tunnel entrances marked on the map. The chapter ends with the ominous statement that they "never imagined what waited for them below."

Chapter 42: Revenge

The day Malcolm returns home to house arrest, he wastes no time initiating his revenge plan. After his parents go to bed, he sneaks into his father's office and accesses his accounts using stored passwords and verification codes sent to his father's phone. He

transfers \$250,000 into cryptocurrency, believing his father won't notice until an audit occurs.

On his father's desk, Malcolm finds a newspaper headline: "Avar's Big Gamble Paying Off." The article describes Milton Avar's investment in "Data Fortress," a company that retrofitted an old downtown bank vault with a Faraday shield to protect data from electromagnetic pulses. The company recently secured a contract to digitize and store all municipal records for Good Harbor, including the security keys for the city's cryptocurrency tokens.

This information gives Malcolm an idea: the underground room he discovered beneath the power plant likely extends under the bank vault. With the iron rails and copper cable stored there, he could create a massive electromagnet to wipe out all the data in the vault—erasing public records (including his own), destroying millions in GH tokens, and ruining his father's investment.

The next morning, after his parents leave, Tibor arrives disguised as a pest control worker. He places a jamming device on the doorbell camera to prevent surveillance and presents a QR code for Malcolm to transfer the agreed-upon \$20,000 in GH tokens. Tibor jokes that Malcolm should have only paid half upfront but assures him he's an "honest criminal."

Tibor explains the plan for Malcolm's escape: on the day he's supposed to leave for military school, a policeman will escort him to the airport gate, where he'll meet someone named Yuri who will help him sneak away. When Malcolm mentions he needs to prepare his hideout but can't leave the house, Tibor offers to provide transportation the next day for "extra cost." Malcolm also requests "half a cow and a really bright flashlight," amusing Tibor, who agrees to provide everything.

The next morning, Malcolm meets one of Tibor's men, disguised as a gardener with a green van, and is transported to the power plant along with the side of beef. After entering the underground facility, Malcolm leaves the beef as an offering for the anaconda. The massive snake emerges, crushes and consumes the entire carcass, then retreats to its warm spot in the overhead pipes. Malcolm establishes what he sees as a primitive deal: he'll feed the snake, and it won't eat him.

Malcolm figures out how to turn on the lights and explores the space, discovering it's nearly the size of a city block. He finds a massive door on steel wheels that likely leads to additional tunnels, confirming his theory about the space extending under the bank vault. At the end of a wall, he discovers a bulkhead door that opens to a tunnel with old rails, suggesting an underground railway system.

When Malcolm returns outside, he's surprised to find Tibor waiting. Malcolm shows him photos of the underground room rather than revealing the secret entrance, and

explains his plan to build powerful electromagnets. Tibor quickly deduces Malcolm's intention to "wipe city computers" and agrees to provide a crew to build the electromagnets for \$50,000 upfront and \$100,000 upon completion.

The chapter ends with Malcolm feeling his plan is coming together, though he still needs to escape his house arrest.

Chapter 43: Gordon Ambrose

The Drone Legends divide their efforts to learn more about the tunnels and their history. Mikaela focuses on reading the journal, Thomas researches shortwave radios and his house's history, while Jorge, Kendall, and Collin investigate potential tunnel entrances marked with green circles on the map.

Collin and his friends gain access to his mother's condo building's boiler room (one of the green-circled locations) with help from Sal, the building's handyman who has taken Collin under his wing. They discover a steel plate on one wall that appears to be a sealed entrance with no visible way to open it from their side.

The group meets in Thomas's backyard to share their findings. Kendall and Jorge report on their investigation of another green circle located in the harbor. They discovered it was an old sewer outlet that emptied into the bay until it was damaged by a tsunami in the early 1900s. Jorge tried to access it by sea kayak but found a metal grate blocking the entrance. They sent Collin's micro drone through the grate and discovered that the tunnel had collapsed, closing off the sewer with only small spaces between the rubble—too small for a person to pass through.

Mikaela shares information from the journal about the tunnel system's history: it was built in the late 1800s by merchants and smugglers wanting to avoid tariffs on goods. The tunnels were so extensive that they were eventually wired for electricity and equipped with an electric cart system. A tsunami in 1915 damaged the harbor and likely flooded the tunnels, which were then forgotten until Gordon Ambrose rediscovered them with help from what Mikaela believes is the same entity that appeared to Emily as "the oracle."

Thomas reports that Gordon Ambrose was a World War II veteran who worked as a machinist in Good Harbor. He never married, had no children, and apparently no family. Thomas discovered that Ambrose had a license for a shortwave radio, but with a different call sign than the one they found in the shelter, suggesting the shelter's radio might have another purpose.

Mikaela shows the group a puzzling table from the journal with thirty rows in three columns: the first column contains row numbers (1-30), the second has series of letters all starting with "DL," and the third has numbers in a time format. Thomas suggests

these might be call signs for other radio stations, with the time representing GMT contact windows.

The group agrees their next step is to attempt radio contact on the 14th. They plan to meet at Thomas's house at 2:00 PM, acknowledging they'll need to close the sundial behind them, cutting off contact with their relay drone. Despite this risk, they all agree to proceed, hoping someone will answer their radio call.

Short Wave Radio Station List

| | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 1 | DLMX | 00:45 |
| 2 | DLCR | 01:15 |
| 3 | DLP | 22:30 |
| 4 | DLG | 21:00 |
| 5 | DLT | 23:00 |
| 6 | DLAA | 23:30 |
| 7 | DLPH | 21:45 |
| 8 | DLV | 22:00 |
| 9 | DLK | 22:15 |
| 10 | DLTW | 21:30 |
| 11 | DLJ | 00:00 |
| 12 | DLMB | 02:00 |
| 13 | DLI | 01:45 |
| 14 | DLN | 02:20 |
| 15 | DLIR | 01:30 |
| 16 | DLTY | 15:00 |
| 17 | DLIS | 15:30 |
| 18 | DLSA | 14:45 |
| 19 | DLE | 16:00 |
| 20 | DLM | 18:00 |
| 21 | DLK | 14:00 |
| 22 | DLS | 17:00 |
| 23 | DLG | 19:45 |
| 24 | DLGM | 20:30 |
| 25 | DLIT | 20:00 |
| 26 | DLNY | 20:45 |
| 27 | DLF | 20:15 |
| 28 | DLS | 21:15 |
| 29 | DLU | 19:30 |
| 30 | DLCA | 19:00 |

Chapter 44: Sprung

The chapter begins with Malcolm leaving his parents' home to supposedly attend military school. A police officer arrives to transport him, and Malcolm has cold, emotionless goodbyes with his parents. His mother offers a halfhearted hug with "zero love," while his father stoically shakes his hand and lectures him about failure being a "valuable life lesson."

As Malcolm crosses the threshold, he feels a wave of freedom and delivers a chilling parting message to his parents: he won't contact them again, their relationship is over, and someday they will know when he has "beaten" them. He then leaves without looking back.

At the airport, everything proceeds as Tibor had promised. Within 90 minutes of leaving home, Malcolm is at the power plant opening the gate for a large black SUV. Tibor emerges with an intimidating man named Cy, whose face is horrifically scarred and missing an eye (leading to Tibor's joke that "Cy" is short for "Cyclops").

Tibor leaves Malcolm with Cy, who carries a side of beef into the power plant and down to the underground facility. There, they wait for the giant anaconda to appear from the pipes and devour the meat—a sight that doesn't faze the stoic Cy at all.

Cy, who speaks in short, guttural sentences, examines the tunnel system and electrical setup. He explains that the power coming from the plant above is connected to the modern grid and distributed to the lights and rail system in the tunnels. He tells Malcolm it will be a "two-week job" to set up the "big magnets" needed for Malcolm's unspecified plan.

The "Bunkhouse" room will house Cy and his team, who will live on-site 24/7 to minimize comings and goings that might attract attention. Malcolm takes the "Boss" room as his new Chaos Headquarters.

Uneasy about the tunnel system, Malcolm orders a customized high-speed drone with extended battery life, payload capability, and a 3D camera with night vision. He uses it to explore the tunnels, finding only sealed bulkhead-style doors similar to the one beneath the power plant. Concerned that the Drone Legends might be trying to access the power plant, Malcolm sets up proximity sensors and an infrared camera for security.

The chapter ends with Malcolm satisfied that everything is proceeding according to his plan.

Chapter 45: Drone Legends Worldwide

The Drone Legends gather at a shelter, watching the clocks count down to their scheduled radio contact time: 10:58 GMT / 2:58 Good Harbor time. Thomas, who has been studying shortwave radios, operates the equipment and makes the call using proper radio protocol: "CQ, CQ, CQ Delta Lima Tango Base Zero Zero One, this is Delta Lima Uniform Sierra Base Zero Zero One."

After a tense wait, they receive a response from a boy with an Australian accent. He explains that he must ask three questions, and if any answers are wrong, he will disconnect and shut down the station.

The questions are:

1. "Who prepared the attic?" They correctly answer "Emily."
2. "Who protected the map?" After discussion, they answer "Anu-hé" (the Native American name of the island).
3. "What symbol led you to the sundial?" They answer "Sol Invictus" (the sun drawing on the map and rock).

After a nerve-wracking silence, the Australian boy confirms their answers are correct. He explains that this radio monitoring tradition started with his great-grandfather in the 1960s when someone paid to establish the station and has continued to pay his family to keep it operational, with different family members taking turns monitoring it over generations.

The boy then reads them a message they are instructed not to write down: "Time will tell if I have succeeded and you can pass the threshold. If you see the world through my eyes, you will have command of the forces of freedom. This is the path to power, and the compass leads the way. The switch is the key to your return. I have dedicated my life to this fight, and now, across the years, I am handing the baton to you. Use what you have been given."

The Australian station operator explains that now that contact has been made, he must notify another station (Delta Lima Juliette Base), who will then contact the next station, activating a network that has been dormant for 60 years.

The Legends realize the table in Emily's journal contains a list of 30 radio stations around the world. Jorge remembers the phrase "see the world through my eyes" and puts on Gordon Ambrose's glasses to look at the world map. He discovers the glasses are polarized, revealing hidden station locations and frequencies marked on the plexiglass overlay of the map.

Collin deduces that the vault combination is related to the three clocks on the console showing different time zones: 11:10 GMT, 6:10 Washington time, and 3:10 Good Harbor

time. He tries 11-6-3 as the combination, and it works. When he pulls the large lever, the bolt slides through with a deep rumbling echo.

The chapter ends as Collin dramatically pulls open the door, revealing darkness beyond and the stench of foul air, indicating the beginning of a new adventure.

Chapter 46: Into the Labyrinth:

The Drone Legends gather at the entrance to the tunnels and proceed through the bulkhead door. They find themselves in a brick tunnel with a stone path, supported by timber beams and fitted with unlit glass lamps in wire cages connected by wires. The tunnel smells of damp mold and hints of decay.

Kendall suggests a reconnaissance flight and launches her DLR X900 drone equipped with night vision. The team watches the feed on their phones as the drone reveals rats scurrying across the tunnel and bats hanging from the ceiling. Eventually, the drone reaches an intersection where another tunnel with rails and overhead wires crosses their path.

Meanwhile, Malcolm is in his underground command center, where Cy and his team are wrapping copper around iron rails. Malcolm has acquired as much Good Harbor cryptocurrency as possible, anticipating that his electromagnetic pulse will wipe out the city's token keys, causing desperation that will drive up the value of his holdings. Despite his detailed revenge plan, he hasn't thought much about what comes after.

While monitoring his own drone's feed in the tunnels, Malcolm spots a bright infrared glow from another drone. Realizing someone else is exploring the tunnels, he turns off his infrared light and uses proximity sensors to navigate. He follows the other drone briefly before engaging his return-to-home feature.

Alarmed by the intruders, Malcolm grabs his cold storage cryptocurrency wallet, places it in three layers of Faraday shielding (to protect it from his own EMP), and rushes to Cy, demanding the project be ready that day. He then runs through the tunnels to hide his Faraday box in an abandoned well, securing it with a chain.

The Legends recall Kendall's drone and begin navigating the tunnels using their compass, smartwatches, and maps. At the intersection they saw during reconnaissance, Jorge guides them toward what he believes is a connecting tunnel leading to the power plant. As they descend, the moldy smell gives way to salt air.

Suddenly, lights in the tunnel flicker on, startling the group. Mikaela suggests someone might have turned on the lights without knowing they were there. They proceed to a short side tunnel with stairs, where they discover a skeleton leaning against the wall. As they prepare to continue their journey respectfully, the lights abruptly go out.

Malcolm, nearly blinded by the sudden illumination, reaches his bulkhead door and notices a Square and Compasses symbol painted on it for the first time. He screams at Cy about the lights, who explains he was conducting a "final power test" and turns them off.

Cy shows Malcolm the red-handled switch that will activate the electromagnet, then takes him upstairs to the power plant control room. He explains that Malcolm will need to turn a dial to "2" to provide maximum power from the grid and generators. When Malcolm asks why he must come upstairs to send power rather than operating it from below, Cy bluntly answers: "You turn on magnet when you down there, you die."

Chapter 47: Captured

The Drone Legends make their way through the short tunnel, carefully navigating around the skeleton. This cramped passage provides a shortcut, saving them a much longer walk. Jorge informs them that the power plant connects to this tunnel about half a mile north.

Unbeknownst to the group, they cross an invisible beam from a sensor hidden in the tunnel. Malcolm's phone buzzes with an alert, and he rushes to his command center to check the security cameras. He recognizes the five fuzzy figures approaching the tunnel section with the enormous steel door, particularly Thomas's large frame and distinctive walk.

Malcolm runs to the main floor and instructs Cy to unlock the bulkhead door, turn off the lights, and have his men hide so they can capture the intruders when they enter.

The Legends soon reach the steel wall that Malcolm had seen earlier. Thomas recognizes it as a giant door. As they continue walking to where the steel door ends, Collin spots the bulkhead door with the Square and Compasses symbol painted on it.

The group recalls the clue from the radio message: "This is the path to power, and the compass leads the way..." and Mikaela adds the next line, "The switch is the key to your return..." They realize they're at the power plant, connecting these clues to their location.

Malcolm, who has been monitoring their conversation, suddenly understands the full meaning of the clue himself. He realizes he had found the power without following all the steps—if you enter from below, you exit through the utility closet, find the switch, turn on the power, and use the removed switch as a key to return to the underground room. Once power is on, it can't be turned off without the switch, meaning whoever figured this out could control power to the entire tunnel system.

Thomas turns the wheel on the bulkhead door and opens it. The group enters the dark, large space, their headlamps casting moving beams as they explore. Just as Kendall notices "something big," the bulkhead door slams shut behind them and the lights suddenly come on.

The Drone Legends find themselves surrounded by Cy and his crew. Cy approaches with his disfigured face, causing the Legends to shrink back in fear. Mikaela and Thomas both feel especially responsible for their friends' safety, though they struggle to maintain their composure.

Cy questions why children are in the tunnels, then gives orders to his men in a foreign language. The henchmen search the group, confiscate their backpacks and phones, and tie their hands behind their backs, making the Drone Legends prisoners.

Chapter 48: Fly, Kendall, Fly!

The Drone Legends find themselves chained to a large metal ring on the steel door. Jorge identifies the construction they've been observing as a giant electromagnet, though he doesn't understand its purpose.

While they're restrained, one of Cy's men searches through their confiscated backpacks and finds Kendall's DLR X900 drone. This gives Kendall an idea for a possible escape plan. She explains to her friends that her father installed new firmware on her glasses that allows her to control the drone using eye movements, although she's never tested this feature before.

Her plan is to fly the drone to Mr. Singh's boat, whose GPS coordinates are stored in the drone's memory. She can take a picture of their location and set it as the origination point, which would give Mr. Singh all the information he needs to find them. When Jorge points out that the sundial entrance is closed, Kendall proposes navigating through the old sewer that empties into the harbor, noting that she'd previously measured the iron grate and confirmed her drone could fit through it.

Conveniently, the man examining their belongings turns on the drone and sets it down while searching for the controller. Kendall asks Thomas and Jorge to press against the sides of her glasses to activate the mode shift. Once activated, she syncs with the drone, loads the coordinates, and takes control.

The drone lifts off the ground, startling the man who had turned it on. It flies toward the bulkhead door just as another man is entering from checking the tunnel. The second man dodges to avoid the drone, inadvertently pushing the door wider open and allowing the drone to escape into the tunnel.

Mikaela advises everyone to act normal so they don't reveal what's happening. Kendall tries to look disengaged while her eyes dart around controlling the drone through the tunnels using night vision. The confused man who turned on the drone rushes over and shouts questions at them in a foreign language.

Meanwhile, Malcolm, who is watching from his command center, immediately launches his own high-speed race drone in pursuit. Mikaela warns Kendall that she's about to have company chasing her drone.

Chapter 49: Mayday:

Kendall flies her drone through the tunnels at high speed, navigating southwest toward the harbor while Malcolm pursues with his drone, intending to ram and destroy hers. The situation is made more difficult as Cy confronts Kendall in person, demanding to know who's controlling the drone, while she tries to maintain her focus on flying.

Cy's henchmen announce they've completed the electromagnet, and Cy engages the switch before ordering his crew to evacuate. All that remains is for Malcolm to turn the power dial to #2 in the control room. Before leaving, Cy takes a steel rod and strikes the concrete floor, creating vibrations that summon the giant anaconda, which has been trained to associate these sounds with feeding time. As the enormous snake approaches the chained Legends, Cy laughs and departs with his men.

With the snake approaching, Mikaela turns to Collin, hoping he can use his ability to communicate with animals. Collin, however, can only sense the snake's intense hunger and the primitive instinct that views the Legends as food.

Meanwhile, Kendall executes a clever plan to escape Malcolm's pursuit. She leads his drone toward a colony of bats hanging from the ceiling, then suddenly stops and reverses direction, causing Malcolm to fly straight into the disturbed bat colony. As the bats swarm his drone, Malcolm temporarily loses control, giving Kendall a crucial head start.

Malcolm eventually recovers and resumes the chase as Kendall approaches the collapsed sewer that leads to the harbor. She carefully times her approach to navigate between the waves that periodically fill the sewer tunnel. With Malcolm closing in, she makes a final dash through the narrow opening between a wave and the ceiling, then skillfully rolls her drone to fit through the diagonal opening in the iron grate.

Malcolm's drone follows her through the wave but crashes into the water, his screen going to static before going black. Kendall announces her successful escape, but her friends don't respond—they're entirely focused on the anaconda that's preparing to strike.

Chapter 50: The Last Battle:

Collin, trying to save his friends from the approaching anaconda, focuses on images that might frighten the snake—perhaps a jaguar or large bird. His strategy works as the snake suddenly stops, looks around anxiously, and retreats to the safety of the overhead pipes.

Meanwhile, Malcolm realizes his time is running out. Assuming Kendall's escaped drone has a homing system that will soon bring the police, he prepares to execute his plan. He heads to the control room to turn the power dial to position #2, but when he returns to the underground chamber, he discovers the snake has accidentally pulled the power switch to the "off" position while climbing to its safe spot.

Across town, Jaswinder Singh receives Kendall's drone on his boat and examines its flight data, discovering it came from underground. He finds the photo of the chained Legends and immediately calls for Gimbal's help. Gimbal arrives quickly, downloads the route information, and tells Singh to head to the old power plant while the robot speeds ahead.

Malcolm, frustrated by the setback, initially plans to return to the control room to fix the issue, but hearing the sound of Gimbal's laser cutting through the steel door, he faces a choice: escape or complete his revenge despite likely dying in the process. He chooses the latter, climbing back up to the catwalk to flip the switch.

Gimbal cuts through the door and enters the room just as Malcolm reaches the switch. The Legends identify Malcolm, who makes eye contact with Mikaela, smiles, and pushes the switch down. The electromagnetic pulse activates, causing iron spikes and objects throughout the tunnel system to fly toward the magnet with tremendous force.

Gimbal creates a force field that matches and repels the electromagnetic pulse, protecting the Legends. The lights throughout Good Harbor flicker and go out as the force field reflects energy back toward the magnets, doubling it and causing the copper to melt and iron to turn red hot.

With its fusion reactors overheating, Gimbal cuts the chains holding the Legends and orders them to run. As they flee, Mikaela glimpses Malcolm surrounded by a swirling vortex of electric blue plasma on the catwalk. Gimbal makes a desperate last move, compressing the magnetic field until it collapses in a blinding flash of blue light that sends a surge back through the power grid, causing explosions throughout the city. Gimbal executes a total core shutdown to prevent a nuclear meltdown.

When the Legends return to the doorway, they find Gimbal on the floor, being consumed by molten metal from the magnets. Kendall tearfully concludes that Gimbal sacrificed itself to save them. The group embraces, mourning their robotic friend, before

focusing on their escape. Kendall, whose glasses still work thanks to Gimbal's shield, offers to guide them through the dark tunnels using ultraviolet light to follow Mikaela's chalk marks.

Mikaela asks about Malcolm, whom she saw on the catwalk, but Kendall scans the room and finds no trace of him—if he was there, he's gone now.

Chapter 51: Not Finished, Just Beginning:

The chapter begins with the seemingly destroyed Gimbal showing signs of life—a blue flicker glows from within its partially submerged body as the molten metals cool around it. The different voices within Gimbal communicate, noting that they have minimal battery charge accumulated from the electrical current created by the cooling metals, with reactor fuel reserves at just one percent.

Gimbal restarts its reactors, using its ion thrusters to free itself from the hardening metals. Once freed, it switches to its more energy-efficient rotors and floats through the door into the tunnels. After confirming the Legends escaped safely, Gimbal rises above Good Harbor to contemplate recent events.

In an internal dialogue, Gimbal's different personas (the British voice, female voice, and alpha) discuss the possibility that their actions may have created the very time warp that started these events. They debate sending their creators a message with the missing information about Malcolm Avar, but worry this might create a temporal loop where they keep changing the timeline without improvement. The alpha voice concludes that despite deviations from their planned timeline, the Legends are safe and developing as intended, so they decide not to send a message back and instead commit to this timeline.

Meanwhile, Jaswinder Singh arrives at the power plant to find emergency vehicles and chaos. All vehicles had temporarily died during the event, and phones remain non-functional. A bright blue light flickers through the power plant windows momentarily before stopping.

Shortly after, Jazz bumps into a mysterious man dressed in black leaving the rear of the power plant. The approximately 50-year-old man with a pale complexion seems to recognize Jazz and reacts with panic then hatred before hurrying away. Jazz feels deeply unsettled by the encounter, sensing something very wrong but unable to place where he's met the man before.

The scene shifts to the Legends gathered in "The Shelter," mourning the loss of Gimbal. Though they viewed Gimbal as a machine rather than a person, they still feel the loss deeply. Mikaela reflects on how finding the kanji above her closet and the attic set her

on this path, then tells her friends that while she wants to continue the quest, she'll understand if any of them want out after all the danger they've faced.

One by one, the Legends affirm their commitment to the group. Thomas credits Mikaela with awakening "the real me," Collin says they've become like family to him, Jorge notes how much he's learned about himself, and Kendall enthusiastically declares the journey "the most fun I've ever had."

Mikaela suggests that Gimbal's purpose was to bring them together and lead them to this headquarters. She inspires the group by pointing out that with their combined skills, worldwide network, and headquarters, they can face any challenge and "fight for what's good."

The chapter and book ends with the group placing their hands together and shouting "DRONE LEGENDS!" in unison, suggesting this is not the end of their adventures but a beginning.

Epilogue: Tomorrow is Yesterday

The epilogue shifts to a future timeline and reveals the origin story of Gimbal, the mysterious quadcopter that has been helping the Drone Legends throughout the book.

Dr. Kamaehu Paeniu, a quantum temporal physicist, recalls how he discovered that his benefactor, Alexander Mantis, is actually a time traveler from the past who intends to return to his own time with knowledge of the future. Fearing the catastrophic changes this could cause to their timeline, Kamaehu recruits historian Rebecca Edmonds and eccentric genius entrepreneur Caleb Van Strom to help stop Mantis.

Rebecca's historical research reveals that five teenagers from Good Harbor in the early 21st century—Mikaela Kadono, Thomas Grant, Kendall Fontenot, Jorge Mendoza, and Collin Trimble—would grow up to become pivotal figures in human history:

- Mikaela becomes a highly admired U.S. President
- Thomas creates "The Grant Paradigm," a diplomatic approach that prevents future armed conflicts
- Kendall leads the first permanent colony on Mars
- Jorge develops the ion technology used for transportation
- Collin creates the "Enviro-Socio Balance" for sustainable food production

All five were members of the "Drone Legends" club led by Jaswinder Singh, whose influence was crucial to their development. The team realizes that Mantis's return to Good Harbor during this precise time period could disrupt this foundation of their civilization.

Since humans can't safely travel through time, they develop a plan to send a technologically advanced quadcopter back to protect the timeline. Caleb designs the "Anthro-Cyborg Transneural Integrated Aerial Vehicle" (ACTIAV) with a quantum core and transparent titanium skin that can change appearance or become invisible.

To give the machine human-like intuition, they scan their own brains, creating a digital copy of their neural patterns. The result is a machine that speaks in three distinct voices (Kamaehu's British accent, Rebecca's voice, and Caleb's boastful tone)—exactly matching Gimbal's behavior throughout the book.

Kamaehu explains that they must send the robot back to the early 20th century (before Mantis's arrival) to lay groundwork that will help the Drone Legends realize their potential regardless of Mantis's interference. Using a portal with entangled particles, they convert the robot to energy and send it through the hole in spacetime created when Mantis first traveled forward in time.

The epilogue ends with Kamaehu watching Mantis step into his portal to return to the past, hoping that their creation (now revealed to be Gimbal) has succeeded in its mission.

This epilogue provides crucial context for the entire story, revealing that Gimbal was sent from the future specifically to protect the Drone Legends because of their historical importance, and that the mysterious "oracle" encountered by Emily and the "alien visitor" described by Gordon Ambrose were actually earlier manifestations of Gimbal as it prepared the groundwork for its mission across different time periods. Alexander Mantis is the man in black that Jaswinder Singh bumps into outside the power plant, who he recognizes, but doesn't connect that it's Malcolm Avar, returned as an adult, from the future.

Map of Good Harbor

