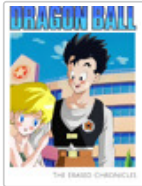


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The Erased Chronicles

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In an alternate timeline where Gohan encounters Erasa, Videl's friend from childhood, what happens when they develop a romantic relationship? Explore the Erased Chronicles, an alternate timeline where Gohan and Erasa try and balance their relationship with all the chaos of Majin Boo's arrival on Earth! Things won't always be what you expect, in this new tale of Dragon Ball Z!

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"I've actually been meaning to say something to you," Erasa turned around quickly, carrying on as if Gohan hadn't said anything. "Good work blending in today, *Golden Warrior*."

"G-Golden Warrior!?" Gohan backed away, eager to avoid this topic as quickly as he could. This girl can't have found him out, it was impossible! Wasn't it? "I-I don't know what you're talking about!"

"Oh spare me," Erasa laughed, a chiming, silvery laugh that was infectious, causing Gohan to briefly forget why he was nervous. "I told you, Gohan. You've never been good at this whole lying business. But, since you've obviously confused, I'll tell you what," She continued, walking over to Gohan, and, despite being shorter than him, seemed to have a presence that put her right on his level. "Meet me after school tomorrow. I'll explain everything you've forgotten."

Erasa turned her back and walked out of the school building, leaving a very bewildered and confused Gohan to follow outside. "*What does she mean? What could I have possibly forgotten?*" Lost in his thoughts, he walked away from the school building, putting some distance between himself and any potential onlookers before calling for Kinto'un. "*She seems to know me...and her scent and name are both familiar...why can't I place it?*" Gohan couldn't help but laugh inwardly as he realized his mother had told him a story quite like this, about how his father proposed to her, after having forgotten her over the course of several years.

"*I can't be as forgetful as Dad, can I?*" The hybrid may have admired his father for his strength and nobility, but intelligence — and to be frank, anything that involved conscious use of the brain — had never been Goku's strong suit. Lost in his thoughts, it took him several moments to notice a very weak energy following him.

Videl, apparently, had taken to stalking him.

"*Is she for real?*" The boy through incredulously, looking back slightly. He saw her duck away behind a building, and took that chance to quickly turn the corner, leaping into the air, scaling a four-story building with seconds. Landing lightly on the edge of the building's roof, Gohan looked down to see Videll frantically trying to see where he'd disappeared too.

"I think she's going to be a large cause of my stress," The Saiyan muttered to himself as he wiped sweat from his brow in relief. Looking at his watch, he saw it was nearly 8 PM. "Oh no! If I don't get home now, Mom's going to kill me! Kinto'un!" Hearing the familiar sound of the Somersault Cloud, Gohan deftly leaped from the roof, landing directly on the surface of his father's heirloom cloud. "Talk about a rough day, Kinto'un! Let's get home at full speed, or I think we'll both get an earful!"

Responding to its owner's commands, the cloud tore through the air top speed, flying over the trees and mountains on its way to get Gohan back to his village.

"Erasa...where have I met you before...?"

East District 439, Base of Mount Paozu, Son Residence

"Mom, Goten, I'm home!" Gohan called out through the house, kicking off his shoes as he entered. The smell of food filling his nostrils, he quickly headed into the kitchen, where he saw his mother was already about to set dinner down. His mother's cooking, to Gohan at least, beat out anything a restaurant could put out.

"Welcome back, dear!" Chi-Chi smiled in the direction of her eldest son, and then turned her eyes to the clock, which read 7:55. "And it looks like you *just* made it back in time for dinner. Do you need to get Kinto'un checked?" Checked for what was anybody's guess; what would ail a flying magical cloud?

"Heh..." Gohan chuckled weakly, lightly pulling out one of the chairs at the table. "That was my fault, Mom. I think I wasted a little too much time after school had let out." It was truly amazing how the son of the strongest man on the planet became so meek in front of his mother.

"Well, try not to cut it that close to the wire again," Chi-Chi reprimanded her son, but it was a light scolding. Perhaps she was lessening her restraints on Gohan as he was getting older. Or it was simply imagination. "So, dear, how was your first day of school?"

"It actually went pretty well," Gohan replied, obviously omitting any mention of the bank robbery to his overprotective mother. "The classes aren't much to speak of, and I might be getting the hang of this 'blending in' you and Bulma want me to do. I also met a girl, her name was Erasa."

"A girl!?" Chi-Chi immediately dropped the bowl of rice she was holding, the clay bowl crashing to the ground with a shattering noise. "W-what do you mean a girl!?" Her voice was reaching a fever-pitch by this point; she was nearly raving. "What kind of hussy tried to accost my baby!?"

As Gohan had thought, any thought of his mother loosening up was simply imagination.

"It's nothing like that, Mom!" Gohan quickly hurried over to pick up the shattered bowl and clean up the wasted rice. "You can calm down, she was actually...great, especially when you compare her to several other students in the class." Naturally, Gohan was comparing Erasa to Sharpener and Videl. "Please don't make a huge scene, especially when I only just got back."

"Great!? Did you just call her great!?" The raving housewife interrogated, all thoughts of cooking and dinner completely gone from her mind as she kept drawing up worst-case scenarios. "Oh no...what if he drops out of school...becomes a teenage father with three kids and some Jezebel who cares more about money than their relationship...he'll never become a scholar, my dreams for him will be ruined...!"

She continued like this for several minutes more, until Gohan finally worked up the nerve to speak.

"Mom, please calm down!" Gohan insisted, speaking as loudly as he could over her ravings to bring her back to Earth. "There is nothing going on between myself or *anyone* at my school! I only just started today, and she was only being friendly, so can you please let it go?"

"Being friendly is how it starts, Goha—" Chi-Chi began, before her son cut her off.

"Mother, please, let it go!" He insisted, and Chi-Chi finally relented. Goten, who had been sitting silently the entire time, not wanting to have his mother round on him, finally found a chance to speak. "Gohan, after dinner, let's go outside and play! Can we!?"

Before Gohan could even speak, his mother cut him off. "Now Goten, don't interfere with your brother's studies. He has to do his homework after he eats, and then it's right to bed for both of you!"

"Aw, no fair!" Goten pouted, puffing his cheeks out as he crossed his arms, obviously upset.

"Don't worry, Goten," Gohan whispered to the boy under his breath. "All my assignments are simple. Give me half an hour and we can sneak out the window while Mom is asleep!"

This brightened the young Saiyan's mood considerably, and both left their mother none the wiser.

As the family of three finally seemed to have dropped the subject, Chi-Chi was able to set the table within the next half hour. Just like their father before them, Goten and Gohan were quick to begin eating everything in sight, chewing and swallowing food within seconds of taking a bite. While Chi-Chi had tried to teach them manners, a Saiyan became a sight to behold when he was eating.

"You know, Gohan," Chi-Chi put down her rice-bowl and chopsticks, looking her done dead in the eye, "when your father was here you were less whimsical with such careless distractions. Your grades were always high and the only thing you thought about besides your studies was gallivanting off with him on another adventure." She let out a theatrical sigh, as if trying to make Gohan feel guilty about what he'd said earlier. "When he gets back I'm telling you, all this nonsense this girl is spewing into your head will be gone, you'll see!"

Gohan remained steadfast in his silence, and Goten could feel something was off, so he kept his mouth shut as well, focusing on his food. "*There she goes again,*" He thought, irritably. "*She's still talking about Dad as if he's coming back, and it's been seven years! I know she misses him, I do too...but this really has to stop.*" Gohan, while he held his tongue, really wanted his mother's delusions about her husband to cease. Ever since Goku had died, Chi-Chi had been unable to accept it, and kept clinging to some blonde hope that he would return, like he had after he killed Freeza.

But this was different this time. Goku sacrificed his own life to save them, and Chi-Chi was acting like he was simply taking an overly long vacation. And to make matters worse, it was confusing poor Goten, who, due to Chi-Chi's own claims, was under the impression Goku was coming back, and Gohan couldn't find the heart to tell his little brother otherwise.

"Oh Goku," Chi-Chi, unaware that neither of her sons were listening to her by this point, focusing entirely on eating instead. "If only you could set Gohan straight for me..."

Grinding his teeth in a manner that has absolutely nothing to do with chewing, Gohan quickly finishing his food, and placed his dishes in the sink. "Alright Mom, I'm going to go do my homework!" He said, loudly and pointedly. "Good night!" Exiting the kitchen before his mother could even say goodnight, the boy went to his room, dropping his book-bag by his bead.

"*Oh Dad...what would you think of Mom, if you saw her now?*" Gohan thought, sliding into a chair at his desk in front of the window. "*Knowing you, you wouldn't even notice she's still grieving over you, even if she's locked in denial...*" The boy kept his eyes locked out on the night sky, feeling the cool air blow into the room.

The moon had since risen high into the sky, and Gohan collapsed onto his futon, feeling slightly weary. He had taken Goten outside, as promised, and spent several hours playing games with his younger brother until the child had simply fallen asleep. Having carried him back and placed him to bed, and now found himself unable to sleep, his mind wandering back to his last few minutes at school.

"Erasa..." The murmur of her name escaped the hybrid's lips as he began to lose himself in his own thoughts. Her name...her face...her scent, all of it seemed so familiar, and yet he still couldn't place it. And yet he knew he'd met her somewhere before. "*Erasa...Erasa...that name...*" And then, as if waking from a haze, a memory surfaced in his head. The memory of two innocent children meeting by chance in a city that brimmed with history.

"*I'm Son Gohan.*"

"*A family name? We definitely don't have those here. My name's Erasa.*"

A multitude of emotions hit Gohan all at once; the foremost being embarrassment and a little bit of shame as well. How could he have forgotten Erasa? She'd be so kind to him when he met her, and they'd even had quite a lot of fun. Weren't those memories he should have held onto? "*I guess I really am like Dad in that regard,*" Gohan thought to himself. But then a new emotion struck him. Two in fact.

Relief. Relief and excitement. He'd found someone in his own school that he could talk to, and seem interested in talking to him as well. Just this thought felt like a weight off his shoulders. *"She already seems to know my identity, and she did tell me that I'd find out everything she knows by the end of tomorrow."* Perhaps this whole 'school' thing might not be as difficult as it seemed. With these pleasant thoughts, Gohan drifted off to sleep.

...was was woken several hours later by the shrill ringing of his alarm.

"I'm awake, I'm awake!" The teenaged Saiyan cried at the top of his lungs, desperately fumbling with the alarm clock to avoid breaking it while shutting it off. "Whew boy...why did I ever put this thing in my room?" Reflecting briefly on how he disliked that clock, he quickly got up and began fumbling around his room, wondering why he felt so pleased with himself.

Then his memories from last night came flooding back in full force. Erasa, that smiling girl from seven years ago, who'd helped him out when he was by himself in Orange Star City. Much to his chagrin, he'd forgotten her over the course of the seven years that had passed since they met. She, however, had not forgotten him, and Gohan was eager to make his first new — old, technically — friend at his new school.

It only took him a few quick minutes to prepare for school, and it didn't take long for him to settle down at the breakfast table with Goten, taking his mother by surprise.

"Gohan, you're up early!" She glanced at the clock; normally, she'd be calling for him to wake up within the next half hour. "What's the matter, dear? Couldn't sleep?"

"Something along those lines," Gohan nodded quickly. His mother's rantings from the previous night were also fresh in his mind, and if he could avoid rousing her suspicion so early in the morning, he might be able to keep his good mood on the way back to school.

Gohan's thinking was correct, as Chi-Chi's eyes narrowed at Gohan's vague answer, but, as she could find no reason to argue, she didn't, instead turning her attention to setting the table. Gohan, in his eagerness to get to school, quickly scarfed down his breakfast, placing his bowl in the sink as he grabbed his bentō and his book-bag and dashed out the door.

"Mom, Goten, I'm heading out!" Gohan called back as he ran out into the crisp, morning air that surrounded the East District. "Kinto'un!"

The Somersault Cloud came flying full pelt in Gohan's direction, and he wasted no time in leaping onto the magical cloud. "Alright Kinto'un! Forward, let's go!" The cloud, eager to go anywhere, tore off directly towards Satan City, leaving Chi-Chi at the doorstep of her home, looking at her son's vanishing form.

"Goten, honey...please promise me you won't ever go on any dates when you get older," The woman looked down at her youngest son with imploring eyes.

"Alright, I promise!" Goten smiled innocent at his mother, completely oblivious to her over-protectiveness in this instance.

Satan City, Orange Star High School, Roof

"Alright, Kinto'un!" Gohan looked down off the side of the cloud, and was relieved to see no one was able to see him from this height. "Let me down right here this time!" The cloud headed straight for the rooftop, and Gohan jumped from its surface, landing neatly on the tiles. He turned back towards the sky, waving cheerfully. "Thanks, Kinto'un! I'll call you back for my ride home!"

Gohan descended the stairs from the roof, heading down to his locker, fetching his supplies for the first three classes before lunch. He closed the locker and proceeded to classroom 3B. As he entered, he was surprised to see several people were already in the classroom despite how early it was; namely, Erasa, and Videl, among a few other nameless students.

Gohan made his way to his seat, sitting down quietly. While he'd been in a euphoric high earlier this morning, now that he was sitting down, he didn't quite know what to say. After all, he'd forgotten her until just last night. *"How do I even go about explaining that?"* He thought to himself, absentmindedly doodling on his notebook.

"Mornin', Goldilocks," Erasa nudged Gohan in the ribs, whispering under her breath so Videl wouldn't hear. The action surprised Gohan, causing him to jump and completely shatter the mechanical pencil in his hand. "I shock you much?" She asked, stifling her laughter, not the least bit surprised that Gohan had shattered the pencil with the slightest bit of unconscious pressure.

"T-that's a fair statement," Gohan hissed back at her, frantically scooping the shards of plastic and fragments of lead into his palm, and stowing it away within the recesses of his bag; he'd clean it out later. "Erasa, I...I'm not quite sure how I'm supposed to phrase this..."

"You apologize for forgetting me?" Erasa asked slyly, a roguish smile slipping across her face. "What can I say, we did only meet once, for a day. Expecting you to remember me based on just that encounter would be asking too much wouldn't it?"

Gohan was quickly taken aback by this. "No, that's not i-wait, how did you know what I was about to say?"

"You were fidgeting," Erasa said pointedly. True to this, Gohan had been nervous ever since he'd taken his seat; he didn't think he'd been that obvious about it. As he recalled, however, she seemed to have a knack for reading people — reading him at the very least. "Either way, your apology is accepted." She winked, making it quite clear to Gohan she wasn't his absentmindedness against him.

With the two caught up in their own conversation, they were blind to the sharp, watchful eyes of Videl, who was very disgruntled that Gohan had simply commandeered Erasa's time, and right in the middle of their own conversation no less. Sharpener pulled up to the chair next to her, and unlike Videl, took Gohan and Erasa's animated discussion in stride.

"When did they become so chummy?" The blonde boy asked Videl, snapping her out of her daze.

"I have no idea..." She bit her nail, her eyes never swiveling in Sharpener's direction. "*Erasa's never that into a discussion unless she really enjoys who she's talking to...and now that I think on it, haven't I seen this kid from somewhere before?*" Videl, ever diligent in investigation of things that did not concern her, continued down this train of thought until Mr. Fahcolty stepped into the room, clearing his throat in a way to get their attention. It was only at that moment that Gohan and Erasa noticed the rest of their class had filed in.

Mr. Fahcolty started by taking roll, and then allowing the kids to use homeroom for 'study hall', which gave many of them some much needed time to cobble together some answers for several unfinished homework assignments. The only students who didn't have any work to finish were Videl, Gohan, and Erasa; unsurprising to Mr. Fahcolty, who let out a sigh as he sat down at his desk and began grading papers. "They don't pay me enough for this job..." Gohan heard him mutter under his breath.

"So, I'm curious, what made you remember?" Erasa inquired, leaning towards Gohan to keep curious ears from listening in. "Just yesterday, you didn't remember me at all, and now, here you are, trying to apologize for forgetting."

"I've remembered everything, more or less," Gohan explained, pushing his supplies to the side. "When I had time to think about it, I kept focusing on you, and everything came flooding back to me; meeting you in Orange Star City, at Burger World, the festival."

"So you were focusing on *me*, were you?" A coy smile crossed Erasa's face.

"N-no, it wasn't anything like that!" Gohan retracted his statement quickly.

Erasa giggled, causing the stuttering hybrid to gape with perplexity at her, "You're so funny! I was only kidding, Gohan."

"Oh, sorry!" Gohan said back with a sheepish laugh, scratching the back of his head in reflex, something he also inherited from his father.

A firm clap was heard from the teacher, however, causing Gohan to gulp apprehensively and Erasa to straighten up instinctively, "I assume you're both done sharing the punchline of such a humorous joke? Yes? Good. Then if you can please join the rest of the class in the regrettable state of reality, then we can all end this class that much sooner..."

"I-I'm sorry!" Gohan called down, earning a sizable guffaw from the entire class, sans Videl and Erasa, the former staring intently at Gohan, bringing the phrase "if looks could kill" to mind. Working up his nerve, he asked her, "Can...I help you at all?"

"I've seen you before," Videl replied sharply, the sternness of her gaze causing Gohan to flinch slightly.

"Yes, you have," He replied slowly. "I saw you outside the bank just yesterday; it hasn't been that long."

"No, before." The ebony-haired girl corrected, waving away Gohan's obvious answer. "I overheard you talking to Erasa; *you* were the boy she met seven years ago when my dad had that festival. I never caught your name then, but I'm not so dumb as to think she met two different boys in one day."

"What are you getting at?" Gohan inquired, confused as to where this train of conversation was actually headed.

"Back then...you were blonde." The girl explained, and Erasa and Gohan's eyes widened immediately. Both of them knew *immediately* the conclusion her brain was rushing towards; they could practically hear the gears turning. "Care to give us an explanation to that, Gohan?"

Working fast, Gohan tried to come up with a plausible cover story to convince the girl. "Oh...uh you see...my mom-"

"-obviously dyed his hair to give him a different look!" The lie slipped through Erasa's lips so easily, immediately rushing to Gohan's aide. "He grew out of it and is now showing his natural sleek black hair. Isn't that right, Gohan?"

Catching on quickly, Gohan nodded his head feverishly in agreement. "Yeah, right! Mom always did take charge of my hairstyle!" He laughed weakly, and Videl remained thoroughly unconvinced. Before she could press her point further, however, the wristwatch under her glove let out a shrill beeping noise, and her attention was diverted.

Pressing a button on the watch, her voice quickly became professional. "This is Videl; what's the issue?"

"*A young girl was kidnapped by a masked individual along the side of Route 76 in Basket Town!*" The voice of a panicked police officer came through the receiver of the wristwatch. "*We're in pursuit but we could use backup!*"

"I'm on my way!" Videl confirmed, leaping out of her seat and dashing down the stairs. "Mr. Fahcolty, I have to go!"

"B-Be safe!" The man called out behind her, straightening his spectacles, the girl already vanishing from the room entirely.

"Hey, Erasa, what just happened?" Gohan blinked, thoroughly confused at the events that had just transpired.

"Oh, this is Videl's hobby," The girl explained lightly, without a care in the world. "Given that she is Mr. Satan's daughter, and she's not that bad a fighter, the police tend to call her in for backup whenever they need help. She must be doing a pretty good job, it's been about a year since this started."

"W-wait, they ask her!?" Gohan repeated, stunned. "*Aren't they even the slightest bit worried that they're calling a human girl into situations like this!?*"

"*Ho ho ho!*" The haughty laugh of Sharpener cut Gohan's thoughts off within seconds. "Don't underestimate Videl, Gohan. She's much stronger than I am, and at the rate she trains, she might even rival Mr. Satan."

"*Rival Mr. Satan...at getting in over her head, sure!*" Gohan thought incredulously. As the hybrid was about to stand up and follow Videl, he felt a thin hand grab his wrist, and looked over to see Erasa, who shook her head firmly.

"Let Videl handle this one, Gohan," She told him quietly, and she felt him relax. "I know what you're thinking; you want to go out and help. But if you're going to pull double duty as the town superhero, you're going to need to show a little restraint. She's handled worse criminals than this before; the report didn't even indicate they were armed. Lay low."

Begrudgingly, Gohan agreed, as he knew Erasa had a point. Everyone would get too suspicious if he left now, right after Videl had. Was balancing schoolwork and hero duty really going to be this...difficult?

The bell signalling the end of the school day resounded throughout the building. Picking up his supplies, Gohan headed towards his locker, taking the textbooks he'd need to complete the assignments he'd gotten for homework. Closing his locker, Gohan found himself face to face with a smiling Erasa. "E-Erasa, what're you...?"

"Your memory really is awful, Gohan," The girl scolded, lacing her tone with a false hurt that was easily betrayed by her persisting smile. "I told you yesterday, I would tell you everything I know about you after school, didn't I? I won't let you weasel out of it either; I already had to blow off an event Videl and I were going to for this, and to be frank, she's out for your blood."

"Oh, that's right, you did say that," Gohan replied unhelpfully. If he was to be honest, he was definitely curious about just how exposed his secret identity was; where had Erasa picked up her information? "Alright, follow me."

"Wait, do you even know the way to my house?" Erasa asked, quickly following behind Gohan as they ascended the stairs to the roof of the school.

"Don't worry about that, you can show me on the way there," He replied, and then turned his attention to the sky. "Watch this. I think you'll find it interesting. **Kinto'un!**" The Saiyan hybrid's voice echoed, until the familiar sound of his father's heirloom cloud greeted his ears. It sped down towards him, coming to a half just above the rooftop. "Erasa, this is Kinto'un."

"Gah!" Erasa jumped back, absolutely shocked, and then proceeded to duck behind Gohan, peeking out at the cloud with curious, yet cautious, eyes. "Did that yellow cloud just move!?"

"Yeah, it did," Gohan chuckled, trying to avoid any further laughter. "It's not so strange, Erasa. Think of Kinto'un like a jet flier, only a dozen times better. It was a gift from my father when I was much younger, so I've held onto it ever since."

"So that's what it is..." Erasa walked out from beside Gohan, and walking over to the cloud, kneeling down next to it. "When you give it a second look, it's actually really cute!" The girl then wrapped her arms around the cloud, hugging it, and to her surprise, it felt ridiculously fluffy and soft to the touch. "And this cloud can take us anywhere?"

"Anywhere, but only if you're pure of heart," Gohan replied, surprised, but very happy, with Erasa's reaction to the cloud. "Why don't you give it a try?" He gestured warmly to the cloud Erasa had locked in her grip. "Go ahead; get on."

"You really can ride this?" Erasa was second-guessing Gohan's suggestions, but she was able to touch the cloud. Perhaps riding it wasn't that much of a stretch? "If I fall through the cloud, catch me, alright?" She asked, obviously nervous about climbing aboard a cloud. With surprising agility, the girl hoisted herself onto Kinto'un, and landed neatly on the surface. "I...I'm on!" She exclaimed in shock, gripping the puffs of Kinto'un in her excitement. "Gohan! I'm on a cloud!" She was giddy, giggling with her elation. "Can I try it!? It can fly, right? Let me try it!"

"*Maybe she should have a test flight on it, just to get used to how it works,*" Gohan thought to himself, though he was unsure if it would be safe for her to ride too far or fast out of his watchful eyes. "Kinto'un, show Erasa how you fly, but be careful!"

"Kinto'un's your name, right?" Erasa cooed to the Somersault Cloud affectionately. "Go!" Clutching tightly to the cloud, it tore off from the rooftop at top speed, determined to impress its new rider. Gohan couldn't help but laugh at her excitement; with the cloud spiraling in the air and moving as fast as a normal human could endure, Erasa's cheers filled the evening sky.

After a few more minutes of the cloud pulling off loop-the-loops in the air, Gohan called the cloud back down to the roof. As Erasa slid off, she appeared to be tired and out of breath, as if she'd just run a mile. "Gohan that was...amazing! And you do this everyday?"

"Whenever I need to come to school, yeah," Gohan replied, smiling at her breathless excitement. "Now that you've got the hang of it, shouldn't we head back to your place?" Clambering onto the cloud, Gohan sat as close to the edge as he could to give Erasa some room. Upon joining him, she wrapped her arms around Gohan's waist, pulling him closer for support, causing the boy to flinch slightly in shock. "E-Erasa, what are you doing?"

"It'd be a shame if I fell off, wouldn't it?" She replied in a kittenish manner, obviously enjoying seeing Gohan's flustered face. "So let me hold onto you until we get home."

Despite his crimson face, Gohan actually couldn't argue Erasa's logic in this situation — or perhaps he just didn't want to — and prodded Kinto'un forward; the cloud took off at a rocket pace, carrying the two teenagers above the city skyline. The speed at which Kinto'un could fly made the city seem much smaller to Erasa than ever before, and within mere minutes, she pointed down at the ground and cried, "There it is Gohan! My house is that one, the one with no lights on!"

Erasa was pointing to a one-story house; because it had no lights on, this made it easy for Gohan to turn Kinto'un towards the ground and make a landing. "Thanks, Kinto'un! I'll call you back when I have to leave!" The cloud ascended into the sky and out of sight, shocking the few people who were still on the street at this hour.

"Well, come on in!" Erasa said cheerfully, unlocking the door to her home with a key, opening the door and stepping inside. She motioned for Gohan to follow her, and he did so, albeit nervously. Stepping in carefully, both teenagers kicked off their shoes as Erasa flipped the light switch on.

The house itself was rather quaint; it seemed fit for a very small family, and this was Gohan's first impression of it. He immediately recognized the scent of this house; it smelled of the same naturally sweet scent that Erasa possessed, but he could detect another human scent that lingered throughout the house; sweet and bitter at the same time, with the aroma of salt and pepper. "Do you only live with one other person?" He inquired before he could stop the question from pouring out of his mouth.

"Yeah, I do." Erasa replied with surprise as she placed her book-bag on the family room's glass table. "I live with my dad, and I have for awhile, ever since my mother passed away. Ever since I entered high school, he's been working more often, so I usually have the place to myself. How'd you know that?"

"Uh..." Gohan's first recourse was to try and spin a lie, but he saw Erasa's eyes narrow. She was obviously analyzing him, and he let out a defeated sigh. "My sense of smell," He explained, slumping if slightly. "It's better than a normal person's, and I'm able to detect scents and odors you wouldn't pick up."

"Given the flying cloud, and the multitude of other things I've seen you do, that's actually the least surprising thing so far," Erasa replied, and her tone showed she wasn't in the least bit shocked at this. "Now, I think you've waited long enough. Come on, I'll show you to my room."

"W-wait, what!?" Gohan protested, but the girl latched onto his arm, and pulled him through the house, towards the flight of stairs. Gohan noticed that, despite only living with her dad, the house, despite its modest look, had more than enough of the average luxuries one could expect. The family room, as he passed by, had a large TV, comfy looking sofas, as well as what appeared to be the latest FONY gaming system.

In spite of Gohan's — rather weak — protests, Erasa led the young Saiyan up the stairs, where they were met with two closed doors facing opposite ends. Before she even opened the door, Gohan could automatically tell which room was Erasa's, as her unique aroma came from inside.

"Stop struggling and in we go!" Erasa crowed cheerfully as she wrenched open her door. Flipping on the light switch inside the room, Gohan was confronted with an onslaught of colours that assailed his eyes; bright baby blues with blinding yellow highlights, the entire room might as well been a light on its own power. Looking around, Gohan immediately concluded this room might have been fit for a younger child, and realized it hadn't changed much since Erasa had been younger. There were patterns of clouds on the ceiling and waves on the walls; Gohan could tell they'd been added through the delicate stroke of a paintbrush years ago. Several shelves were filled with what seemed to be toys from childhood, and there was even a chest that contained very childish things. Just looking at this room showed Erasa was the kind of person who held tightly to the past. Looking around, the only additions in the room that seemed new, to Gohan's eyes, was the desktop computer Erasa owned, made by the Largehard company, and the fluffy bed she owned, which obviously had to be replaced to accommodate her growing up.

"Um..." Gohan began, raising a finger towards the ceiling.

"You're curious about the patterns?" Erasa asked, plopping herself down on her bed. "I used to have a vested interest in art when I was younger. Dad figured the creativity and expression was good for me, especially after mom died. After while, I'd covered nearly my entire room with clouds and waves. I guess it's because I've always liked the beach, so those patterns just flowed naturally."

"I see..." Gohan replied quietly. True to the point, she had mentioned her mother was dead, but he hadn't had much time to take that in as she had dragged him up here. "I'm sorry to hear that. While I know it's not much consolation, my dad died as well, seven years ago. So, I know how you feel."

Erasa let out a startled gasp, quickly covering her mouth with her hand to stifle it. His father was dead? Her memory flashed back to the man with upright blonde hair who had come to pick up Gohan seven years ago, and then remembered it was the same man who had primarily fought Cell in the Cell Games. With that, exactly how he'd died clicked in her head, and there was an awkward silence between the two for a few moments, before she said, "I guess that's something we both have in common..."

"Yeah..." Gohan replied quietly. Trying to find a way to escape the awkward silence, his eyes wandered, halting immediately upon seeing a familiar stuffed animal sitting upright on Erasa's bed. Walking over to it, he picked it up, and much to his surprise, found that he recognized it. "E-Erasa, is this the bear I won at the festival?"

"Hm?" Gohan's question snapped Erasa out of the funk she was in, and she immediately smiled at the sight of the bear. "That's the very same! I kept him ever since you won him for me as a prize, and he's been well taken care of! He even has a name; Ippan!"

"I...ppan?" The hybrid's face flushed pink at the name. "That's quite an interesting name you've chosen." Placing the bear down, Gohan noticed that it was in absolutely perfect condition. "*She really must have treasured it,*" He thought to himself as he finally sat down next to her. "So...is this where you start explaining?"

Nodding, Erasa stood up, walking over to the cabinet under her television. Reaching in, she pulled out several video cassette tapes, wrapped in plastic. "Most of what you need to know is right here on these," She said, holding up the tapes for Gohan to see.

"On those tapes?" Gohan looked at them curiously. "What's on them?"

"These are videos of the Cell Games," She replied, brandishing the videos in Gohan's direction as she removed the plastic.

"*Videos..of the Cell Games!?*" Gohan thought incredulously, eyeing the cassettes with apprehension. "*I thought the footage had been destroyed...and people have these? And even worse, watch them like home movies!?*"

"You'd be surprised how quickly these recordings actually sold when the entire event ended. And on these tapes...is you." She took out one of the cassettes, and placed it into the VCR that sat in front of her television, turning the device on and allowing the video to play.

The scene that greeted Gohan's eyes was only too familiar to the teenage hybrid; a pure white tournament ring, set up in the middle of a nearly barren wasteland. To be frank, it was a setting more fit for a graveyard, and Gohan had to assume that was why Cell had chosen it for the site of his Cell Games. "*This really is it...*" He thought to himself, his eyes now locked on the screen. He had to admit the quality of the video could be better, but the cameraman was probably far too terrified to keep a steady hand the entire time. The camera panned over to a group of individuals, the strangest assortment of people that humanity ever thought they would see come to save the Earth.

The Z-Fighters.

Naturally, Gohan recognized each and every person present; Krillin, Tien, Yamcha, Vegeta, Trunks from the future, as well as himself, who was a Super Saiyan at the time. But what hit home with Gohan the most was the sight of the one competitor who hadn't made it out alive; his father.

"Dad..." Gohan breathed, and Erasa flashed him a look of concern.

Stepping into the ring, wearing his trademark orange gi from the Turtle School of Martial Arts, was Son Goku.

"*As I'm sure you know by now...I've been waiting for this...*" The voice of Cell, the menace who terrorized the planet seven years ago, caught Gohan's ears; the audio, while faulty, was easily perceived by his Saiyan hearing. However, the words were crystal as he remembered hearing Cell speak as if it were just yesterday.

"The little blonde boy in the sidelines, that's you, isn't it?" Erasa gestured to the younger Gohan's face, as the camera panned over him and his comrades once more. The boy in the screen was watching his father intently, and Gohan could see two perspectives from this; the screen was looking at, where he saw his own younger face, and the ring, in which his father had taken a fighting stance against Cell. He still remembered that feeling of faith he had in his father's skills to combat Cell. How wrong he had been.

"Yeah...that kid is me..." Gohan replied quietly, his eyes on the screen. He didn't need to see a video to remember the Cell Games; those memories would never leave him.

Erasa removed the current cassette, much to Gohan's relief; seeing his father's face, hearing his voice, especially in the setting of the Cell Games, was too much. The click of another cassette tape caught Gohan's attention, and the battle cry of Cell greeted his ears, taking him back to when he'd stepped into the fray at the behest of his father.

"Around the time Dad tossed Cell a Senzu Bean," Gohan inwardly sighed at his father's better nature. *"I sometimes wonder what he would have done if that gesture of good will had backfired on all of us."*

"Wonderful...now let's get started..." Cell's voice rang loud and clear in Gohan's ears, enhancing the choppy quality of the audio that Erasa herself could barely make out. *"So, child? Are you ready?"* Gohan could see his younger counterpart bracing himself, letting out a mighty cry unto the heavens as he began to raise his own battle power in preparation for the fight against Cell.

"You were a competitor in the Cell Games," Erasa continued with her mention of the obvious. "I'd seen the footage, when it was broadcast around the globe, and I immediately recognized you. It's hard to forget someone like you after only a week, Gohan."

"So, these videos are how you knew?" Gohan pried, trying to focus on Erasa, to bring himself back to the present, back to this room; away from the Cell Games and the horrors that had occurred there. It became obvious to Erasa that the footage was causing Gohan discomfort, and she quickly pressed a button on her remote, ejecting the cassette.

Thinking it best to finish her explanation, Erasa continued, breaking the resumed silence that permeated the colourful room. "The cassettes weren't the only thing. I drew my final conclusion about your identity as the Gold Fighter when I remembered what you did when we first met; you saved me, Gohan. From the oncoming truck?"

Gohan remembered this very clearly. His body, in a desire to keep Erasa from getting crushed, reacted in an instant. Snatching her from the side of the road, he had moved her to the other sidewalk before any onlookers could witness his instantaneous entire body had reacted on one single desire: protect Erasa.

"I've also seen you fly," Erasa added brightly, and this surprised Gohan, causing him to give her a wide-eyed stare.

"You've even seen me fly?" He responded in shock. "When was this?"

"When your dad came to pick you up," The blonde girl explained, and the moment surfaced in Gohan's memory. "Both of you were flying; that can't have been any kind of trick. What really cemented it, though, was your little...performance...in P.E. You aren't really that good at holding back your superhuman abilities, and it didn't take long to realize that you had to be the Gold Fighter. Everything *fit*."

"Urk!" Gohan flinched at this; the amount of insight Erasa had on him by this point was staggering. Despite this, Gohan also felt, if he dared say it, relieved. "I'm surprised...you've definitely analyzed this through-and-through. To be truthful, I've been apprehensive about anyone knowing what I can do. My mother, and a friend of my father's both warned me I could be treated differently if people found out what I could do, when all I want to do is blend in. Even if I can't be normal, I want to try my hand at a normal life."

"Gohan..." Erasa murmured quietly, her sapphire eyes locking their gaze on the Saiyan boy who was laying his heart out for the girl to see.

"Then I met you," Gohan carried on, his onyx eyes meeting Erasa's sapphire orbs. "Someone who figured out the truth about me, and you're still treating me like I'm average; like a friend, even. I'm grateful, Erasa. To have someone I can talk to...I didn't expect something like this to happen when I arrived in this city."

Erasa smiled, a soft, kind smile that could make the heart melt. "You can relax around me, Gohan. Unwind. I'll be here for you if you need anything. I'll even help you pull double duty as the Golden Warrior; playing hero seems to be something you can't stop doing." She wagged a finger at him, winking playfully. "I'll help you blend in, alright?"

"Thanks, Erasa," Gohan answered, entirely convinced that what Erasa said was true.

"Erasa! I'm back!" A disembodied male voice came from downstairs, causing both teenagers to jump in shock.

"My dad's home!" Erasa hissed under her breath, a look of panic on her face. "If he sees you up here, Gohan, he will flip! We've got to get you out!"

"Crap!" The hybrid jumped up, and his first reaction was to make a break for the window, just as they heard footsteps coming towards the stairs. "Erasa, I'll see you tomorrow in school, alright?"

"Alright, tomorrow, now go before he opens the door!" She insisted, waving him off in earnest. "We'll take more about this tomorrow!"

"R-right!" Gohan deftly leaped out of the window, propelling himself high into the air, just in time to hear Erasa's door click open. He'd just barely made it. "So, Erasa really does know everything about me...and she's doesn't treat me any different at all." Gohan's face broke out into a wide smile as he realized for the first time, he finally had a human friend. The familiar shape of Kinto'un descended next to him, flying at top speed alongside its owner.

"Come on, Kinto'un!" Gohan crowed into the night sky. "I'll race you on home!"

But as Gohan raced home, his thoughts full of bliss at his accomplishment, he didn't consider the threat waiting for him at home.

An angry Chi-Chi.

Author's Note: Chapter 3 is finally done and whoo-boy was this a doozy to write. Like the first chapter, this chapter was pretty much all me; no source material to speak of with the exception of Videl's exit to go fight crime, but I changed that up a bit to make sure Gohan needn't interfere with her hobby — this time. I have to thank my friend Demod20 twice over this time; he helped me sit down and brainstorm some ideas for this, in addition to being my beta reader who read the finished chapter prior to my putting it out, to make sure it was ship-shape. Thanks man, you are a HUGE help here.

Three things of note this time, before I sign out; to anyone who doesn't know, the word "ippan" (一般) means "bowl of rice" or "meal", which is nearly the exact same meaning as the word "gohan" (

ご飯), which means "cooked rice" or "meal". She named the bear Gohan won after Gohan, in a unique little way. And, to anyone who sees that Erasa is also missing a parent...that actually was unintentional; I didn't plan on them sharing that until I wrote it out, and decided it would be a way they could bond! I'd also like to see how many people get the "Largehard" and "Fony" names, without me having to explain them; and no, the former is not innuendo. Anyway, that's all for this installment, everyone! Stay tuned for the next chapter!

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