Passion of the Father

by Tien_Shinhan

Summary

Three months following the Buu Saga, the world falls into a state of insanity due to the memory erasure wish never being made. Against this backdrop, Videl begins to feel like a mortal among Gods. After losing a fight to a challenger, she finds herself directionless. Gohan, blaming himself, offers to complete his girlfriends' training. What begins as a journey of rediscovery, turns into a quest to save humanity from itself.
Falling Behind

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“Oh my God! Videl!” screamed Gohan as his girlfriend rode him in a sexed-up frenzied state. The half-breed grabbed the brunette fighter’s luscious buttocks as he guided her up and down his iron-hard thickness, causing her higher C-cup sized assets to bounce enticingly.

“Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh My GOD!!!” Videl for her part was panting like she’d run a mile. No matter how many times Gohan took her over the edge, she just couldn’t sate herself. Her eyes rolled into the back of her head and her mouth was left drooling, hanging open with an almost drug-induced smile as her lithe, nude body gyrated on her man’s lap.

It had been three months since the defeat of Majin Buu at the hands of Son Goku and Vegeta, and everyone was trying to rebuild their lives any way they could. For Videl and Gohan, that meant exploring each other and learning to love each other as if any moment might be their last. There was a desperate attitude to both their love life and their personal lives as fighters since they were both killed for the first time by Bibidi’s creation.

Videl could feel that all-too pleasant knot of heat and tension building in her womb as she continued to impale herself on Gohan in a frantic bid to hit her deepest sweet spot over and over again at a dizzying pace. Then with a final buck coming up from the hips of her half-Saiyan lover, the knot exploded and she was thrown into that world of mind-numbing pleasure she’d experienced so often in recent months as her dripping womanhood took every wave of Gohan’s physical essence into her.

With a loud squeal of “Fuck!!!” she collapsed on Gohan’s well-toned physique. She continued to gyrate her hips with him still inside her, milking her boyfriend for all he was worth. Gohan wrapped his arms around her protectively and bent in for a slow, deep kiss.

“Let’s do this again,” she slurred.

“Same time Wednesday?” Gohan asked. “My mother’s been fine with me being out at night so far…., at least since my dad came back. Eventually, it’s going to get harder to meet up like this.”

“We’ll think of something,” was her answer. “You said it yourself. They can sense energy so they’ve known about our trysts since the beginning. Especially, your dad and Vegeta, so you know Bulma has probably said something to your mom by now…..”

Gohan couldn’t argue with her on that point. Bulma and his mother had become best friends after the battle with Cell, and there was very little that Bulma found out through Vegeta that didn’t get back to Chi-Chi. Could his mother have really been that dead-set on making it work between him and Videl that she deliberately looked the other way?

The two of them lay together like that for hours, Videl resting atop the only boy who had won her heart, held in his loving embrace. Aside from their crime fighting, making love was one of the few things that offered her and Gohan any sense of closure following the whole Buu incident, especially seeing how her father allowed Buu to live with them. Putting them all in danger like that yet again!? It was almost a second slap in the face after all the lies her father told. She really did love her father, but he had his moments where she felt like putting some distance between her and him. She’d turned seventeen two months ago, and a part of her wanted so badly to just move away with Gohan and start a new life together, to run from the very thing that gave her nightmares every time Gohan
wasn’t with her. Silly as it sounded, she had PTSD attacks just from seeing anyone with an ‘M’ tattoo no matter how vague the reference, and Gohan was wracked with emotional problems from his failure to save everyone and more specifically her from Super Buu’s terrifying hunger.

Eventually, Videl had to get up. It was morning and she really didn’t need her father or any of the Satan Estate house staff walking in and seeing them like this. She had her suspicions that her father already knew how far she and Gohan have taken things as well as how much time they spent sleeping together. Mr. Satan was a very crafty and overprotective man. Sometimes, she thought the only thing keeping her father from butting into her love life was his innate fear of Gohan. Not that Gohan would ever actually harm her father, but she sure as hell wasn’t going to let him know that. Then there was the elephant in the room, Mr. Buu. Despite claims to the contrary by her father, seeing that thing living in her home will always give her issues. Panic attacks were less common now, but she still had to take her medication. She never could understand how her boyfriend could be so outwardly nonchalant about the whole death and resurrection thing. Heck! Acting chipper probably was his coping mechanism. It was Monday, and both she and Gohan needed to get ready for school. Making her way into her private bathroom, she slipped into the shower, setting it on hot and letting the warm water cascade down her naked body.

Just as Videl had started to scrub herself with a rich soap-lathered washing towel, she heard the shower door open. Smiling, she reached back and handed Gohan the soap and another wash towel.

“You know...,” she began, “You’ve grown more bold since we started doing this.” Gohan being Gohan, simply smiled as he came up to her rear and wrapped his arms around the young girl he’d come to love.

“And you’ve grown more enticing.” He began to kiss and nip at her neck as he started to wash and rub her front from behind. Smiling in a state of bliss, Videl leaned back and gave into his ministrations yet again. It was going to be a beautiful day...

Later on at school, Videl and Gohan sat in their usual seats with their three best friends, Pen, Sharpner, and Erasa. It was literature class and their first period teacher, a twenty-something blonde, was a recent college grad who was still relatively new to the job, and that left a lot of room for in-class antics. Their original literature teacher had died shortly after his revival, and the school scrambled to bring in a replacement.

Some of the adolescents at the back of the class had started playing Poker out in the open, with actual money being put up for bets. Gohan really didn’t see why the kids in the back had to take advantage of someone so new to the job. It reminded him of his own first day in school months prior. The overall atmosphere at the school had changed so dramatically since everyone’s revival.

Besides everyone knowing about Gohan’s identity as both the Great Saiyaman and the Gold Fighter, there were other factors contributing to the change. Some of their fellow students had adopted an ‘If it feels good, do it!’ approach to life while others took their second chance at life and tried to live up to their full potential. Buu’s violence had literally taken the old adage ‘You only live once’ and shoved it right down everyone’s throat, and it would take a few generations for everyone on Earth to find closure.

Buu’s massacre also had the added effect of making the vast majority of people on Earth more cynical, especially Son Gohan. Though he would never become as cynical as someone like his girlfriend or Vegeta, it was just so hard to stay completely optimistic anymore. The occasional person who didn’t change in spite of the horrors three months ago was someone Gohan could admire. These carefree souls would always be themselves. They were also the ones least likely to be wary of him because of his powers. The world desperately needed more people like that.
A good number of their classmates had also become far more brazen in their acts at school. It wasn’t too uncommon now for the students to show complete disregard for the school’s sexual harassment code, and even now several boys were groping their girlfriends in class. Even Videl had done this to him on more than one occasion, not that he minded.

The teacher had gone into a lecture about the contributions of Venerable Beed and the differences between old and new English that left everyone who wasn’t academically driven wishing they’d brought their smart phones.

“Sigh…” Sharpner huffed. “This is so boring. She sounds like a robot…”

“That’s not very nice Sharpie,” Erasa mildly scolded. “Give her some time.”

“Just think about how hard this is for her,” added Gohan. “It’s her first day on the job. She seems really nice.”

“Guys, quiet! I need to get this down pat,” Videl hissed. Videl wasn’t doing so well in this class, and her friends and all their chatter weren’t helping. She had started attending tutoring sessions with Erasa and Sharpner not too long after her below average showing on the midterm’s exam earlier that semester. Coupled with Gohan lending her his notes, she was doing everything she could to keep her marks from slipping. Finals were only a few weeks away, and she needed to cram as much as possible. Much as she hated it, she was now far less likely to leave class for crime fighting, and she often sent Gohan in her stead.

After their second period class, all the students filed into the hall to drop their bags off at their lockers before heading to the school cafeteria. It was during this time that the youths got to socialize the most.

Videl and Gohan headed to their lockers with Videl glomping his left arm. Some of the male students looked on at the couple, actually feeling jilted that some freak half-alien managed to win the affection of the one and only Videl Satan. Some of this antagonism had been directed at Videl specifically, mostly by overgrown man-children who had some screwed-up sense of entitlement to any girl with a decent set of legs. In the end, all it really took was Gohan confronting a few of them, albeit reluctantly, and most of them went back to using him as their object of loathing. It was a good thing too! The last thing he needed was one of his own schoolmates blowing things way out of proportion over losing a fight with a girl and attempting to smuggle a gun into the school cafeteria. Videl’s fame and adoration as a celebrity could only go so far in keeping her safe, and Gohan did not want to add paranoia to his list of problems.

Upon getting to their lockers, the two teens found themselves obstructed by two of their schoolmates making out right in the open. A boy from two grades below them had his hand up a girl’s skirt. Videl rasped her knuckles against the adjacent lockers to get their attention.

“Excuse me!?” huffed the petite fighter. “Do you mind? Get a fuckin room!”

The two teenagers in question, one of them from the school cheerleading squad, threw a glare towards her and Gohan before reluctantly moving off to someplace more private. “Whatever Videl Satan… You’re one to talk about getting a room.”

“It’s as if everyone is losing it,” remarked Gohan, shaking his head.

“All these people we used to know…,” mused Videl shaking her head, “The world just keeps getting crazier and crazier.”
Opening his locker, Gohan deposited his bag before turning to his girlfriend. “I agree. I don’t even try to act normal anymore because everyone else is on a one-way trip to where I am already. Everyone is just so all over the place. If they think they’ve got it bad just because they died once, I should probably introduce them to Krillin.”

At the mention of the former monk’s name, Videl arched an eyebrow. “Why Krillin?”

“He’s died four times already,” Gohan said flatly.

For the first time since they were brought back to life, Videl’s eyes bugged out. “F-four times?! Sweet Jesus…”

“Yeah…” mused Gohan. “He’s been revived so much that there’s an inside joke among us that when there’s no more room in Hell, Krillin will walk the Earth.”

The two young lovers burst out laughing. These were the moments they treasured. Silently, Gohan wondered if closure was the main driving force behind Krillin getting together with Marron only a few months following his revival after the events on Namek. Sometimes, Gohan wonders if it is Krillin he has the most in common with out of all his dad’s old friends.

Lunch proceeded like it always did in the last 3 months. Gohan would sit next to Videl across from Erasa, Sharpner, and Pen, and strike up some chatter about who’s dating who, newly released movies on Blu-Ray, or some such thing. But even here, the residual trauma of Buu’s rampage could be seen in the eyes of the resurrected. Every so often, some poor kid would break down from memories he or she had of the afterlife, from being reunited with old loved ones who died from natural causes long before Babidi came to Earth.

_Babidi_… There was a name that was outlawed by King Furry’s government. It was a name that represented the greatest evil in the history of mankind, at least since the days of The Dictator. There was even a Holocaust Museum-styled complex built in Capital Central in remembrance for all that happened those few dark days.

It was then that Gohan was thought back to why Dende decided against using the dragonballs to erase everyone’s memory of those few days of worldwide extinction. There were so many worlds destroyed by Kid Buu before he fought with Goku and Vegeta in Otherworld that it would have been selfish to use the two wishes on the people of Earth. There was that, and then there was Dende and Piccolo’s Moral Universalist belief that the people of Earth were at least entitled to the truth under the premise that they would benefit from it long-term.

With a grimace, Gohan stared down at his tray. “Dende, I really want to trust your wisdom, but sometimes I wonder…”

“Gohan!”

Gohan’s head snapped up as if he had been asleep. Erasa and Sharpner exchanged glances and gave him strange looks. “W-what’s wrong?”

“You were talking to yourself,” Erasa pointed out. “You sounded like you were praying.”

“That and you’ve barely touched your food,” added Sharpner. “Having flashbacks of Buu again?”

“Not really,” was his clipped answer.

“Me and Gohan had to deal with Buu at his worst,” Videl growled, balling her fists in her lap. “I’ve never felt so helpless in my life.” As she said this, Videl’s hands began to tremble. This was not lost
on Gohan. Her personality was in many ways similar to his mentor Piccolo and Vegeta’s, so it wasn’t often that Videl openly showed weakness.

Gohan took her hands into his and tenderly kissed her on the forehead. “We all did…”

Erasa whipped out her smart phone and took a photo of her two best friends’ tender moment. This was definitely yearbook material.

After their fourth period class had ended, school finally let out, and the four teens decided to hang out at the local coffee shop. Gohan and Videl made their orders, but before either of them could take a sip, Videl’s wrist comm went off.

“Hey Chief! What’s up?”

“Videl! There’s a hostage crisis at the 3rd Satan City Bank on Huckabee Blvd! Some crazy fanatics pulled the wool over our eyes and were using a bank robbery as a cover for a terrorist attack! A lot of really good officers have been downed by heavy gunfire, and the assailants are preparing to decapitate the hostages on live television!”

Just then, gun fire rang out over the communicator. “Chief! Chief!” Videl screamed repeatedly.

“Videl, they just gunned down some of the paramedics! We can’t even save the wounded! Please! You and Saiyaman get over here as fast as you can!”

“This sounds like more than just your run-of-the-mill thuggery,” said Sharpner.

“No shit!” Videl remarked. “Come on Gohan! We’ve got a job to do!”

“I’m way ahead of ya!” exclaimed the DemiSaiyan. “Let’s do this!” Paying for the coffee, the two teenaged crime fighters took to the air.

The two adolescents were appalled by what they saw upon arriving at the seige. Strewn about the street and sidewalks peripheral to the bank entrance were over two dozen dead and wounded policemen and a number of dead medics. The front doors to the lobby had been shot out, and guns were being trained by snipers from both sides of the exchange. Most of the surviving officers were pinned down behind a hastily made siege barricade.

Videl quickly spotted the Satan City Police Chief standing with the commissioner behind said barricade going over who knows what kind of strategy.

“We came as fast as we could…,” breathed Videl.

“And who is this young man?”

Gohan looked down at his attire and quickly realized that in his haste he forgot to don his Saiyaman outfit. Only now did Videl notice this as well.

“This is… Saiyaman without the costume,” Videl explained.

The chief of police and his superior were somewhat underwhelmed by what they saw. “He’s a little plain for a super hero, isn’t he?”

Gohan ran a hand through his spikey locks and gave his typical Son grin. “Yeah…, wardrobe malfunction. He...he...he!”
“Gohan! Get the lead out!” Videl nagged as she turned on her heel and made a mad rush for the front entrance, “We’ve got to go now!”

“That girl is something else,” the Chief commented.

“You don’t know the half of it,” replied Gohan over his shoulder as he set out to follow his lover’s lead.

The two love-sick crime stoppers ducked and darted about as they dodged an impressive level of firepower. Of the two, Gohan was using his vast super speed to phase in and out faster than any beam of energy could travel. To him, the bullets were standing still.

Videl however was not faring as well. Long before she had met Gohan she had trained by trial and error to go full-on Batman in dodging enemy gunfire. She couldn’t see the bullets herself and she certainly wasn’t bulletproof like Gohan. Krillain, or Yamacha, but she had her battle-tested ways. Had it not been for the presence of Gohan and his father’s friends, she really would have ranked at least in the top ten in terms of combative application and strategy.

Using the environment to her advantage, the battling beauty darted between walls and support beams to shield herself from the onslaught. With the grace of a panther, the lithe grappler jumped and twisted through what would have surely gotten anyone else killed. She was molded by this kind of action. No, she lived for this!

Meanwhile, Gohan had taken to the air and honed in on the roof-based snipers keeping his girlfriend pinned down. With a light tap, he had brought down the first three leaving just one more. Turning to the last one, Gohan couldn’t get a visual.

The last sniper had jumped over the rail guard onto an outcrop below the roof. Lining his crosshair, the sniper fired a shot at just the right time to take a beam Videl had been straddling out from under her. The Satan girl landed in a crouch.

The sniper prepared to take one last aim at the adolescent until he found himself being jerked off his feet by his vest. Looking into the eyes of his attacker, the gunman found himself paralyzed by the contorted rage in Gohan’s gaze. The half-Saiyan had murder in his eyes as he casually ripped the rifle away from Videl’s assailant and crushed it into a twisted heap of plastic and metal.

“How dare you?!” Gohan screamed. “How dare you hurt my woman!” Gohan’s grip tightened around the man’s windpipe before he threw the sniper into some hedges four stories below.

Jumping through a side window on the first floor, Videl had hoped to out-flank the remaining gunmen. What she got instead was an open room with scattered chairs and other office furniture between herself and her adversaries. Five of the remaining six gunmen brought a hail of bullets down on the short brunette, forcing her to continue darting around whatever furniture and support columns she could use as cover.

‘This is getting me nowhere fast!’ thought the young girl.

Out of nowhere, Gohan came bursting through an adjacent wall. The six remaining gunmen were so taken back by this turn of events that two of them threw down their guns on the spot and kissed the floor. The other four darted behind the surviving hostages and began to bargain.

“Stop right there, hero,” drawled the apparent ring-leader of the group. The man had the barrel of his sidearm aimed in the temple of one of the hostages, a woman in her mid to late thirties. “Take one step and its nighty-night for this bitch.”
If Videl didn’t know any better, she’d say that Gohan looked rather amused.

“Look fella! You and I know what’s gonna happen here so why don’t you and your friends just give up?” asked the half-Saiyan. He wasn’t condescending, he wasn’t being arrogant, he wasn’t even trying to get under the gunman’s skin. He was actually offering the assailants a chance to get out of a serious beating.

“Oh, really…?” smiled the leader, “Alright boys! Let him have it!”

With that, the four remaining gunmen unloaded on Satan City’s resident super hero. The bullets ricocheted off Gohan’s iron-hard body without leaving as much as a scratch. Trying to show off, Gohan raised his left arm and began to catch almost every single bullet fired directly at him.

Of course, his showing off led to a reckless attitude that was heedless of the line of fire’s spread. Stray bullets forced Videl to duck and cover behind a teller’s counter. Videl’s movements were not missed by one of the remaining gunmen who, drawing an Arkansas Bowie knife, bolted in the Satan girl’s direction. Just as Videl was springing from behind the counter, the knife-wielding terrorist was almost on top of her.

Gohan eye’s widened in abject horror as the gunman prepared to slice his girlfriend open like a tomato. “VIDEL!!!”

The Satan Girl turned around just in time to intercept the swing. Before she could retaliate however, her boyfriend had seemingly phased into existence right behind her opponent. Stunned, she stood there and watched as an enraged Gohan completely lost his shit.

Grabbing Videl’s attacker from behind, the half-Saiyan dug his crushing grip into the rib cage of the other man, crushing ribs, puncturing plural tissue, lungs, and the man’s heart before lifting the certainly dead gunman over his head and chucking him right into the bank vault door with enough force the cadaver left a deep impact crater in the steel threshold. Brain matter, limbs, and entrails flew everywhere.

Upon seeing this, the remaining three gunmen threw themselves on the floor, covered their heads, and began to plead for their lives. Losing control of their bodily functions, twin puddles started to seep out from where they lay.

A million emotions played across Videl’s face at this display of unparalleled attrition. Feeling of fear, pride, and arousal sent a thrill through her, but these feelings were only bested by feelings of intense anger, inferiority, uselessness, and longing…. Only the boy she blackmailed, admonished, and made love to could make her feel these conflicting emotions.

Videl’s face twisted in rage before she let into him. “Gohan! What the hell!? He was mine!”

As Gohan turned to face her, Videl saw a look of pain and sorrow on her boyfriend’s face that almost turned her inside out. If it weren’t for her own stubborn dignity as a fighter, she would have just dropped it right then and there.

“He was going to kill you…” Gohan seethed, his voice quivering with raw emotion. “I-I couldn’t…”

“What!!” Videl barked, “Lose me again? Sweetheart, I’ve been doing this for years! I’m not some fragile little flower ya know!”

Gohan collapsed into a nearby chair, and tried to get his nerves under control. Videl in the meantime, began to handcuff the still living assailants. The police would be storming the building any minute, they needed to have these men subdued.
As she began to free the hostages, Videl took one more look at her boyfriend. Since they began doing this together, they’ve struggled to set boundaries between them, specifically when Gohan can interfere with her own fights. It just made her feel so arbitrary that she had begun to think about her place in the grand scheme of things. She really couldn’t fault him for wanting to protect her. He would always blame himself for both her defeat at the hands of Spopovitch at the last tournament and her first death at the hands of Majin Buu. They’d talked about this many times before. She had her own nightmares, her own panic attacks ever since, but she needed to confront this problem head on.

She always hated being coddled both when her father did it and when Gohan lost control like that, and she wasn’t used to having someone to emotionally lean on. Gohan and she already did enough of that when they slept together. Having a father who spent so much time on business trips and growing up without a mother would do that to anyone. One might even say Videl grew up with Orphan’s Syndrome. Imagine that…, a girl who had anything she ever wanted believing she had nothing she could call her own. That’s why crime fighting and tournaments had been so important to her for so long before she met her half-Saiyan lover.

Videl was brought out of her reverie by the shuffle of boots and the screams of police personnel. The hostages showed their gratitude with words of admiration, but it was all background noise by this point. She could see the Chief pulling up a chair and questioning her boyfriend, probably trying to get an explanation for what might as well have been a lump of dog meat that was embedded over 2 feet within a stainless steel vault.

“So let me make sure I got all this…,” the Chief drawled. Gohan nodded along to all the chief inquiries. “One of the gunmen tried to take Videl from behind. You lost your shit and reduced this guy’s chest cavity to applesauce before hurling him 40 feet through a bank vault door?!”

“Yeah…,” Gohan answered. “I was terrified. I-I just lost it…”

“After we get a written testimony from the hostages, we’re gonna have to retrieve the security footage for this one. Until then son, you and Videl go home and get some rest.”

Stepping over the yellow tape, Gohan looked off to his side and was horrified yet again. There was now a blue chalk line in place of the sniper’s corpse.

Approaching the morbid scene, Gohan almost begged. “Please tell me this isn’t what I think it is.”

“He died shortly after impact,” a member of the forensics team stated casually. “Several police saw you snatch up the gunman by the throat. We’re trying to determine whether it was due to the fall or to physical trauma.”

He had to get away. Gohan turned and saw his girlfriend looking away from him.

“What’s wrong Videl?” he asked.

“I-It’s nothing…” was her only answer.

“I’m not too convinced.” Turning her to him, his eyes pleaded. “Please, what is it?”

Her cheeks reddened in frustration as she turned and glared at him. “You didn’t let me do anything! Gohan, we discussed this before.”

His eyes etched with melancholy, he queried, “Would you rather feel useless or feel like a monster?” He really wasn’t in the mood to deal with this right now.

“What?! Gohan, you thought you were protecting me!” Videl argued.
“Well, which is it?” pressed Gohan, “Am I protecting you, or am I making you feel useless?” He rarely tried to be assertive with Videl any more than he did with his mother, but he felt as if his girlfriend didn’t know what she wanted. Maybe it was her time of the month…

Videl was getting really pissed. Tears began to well up, and she knew if she didn’t leave that she was going to make a scene.

“How can you ask that question?!” It was more of a lashing out than anything else. Videl rounded on her heels but just as she started to take off, she felt a pair of strong arms wrap around her.

Right then and there she lost it, bad. As Gohan held her in his arms, she began to wail and scream insults at him as she cried into his chest.

It took a few minutes for her to cry herself out as Gohan continued to hold her. It didn’t take long for a group of onlookers to form around them, some of them paparazzi.

Looking up, Gohan and Videl found themselves turning beat red at the unwanted attention they were receiving, both from officers of the law they’d worked with before and from reporters looking for cheesecake. Videl frowned at this. This was a personal moment. Why couldn’t these folks just go away?

“How much did you guys see?” she groaned.

“Enough,” supplied one officer, this one being someone Videl had known for years. “Me and my wife went through the same problems before we got hitched.”

Turning back to her boyfriend, Videl muttered a quick, “I gotta go home…”

“Would you like me to join you?” Gohan offered.

Videl declined with a shake of her head, “I need some space Gohan. You can come over tomorrow. Just remember Wednesday night, OK. We need our therapy.”

Naughty thoughts dancing in his head, the half-Saiyan boy grinned ear to ear as he nodded. “Later!”

“Later!” she said before taking to the sky.

Gohan sighed contentedly as he studied her nice backside. Wednesday night was going to be freaking awesome.
Problems

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

It was after 4th period at Orange Star High, and Videl Satan had just arrived at the on-campus office of the school psychiatrist. As part of her quest to rebuild her sense of self following Majin Buu’s destructive rampage, the adolescent girl had been attending therapy sessions since her resurrection.

At first, she had struggled to get a handle on her feelings of disconnect, to get over the complete erasure of everything she used to believe in. She used to see herself as the strongest in the world second in line to just her father only to have one of the most important parts of her identity ripped out from under her.

Then there was her Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Gohan wasn’t the only one going on murderous rampages when they fought crime. On one mission, Videl had gone completely bonkers and snapped an assailant’s neck. All that over a tattoo with an ‘M’ as part of the detail! She would just black out, and her body would go on murderous autopilot. It happened when she and Gohan were fighting crime, it happened once when she sparred with one of the lower-ranked students at her father’s dojo, and it even happened once when she was underneath Gohan while they were having sex during a party at Erasa’s. Boy, was that awkward!? It was quite common for law enforcement on the front lines in siege operations, raids, and shootouts to develop this socially stunting mental disorder. She knew several long-time friends on the Force who struggled with PTSD daily, three of them ex-military.

The office of Dr. Alexander Bulton was very cozy and inviting with all the walls colored in rich, warm, creamy colors that just said “Please, have a seat.” Behind him was the grey futon on which Videl had divulged many of her and Gohan’s secrets.

It brought a small smile to the girl whenever she recalled the time Dr. Bulton asked her to demonstrate ki manipulation. That was the very last time the mental health professional outright dismissed anything she said regardless of how crazy it all sounded.

Dr. Bulton himself, was a middle aged balding white male who was dressed business casual. Sorting through a packet of forms, he acknowledged Videl’s presence with a motion of his hand before asking her to lay on the futon.

“How are we feeling today, Miss Satan?” asked the man politely.

“I’m doing OK, I guess.” Adjusting herself on the futon, Videl was tempted to reach into her pocket and pull out a cigarette. The medications by themselves just didn’t cut it. She’d started smoking irregularly with Erasa and Angela and had even managed to get Gohan to start smoking with her after particularly trying situations in the field. If either of their parents ever found out, there really would be hell to pay…

“Have you been taking the proper dosage as required?”

Videl nodded a quiet “yes” before asking, “What kind of side effects could arise from using other pills with this medication?”

“Depends,” said Dr. Bulton, “What other meds are you using?”


“Not really meds so much as birth control,” she answered.

“Well…,” the doctor began, “It should be fine. The medication shouldn’t undermine it, which is good considering what you’ve told me before about your sex life.”

The thought of all the lurid details she had given in previous sessions brought a deep pink blush to the brunette fighter’s cheeks. It was Dr. Bulton who had recommended her boyfriend to a sex therapist in light of certain issues Videl and Gohan had right after their revival, specifically Gohan’s sheltered upbringing and constant mommy issues stemming from too much hen-pecking.

Videl had come to love Chi-Chi as if she were her own mother, but there were still times when she just wanted to slap the shit out the woman for all the damage her parenting style had wrought on Gohan. It took a full month just to get Gohan to stop holding back when they made love, but the results were well worth the wait. Gohan went from being average in bed, to being a seasoned and confident lover. There was only so much having 11 inches could accomplish without proper training. The therapist even had him record a few of their sessions for use in coaching, something Gohan wasn’t too keen on.

“Have you had any panic attacks since the last time you were here?”

Videl shook her head. “No. I managed to get through the week without having an episode.”

“And your boyfriend?” he queried.

“To say he’s loosened up in the last couple of months would be an understatement!” Videl beamed, “He’s actually starting to enjoy the same things most guys his age do. It really makes a difference.”

Hearing this, the doctor pressed for more info. “Things like…?”

“He postures more, he wants to have more sex, he actually goes out of his way to get into trouble, he pays a lot more attention to my looks as a woman, and he’s gotten a lot bolder in mouthing off to his parents, particularly his mom.”

“He certainly sounds like a late bloomer,” Dr. Bulton observed. “Most people go through this phase in their early teens. In a way, it sounds eerily similar to some of the adolescent activities you’ve only recently gotten into. You seem to bring each other out of your shells.”

“Yeah…” she breathed. “The other boys at school are starting to feel more threatened. They keep getting into more confrontations with him, and vis-à-vis, especially over me.”

“Sounds like me at that age,” mused the older man. “Boys will be boys.”

“Yes, but he seems to have hit a glass ceiling in developing his confidence.” Videl looked over at the adjacent window before continuing. “I know it’s wrong, but a part of me wants to see him get more confrontational with the other boys. They could really get hurt, but I can’t help but think he needs to start going into situations where the consequences are less important to him.”

“We’ve already talked about this Miss Satan,” the doctor quietly admonished. “As your psychiatrist, I still think you should just take a step back from this thrill-seeking that’s become a fixture of your life. If this Gohan really is the Great Saiyaman, having him seek absolution through the same reckless behavior could end very badly!”

Looking cross, Videl met the older man’s gaze. “But I want him to know the feeling with me. I want him to feel alive the same way I do when I go into battle.”
“Alive?!” The doctor shook his head at what he was hearing. “Miss Satan, this isn’t some game you’re playing.” “Here we go…” Videl braced herself for the same old tired lecture she got from everyone else when she started talking about her feelings on the front lines. She largely turned off and tuned out for the rest of the session.

The current World Martial Arts Champion titleholder Mark Satan, sighed with contentment as he leaned back on his couch. At his side slept Mr. Buu’s dog Bee, his head resting on the Champ’s lap. Today’s press conference had been well handled, and he definitely needed some relaxation. Fewer things gave him as much pleasure as watching films of his past tournament wins, back when he was younger, stronger, more authentic, and had a loving wife…

At the thought of his late wife, the man felt a wave of morose in the pit of his stomach. Every time he thought of his deceased love, he thought of just how lucky he was to have their daughter in his life. He knew that one day, maybe soon, he would have to let his little girl be her own person. She was seventeen now, dating a somewhat weird but ridiculously overpowered half-alien boy, and spreading her wings, hopefully not her legs. It just hurt so much to admit it to himself that his baby girl was growing up.

At the end of the day, Videl was really all he had, the only thing keeping him grounded in the real world. He doubted he would ever remarry. He just felt too guilty to get too close to any of the hundreds of women he had shared a bed with over the years. Sometimes, he wondered if perhaps he could just get Videl to move whoever she married into the Satan Estate with them so he’d never have to watch her leave. He certainly had enough room, and Videl would be right where she needed to be to take the reins of the family business.

On the issue of Videl’s boyfriend, Mr. Satan had mixed feelings. The Son boy had been an almost daily visitor to the Satan Estate for the past three months, and was becoming almost as at home as his friend, Mr. Buu. To describe Gohan as powerful would be falling far short of the utter reality of what the boy was capable of. In fact, it was this very boy Mark had to thank for everything both he and his daughter owned. Son Gohan was more than powerful enough to date his daughter and take over the company with her if or when they got married, but he just could not for the life of him figure out a way to sell the kid to the public without causing the press to connect the dots concerning the Cell Games. They already knew about Gohan being the boy who fought alongside Piccolo Daimoa against the alien invasion eleven years ago, and so many people saw him change into that Golden Warrior at the last tournament that rumors were spreading that he and the Delivery Boy were one in the same. To add to that, he knew that the Son boy was not being entirely upfront on how far his relationship with Videl had progressed. Nowadays, when he looked at Videl, he noticed the same radiance in her that he had in his wife after they began fooling around. He’d have to be a complete dunce to not notice the change.

From what information he had gathered, Son Gohan was the grandson and possible heir of the famous warlord, the Ox King of the Ox Kingdom, a tributary state of King Furry’s to the north. He was also the son of the previous World Champion, Son Goku, a man Mr. Satan had berated publicly for almost a decade. He wasn’t really sure what the Son boy thought of him personally, but he knew a battle he couldn’t possibly win when he saw it. Seriously! How do you keep a boyfriend with the powers of a demigod honest?! Just thinking about it made him feel impotent.

Just then he heard a knock on the door. Looking over his shoulder, he saw his daughter stepping into the room.

“Hey Daddy,“ his short daughter greeted in a somewhat repressed voice.

“Hey, Sweetpea! How was school today?”
“It was OK,” was her simple answer. Biting her lower lip, the petite fighter shuffled her feet in a very fidgety manner. “I wanted to talk to you about something.”

“Yeah sure… fire away, Pumpkin!” he said offhandedly.

Seeing how little attention her father was paying to her, the young fighter reached down and grabbed the remote before pausing the video. “This can’t wait Dad! I and Gohan are having some issues.”

At the mention of her boyfriend, Mark turned off the big screen completely and led his daughter over to the bar. If there was one thing that he would listen to, it was his daughter’s relationship problems. Following her being brought back to life, he promised himself that he would never ignore his only child again, that he would treasure every minute with her. The very fact that his daughter was dating at all still scared him regardless how honorable her boyfriend might have been.

“OK, what’s wrong?” he asked. “Did he hurt you?”

“What?! Oh, No! No! No!” she sputtered, flailing her hands back and forth, “We had an argument. It’s about Gohan and the way he can make me feel at times. It’s complicated…”

“Uh-oh! This can’t be good,” said the Champ with a grimace. “Have you discussed this with him?”

“Vaguely…,” she answered. Videl tried to look anywhere but at her father. “I love him so much! He makes me feel so whole but at the same time so inferior.”

“How?” My Satan’s eyebrows scrunched together as he processed what he was hearing. His daughter reserved nothing but praise and admiration for Gohan since the two teens began dating. What could have brought this?

Tears began to sting at Videl’s eyes as she continued. “It’s his abilities…, he’s just so spectacular, so strong, and so fast, and I just can’t seem to keep up! I just feel so useless! When we fight crime, he’s so far ahead of me I’m not even sure why I even bother… I know it’s not really his fault. I can’t blame him for just existing! I can’t blame him for just existing! It’s just that every time I go out on the front lines with him, his abilities keep reminding me that I’m not really needed anymore. I don’t feel like half the fighter I was before he came into my life. I don’t feel like I have an identity outside my relationship! I-I just don’t know who I am anymore!”

With that, the floodgates came open and Videl began to openly sob into her father’s robe.

Videl’s feelings of jealousy towards her boyfriend were completely misguided, and he knew it. Mr. Satan couldn’t feel any worse than he did then. He didn’t know how to make this better. A huge part of this was his fault for building a false identity as the world’s savior. The illusions he had created around himself as the slayer of Cell had spread a pall over his little girl’s life, causing Videl to believe not only his own lies for so long, but also in a false identity she had built for herself from those lies. Goku and his friends coming into their lives during the whole Buu fiasco tore the very foundation out from under his daughter’s entire person.

Hercule enveloped his daughter in a warm hug and wiped the tears from her eyes. “There, there, Sweetpea! It’s gonna be OK…”

Videl grabbed a tissue and began to blow her nose. “I don’t know Papa… He just wants to protect me, but how can I make him see that I don’t need protection? He knows I’ve been fighting street crime for years, that I’ve held my own long before we started doing this together, but he's so overprotective! He just keeps getting in the way! I know he means well, I really do, but he makes me feel really weak. I’m just so tired of being a tag-along! I want to feel like a real partner…”
Mr. Satan had never been on board with his daughter’s volunteer work for the police in the first place. Hell, when Gohan started dating and fighting crime with her, Mark had felt somewhat relieved. Before that, Mr. Satan did everything he could to protect his baby girl by discouraging her thrill-seeking adventures, to no avail. Her hunger for action was just too great. She was a ravaging spirit lusting for personal glory to her own name every bit as much as she was for justice.

‘If only that Son boy knew what he was getting into…” thought the Champ glumly.

Just then, there was a knock on the door which had the dog barking and jumping off the couch.

“Who is it?!” the champ called, hoping to be heard over Bee’s ruckus.

Their butler, an older man in his late 60s to early 70s, stuck his head through the door. “It’s the young mistress’ love interest, Sir. Shall I see him in?”

“Speak of the devil…” muttered the aged grappler. “You know he’s gonna know you were crying, right?”

Looking to his daughter, he got a confirming nod. “I don’t see why not,” answered the afroed man. “Sure Robert! Let him in!”

Just outside, Gohan paced around in small circles. He needed to say something, anything to smooth over the friction that had been forming between him and his girlfriend in recent weeks.

His stomach was in knots and his mind was in turmoil. ‘Oh Videl... Why did you have to make this so hard?’

The more he thought about it, the more he reasoned that he’d have to take this burden upon himself as well. That was his life story wasn’t it? Carrying the emotional deadweight of his loved ones? It’s what he’d always done from his earliest days as a fighter, and it had always greased the wheels for everyone. Gohan’s introspection was cut short however when the butler had returned with a just the confirmation he’d been hoping for.

Stepping into the large open room, Gohan was met with the sight of both Videl and her father waiting for him. Her face was flushed, her eyes were moistened and red, and she held a napkin between her hands. She had been crying, likely over what transpired yesterday.

To say Videl Satan was a tough cookie would be a huge understatement. In the few months they had been dating, he had only seen his girlfriend cry a few times, most of them this week, and he was always the reason she had done so.

“She looks so lost…” Gohan felt like his knees were going to give out right there. Seeing the girl he’d gladly give his life for just standing there looking so rudderless and distressed made him feel like a real bastard.

“Gohan…” Videl breathed.

Not caring if her father was there, Gohan rushed up to Videl and crushed his lips against hers in a powerful yet tender embrace. Nuzzling his face into the crook of her neck, he smelled traces of the coconut-scented shampoo she used as well as the pungent odor that only a seasoned fighter could give off. The tender embrace was cut short by the sound of Mr. Satan clearing his throat.

“Ahem!”

The two lovers broke off the kiss and looked back at the Champ with no small measure of
awkwardness. The man always knew how to kill a good mood even when he was trying to help them. This was one of several issues that made it difficult for Gohan and Videl to be physically intimate in front of the man.

“Gohan, we need to discuss some-,” Videl’s words were cut off by a finger to her lips as Gohan took the lead.

“Videl…,” he began, looking into her eyes intently, “I never meant to make you feel so unneeded. I never wanted this to come between us. I feel so blind, so obtuse. I just want to protect you, but I feel like I’m hurting you. Is there any way you can forgive me?”

A tear slid down Gohan’s face and Videl felt like she was going to melt right on the spot. “I don’t need to forgive you for being who you are Gohan. I just hate myself for being so inferior.”

Hearing this, Gohan’s eyebrows shot to his forehead. “What are you saying Videl?! You’re one of the strongest people I know! How can you even think that? Everyone needs you! I need you!”

“Why?!” she choked. “You’re good at everything you do!”

The two teen fighters took a seat on the nearby couch. Gohan could practically feel his girlfriend’s apprehension as she considered what to say.

“I used to be somebody,” she said. “I used to be someone everybody looked up to. People always used to look to me for advice. I was the brave one, the mature one, the tough one, the decisive one. I had life goals, goals that were at least attainable.”

Gohan reached over and placed a hand on her cheek, pulling her gaze up to meet his. “Videl…, I know you as someone who knows what she wants and how to get it. You never give up. Even when Spopovich had you totally outclassed, you still fought on to the end. You’re fearsome, and you never stop until you know the truth. You have the qualities of a great warrior and an even better girlfriend.”

“This is gonna take time Gohan,” she said. “I just can’t seem to keep my bearings anymore.”

“We’ll get this sorted out some way,” Gohan said tenderly as he bent in for another smooch.

Just then before the two of them could go any further, the door swung open and in ran the old butler. The man had a look of urgency, but before he could say anything, he had to catch his second wind.

Concerned, Mr. Satan rose from his chair and came up beside the gasping senior. “Robert!? What’s going on?”

Looking up from his hunched over position, the old man wheezed, “A…a challenger!”

“That’s it?!?” Mr. Satan scoffed. “We get challengers all the time! Tell whoever it is that they can come back during open hours.”

“I… d-don’t think you have a choice in the matter sir,” the elderly butler continued, “There’s a strange woman down in the gym. She’s issued a challenge to either you or your daughter.”

“Me?” asked Videl pointing to herself.

The old man nodded before going on, “We tried to get her to leave, but she started beating up your students. Our security teams got flattened! She says she won’t stop until one of you come out and face her.”
Mr. Satan and Videl rushed out into the hall, followed closely by Gohan. Because of the Satan Dojo’s close proximity to the Satan mansion, they didn’t have to travel very far.

“I’m not sure why, but I’ve got a weird feeling about this,” remarked Gohan.

Looking over her shoulder, Videl regarded her half-Saiyan lover quizzingly. “You’re always a little on guard about things. Relax…! Whatever it is can’t be that bad.”

In no time, the three of them had made their way to the dojo’s back entrance where the staff had access. Walking into the main training rooms, they were not prepared for what they found. Mr. Satan was so shocked that he completely lost it.

“What the fuck!?!?”

The entire training hall was in an uproar. Bodies were laid out on medical cots, their occupants suffering varying degrees of traumatic injury as on-site medical personnel ran tither and yonder taking vitals, making blood transfusions, etc. Among those laid out were his two former students Coroni and Pirowski.

Around one of the training rings, a crowd had formed. They were all bearing witness to a violent spectacle being played out on one of their fellow students by a mysterious assailant.

This assailant, a woman by the looks of it, had wrapped her thighs around the neck, upper chest, right arm, and shoulder of her unfortunate opponent. Shortly afterwards, a resounding ‘crack!’ was heard with an accompanying sound of anguish before her latest victim was thrown from the ring like a ragdoll. The broken man landed before taxying to a stop at Videl’s feet.

It was then that Videl got a good look at this challenger. She was a tall, big-breasted, heavily muscled, redhead with hair that looked like something out of some Celtic epic. She wore a skin-tight tank top with matching grey spandex shorts. Her skin, from what was she could see was riddled with scars and abrasions, and her face had a wild, untamed look to it with a complimenting gleam in her green eyes that hinted at some predatory intelligence.

The woman in question turned and locked eyes with the young Satan girl. Her lips pulled back in a toothy smile, she blew a coy kiss in Videl’s direction.

Balling her fists in disgust, Videl stepped forward. “Bitch! I don’t know who you are or what you’re trying to pull, but you’d better make like a tree and leave! We get a lot of strays around here, and I usually get tasked with being animal control.”

The red-haired woman frowned a bit. “I’m surprised you don’t recognize me little Miss Satan. After all, it was our repeated run-ins with each other that landed me in Juvie.”

Then it dawned on Videl. This woman did look familiar.

‘No… no, it couldn’t be…’

Videl’s brow scrunched in agitation. “What’s your name, Red?”

“Oh! You have forgotten me!” the ginger chided in mock playfulness. She bent at the hip in a patently fake bow of respect. “I’m surprised you would forget your biggest fan. The name’s Barbella.”

Videl’s jaw hung slack at this new revelation. ‘No, no, no, this can’t be that Barbella!’
Three years ago…

A young girl of fifteen tucked and jumped through a display window in the shopping district of what was then Orange Star City. Shards of glass flew everywhere as her feet found the sidewalk. She had been in and out of foster homes most of her life, and had turned to a life of petty theft to support herself. Her hair was flaming red and it fluttered in the wind behind her as she darted down an adjacent alley. She was currently being pursued by the single biggest pain in the ass to ever combat crime in town’s history.

“Stop thief!” A young brunette girl of about thirteen trailed closely behind.

“As if I’d listen to you!” the ginger called over her shoulder. Reaching into her left pocket, she pulled out a Molotov cocktail and lit the fuse before tossing it over her shoulder.

Her pursuer Videl Satan, barely had enough time to dive behind a nearby dumpster before the homemade incendiary went off. She threw up her arms in an attempt to shield herself from the ensuing inferno. Resuming the chase, the young heroine cursed under her breath.

Looking behind her, Barbella found that her young pursuer had managed to catch up. She was practically nipping at her heels. This shit had to end now!

He red-haired teen jumped off to the side and put her back to the wall. Now she and the Satan girl would have to fight in close quarters.

“Just give up, and they’ll go easy on you!”

“Give up?!” scoffed Barbella incredulously, “That’s easy to say for someone who already has everything!”

“So that’s how it’s gonna be huh?” asked an amused Videl.

Eyes locked and guards raised, the two youths circled one another like a couple of wolves eyeing dinner. This wasn’t their first run-in, and assuming the police didn’t get here soon, it probably wouldn’t be their last.

Barbella made the first move. Stepping forward, she threw a series of tight haymakers interspersed with a few jabs.

Videl for her part dipped and parried these overextended shots with some minor difficulty. This was how it always was between them. Barbella would rob a convenience store, Videl would give chase, Barbella would corner herself, the two of them would fight like demons possessed, Videl would recover the stolen merchandise, and Barbella would walk away empty-handed. Videl always wondered why Barbie never went pro with her hand-to-hand talent.

The two youths separated at the sound of sirens. Blocking each end of the alley were the city’s finest.

Growling at the Satan girl, Barbella made a break for it. She darted towards the alley exit, and just as she was about to jump over the hood of the squad car blocking her escape, one of the officers present stuck his foot out. The red haired hood tripped, and just as she was about to recover her footing, another officer wrapped his arms under hers and trapped the delinquent in a Full Nelson.

With that, the burglary spree of Barbella came to an end. As she was being handcuffed, she cast a baleful glare at her arch nemesis, one Videl Satan.

“Jogged your memory did I?” she quipped. “You ruined my life, and I think it’s time I got what’s
mine.” The red-haired woman cracked her knuckles menacingly at the object of her obsession.

Looking back at her boyfriend Videl rested her hands on her hips in a show of arrogant bravado before smugly remarking “Preach.”

The red-haired female’s face twisted in heated rage. “What… was…THAT!?”

Videl let out a deep sigh. “Look bitch! Now’s not a good time. I’m dealing with some issues so if you’d be so kind-“

“Enough!” barked the ginger. “If you or your father don’t fight me here and now, I’ll pummel every single student your father has until this dojo is closed! I didn’t crawl out of the pits of hell just to be told to come back when you think you’re ready! I didn’t think you’d be this cowardly.”

That did it. Clenching her fists, Videl felt something snap inside her. She’d been called a lot of shit in her life by all kinds of burglars, terrorists, gang members, drug pushers, rapists, and the like, but none of those folks had ever accused her of cowardice.

“Con-fuckin-gradulations you pretentious bitch!” Videl beamed threateningly. “This is your lucky day. Here! Let’s see what you’ve won!”

Off to the side, Gohan’s gaze was locked onto the woman in the ring. Ever sense he’d arrived, he felt something, something different. A pressure in the air like there was a somewhat big presence in the room. At first he’d nearly dismissed it, seeing it as a side effect of having a large number of slightly stronger humans together in one building. Now because of close proximity, he was starting to pick up on subtle differences among individual kis. One ki in particular caught his attention.

Narrowing his eyes, he peered deeper into this Barbella’s ki presence. Then it hit him like a truck. Almost all of the ki presence around the ring belonged to this Barbella.

“How did I not see this?’ pondered the half-Saiyan. ‘Could it be that her ki is so unfocused and untrained that I didn’t notice its overall size?’

Videl approached the ring with an air of confidence. Before stepping onto the platform however, she stopped to do a few stretches. Just as she started however, Gohan rushed to her side.

“Videl, don’t do it!” he cautioned.

Annoyed, Videl glared up at her boyfriend. “What’s gotten into you?"

“I really don’t think you should fight her,” he advised. “She’s strong!”

Videl took one scrutinizing look back at her challenger before turning back to Gohan. “It’s not like she’s one of the freaks you’ve fought. I’ve fought this girl before Gohan. She’s not a big deal.”

“And how long ago was this?” asked the half breed.

“Three… maybe three and a half years I think.”

“A lot can happen in three years.”

“And there it is again,” muttered Videl. “That same dismissive crap that’s been getting on my nerves lately.”

Releasing a long sigh, Gohan shook his head at the girl’s stubbornness. “I see you’ve made up your mind. If you really have to do this Videl, just promise me one thing.”
'Here we go…' Rolling her eyes, Videl stood to her full height before crossing her arms. “What is it?”

“Be careful.”

She hated it when Gohan treated her like she was brittle as glass. Videl’s eyes narrowed. Were Saiyans really this protective with their women?

Videl had always described herself as a feminist. She had never loved being coddled and had done everything she could to be her own person. Even after three months, she wasn’t used to Gohan doting over her. It was really starting to cramp her style.

“Gohan, listen!” she ground out. “I need you to back off a bit, OK? I can at least handle this. How am I supposed to get stronger if you don’t stop crushing me?”

Defeated, Gohan just turned away, buried his face in his hands, and drug himself to a nearby bench. He didn’t even notice Mr. Satan coming up behind him until he felt a hand on his shoulder.

Mr. Satan looked down at him with sympathetic eyes. “I understand how you feel boy. I had the same problems raising her.”

His shoulders slumping in surrender, Gohan asked, “Any advice you could give me?”

“Just this,” he answered taking a seat next to Gohan, “Don’t try to make it too obvious that you’re protecting her.”

“I swear, he needs his feelings hurt sometimes. He improves on everything else I help him with, but he still can’t give me this.” Videl muttered to herself casting an exasperated look at her boyfriend.

“Are we gonna do this today?!” hollered Barbella demandingly.

Stepping into the ring, Videl’s eyes held a hungry wild gleam and the smile she wore went from ear to ear.

‘Oh, this is going to be a beautiful day…’

Chapter End Notes

As you guys can tell, Videl’s feelings of inferiority and her drive to improve herself by facing danger and Gohan’s desire to protect her from herself are creating a good deal of friction between them. Both Gohan and Mr. Satan blame themselves for Videl’s slowly growing feelings of vulnerability, but their attempts to protect her are seen by Videl as overbearing. This is going to breed some problems later on for the two men as they sacrifice their time and peace of mind to save hers’. One has to remember that one does not simply go from having Videl’s almost Vegeta-like sassy, bitchy, pushy, derisive confrontational attitude that she had in the Great Saiyaman and Buu Saga to having a personality that is the exact opposite in only a few short years. Even if her father’s lie about saving the world is laid bare, people don’t just stop being who they are. Akira Toriyama couldn’t write a compelling female Dragonball character to save his life.
“So you’re saying that this woman is tougher than she looks?” the Champ asked in a dubious whisper, hoping not to be overheard.

Gohan nodded, whispering back, “My father and the rest of us have the ability to ascertain an opponent’s strength by using a trained sixth sense to feel their life energy. The only reason Videl doesn’t know this woman’s strength is because I haven’t taught her how to do this.”

“And you didn’t think to do this, why?” Mr. Satan hissed, clearly agitated by this lack of regard on Gohan’s part.

Twiddling his fingers, Gohan apologized sheepishly, “I’m sorry Mark! Ever since the Buu incident, we’ve been trying to enjoy ourselves. We’ve all been slacking off! Teaching her new skills just hasn’t been at the top of our priorities list. I wanted to give Videl room to figure things out for herself. You know how she can be!”

“No, you’ve been slacking off!” countered the afroed man. “Videl’s been hitting the dojo every morning for the last three months! On average, she’s gone through twelve heavy Mui Thai bags a week! She did it just to catch up with you!”

Gohan didn’t know how to process this. Despite having no external motivation, the love of his life had pushed herself so hard just to be a better partner both in battle and in life. Gohan’s head spun around to look upon his girlfriend who now stood with her opponent in the middle of the ring.

Around the ring, the remaining Satan students, oblivious of what was to come, continued to cheer for the daughter of their savior. For once, Gohan wished he were one of them so that he too could be as ignorant and optimistic.

‘God, I’ve been so blind,’ he berated himself. ‘She did all this just to make the feelings of inadequacy go away. I really have failed her…’ Guilt overtaking him, the half-Saiyan buried his face in his hands to hide his feelings of shame. He knew… he knew what was about to transpire, and it was his fault. It was all his fault just like it had been with Spopovich. He couldn’t stand to watch Videl get hurt because of his lack of foresight.

The side of Videl’s mouth quirked a derisive smirk at the former street thug. “I’ve been dealing with a lot of personal issues lately. How kind of you to provide me with just the kind of catharsis I need to end this day on a high note.”

Barbella wore a feral smile of twisted hunger. “Just keep talking you flat-chested little slut!”

Videl chuckled darkly as her predatory sneer became more akin to how Vegeta would look. “You got everything right except for the ‘flat-chested’ part.”

“Let’s fix that,” was Barbella’s final remark.

With that, the dojo’s designated referee took one last look between the two Amazons before shouting “Fight!”

The two female grapplers dashed for each other at the sound of the gong and locked horns. At first, it seemed as if there would be a stalemate until, to everyone’s surprise, Barbella began to push Videl back. Slowly at first but progressively faster, Videl began to slide as Barbie took advantage of her greater height and leverage to take control of their little face-off.
'I can't believe her strength!' Videl dug deep and put all her ki into augmenting her own impressive brute strength, but even with the boost provided by her life energy, she could only slow down her opponent’s push.

Finally, Videl had had enough. Drawing back her right leg, she attempted to deliver a devastating kick to the other woman’s kidney. Reacting on instinct, Barbie broke off the grappling contest and intercepted the strike with her elbow. Much to Videl’s surprise, the redhead didn’t so much as grunt. Videl however wasn’t through though. Using her now free hand, she drew back and delivered a powerful hard right to Barbie’s face.

The strike hobbled the Ginger, forcing her to step back and giving Videl some much needed wiggle room. Much to Videl’s dismay, the wily redhead shrugged the attack off without batting an eye. Her lip wasn’t even busted!

‘How…?!’ Videl wondered aghast.

Taking Videl’s stunned hesitation as an opening, Barbella dropped to the ground and threw a sweeping kick at Videl’s feet, taking the younger girl to the floor.

If there was one area, one specialized area in hand-to-hand where Videl did not completely excel, it was going to the ground. In spite of her father training her in a style where floor tussles were a given, Videl was a brawler, a law enforcement field tactician, and a master kicker. It wasn’t that she was weak in things such as Judo and Pankration, as she had always been in the top 5 in her father’s dojo in ground fighting, it was that these were the areas where her small stature afforded her the least advantages. Size and weight were the things she had always lacked, and it was for this reason that going to the mat had always proved to be even her average opponent’s equalizer.

The two female grapplers rolled about like two boa constrictors in a tangled knot of hair and limbs as each one tried to get an arm-bar, leg-bar, choke hold, anything. It was obvious however, who was winning in this tussle.

Videl tried desperately to maneuver herself onto her opponent, but every time she managed to get out from under Barbella’s heavier, more muscled mass, the ginger would deny her the leverage and access she needed by either flinging Videl’s lighter frame off of her with one or both arms or by rolling over and pinning Videl under her torso.

Giving up on the battle for leverage, Videl fell back on what had always served her best in the past. The fiery brunette began to punch and knee her larger opponent repeatedly in the kidneys.

Barbella for her part, was taking the kidney shots like a trooper. Her oblique muscles and lats were so thick and her body so resistant to pain and bleeding that even Videl’s ki-enhanced shots to her flanks couldn’t score pay-dirt.

‘What is she…?!’ wondered Videl, panic beginning to set in. ‘I can’t get her off! I can’t get her….OFF!!’

In her frustration Videl didn’t notice that Barbella had jerked herself into a straddling position atop her. Using her impressive core body strength, the redhead wrapped her legs around the smaller Satan girl’s and locked her own heels together just under her bottom. She then let into Videl’s upper body and face with compact hay-makers and hard jabs.

Videl, trying desperately to block the larger woman’s punches, again used ki to augment her own combative ability by pooling energy into her forearms to lessen the damage. Slowly but surely though, this approach began to wear away as punches made it past her guard.
Barbella continued to lay on the pressure, keeping her strikes as compact as possible. There would be no opening for which little Miss Satan could exploit. Eventually, punches began to slip through.

Videl felt every blow that managed to get past her guard. Eyes bruised, nose broken, lips busted, tongue bitten, she couldn’t stop the damage or the pain from piling up. Images from the last tournament began to play through her head, memories of her defeat at the hands of Spopovich. She was slowly slipping, drifting into the abyss of her own nightmares.

From the benches, Mr. Satan tried to cheer Videl on while Gohan glared at Videl’s opponent with a look that could burn through tempered steel.

‘Please…, hang in there Videl!’ Gohan silently prayed for a miracle as he watched his girlfriend get the shit beat out of her.

Finally, something snapped and Videl thrust her hands into Barbella’s face. An invisible wave of ki exploded from her hands and sling-shotted her opponent with enough force that the back of Barbie’s head dented the ring floor.

Videl, seeing this as her only chance, climbed on top of her stunned opponent and wrapped her arms around the redhead’s neck. The Satan girl’s eyes were glazed over in a wild deadly madness as her kill or be killed instincts chose the wrong place and the wrong time to kick in.

“VIDEL!! Don’t do it!” Gohan screamed, trying to bring his girlfriend back to the real world. His cries however, fell on deaf ears.

Locked in a state of panic-induced violence, the petite fighter began to twist the older female’s neck, and just when it seemed she was going to get the leverage needed to jerk Barbella’s head back in the other direction for the kill, Barbella’s neck stopped moving.

Indignation and rage coiled like a black dragon in the pit of the redhead’s gut. Barbella was furious! Not only had her greatest enemy somehow managed to escape her barrage, the little Satan bitch even tried to kill her! Reaching up, Barbella began to twist the comparatively smaller arms of her would-be killer until she wrenched the little teen’s hands out from around her neck and away from her head.

“I was gonna settle for knocking you out in front of everyone, but you wanted to make this a zero sum game!” she growled. “Just for that, I’m gonna kill your spirit and your dignity!”

With a powerful twist of her upper body, Barbella threw Videl clear across the ring. The petite fighter twisted around like a cat before coming to land in an awkward and painful crouch. She didn’t have long to rest though as her opponent jumped to her feet and dashed headlong into her, but just as Barbella was upon her, Videl took to the air.

Looking up, Barbella simply could not wrap her head around what she was seeing. High above her, Videl Satan floated in midair. Outside the ring, members of the Satan Dojo gaped in awe at Videl’s ability to fly.

“How can she do that??” asked one aloud.

“That’s impossible!” screamed another.

Videl came down upon Barbella in a whirlwind of blistering kicks. Zipping about like a 5ft 115 lb hummingbird, the smaller teen dipped and rose as she bashed and badgered Barbella incessantly. The larger woman threw up her arms in an attempt to weather the onslaught as lighting fast kick after kick came down on her face, cranium, and neck.
Videl kept on the pressure for as long as her body would allow. In Videl’s battered state however, it just wasn’t enough. In her frustration, she overextended one of her kicks, giving Barbie just the opening she needed to make a grab for Videl’s ankle before tossing the younger teen clear across the ring.

Using her ki to stay afloat, Videl let the momentum of the throw put some distance between herself and her opposition before dashing towards the ceiling once more. And so becoming more frustrated and left increasingly exhausted, Videl was back to square one following her fruitless aerial assault.

“Damn… she’s losing her nerve,” one Satan student remarked quietly.

“Is this really how Miss Satan fights?” asked another underwhelmed grunt.

Ignoring the scornful comments of her astonished peers, Videl continued to levitate above the ring. She needed to stall for time at least until she could recover some of her stamina. Below, Barbella was busy brainstorming.

‘How is she doing this?’ wondered the Ginger-haired Amazon, ‘How can I fight someone who can just escape into the air?!’

It was then that the red-haired grappler saw it. All around the floating Satan girl were ceiling beams connected to suspended light fixtures and ventilation blocks. The girl didn’t seem any the wiser.

Running back to the far edge of the ring, the muscled ginger bent over and assumed a starting position. “Target acquired…”

Near the ceiling, Videl looked on with unease. Her fight or flight instinct was going crazy.

“What in the hell is she doing?” she asked herself.

“Let’s see if this works!” The redhead bolted into a headlong charge before springing into the air with a powerful vertical jump. Her momentum kept carrying her up until she reached one of the hanging ventilation blocks, and twisting around, came to an upside down standing position right above the still floating Videl.

Videl only had enough time to look up before her opponent, aided by gravity, jumped from her upside down standing position and came down right on top of the petite fighter. Wrapping her taunt arms around the smaller grappler, Barbella jerked to the side and drug Videl with her into a free fall… straight into the ring floor!

Videl barely had a moment to scream before her much larger opponent’s body mass slammed her into the concrete floor from a 25 foot drop, and unlike her high fall from her fight with Spopovich, this time Videl was unable to absorb the impact through a landing crouch. Hardening her body by expanding her ki could only do so much to help her wither the impact. A shallow impact crater formed under the two female fighters as Barbella plow-drove the younger girl through the floor.

Standing up, Barbella took a moment to study her handiwork. Looking around, she took in that they had struck the ring edge and exploded right out into the area surrounding the ring. The Satan girl was still conscious, that much was certain, but there was simply no way she could have gotten out of that without a few broken bones. Videl released a few dry heaves as she coughed up blood and a few teeth in a puddle around her mouth. Suddenly, a loud pained scream, that of a man’s, cut through the air.

It was Gohan. “STOOOP!”
“Gohan…” Videl whimpered gruffly from her facedown position.

“P-please, whoever you are!” he pleaded angrily. “Please, just stop! You’ve won… No more!”

The red-haired woman regarded the boy with a dismissive shrug before turning back to her opponent. Videl had risen to her feet and was now looking at her through puss-filled, half-swollen eyes.

“You know…,” said Barbie with morbid laughter, “Red is definitely your color!”

“Screw you!” Videl spat.

“I’ve waited a long time for this,” growled the redhead. “I literally went to Hell because of you! I had been in Juvie for almost three years when Majin Buu attacked the state facility I was being held in! The guards had abandoned us to that creature. We were teenagers, and they left us to die!”

Even in her injured state, Videl couldn’t help but feel appalled. Had the correctional officers really abandoned minors to their deaths? For all the good it did her, at least when Super Buu had eaten her she had the option of running. She was brought out of her reverie as Barbella continued.

“We were trapped! Stuck in our cells! The pink marshmallow man from Hell turned us all into junk food and ate us like we were fucking popcorn! When it came my turn to die, I just gave up. I couldn’t even scream. I awoke to be judged in the afterlife where I was sentenced to Hell for crimes I committed while incarcerated!”

Reaching forward, the butch firecrotch grabbed Videl by the shirt collar and brought her close. “Do you know what happens to a woman in Hell?! All around me was darkness, cold, and fear! The most wicked, vile creatures in history used me as a cock sock! When I came back from that nightmare, I awoke in the very same prison I had died in. Out of one Hell and into another! I promised myself then that I’d make you suffer for making me so helpless!”

Videl, through her blood and dust-filled nostrils, could only snort. “Don’t blame me for your mistakes! You got what you deserved.”

Barbella’s eyes narrowed dangerously at the injured brunette. Looking into the younger fighter’s perturbed face, she hissed contemptuously, “Some bitch who’s had everything handed to her on a platter could never know my pain. My soul was raped! I want you to feel just a little of what I felt! I don’t just want you to know helplessness, I want you to taste it!”

Pushing the Satan girl away, Barbella brought her fists up in a turtle guard, and let loose with a flurry of jabs and hard rights that found their mark on the now defenseless teen. Videl tried to put up a cross guard, but it was all for nothing. She was batted around like a small child as her adversary continued to brutally pummel her.

Barbella soon grew bored with using Videl as a punching bag, and decided to switch things up. Reaching forward with both arms, she grabbed Videl’s head and drawing back, delivered a heart-stopping head-butt that split open Videl’s forehead.

Blood flowed freely into Videl’s eyes, leaving her completely blind to her opponent’s next move. Desperate to hit something, she swung in random directions. It didn’t even count for decent shadow boxing as she stumbled in a punch-drunk stupor.

Drawing back, Barbella lifted her right fist overhead. She was revving up for the mother of all uppercuts. Putting her entire upper body strength, her back, and her seemingly hydraulic power into the punch, she swung wide from down below. Her fist drug a trench through the concrete floor as it
continued on its trajectory. Finally, it connected.

Videl’s head snapped back as the sheer magnitude of the punch sent her airborne straight into a light fixture. The battered girl’s head went through the fixture and knocked a hole in the ceiling before she fell back to the ground. Just before she hit the floor however, a hand snatched her out of the air by the throat. It was a miracle it hadn’t broken her neck.

Looking down at her victim, the former street criminal smiled like a rapist having a lucky day. “Let’s put the icing on the cake, shall we?”

With Videl in tow, the red-haired lunatic walked over to where the barbell plates were kept. Selecting an Olympic weight bar from a nearby rack, she began to twist the bar around Videl’s neck, forming a metallic noose. Dropping Videl to the floor like a used dishrag, she then twisted the other end into a hook.

Turning around, she drug the now helpless brunette back towards the ring. Terrified that they would be on the receiving end of the ginger-haired Valkyrie’s wrath, the crowd watching the spectacle gave Barbella a wide breath. Just before she reached the ring however, she was stopped by the same boy who had pleaded with her before. He, Gohan, was flanked by Videl’s completely lipid father who was being held back by a few of his terrified students.

“Please…” Gohan shuddered, clinching his fists at his sides. The teen did everything he could to restrain himself from laying his hands on a woman, even one as vile as this. “No more… Just let Videl go! You’ve had your sick fun, now leave!”

Off to the side, the Champ wasn’t faring much better.

“I’LL GET YOU FOR THIS YOU SCREWY BITCH!!” screamed the afroed man as he tried to claw his way through some of his students.

“Hmph!” smirked the fierce redhead. “I’m not done with your little slut yet.”

Skulking away from an increasingly unstable Gohan, Barbella climbed back into the ring, with Videl being drug facedown until they were right under a ceiling beam. Reaching up, she latched the hooked end over the beam as if to display Videl’s hanging limp form.

Looking out over the shocked, morbid crowd, the redhead smiled deviously. “You boys wanna see a show??”

Seizing Videl by both her shirt and shorts, Barbella ripped both her tattered, bloodied cloths and the young Satan girl’s bra off in one swift motion. Gasping for air, the poor battered girl was stripped completely nude, her business on display for all to see. Taking the now ripped garments in hand, Barbella began to twirl the articles over her head as if they were some perverse trophy. Looking back, she could see Videl’s face awash with tears stained pink from caked blood.

The redhead brought her hand to her chin in mock introspection before beaming, “It’s almost perfect, but it’s missing something.”

Looking out at the crowd and drinking in the anguished faces of Mr. Satan and Gohan, it hit her. “That’s it!”

Turning back to Videl, she pressed her thumb nail against the petite fighter’s cleavage and carved a deep cut between her breasts. Blood dribbled down from the chest slash onto Videl’s tummy and sex.
“Perfect! A work of art.” Turning to leave, the redhead walked up to Mr. Satan and shoved him hard. Reveling in the older grappler’s distraught state, she regarded the Champ with a smug expression. “When the bitch wakes up, tell her that she was a better whore than any of those girls I had in prison!”

Looking to the gathered crowd, Barbella raised her fists into the air, dropped to her knees, and threw her head back in an elated, animalistic scream of ecstasy.

“I AM THE STRONGEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD!!!”

Both Gohan and Mr. Satan rushed into the ring. Terrified of worsening Videl’s injuries, Gohan took great care in twisting the offending steel bar from around his rasping girlfriend’s neck before laying her down on Mr. Satan’s brown gi.

It was then that Gohan took a moment to assess her injuries. Her whole body was a mess riddled with deep bruising, contusions, and flesh wounds. Her face however, got the worst of it. Her cheeks and eyes were swollen to the point where her face resembled a catcher’s mitt, and her nose was flattened. There were also places where teeth had punctured through her lips.

“We need to get her to Buu,” whispered the Champ between sobs. “He can heal her…”

Gohan nodded once before lifting the short girl into his arms bridal style. Videl instinctively folded up as yet another panic attack took her, her sobs and wails flaking Gohan and her father with dried blood. Gohan did what he could to calm her down as he carried her from the dojo.

“Shuush, shuush…., Don’t worry Videl,” Gohan said soothingly, kissing her forehead, “It’s going to be OK. We’ll get you fixed up.”

It was nightfall in Satan City. In her room, the daughter of the Champ sat upright on her bed as she stared blankly ahead. She was now clothed in her night gown. Her eyes bore deep bags and a half-used box of tissues lay beside her. An empty medication bottle lay discarded at the foot of the bed. The room was dark and silent, save the occasional sounds of sobbing and heavy desperate breathing. The events from earlier intermingled with her memories from her fight with Spopovich, wracking her body with a pained shudders.

Using his magical abilities, Mr. Buu had healed Videl’s grievous injuries, even going so far as restoring her missing teeth. Her body was good as new, but her sense of self-worth was on the verge of total collapse. She would never be good enough to be a real partner for Gohan. Her whole life was a sham! She was a sham every bit as much as her father, only now did she fully understand it. She was a nobody, and her relationship with Gohan was the only real defining feature to her identity. Suddenly, her morose thoughts drifted to her father, the Champ.

Her father…

She cursed the man under her breath. She cursed the very grandmother who was so dear to her for birthing him! At first, she had felt so hurt that her father could just up and lie to her and everyone they knew about something so important for so long, but hurt was all it really amounted to. That, and shame, shame at the fact that he could so flagrantly abuse everyone’s trust just to line his own pockets. Later on however, the real implications of what her father’s actions meant for her began to slowly work their way into her psyche, leading Videl down an ever darker path of introspection that left her feeling empty. So many years played across her mind, years of untapped potential wasted on training that never made her the strong, disciplined individual she envisioned herself becoming. She didn’t want to be just a footnote in history. She was a nobody, always living in her father’s shadow even before she discovered her father’s lies, and any good, any heroism she displayed always fed
back into her father’s superficial reputation. After she had learned the truth, her feelings of inferiority, her self-doubts took on a life of their own.

“Who am I really?” she squeaked in a weak tone that sounded completely unlike her.

Her gaze drifted over to her various trophies, certificates, and awards she had accumulated over the years. There was the trophy she attained for winning the 24th World Martial Arts Junior Division Tournament. Further down, there was a placard dedicated to her being awarded the key to the city by Satan City’s previous mayor, and beside that, a placard for her work in the Orange Star High School Martial Artist’s Youth Club.

Anger and bitterness coiled inside her as Videl approached the display case. She took one last look at her prized awards, every major accomplishment to her name, every single one a reminder of a wasted adolescence. A fresh wave of tears coming on, the young Satan drew her fists to her sides and screamed with primal rage before drawing back and shin-kicking the entire ensemble into a pile of glass, metal, and scrap wood.

‘All of it meaningless…’ Videl bite into her cheek, bringing blood. The girl stumbled back onto her bed and for the umpteenth time that week, broke down into tears.

Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. Looking behind her, Videl saw both her boyfriend and her father slip into the darkened room. One of them, she didn’t know which, turned on her bedside lamp. Immediately, she tried to shield her eyes from the light. Looking over, she caught Gohan lying down next to her. She really didn’t know if she was ready to deal with this now.

“Videl? Videl, please talk to me…”

Videl felt so ashamed. She must have seemed so weak to the two most important men in her life.

“What is it?” she croaked as if it weren’t obvious.

“Videl, please… please look at me.”

Videl rolled over and regarded the look of sorrow on Gohan’s face. Here she was wallowing in her self-pity over her own weakness, and her boyfriend still only ever thought of her. He still felt guilty, and he still tried to shoulder her emotional deadweight. In spite of his warnings, she was the one who chose to fight, and she was the one who was too inferior to win.

Gohan sat there looking into the cerulean orbs that tantalized him from the day Videl blackmailed her way into his life. If Gohan thought he couldn’t have felt like he was any more a failure than he did earlier that day, he was grossly wrong. Only when he saw the girl he loved crying in agony and humiliation for the second time in three months did he realize just how much he had failed both as her boyfriend and even more so as her teacher.

“I can’t believe I allowed this to happen,” he said softly.

Videl gave her boyfriend a sympathetic look. “Gohan, there’s no way you could have planned for-“ She was silenced with raised hand.

“This is my fault! I may not have been the one who beat the shit out of you, but I am the one who set you up to fail.”

Gohan took a moment to collect himself before continuing. “You don’t need to take this out on yourself Videl. If I had only spent as much time training you as I did my little brother, you’d have never lost to Babidi’s lackey! My dishonesty, my attempt to keep the truth from you about myself got
in the way of another far more important role I had already assumed. You’ve been dying on the inside ever since your fight with Spopovich. All I want is for the girl I love to be herself again.”

“Gohan, please…” Videl felt another wave of waterworks coming as she listened to Gohan bear his soul to her.

Not caring that her father was standing over them, Gohan reached over and pulled Videl close before taking her hands in his. Wiping the bangs from her eyes, Gohan cleared his throat before continuing.

“When you save lives Videl, it means so much more than anything I could do. You’re not bulletproof and you certainly can’t move at hyper speed. Your life is always on the line. You leave it all on the road without once looking back. Your strength of will, your ferocity, your courage, your assertiveness, you’re everything I wish I was. You’re everything all my dad’s friends only wish I was.”

His grip tightened on hers. “You’re the hero this world needs, not the one it got saddled with, and its high time you got the tools you need to be everything you were born to be. I can only imagine how history would have been different had you been the kid Piccolo left in the wilderness so many years before. As soon as you’re ready, I’d like to start your training over from the beginning. No lies, no secrets, no holding back. I’ll make you as equal as you’re willing to be.”

Videl’s eyes searched almost pleadingly. “No more secrets?”

“Scout’s honor,” beamed the half-Saiyan, raising his right hand for comedic effect.

Videl looked away momentarily before meeting his gaze with a mischievous glint in her eye. “I hope you know what you’re getting yourself into. I’m gonna hold you to this. I’d hate to have to cross my legs for the next six months.”

Gohan’s face took on a look of horror at the thought. “Ah…, that’s just playing dirty.” Behind him, Mr. Satan’s jaw practically hit the floor at his daughter’s playful admission.

“WHAT!??” he bellowed, causing the two teens to wince. “What the fuck?! What the literal fuck?!”

“Oh crap!” muttered Gohan, face-palming. They’d gotten so caught up in the moment that they’d forgotten all about Videl’s father being in the same room.

“Look Mark,” Gohan said with a placating gesture, “I assure you that my intentions were every bit as honorable as yours must have been when you met Videl’s mother.”

“That’s what I was afraid of?! I had my suspicions, but now I know I shouldn’t have trusted you around her!”

Videl let out an agitated sigh. She really didn’t need to deal with this now. “Daddy, I’m the one who led Gohan on.”

Mark Satan couldn’t believe what he was hearing. “Videl, you’re too young!”

“I’m a grown assed woman and you know it! You lied to me, and you’ve been floosying with all sorts of women since mom died so don’t give me that garbage!”

Mister Satan deflated completely at his daughter’s scathing remarks.

‘She just had to pick at that old wound didn’t she?’ thought the older man. Without saying another word, he stalked out of his daughter’s room. It had been in a stab in the gut that he really wasn’t
prepared to confront. Just as he reached the door, his daughter stopped him.

“We’re not finished yet, Dad!”

Mark turned to his only child. The look of betrayal and hurt was evident in the creases of his eyes.

“You’re broken…” he hissed.

“What?!”

“You’re not a virgin anymore!” he snapped. “You’re tainted!”

“Dad, I’ve been wise to the ways of the world for years!” she yelled, tears of anger streaming down her face. “Fighting crime sorta does that to ya! Stop trying to protect me!”

“Whatever!”

“Was I supposed to just wait until you died of old age before I found happiness?!” she demanded fiercely. “Do you think mom would’ve kept me miserable?! Do you think she would have kept me from having a love life? I have needs too, ya know!”

“Videl…,” her father growled.

“I died! You didn’t!” wailed Videl. “What right do you have to judge me?! I want to have happiness while I’m young enough to enjoy it! All you’ve ever done is ruin my LIFE!!”

Mr. Satan just couldn’t take it anymore. Wracked with a million conflicting emotions, he threw open the door and fled the room. He needed to get away before he said something they’d both regret.

Videl turned back to Gohan who was looking at her with an odd mix of unease and respect.

“And that…,” she began, “is how it’s done. Take notes!”

“Wow…” he mouthed. The two embraced once more, Gohan holding Videl to his chest.

“So…,” she said, “When do we start the training?”

“How about when school ends? We’ll have all the time we need come summer vacation.”

“Hmm…,” she mused. “I think I might have been a little harsh back there with my old man.”

“Maybe I should go talk to him this time,” Gohan offered.

“You think that’s a good idea Gohan?” she asked, quirking an eyebrow. “I really don’t think he wants to talk to either of us after what just happened.”

“I think it’s time I had a heart to heart with him myself,” he smiled. “You said it yourself. He’s afraid of me.”

Once again Mark Satan, a.k.a ‘The Champ’ found himself sitting at his bar, nursing a glass of scotch whiskey as he tried to drink away his problems. It wasn’t just his daughter’s revelation on the state of her and that boy’s relationship that was eating at him. He probably had the worst case of survivor’s guilt, quite possibly the only case of actual survivor’s guilt, and it was tearing him apart.

Why did he have to be the only person to have never died? And why did his daughter have to hold her deceased mother over his head? He had lived every day for the past seven years like there was no
tomorrow. Only when everyone else started doing the same did he realize just how badly he’d lived his life.

He couldn’t protect his daughter from herself, and he sure as hell couldn’t protect her from that Gohan kid. There was a part of him that sympathized with the boy’s plight, seeing as it was so similar to his own, but his desire to protect his baby girl from being hurt always overrode what common cause he and the son of Goku could have shared.

“How did she wind up with someone so similar to me?” he asked himself. The two most important men in his daughter’s life had both lied to her in some form of another, and the resulting fallout had hurt her so much that it pushed her away. Maybe it was true that overprotected girls tended to gravitate towards men with their father’s characteristics.

The thought of his daughter and that boy making the same mistakes he made with his own wife brought a feeling of newfound determination to the man. He would make this better, somehow.

Just then, he heard a knock at the door.

“It’s open,” he growled.

Turning around, he wasn’t prepared for who it was. Stepping into the room was the Son boy, the kid who deflowered his little girl. He wore the same awkward goofy grin that he’d always sported when he came to him in the past. Mark wasn’t fooled. This kid was far more dangerous than he let on. He just could not understand how someone with Gohan’s powers could seem so passive. Suddenly, the boy’s demeanor changed completely.

“We need to talk,” said the hybrid.

The Champ nodded. “Yes, yes we do.” He eyed the Son boy warily. There had been times before where the two men tolerated each other, but this was the first time that the kid had ever actually confronted him. He needed to tread lightly.

Gohan, to his credit, actually got up in the afroed man’s face. “I’m going to take Videl with me when summer vacation begins. It’s going to happen with or without your permission so don’t try to stop us!”

His eyes narrowing, the older grappler had to swallow back his anger. “Why?”

“Why?” Gohan repeated, “Why?! Mark, you saw what happened to Videl out there! I’m responsible for what happened to her every bit as much as that crazy red-haired lady. It’s going to get worse if I don’t step in!”

“How long will she be gone?” asked the Champ.

“Long enough,” was Gohan’s answer.

“Then I’m going with you!” Mark asserted.

“You’ll slow us down,” Gohan grumbled.

“It’s the only way I’m agreeing to this. I’m also bringing Mr. Buu with us so I can have some backup.”

“You’re really gonna go through with this huh?” Gohan asked, sounding defeated.
“Where do you think Videl gets it from?”

Reaching behind him, Mr. Satan poured a glass of scotch and offered it to Gohan. The man raised his own glass in a toast. “To bloody adventures!”

“To unintended consequences!” declared the half-breed. With that, the two men downed their glasses and slammed them down on the bar.

“By the way,” queried the Champ, “Just for the sake of knowing, how often have you been with my daughter?”

“Uh…. to be perfectly honest, since the whole Majin Buu incident we've sleep together more than most married couples,” was Gohan’s blunt answer. “That should give you an idea.”

Mr. Satan poured himself another drink.

‘This is gonna take a lot of shots.’

Oh, this was going to be beautiful…. 
“Gohan, stop this!” yelled Chi Chi in anger as she tugged on the cloths-filled duffle bag her son carried. “Goku, say something to your son!”

Goku, in typical Son fashion, sat at the table with his younger son shoveling food and watching the drama play out between his wife and eldest boy. As was the case with most of the recent arguments Chi-Chi and Gohan had, he knew when to hold em, when to fold em, and when to walk away.

“This is something I have to do!” Gohan snapped. “You can either support my decision or not. I really couldn’t care less.”

It had been three weeks since the incident at the Satan Dojo. Finals had ended at Orange Star High and the time had come for Gohan to retrieve Videl, her father, and Mr. Buu. He had a vague idea of what he needed to do, so he would have to make up some of it as he went. The other most important woman in his life needed him and he wasn’t going to leave her floundering.

“What about cram school?!” his mother shrieked. “How’re you gonna get into a decent university if you aren’t ready for the entrance exams?!”

“Is that all you ever think about?!” Gohan bellowed. “I’m the most powerful God-damned thing in the freakin universe, I’ve got the highest test scores in my entire school, and you want me to think about fucking cram school?!”

At his outburst, his mother saw red. For the last few months, Gohan had gotten more and more out of line with her. At first, she had tried grounding him, and he just flat-out ignored her. Then, she tried getting Goku to intervene, which only drove an even bigger wedge not just between her and her son, but also drug out some of Gohan’s privately held resentment for Goku’s past actions.

“How dare you?! How dare YOU?!”


“You don’t come home for days at a time, you shack up with that damned girl every night, and you hardly ever spend time with your family! You’re too young to be doing those things with Videl! I don’t want to become a grandmother like that!”

Gohan rounded on her. “Last time I checked Mom, you and Dad were doing a lot more with each other when you were my age! I’m a grown-assed man and I’ll do whatever I have to! What about that do you not get?!”

Tears streaming down her cheeks, Chi-Chi collapsed to her knees. She couldn’t protect him. She couldn’t stop him from pulling a Goku and leaving the family.

“Go then!” she screamed. “Get out and don’t come back! Don’t expect to have a place to lay your head down when you walk out that door!”

Gohan turned around and shot his mother a glare that would’ve made Piccolo damned proud to have perfected the thing. “I love you Mom, but you’ve never given two shits about what I want. You’ve always tried to live your life through me, treating me as if I were some blank canvas that you could just paint over!”

“I did it for your own good!” she wailed. “I want you to have it better than we ever did!”
“Don’t hand me that crap!” Gohan rebuked. “You’re miserable about your own life choices, and you want me to be every bit as miserable. I’ll go to school, I might go to college, but I’ll succeed on my own terms and I’ll be sure to enjoy the only life I’ll ever have, a life that you’ve wasted! I’m through with this…”

Just as Gohan was heading out the door, he felt a heavy hand on his shoulder. Doing an about-face, his glare locked eyes with the profile of his father.

“What Dad?!” the half-breed ground out.

“You really love her, don’t you?” asked Goku. The man gave his son a warm, understanding smile that softened Gohan’s demeanor.

Gohan broke eye contact with the Saiyan, opting instead to stare at the ground. “Every bad thing that’s happened in our lives since Cell is my fault! Your death, my not taking credit for Cell setting Videl up to fail, my lies setting her up to fail against Spopovich, Buu killing everyone, and now the only girl I’ve ever loved is losing who she is!”

Grabbing his now seething son’s shoulders, Goku forced Gohan to look him in the eye. “None of that’s your fault, Gohan! You’ve done everything you could to make things right. Stop doubting yourself!”

“No…,” uttered Gohan shaking his head, “You’re dead wrong… Every problem I’ve had in life is because of my own lack of foresight..., not seeing the bigger picture! I have to break that chain before it hangs me! I-I’m emancipating myself. I can’t do what I have to do as long as I have to answer to Mom! I’ve never had a real choice in life, and I let Mom turn me into a hen-pecked, simpering bitch! I’ve lost my self-respect because of her, but I’m not gonna lose Videl!”

Trying to calm himself, Gohan breathed deeply before continuing. “All my life, someone else has led me around by the leash! I’ve never been allowed to be my own person. Mom has always had my balls in her purse! She’s always tried to keep me from the rest of the world, and by the time I got around to having a real social life, I didn’t know what to do with it! It’s a fucking insult that she thinks two years of socializing in high school will somehow make up for a lifetime of her damage…”

Gohan by now was so pissed that he was screaming. “She ruined me, Dad! She fucking ruined ME!!! It’s all her FAULT!! Because of her, I was so socially stunted, that I ruined my first time with Videl! I was so sexually stunted that I couldn’t even make our first time together meaningful! I’ll never get that back. Videl got me sexual therapy for God’s sake! For all Mom’s taken from me, I’ll never forgive her!”

Goku’s face grew pensive. It was becoming all too clear that his son’s peace of mind and his sense of self-worth were in tatters every bit as much as his girlfriend’s. Had his own death at the hands of Cell really left his son’s life so rudderless? Just how badly did not having a positive male role model in the house affect his son’s adolescence?

When Goku was a boy, he practically raised himself. Life was a grand adventure that gave Goku no shortage of elation. Goku wasn’t always the brightest bulb, but he understood some of what his son was feeling. Perhaps it was time. Perhaps Gohan was ready to leave and live life for himself.

“Well…” Goku sighed, “I guess you’ve put more than a little thought into this, huh?”

“Dad…,” Gohan began, “I love Videl! If I abandon her now, I’ll be no better than…” Gohan couldn’t finish the last part.
“…No better than me,” his father finished with a hushed tone. “You don’t have to say it son. I will. If it hadn’t been for the last tournament, I don’t think I would have come back. I would like to say that I want to start being a better father to you, but I know you wouldn’t believe me anyway. I just want you to know one thing.”

“What is it?”

Smiling, Son Goku wrapped his arms around his eldest, giving him one more reassuring hug. “That I’m proud of you no matter what you do in life. Rest assured, you’ll always have a place to come back to.”

Gohan tightened his hold on his father before the two of them pulled apart. Goku gave his eldest one more look-over before beaming his patented Son smirk.

“Now go be a man to Videl!” he ordered with a slap to his son’s shoulder. “Judging by your nightlife kis, I’d say you’ve done a better job than you give yourself credit for.”

His face reddening, Gohan nodded an awkward, “Yeah….maybe.” before taking to the air. His father continued to wave at the young man as he disappeared into the distance. One question came to Goku as he watched his eldest depart.

‘*When did he get so bold?’*

“So this is the place, huh?”

Unimpressed, Mr. Satan and Videl looked around at the barren landscape. Basins, cliffs, and mesas stretched for miles in either direction, separated only by sparse shrubbery. Mr. Buu stood off to the side, picking at an anthill with childlike fascination.

“Yes,” answered Gohan. “This is the place where Piccolo pummeled into me the fundamentals of martial arts.”

“Pummeled?!” Videl repeated. “He beat you?! I thought you said you were only four years old!”

“We were under some pretty stringent constraints at the time,” Gohan explained. “It was here where Mister Piccolo introduced me to flying by throwing me off a cliff.”

Videl’s eyes grew to the size of dinner plates. “He did that to a toddler?!”

“I survived,” was Gohan’s cut answer.

Hearing this, Videl found a new appreciation for just what her boyfriend went through to become the man he is now. Could she really do the same?

“So…, where do we start?” she asked enthusiastically.

“I’m gonna put you through some paces to see just where we need to begin.” Gohan scanned the surrounding terrain as if looking for something. He soon spied a nearby rock the size of a small house.

“This will do nicely,” said Gohan. “Videl, I want you to try and move this.”

“What?!” she screamed. She looked at her boyfriend as if he’d grown a second head. “B-but there’s no way I can move that!”

“Do it anyway,” was Gohan’s response.
Groaning to herself, the Satan girl walked up and lent into the large boulder. She dug her feet into the sandy topsoil below and gave it her all. Unsurprisingly, the massive rock didn’t budge. She bore down with everything and gave it hell, but still nothing. Her brute strength, though great by human standards, just wasn’t enough to meet the task.

‘This is gonna be harder than I thought…’ When Piccolo told him to move a rock, he did it. When Piccolo told him to fight a T-Rex with his bare hands, he thought his old mentor was deranged, but he still rose to the challenge. Gohan was beginning to see that Videl’s baptizing into the inner secrets of the ancient martial arts would be no quick and easy thing.

Defeated, Videl leaned back against the rock, and took a moment to rest.

“Now, try doing it with your ki,” Gohan suggested.

“Alright!” Steeling herself, the small teen tapped deep into her ki reserves and put everything she had into one last endeavor. Still, nothing…

“Huh?!” Gohan scratched the back of his head sheepishly, his aloofness to Videl’s relatively normal limitations coming across a little more blatantly than he’d like. “L-let’s find you a smaller one.”

“Could you move it?!” the Champ inquired almost accusingly.

With a sigh, Gohan stepped up to the house-sized boulder and brought his index finger up to the same spot Videl had been pushing on. With a slow flex of his wrist, his finger pushed the massive boulder as if he were sliding open a bathroom door.

The effect this act had on Mark Satan was comical to say the least, but for Videl, the effect was completely different. Videl tossed a jealous glare his way. If that glare of hers were a weapon, Gohan would be needing a sensu bean.

“Here’s a better one!” he called. He ran over to the significantly smaller boulder, this one being roughly the size of a truck, and quickly assessed it. It was more rectangular in shape than the larger one he had Videl use before.

“That’s a small one?” asked the Champ, incredulously.

“Here goes nothing,” muttered the small teen as she braced herself for this seemingly less Herculean task. This time however, the rock shifted with an audible ‘thump!’

“Did you hear that? She moved it!” squealed Mister Satan excitedly. “I don’t know how but she did!”

Gohan ignored the older man. “Alright, now dig into your ki!”

Gritting her teeth, the raven-haired girl drew on her inner life energies, and the boulder began to slide along the sandy ground, first slowly then picking up speed.

Feeling very small indeed, her father’s eyes grew wide as saucers. Losing his composure, the Champ sunk to his knees.

Stopping, Videl looked back at her boyfriend with expectant wide eyes. Much to her disappointment, Gohan had his hand behind his head and a patently superficial grin as if he were trying to put on an excited front. Videl knew when he was acting. You don’t sleep with someone and hang onto someone’s arm constantly without picking up on their little tics.
“That bad huh?” she asked, her deep feeling of inferiority rearing its ugly head once more.

“Not entirely,” was Gohan’s answer, his hand raised in a placating gesture. “Don’t get so depressed. This was only a test. You’re still a lot stronger than most people ever will become.”

“On a scale of one to ten?”

“For mainstream martial artists,” he said, “I’d put you at a 13. Like I said before, this is just to find your starting point.”

“OK…” breathed Videl.

Gohan brought his fists up to his sides. “Next, we’re gonna spar.”

A wild, predatory gleam found its way into Videl’s eyes as she started to gaze at her boyfriend with a hungry longing. It was that same feeling she got whenever she put her life at risk. That trill, that rush... Like she was getting a quick fix.

Gohan for his part was a little unnerved by the change in his girlfriend’s demeanor. The only time she ever looked like that was when they were either fighting crime or when Videl got to be on top when they were having sex. In the short time he’d known her before she uncovered his identity as Saiyaman, she always had this wily fierce look about her when she pursued him. She was like a lioness stalking her prey.

“You better not go easy on me,” growled Videl. “Test or not, I still have my pride.”

“OK…OK!” he placated in an effort to appease the short girl. “You asked for it.” With that, Gohan vanished from sight.

“W-Where’d he go?!” asked a panicked Mr. Satan.

Ignoring her father completely, Videl whipped around to see if Gohan was trying to catch her from behind. She saw nothing. Turning back around to where Gohan had disappeared, she was met with Gohan’s tall form. Craning her neck to meet his gaze, she cursed herself for being so damned short. He looked down at her with an unsettling scrutinizing stare.

Stepping back, the little Satan girl let loose with a flurry of ki-enhanced punches. To any normal human being, the strikes would’ve blended together in a blur of movement, but to Gohan however, the strikes were something he could handle in his sleep. Raising his left hand, the half-Saiyan casually parried and blocked shots that would have laid out the entire mainstream martial arts community.

“Keep it up as long as you can!” he commanded. “We need to see the full extent of your stamina.”

Videl continued to pour on the punches, and Gohan pushed aside every shot in turn as if he were playing a casual game with a toddler. This continued on unimpeded for a good hour until Gohan grew decidedly bored.

“Now mix in some kicks!” ordered the half-Saiyan. “Treat this as if it’s real because I’m about to start mixing things up.”

“Err…what do you think I’m doing?!” she growled. All business, her boyfriend frowned.

The shock of seeing just how easily the Son boy toyed with his daughter, a girl who had easily surpassed him a couple of years ago, had the afroed man sitting down for air. If Videl had maintained
an assault like this with him, he would’ve been steamrolled within a minute, two if he got really lucky. He was soon brought back to the real world by Gohan.

“Mark! Get behind me and start throwing some things in there!”

“I-I thought this was supposed to be Videl’s training,” said the Champ.

Still flicking away Videl’s seemingly fearsome assault with one hand, Gohan replied, “You said you wanted to come along. You’re not getting out of this without contributing. Like I said, let’s shake things up a bit.”

With a groan, Mr. Satan settled behind Gohan and started to rain his own punches down on the boy. To his continued shock and amazement, Gohan used the same arm to block his every move that he was with Videl. Hell, he made it seem downright playful!

Videl kept her punches compact and her kicks as random as she could. Sweat was pouring down her body, and Gohan wasn’t even winded. She was so fixated on her boyfriend’s calm state that she didn’t even notice the back of Gohan’s hand coming her way.

Videl didn’t have time to sputter as the back of Gohan’s hand connected with her lips and nose. There was so much force behind the blow, at least to her, that she was knocked back and rolled face down in the sand. Blood dripped from her busted lip onto the hot, baking ground. Pushing herself onto her elbows, she glared angrily at Gohan. She wasn’t half as angry though as the third member of their party.

‘He bitch-slapped me!’ was the only coherent thought Videl had.

“What the Hell was that?!” screamed Mr. Satan. The man looked like he was gonna have a stroke.

“What?! I told her that I was gonna mix things up,” Gohan explained in a placating tone. “This is how my mentor eased me into it, unless of course you’d like to spar with her.”

Mr. Satan had no answer for that. He certainly didn’t want to spar with his baby girl, especially since the disparity between the two of them had grown so much.

Taking the man’s silence as a surrender, a smirk made its way up Gohan’s face. “I didn’t think so…”

Gohan finished just in time to dodge a hard right to the face. Videl was furious, and her anger was reducing her to a klutz. In her weariness, she staggered forward and tripped over her own feet. It was hot, very hot, and it wasn’t even midday yet. Her sweaty hair was clinging to her back and face, and exhaustion was beginning to take it’s toll. Her ki reserves wouldn’t last much longer before they became dangerously low.

Gohan seemed to notice this too. He brought his hand down and gestured for the girl to stop.

“That’s enough,” he remarked. “I was gonna have you run, but you’ve expended too much energy, too quick. Any more and you’ll die from a heat stroke. We’ll take a break.”

“I’m not finished yet,” Videl ground out. “I’m gonna make you get serious with me!”

“Not like this you’re not,” was his tort reply.

“Err…Damn you and your dismissive bullshit!” she cried as she threw herself back at Gohan with renewed ferocity. “Treat me like an equal! Stop treating me like I can’t handle it!”
Gohan was getting angry. “You don’t know what you’re asking!”

‘What the hell has gotten into this girl?!” he asked himself.

“It’s all or nothing, Gohan!” screamed Videl. “Bear it all! I want it, I want it! Man the fuck up!”

At that last remark, something inside Gohan snapped. Drawing back his hand, he swung the back of his fist at the little brunette. Videl was lucky that she had her guard up when she did for when the back of Gohan’s fist collided with her arms, the gut-wrenching sound of bones breaking and muscles tearing could be heard all around. The last thing Gohan heard before Videl was summersaulted into a gruesome roll was a pained ‘yelp!’

Videl came to a stop a good ten meters away from Gohan and her father. She was losing consciousness and fast. All the concussions, all the bullet wounds from her time working with the Satan City Police were nothing compared to the bodily destruction of her boyfriend losing control. Her arms were shattered, her shoulders were torn out of place, and she began to choke on her own blood. The pain was worse than anything she had experienced at the hands of Spopovich and Barbella. The next thing she noticed before losing consciousness were the shapes of Gohan and her father leaning over her.

Videl clutched her head as a fresh wave of pain brought her out of dreamland. Opening her eyes, the first thing she noticed was that it was night time. The Milky Way painted a serene canvass across the evening desert sky. The second thing she noticed was that a campfire had been set up right outside their capsule house. The third were the blankets she was wrapped in. The final thing she noted was that her biker shorts and bra, and boots were missing, leaving her only clad in her white shirt and panties. Trying to recall what happened, she was brought out of her reverie by the voice of the boy she loved.

“You’re up!” Gohan sat at her side shakily and handed her a cup of something warm, tea perhaps, before putting an arm around her shoulder.

She avoided his gaze as much as she could before stating, “You hurt me…”

“I did what Piccolo would have done to me,” he explained. “Growing up, it’s the only way I’ve ever learned how to train.”

A pregnant silence fell as Videl visualized Gohan getting destroyed by his own mentor as badly as she had earlier. “Did he ever hurt you as much as you hurt me?”

Sighing shakily, Gohan removed his arm from around her shoulder before crouching down in front of her. He cupped her chin and brought her gaze up to meet his. “No.”

‘No!’ How was she supposed to take that? Was she supposed to be happy that Gohan finally got serious with her, or angry because he showed less regard for her safety than even the once evil Piccolo Daimoa showed for his student?

Gohan regarded her silence momentarily before continuing. “The strength difference between me and Piccolo wasn’t even a blip on the scale compared to the one that currently exists between me and you. I’ve been dealing with some really bad issues lately, and something you said brought those issues to the forefront. It was only a moment, but I lost control because my emotions aren’t where they need to be.”

Videl chuckled darkly at this. “It’s funny ya know. Both Spopovich and Barbella nearly killed me, but neither of them hurt me as badly as my boyfriend.”
“Videl…” Gohan breathed, his heart seized in his chest.

“You let Barbella humiliate me because you wanted to save our relationship, to help me keep the very thing she took anyway,” she mumbled between sips of tea, “Then you hurt me just to give me what I wanted even if it anguished you to do it. I could have died, but in the end, all you ever wanted was to make me happy.”

“You mean everything to me, Videl,” he said breathlessly. “I’ll never leave you directionless again. Well, that and I had a falling out with my mother. It was coming anyway.”

Videl’s eyes widened as she whipped around. “What do you mean?”

Gohan sighed. “I left home for good. Me and my mom can’t be in the same house anymore. I got tired of her bullshit.”

“It was over me, wasn’t it?” Videl asked, her voice tinged with guilt.

“ Mostly,” he replied. “I just saw the writing on the wall and realized that I could only have one important woman in my life. I realized that if I didn’t leave, she’d try to control my life and our relationship till the day she croaked. I couldn’t take it anymore, Videl.”

“I understand,” she stated in sympathy.

“But not everything,” he corrected. “She has always led me around like a dog on a leash. Her home schooling kept me from having a real life, and by the time she finally allowed me to attend high school, I can’t help but think she did it just to have more influence over me. I don’t buy her crap about doing it to help me learn social skills any further than I can spit a rat! If that were the case, she wouldn’t have tried to keep such a short leash on me from the get-go. No, she did it for the same reason she does everything: College credits. It’s like she sees me as her retirement or something.”

Videl raised an eyebrow at this. “Her retirement? I thought you said you were royalty.”

“I am but my mother is such a strict traditionalist that she would never allow me to be my own person. My grandfather the Ox King raised her the same way. I guess my mother never knew any other way to parent. She only became a fighter so she could catch my dad and make him keep his end of some promise he never even understood. I don’t think my mother knew what she really wanted in life before she married.”

“Ya know…,” began Videl. “I used to be a fan of Chi-Chi’s.”

“You what?”

Videl pulled her knees up to her chest. “I admired your mother. I used to idolize her as someone all female martial artists could look up to. I thought we could have had something in common. Upon getting to know her however, I see just how naïve I really was. Even my father doesn’t interfere with my life as much as your mom did yours. If you did continue staying with her, she would have tried to run over me too. She probably would’ve tried to corral me into giving up on my own life, even after we get married.”

Videl turned to Gohan and looked at him with conviction. “These aren’t the hands of a housewife. I’m a fighter. I’m a warrior! I’m a strong, independent woman, and I’ll be damned if I let someone like her try to guilt me into giving up. She already did that with you, and it got us all killed.”

“Videl, I know you’d like to believe that it was my mother’s fault that I gave up on fighting, but truthfully, I’ve never been a real fighter. I’d prefer if I never had to go into battle again.”
Videl glared at him. “That’s bullshit, and you know it!”

“Huh?” Speechless, Gohan’s mouth hung open at his girlfriend’s accusing tone.

“Let’s take a walk,” she coaxed, rising to her feet. Gohan stared at her retreating form before jogging after her out into the cool desert night.

The two teens didn’t walk far before taking to the air in an effort to cover more distance. The couple flew silently without saying a word. They traveled a scant few miles until they found a rocky outcrop in the middle of an isolated prairie. Upon landing, Videl did an about-face on her love interest.

“Let me tell you something, Gohan!” she growled, jabbing her finger into his chest. “I didn’t fall in love with a quitter! I didn’t fall in love with you to have a normal life! There’s no such thing as going back to normal when you know the truth!”

Gohan’s gaze hardened at her criticisms. “I’ve never been able to have a normal life. How is normal a bad thing?”

“You’re saying you want to live in denial?!” Videl fumed. “I might have been raised by a liar, but I refuse to stay in a relationship with someone who lies to himself as much as he has to me! You were born with gifts that I would’ve killed for, and what do you want to do?! Squander them! You want to squander them and let yourself get weak again just like you did after Cell!”

“What’s gotten into you?!” Gohan yelled.

Her face reddening with rage, she pointed an accusing finger at her boyfriend. “You really wanna know?! OK, I’ll tell you! You could’ve beaten Majin Buu! You could’ve saved all of us! You could’ve saved me! Passivism has never been a final solution to evil! It made you a pussy when you could have been a real man! You’re half human, but I have yet to see one thing from you that shows that you share in our people’s indomitable will! You seem to be intelligent, but everything you do keeps creating unintended consequences that we all have to live with! You could have been the hero I know you could be if you never let yourself go, the hero I fell in love with! You’re not that man anymore, Gohan!”

Gohan’s face began to twitch with anger. Before he could say anything however, Videl was back at it.

“Or were you ever that man?!” she asked pleadingly. “If the stories you’ve told me about your childhood are true, you’re putting all our lives at risk by not staying in shape! By not being the man you were born to be! Take your balls out of your mother’s purse and be the man I love! I didn’t fall for a normal guy! I didn’t fall for a scholar just so I could play house! I fell for someone extraordinary!”

“Every time you quit, you can bet that whoever comes to threaten us next will be laughing. Do you
want to get everyone killed again? Be who you were born to be! Be who you were destined to be!”

Gohan’s features began to soften as the weight of his woman’s words sank in. “You drive a hard bargain Miss Videl Satan!” he commented with a sigh. “You make our relationship sound more like a business contract every day.”

Videl returned his smile with her own. “I’ve been doing that since day one. Look who I was raised by.”

“I do have two conditions though,” he said.

At this, Videl placed her hands on her hips. “Fire away.”

“One…” began the half-Saiyan. “I still go to college for something.”

“Done!”

“Two…” he continued with a devious smirk. “You have to give yourself to me every time I want it.”

A pink tint found its’ way onto Videl’s face as she smiled up at the love of her life. “I thought I was already doing that but OK, it’s a deal!”

“Wanna shake on it?” asked the demi-Saiyan, extending a hand.

“I’ll do you one better,” Videl whispered breathlessly as she reached up and pulled her half-Saiyan love interest in for a slow, deep-throated kiss. Their tongues dueled for access until the two teens broke away for air. “Let’s fuck on it!”

“W-what?!” Gohan stammered, his face deadpanning.

Videl’s eyes took on a mischievous glint as she reached under the hem of her white shirt, and hooking her fingers around the strings of her panties, pulled the delicate fabric down to her ankles.

His mouth hanging open from the abrupt playful change of his girlfriend’s attitude, Gohan soon found himself grinning from ear to ear. “You kooky, beautiful bitch…”

Giggling, Videl stepped out of the discarded piece of clothing, and clasping her hands to her now exposed pussy, stepped away until she was leaning back against a nearby rock face. Gohan watched with lust-filled eyes as his petite girlfriend, still standing, spread her legs open and bore him her treasures. His own cloths had joined Videl’s panties in a pile off to the side as he sauntered over to the love of his life. Just as he was about to bridge the gap between the two of them, Videl motioned him to stop.

“It’s not everyday someone hurts me just to be a better boyfriend,” she said wryly, her breathing becoming ragged. “It’s all yours Gohan. A reward for good behavior. Come and get it!” With that, Videl brought her hips forward, and reaching under her, spread the folds of her hot little kitty-kat.

Looking down at his girlfriend’s spread mound, he remarked with a chuckle “Well, I drank the poison. Might as well lick the bowl.”

Crouching, Gohan buried his nose and lips in her moist, heated womanhood. He reveled in both the scent of Videl’s arousal and her warrior’s scent. The musky cocktail of smells drove him wild as he pushed his tongue into her most intimate space to lap up her fine wine. He wanted, no, he had to have her smell all over him.
Videl shuttered at the sensations Gohan drudged out of her as he licked and preened her throbbing pussy. Craning her head back, she bit down on her lower lip as the man between her thighs brought her to a place of ecstasy. The pleasure was earth-shattering, the heat was delicious, and the pressure building in her womb had her bucking her hips to meet his skilled mouth. Her nipples had become rock-hard by this point, and Videl reached up with one hand and kneaded them like flour dough as her other hand buried itself in Gohan’s black locks.

Gohan flicked his tongue over her outer labia with reckless abandon as he took to this task with a zeal that would have made any religious fanatic proud. Hearing the moans and husky breaths of the gorgeous girl above him fed into his libido like nothing else.

Soon enough, the knot of tension in her lower belly came undone and Videl was sent into a rapture of carnal delight. She squealed as a wave of her love juices drenched his consort’s face. Gohan was unprepared when his little girlfriend locked her powerful thighs around his head and began to gyrate on his tongue in an effort to ride out the hot fire she felt in her nether regions.

Her convulsions subsiding, Videl slid down the rock wall onto her rear. Kneeling down, Gohan picked his lover up bridal style and brought her over to a patch of dry grass. There, he laid her down gently before climbing atop her. Her thighs spread wide as she began to pleasure herself at the thought of what was about to happen.

Her eyes glossed over with raw lust, Videl stared up at her Saiyan suitor. Her mouth hung agape as she licked her lips sensuously. Her pelvis gyrated as if it were seeking access to its better half all on its own, and her velvety nether lips brushed against the tip of his hardness, eliciting an instinctual forward jerk of Gohan’s hips.

Not able to take it any longer, Gohan seized her hips and lifted her bottom to get better access. Lining up, the half breed looked into his woman’s hungry eyes before pushing himself into her up to his own pelvis with one grinding movement.

Gohan threw back his head at the familiar feelings of being inside Videl’s moist tightness. It was then that he spied a full moon in the sky. Something strange began to build up inside him as he tensed against his girlfriend’s athletic form.

She always marveled at his size, and how her short, small frame could handle it. She supposed she should be grateful for her small stature if only because it meant she would always be nice and tight for him. That, and it made it easier for him to bounce her in ever more exiting ways. Smirking mischievously, Videl knew that she was in for one hell of a wild ride! Little did she know that something was about to take this experience in a whole new direction.

Looking back down at his consort, Gohan’s world began to fade to black. A primal, feral imperative took over his body, an imperative that he was no longer in control of, and he pinned Videl’s wrists above her.

A look of terror falling over her, Videl gazed into her lover’s face. Gohan’s eyes turned teal and a green light began to shine outwards from Gohan in circular rippling waves that distorted the colors of the surrounding world as each one painted over the other. The earth began to quake as a great, terrifying power began to overtake the half-Saiyan teen, and lightning, radical lightning such that no storm could produce, rent the grass and standing structures in the surrounding region.

He was going Super Saiyan! Videl didn’t know how or why but it was happening. Elder Kai’s unlocking of Gohan’s hidden potential should have been the end of Gohan’s transforming days, but apparently they were all mistaken. What she wasn’t expecting however, were the results it had on her. Videl writhed in ecstasy as a golden aura, Gohan’s bioelectric power, overtook and subjugated
her own ki and clad her in a protecting, accentuating warm light that made her pussy absolutely
tingle with delight. It empowered her and conveyed upon her the ki-enhanced strength and physical
toughness that her body would need to handle what was to come.

The power continued to billow up until it reached a critical mass within Videl’s sultry body, and then
something amazing happened. Her hair stood on end and turned completely blond as tendrils of
azure lightning coursed through her. The show hadn’t even started yet and she was already thrashing
around beneath him as she curled her toes with untold pleasure.

With a final explosive flash, a brilliant dome of green light blasted out from the young lovers and
absolutely decimated the surrounding area. The force was such that a deep pressure crater was
pushed into the Earth by the concussive forces of Gohan’s radical power. When the smoke cleared,
Gohan started down at her with eyes that were completely white and his golden glowing hair shot
out in every direction. His expression was one of untamed, unencumbered hunger.

Just before the Buu incident months ago, she had seen this state on a renegade Saiyan named Broly
as she tried in vain to fight him off with Goten and Trunks in the northern crystal fields. She was
terrified then, but now that she had an LSS of her own, she reveled in Gohan’s new post-Elder Kai
transformation. She owed the Supreme Kai a big favor for this.

Videl wrapped her thighs around Gohan’s waist and used the leverage to press her ample bosom
though her white shirt against his now massive physique. That was all it took for Gohan to start
rocking her body in his super state with an animalistic, powerful tempo.

Her eyes fluttering, Videl’s head thrashed with abandon as her berserker boyfriend plowed her fertile
field. Her and Gohan’s husky screams and the slapping of flesh on flesh were the only things
audible at this carnal ground zero as Gohan’s humping stirred up a musky cocktail of sexual juices
where their bodies joined. No other man could do this for her, and no other girl would know this
particular pleasure but her. This was something her and Gohan had alone. If for no other reason, this
discovery made it where she could never be happy with another man regardless their many issues as
a couple.

“That’s it Gohan! That’s it!” wailed the lust-crazed girl, fresh tears streaming down her cheeks. “I’m
all yours baby! Pound my kitty-kat! Pound my kitty-kat! I’m all yours whenever you want me, I
promise!”

The two teens continued on like this for a few hours, but like most good things, this too had to come
to an end. In Gohan’s crazed state, it was a wonder Videl didn’t die from sex-induced exhaustion.
With one last powerful thrust, the boy emptied his loins into Videl’s waiting womb. Videl bucked
and thrashed her hips wildly as she was hit with an orgasm so powerful that she lost consciousness
and with it the protective golden aura that Gohan’s mating had enshrouded her with.

Gohan’s hips gave a few more involuntary jerks as he laid behind his once again raven-haired
girlfriend. The unpredictable power leaving him, the exhausted teen wrapped his arms around the
small girl as if she were the most precious thing in the cosmos.

The two naked teens were woken by dawn’s first light. Gohan, being the early morning riser of the
two, was the first to stir. Grabbing Videl’s shoulder, he shook the petite female until she came to.

“I’m awake, I’m awake...,” repeated the Satan girl groggily. She wiped the sleep from her eyes with
a deep yawn before turning into her boyfriend’s embrace.

“You seem to have slept well,” he observed.
“As good as one can on solid rock,” was her tort reply. She tossed her head back and forth in an effort to get the kinks out. “So…, about my training?”

“I’m too strong to be of any real help, but I know someone who can help us,” explained the half-breed.


“No, but that’s a good one,” he chuckled, “No, I’m talking about the founder of my father’s school of martial arts! The Turtle Hermit, Master Muten Roshi. He has a lot more experience with building up fighters from scratch. Decades more! He’s the go-to guy!”

“Master Roshi…?”

‘Where have I heard that name before?’ Finally it dawned on her.

“Wait a minute!” she snapped excitedly. “You mean that Master Roshi?! The legendary martial artist!”

“Uh…yeah.” Gohan gave her a ‘No Duh!’ look. “You met him before on the Lookout, remember?”

Briefly, Videl’s mind wandered back to the old man with a Fuu-Manchu who had pulled so many perverted acts with her both while she was hunting for the Dragonballs with Bulma and the gang and while she was staying on the Lookout during the whole Buu crisis. Her face began to twitch at the thought of her last episode with the elderly master. How could she not forget?! All of a sudden, learning the inner secrets of the ancient martial arts didn’t seem too appealing.

“Do we have to?” she asked in a defeated tone.

“He’s the only one who can help us,” said Gohan, confirming her fears.

“Of course he is…” she moaned sourly.

The two teens got up and took to the air. It was time for them to get back to camp, and Videl needed to help Gohan search the surrounding area for his cloths. Most of the cloths were scattered out in a wide circle, some of them bearing the brunt of the two teen’s nighttime romp.

Finding the last article, the young lovers sped off back to camp. Little did they realize that they left one very important undergarment behind. The discarded panties in question hung from a tree limb, flapping like a flag in the wind.

Arriving back at camp, they found that Videl’s father and Mr. Buu were already cooking up some morning grub.

“Where have you two been?!” demanded the Champ.

“Gohan and me had some important issues to discuss,” his daughter answered.

The afroed fighter was unconvinced. Suddenly, a desert gale picked up. It was so strong that it blew a certain girl’s night shirt up around her waist. That was all it took for Mark Satan and Son Gohan to get an eyeful.

“Videl!” screamed the Champ. “You’re not wearing any underwear!”

Looking down, Videl discovered that indeed, her little brunette-tufted womanhood was on display for all present. With an embarrassed “EEK!” she closed her legs tightly and grabbed the hem of her
shirt, tugging it down in an effort to retain some of her dignity. Her face flushed as red as a tomato.

“Please…. someone, anyone, just kill me now…” she grumbled.

*Oh, this was going to be a beautiful day...*
“Ya know Videl…, the two of you are gonna mess up your lives if this keeps going.”

The Champ eyed his daughter out of the corner of his vision as he set the controls of their air transport for autopilot. Videl sat in the passenger side seat fumbling with her medication bag. Gohan had elected to sit in the back just behind the Champ. The three of them had passed by Satan City one last time to drop off Mr. Buu before making their long track to the Southern Ocean. The Kami House was clear across the planet, and Mark Satan somehow knew that this was gonna be a long-term commitment. His publicist and manager would have to take care of company affairs in his absence.

“We were careful,” she defended.

“So, he used protection then?”

His daughter sighed. “No Daddy… I’ve been on the pill since shortly after the whole Majin Buu thing. Condoms don’t work with me and Gohan.”

Looking through the side-view mirror, the Champ noticed that the boy, no…, the young man, was visibly uncomfortable. It wasn’t hard to see that the boy was not used to discussing his and Videl’s sex life. Whatever information he was gonna get would have to come from his daughter.

The Champ’s brow furrowed as he glowered at his only child. “Why? Why are you doing all the work?!”

With a huff, his daughter tossed her medication bag into the back seat. “Two reasons: One, Gohan’s thrusts are so powerful that rubbers tear like paper-” Hearing this, her now red-faced father interjected…

“What?!” he all but screamed in angered disbelief. “Doesn’t he hurt you?!”

Videl’s face reddened as she tried to look anywhere but her father’s face. “No…,” Videl groaned. “This brings up the second reason I have to do all the planning.”

“And that is…?” Mark pressed.

“I’m too tight,” was her short muttered answer.

“Begging your pardon?”

The little Satan girl whipped around and threw her father a cold stare. “I said I’m too tight, Dad! My clinching muscles are too strong! Condoms won’t work!”

Mr. Satan’s jaw practically hit the floor. “Y-you’re kidding me…”

Turning to stare out the passenger side window, his daughter crossed her arms and slid down into her seat. “Believe me…, we’ve tried.”

“So all that stuff about you two having a discussion last night was just a cover?”

“No, Daddy,” answered Videl with an annoyed sigh. “I needed to confront Gohan about something central to our relationship.”

“Which is…?”
“Well…, we came to a few arrangements,” she explained. “The world needs Gohan the warrior more than it will ever need Gohan the scholar. He agreed to keep up his training if I gave him three things.”

“Oh no…” Gohan groaned. “Here it comes.” At that moment, the half-Saiyan wished he could be anywhere else but in that transport.

“Gohan agreed to stay in shape if he could go to college,” Videl said.

“That doesn’t sound like a bad concession,” remarked the Champ. “College is always good!”

Videl rolled her eyes. ‘Sure you’re alright with the first one…’

“What’s the second?”

“Gohan had a falling out with his parents.” Videl was now twiddling her thumbs like a giddy school girl. “Whatever happens, I’m moving him in with us.”

“Out of the question!” was Mark Satan’s curt answer.

“It’s non-negotiable!” she fired back. “Gohan is the reason we even have most of our fortune! He could have taken credit for beating Cell, but he was only nine years old at the time. The only reason we’re even rich is because you did the equivalent of taking someone else’s winning lottery ticket! Face it! We owe it to him!”

Mr. Satan sighed. “What’s the third concession?”

“Do you really wanna know?” she asked dryly.

“I’m your father. I think I have a right to know!”

She sighed. This wasn’t going to end well. “I pretty much gave my body to Gohan… for life.”

“Oh God…” her boyfriend shuddered.

The Champ visibly paled as realization dawned on him. “Please don’t tell me! You can’t be serious! NO! NO! HELL NO!!!”

“Gohan gets full access to me from now on! We already spend three to five nights a week sleeping together as it is, and we’re getting tired of tip-toeing our love life around everyone. We sit next to each other at school, we fight crime together, we stare death in the face together, we eat together, we bath together, we hang out all the time… we’re practically a married couple anyway so I don’t see what the problem is! Me and Gohan will be sharing the same bed and the same bathroom from here on out. There are about 50 rooms in our mansion, and this way you won’t be losing any of them!”

“What about my reputation?!” he screamed.

“Daddy, you’re going to make money for the rest of your life regardless. King Furry gave you full tax-exempt status for Christ’s sake! You’re not gonna be hurting. Besides, the press already knows about us!”

Mr. Satan was visibly shaking with anger. The betrayal he felt from his daughter’s devil-may-care attitude was just too much. “It’s almost like you’re flaunting it!”

“I didn’t say Gohan and I haven’t been discrete about our… affair,” she argued. “We don’t want the paparazzi butting their noses into our private business any more than they already do. Besides, you’re
the one who stipulated that any boy I wanted to have in my life would have to be stronger than you! You sorta set yourself up for this. Just think of this as my way of getting my and Gohan’s adolescence back with interest.”

“I can still refuse to allow any of this,” Mark warned.

Chuckling, his daughter shook her head at her father’s obtuseness. “And I can always throw my cloths in a suitcase, take my trust fund, and let you have your life built on lies! If we stop fighting crime, the people of the city would start pressuring you to do that kind of stuff, and I don’t think you would be able to keep up this whole ‘world savior’ farce if that were the case! In a way, one could say I’ve been protecting you.”

If Mark Satan could get any paler, he’d be transparent. “You’re enjoying this, aren’t you?”

Videl couldn’t help but smile at her father’s unease. “It’s not every day a girl has the deck stacked against her own father. Face it Dad! I don’t have you in a checkmate. I have you in a royal flush!”

Mr. Satan’s mind was racing. His daughter had a history of using blackmail to get what she wanted from people, and what she was threatening him with wasn’t even the worst thing she could use against him.

“And another thing!”

Mr. Satan groaned. ‘Greedy girl! What more could she want?’

Sighing, the afroed man buried his face in his hands. “What...?”

“You’re going to start dealing with Gohan like he’s a member of the family!” It was an order more than a demand. “You and him still have your moments, but I need some feedback that this is going to work. I don’t want this to be too awkward!”

The older man laughed dryly. “A teenaged girl moving her half-alien boyfriend into her and her father’s mansion for premarital sex isn’t awkward enough?!” he asked incredulously.

“And having a ten foot pink bubblegum man that wiped out humanity isn’t?!” she fired back. “Dad, what I want to do with Gohan is fairly normal by rich, celebrity girl standards. I think you have bigger things to worry about if your reputation is your primary concern. You still haven’t figured out how to sell Majin Buu’s reforming to the public.”

“Point taken,” he conceded in a defeated tone. “So..., when’s the wedding?”

“Someday,” Videl stated. “I don’t want the press associated with a formal wedding ceremony yet. We’re still pretty vague on the ‘when’ part though. Too many of our friends haven’t settled down from everyone’s death for us to really build an invite list. They’re just too self-involved right now. We really wanted to wait until after our graduation from high school before getting married.”

“B-but that’s a whole nother year from now!” her father argued.

“For now, let’s just focus on the present.” Videl looked over her shoulder to see Gohan twiddling his thumbs in embarrassment. He really did look cute when he did that.

“So Gohan… are Krillin and his family still living with Master Roshi?” asked Videl.

“Yes,” he mumbled. “Master Roshi is like a father to Krillin. He’s been living with him since he and my dad trained together as kids.”
“I guess it’s a good thing we brought a capsule house.” Videl remarked with relief. “Is there anything else I need to know about Master Roshi?”

Gohan breathed deeply. “I’ve never trained under him. Because of this, I don’t really know much about his actual backstory or how he handles things as a teacher. I’ve known him since I was real little, but to me, Master Roshi has always been more of an enigma. Dad would sometimes tell stories about his training with Krillin, but I was too young to really be interested. He does however, seem to know more about what’s going on than he lets on. The man is incredibly sharp. Sometimes, I think his weird antics are more of a cover than anything else.”

“Do you really think he’ll train me?” she asked.

“I don’t see why not,” answered the half-breed. “It’s not like he’s doing anything these days. A new student would keep him on his toes.”

Upon arriving at Kami House, Gohan and the others made small talk as if this were just another of his sporadic visits. What really surprised the residents of the small isle was the company Gohan brought with him. This was the first time Gohan had purposely brought Videl or her father to their tropical getaway. Awkward pleasantries were exchanged between them, but eventually Gohan and Videl had to bring up their reason for being there.

“So let me get this straight Gohan…,” An aged hand pulled the tab off an old beer can before depositing it in a nearby jar, “You’re asking me to train your girlfriend?”

Staring at the floor, Gohan nodded. Behind him, Mr. Satan was yammering on with Krillin and his wife about something that was neither here nor there while Videl focused intently on the man they’d traveled half a world to see.

Stroking his beard, Master Roshi settled back into the couch cushions as he regarded the three visitors in his living room. Videl, though focused, looked visibly uncomfortable under his gaze. That was the beauty of using polarized sunglasses; One could give folks the once over without the person of interest putting up too much of a guarded front.

“That’s out of the blue and all but, I just don’t know how to train her,” the half-breed explained. “I thought I could use Piccolo’s method, but I almost killed her. I’m at a loss at how to hand our problem.”

“Yet, you taught her how to manipulate ki,” Roshi pointed out.

“She has a natural talent,” he said in compliment. “I don’t know how she did it, but she even managed to hold off Broly for a short while. I thought my teaching her to fly would open the gates for her to increase in strength at a much faster rate.”

Roshi smiled. “And indeed it has my boy! I can tell that she’s much stronger now than she was when she fought Spopovich. You just made a mistake in her training, one that can be corrected.”

“What do you mean, sir?” Gohan asked quirking an eyebrow.

“You did everything assed-backwards,” the old hermit said matter-of-factly. “You shoehorned her by skipping out on some of the most important fundamentals in building up a fighter from scratch. Don’t get me wrong! It’s amazing that she was able to learn ki manipulation and flight so quickly, but she missed out on some very important training needed to prepare her for what came next.”

Gohan looked downcast. “So even in training her to fly too early, I sorta messed up.”
“Yes and no,” was Roshi’s reply. “Boy, you were applying the same standard to Videl that Piccolo did with you, but there was much groundwork that needed to be laid before she should have been allowed to learn ki manipulation. At least…, that’s been my experience. Ki manipulation helps augment the body, but it can only do so much if there is only so much to augment.”

Feeling like a first-rate fool, Gohan looked absolutely sheepish.

“What you need to understand Gohan is that you taught her how to run before she learned how to crawl. In a way, you made the same mistake with Videl that your mother made with Goten’s training. The basics are absolutely fundamental when building a new fighter from scratch.”

Master Roshi stood up and began to walk towards the door. Looking over his shoulder, he motioned for Gohan to join him.

“Stay here Videl,” the half-Saiyan told her before trudging after the old hermit.

The teen followed the wizened master out onto the beach. A pregnant silence came between the two of them as they stood looking out over the warm surf. The only other company present was Roshi’s pet sea turtle. Finally, it was Master Roshi who broke the silence.

“I’ll do it,” he rumbled.

Gohan’s face lit up. “You will?!”

“But only if two conditions are met.”

“I seem to be getting a lot of those lately,” remarked Gohan.

“First, you have to train with us.” Roshi stipulated. “I want you to learn how to train people from the ground up as well because I have a feeling that sort of experience is going to be invaluable someday soon.”

“Well that doesn’t sound so bad,” said the Son boy. “But why would you say I need the experience?”

Roshi sighed before turning his gaze back to the ocean. The old man seemed troubled. “There are two reasons, one of which I need you to keep to yourself.”

“Why? I think my girlfriend may need to know this too,” Gohan argued.

“You can tell her soon. This is something only you and a few others will be in any position to do anything about. For the past two months, something has been in the air. A malignant evil of sorts has been slowly growing. It’s doesn’t feel like a single powerful monster like Cell or Majin Buu, but it will be a long-term problem that we’ll all have to live with.”

“Again, I don’t know why you haven’t told anyone else,” Gohan remarked. “If it’s as bad as you say, we all need to know about this threat.”

“Everyone who needs to know already does,” the old master assured. “You can tell Videl and her father later. When this whole thing comes to a head, I think Videl will be on the front lines with you more than anyone given the nature of this enemy. I fear that this new threat is more home-grown than the last. It’ll be brother against brother, street to street, and neighbor against neighbor. Civil society will collapse, and the world will be brought to ruin. This brings me to my other reason for wanting you to train.”
“What would that be, Master?”

Roshi smiled at the son of his greatest student. “You’re going to have to take up the mantle of teacher in your own right. I can’t teach everyone that the world will need, and there just aren’t enough people within our little group to be everywhere we’ll need to be. Truthfully, we should have been training more fighters from the get-go. We won’t be around forever, and we need to leave someone behind who can carry on.”

“You said you had another condition that I’d have to meet before you’d train Videl?” Gohan queried.

“Yes…,” Roshi breathed. “This next part is gonna sound crazy but bear with me. I always train more than one fresh student. I would like for Videl’s father to be her training partner.”

“You WHAT?! You want to train Mr. Satan?!”

“This is my own selfish condition,” Roshi admitted. “I have my own reasons for wanting this. If the man cares for his daughter as much as I think he does, he’ll agree to this.”

“You are going to discuss this with him, right?” asked Gohan, raising an eyebrow.

“That’s why I intend to speak with both Videl and Mr. Satan, separately. I’ve never told anyone this, but I have the ability to read minds. Think of it as a job interview where the truth can never be hidden from human resources. I only take on students with the full knowledge of who they are and what they are actually capable of. It’s invasive, but only by knowing this am I able to meet my student’s individual needs.”

“That’s a handy trick…” stated the half-Saiyan.

The ancient Turtle Hermit smiled. “A real master doesn’t reveal all his secrets. There are some things even you and your father have yet to learn, one of which I’m sure Videl will need in the coming years considering your ‘special’ circumstances.”

The two men turned back towards Kami House. Little Marron ran between them as she played tag with Oolong. Gohan had one more question that niggled at him.

“So what skill were you referring to? The one you said me and Videl would appreciate?”

“Have you ever wondered why your grandpa and myself aged so slowly?” Roshi asked.

Pondering the question, Gohan put a finger to his chin. “Come to think of it, Mom’s also pretty young for someone her age.”

“Then in time you’ll come to understand why my training Videl is going to be so important not just for her but for the two of you as a couple,” Roshi explained with a wink.

“I still don’t understand what you’re getting at,” said Gohan.

The old man’s lips quirked upward in a smirk. “No, but your girlfriend will soon enough.”

The two of them stepped into the living room to find Android 18 serving Videl and Mr. Satan refreshments. Master Roshi’s dirty magazines formed a neat stack on the coffee table, and though she tried to be discreet about it, Videl eyed the offending material. Krillin was flipping through some channels, but because of the lack of parental controls, most of the adult programming was on full display.
“Eighteen, doesn’t it ever bother you that your daughter is around so much adult material?” Videl asked.

The blonde cyborg sighed in frustration. “Honestly, the abundance of adult material is the least of my worries. I mean... consider who I live with.”

“You make an interesting point,” conceded the brunette. Videl looked up to see both her boyfriend and Master Roshi entering the living space.

The old master cleared his throat, garnering the attention of everyone present. “Well, me and Gohan here talked it over.”

“And...?” Videl beamed, her eyes filled with hope.

“And I have decided to take Videl Satan on as my sixth living student!” announced the ancient master.

Pounding her gloved fist into her other hand, the little Satan girl gave an enthused shout, “Alright!”

“On two conditions...”

Upon hearing this, Videl’s hands dropped to her sides. “Those being?”

“One, Gohan has to undergo the training with you,” Roshi explained, “And second, your father must also become my student!”

The Champ was dumbfounded. “Me?! Why me?”

Krillin came up behind the afroed grappler and gave him a pat on the shoulder. “You lucky dog! Master Roshi is an eight time World Martial Arts Tournament Champion. He’s practically gift-wrapping it for you. He hardly ever takes students, especially out of the blue like this!”

“I take it this is some sort of honor...?” Mark asked.

“You bet it is!” beamed Krillin. “Master Roshi is considered the greatest master of the ancient martial arts for good reason! I’ve been a student of Roshi’s since I was twelve, and I’ve only seen him take one other student besides me and Goku!”

Beckoning for silence, the old master cleared his throat. “Now that that’s settled, I would like to speak with both of my new students separately.”

“I’ll go first,” offered Videl.

“This way.” the old turtle hermit motioned the raven-haired teen up the stairs with his cane. Upstairs, he led her into an empty bedroom where the old master took a seat at the foot of what Videl presumed was Krillin and Eighteen’s bed. Knowing the aged master’s perverted antics, she eyed the old man suspiciously.

The old man gestured to a nearby chair. “Have a seat.”

“Is this some kind of interview?” she asked.

“Of course,” he stated. “I guess the first place to start would be for you to tell me why you want my training?”

“It’s complicated...” she muttered. “I don’t want you to get the idea that I’m training for the wrong
reasons.”

“Try me.”

The little Satan girl twiddled her fingers before resting her hands in her lap. For her, this was still a very touchy subject, one that she kept between her, Gohan, and her father. Finally, she met the old master’s gaze.

“I feel lost,” she began with a shudder. “I-I used to be someone or rather I thought I was someone. I used to think I was so strong, but I just don’t know who I am anymore! I feel so unneeded nowadays! I wasted my whole life on training that never made me the person I wanted to be, the person I had to be! I’m tired of being coddled! I’m a warrior and that’s how I want to be remembered! I don’t want people to remember me as ‘Mr Satan’s daughter’! I want to build my own identity. I can’t go back to living a lie!”

Master Roshi grimaced at not just the words of the youth but also the flood of memories his mind gleaned from hers.

“It’s tough seeing a young girl’s mind so filled with doubts,” he remarked. “You’re carrying a lot of memories, bad memories of things that no young’n your age should have to carry. You’ve seen a lot more than most people your age, but in the same token, you have yet to grow up in other areas of your life. The horrors you’ve seen combined with the horrors you’ve suffered have caused you great emotional and mental trauma.”

Videl’s eyebrows shot up at the old hermit’s words. “Y-yes! How do you know about me?”

“I have my ways,” was Roshi’s simple answer.

“Will my problems get in the way of you teaching me?” she asked.

“No,” Roshi answered. “You’re not the first person I’ve had to teach who wasn’t coolly adjusted. Gohan’s grandfather, the Ox King, was a brash, violent man in his youth. The few people you’ve hurt because of your PTSD since Buu are nothing compared to the oceans of blood spilled by Gyumoa. Besides, I can assure you that Gohan is suffering from almost as many emotional and mental issues as you are. You both need help, and someone has to be there for you.”

“T-thank you,” Videl said with a warm smile.

“Just make sure you keep taking your meds while I’m teaching you,” Roshi advised. Videl nodded.

“There is also one more thing of great importance that we need to discuss before we start you out under my program.”

“What would that be?” Videl asked.

“It’s something pertaining to your long-term relationship with Gohan,” he informed. “It’s about him.”

Videl, ever curious to know her boyfriend’s secrets, listened intently.

“You know Gohan’s only half-human, yes?”

“Yes,” Videl nodded. “Me and Gohan have discussed this.”

“Well, you better remain seated because what I’m about to tell you is going to affect you and his relationship from this day forward.”
“How bad could this be?” asked the little Satan girl.

“Not necessarily bad so much as a complication, one that I’m going to have to help you resolve.”

“Lay it on me then,” ordered Videl. “I’m sure it can’t be any weirder than any of the other things Gohan has told me.”

“It’s something that Gohan himself doesn’t even know yet.” Roshi warned. “This is an issue where time is your greatest adversary. As you know, humans typically only live for about a century, and that’s if they’re extremely lucky.”

“Yeah, so...?”

“Saiyans live longer and age far slower than humans,” Roshi told her. “You will give Gohan many good years, but you likely won’t grow old with him.”

The effect this revelation had on the petite fighter was devastating. She couldn’t believe what she was hearing. This had to be some kind of nightmare. Shuddering violently, Videl wrapped her arms around her waist as she was racked with sobs.

“Why?! Why?!” she repeated over and over as tears fell from her eyes. “Nothing I’ve ever had has been mine! Is growing old with him really too much to ask for?! Everything I’ve ever known or cared about is being taken from me!”

Videl then felt two hands on her shoulders. Through eyes blurry with tears, she looked into the face of the old Turtle hermit.

“What if I told you that there is a way you can grow old with that boy?” he asked.

“How do you fight time?!” was her ragged question.

“By training under me;” he answered. “What if I were to tell you that I’ve lived for over 300 years?”

Upon hearing this, Videl’s moist eyes widened. “That’s impossible! People can’t live that long!”

Master Roshi smirked. “Not only is it possible, but there are several people alive today who are already far older than they should have lived. Gohan’s grandpa the Ox King is one such person. His gigantism would have had him dying an early death from heart problems had it not been for one condition being met. Thanks to my training, he’s lived for over a century.”

“Please, you’ve got to help me!” Videl begged as she grabbed at Roshi’s tunic. “Please! I don’t want to leave Gohan a widower! I want to have all our experiences together!”

“I will or rather we will, but it’s going to take time,” explained the elderly master. “My training will change the very nature of your body. Cosmetically, you will be a different person when we’re done. Rest assured, if you are diligent and do exactly as I instruct you, you will be able to grow old with that boy.”

Wiping her eyes, Videl’s face brightened with an uncertain hope at hearing this. “Will I still be me?”

“The body might change but you’ll still be the same person,” he assured her. “Do not make this decision lightly though. When you do this, it’s for keeps. You’ll be able to grow old with Gohan, but you’ll effectively be creating a gap between yourself and every other person in your life. As your extended life progresses, older friends will start to disappear. They’ll start to notice the difference as they begin to age whereas you remain young. They’ll begin to die off and you’ll be unable to join
them for many years. The real question you need to be asking yourself is whether you really love the boy enough to be with him in a relationship that could potentially last a couple of centuries?"

Videl glowered at the old master with a look of dogged determination. To her, this was a challenge, a challenge that she would have met like any other.

“I pledged my heart and body to him! I gave myself to Gohan, and I’ll be damned if I let him live a life without me! I’m not going to let something as trivial as biology get in my way!”

Leaning forward, Roshi patted her on the shoulder. “Then welcome aboard, student.”

Videl smiled at the older man. ‘Gohan was right! There really is more to this guy than meets the eye.’

“I’ve heard everything I need to, so when you leave this room, send your father in,” he ordered.

“Uh… yes Master!” Videl actually bowed to the ancient man, something she hadn’t done for an older martial artist since her childhood. Straightening herself, she wiped her eyes one last time before leaving the room.

When she got downstairs, Gohan and the others were still gathered around the coffee table chatting. Upon seeing her, Gohan ran up and took her hands in his. He knew she had been crying again.

“What happened?” he asked, his look one of concern.

“Just had another bomb-shell dropped on me is all,” she answered with an uneasy smile. “It’s OK though…I’ll trust Master Roshi on this.”

“Trust him on what? I don’t understand.”

Videl wrapped her arms around the boy and pulled his head down for a kiss before turning to her father.

“Dad, it’s your turn.”

“Oh…uh, right!” muttered the Champ.

Setting his drink to the side, the afroed man disappeared up the same steps. Looking back, he noticed that the Son boy was still pressing his daughter for answers. Uncharacteristically, Videl for her part kept trying to side-step the issue.

“Must be something pretty important,” he wondered aloud.

Upon reaching the master bedroom, he took a seat in the same chair opposite from the aged master. Immediately, he felt something was off. The way the old hermit stared at him made him feel like his very soul were part of some unspoken autopsy. Roshi’s face showed no emotion as he continued to give the Champ the once over.

“So…,” began the Champ in awkward silence. “You said you wanted to train me. I guess the best place to start would be to ask ‘why?’ Why me of all people? I’m not exactly liked among you folks.”

“Everyone else fervently believes that you’re beyond help,” Roshi began. “But I think you’re just ignorant. Ignorance is curable. Stupidity is not and I know that you are far from stupid.”

“Well yeah!” Mark bragged. “I’m a two-time world champ!”
“Doesn’t it bother you though?” Roshi pressed. “Doesn’t it bother you that your first World Tournament victory was only made possible by the fact that we had other things to do? Doesn’t it bother you that you had to bribe my student’s wife just to win the championship a second time?”

Mr. Satan let out a groan. Somehow, he knew this was gonna come up. “I’d be lying if I said it didn’t. I was at least able to take some measure of pride in my early career. Eventually though, I didn’t have a choice but to start doing things solely for money. Having a wife and a kid to take care of, and trying to keep a dojo afloat will do that for ya.”

“You were also dealing with another tragedy in your life, weren’t you?” Roshi asked.

Mark Satan’s eyes widened at the old man’s insight. “Y-yes! How did you know?”

“I have my ways as your daughter has discovered,” answered the elder martial artist. “You were dealing with the loss of your master. He was a great man who was cut down before his time. You were never officially declared an expert by him before his death, and so you do everything to manage your own feelings of inadequacy.”

“This is pretty creepy, old-timer!” stammered the Champ. “How do you know so much about me and my late master?!”

“Like I said, I have my ways. The man who killed your master is an old enemy of your daughter’s boyfriend, his father, and me. His name was Mercenary Toa, and he is a ruthless contract killer every bit as strong as me. You and your master were in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

“How are you doing this?!?” Mark demanded. “It’s like you can read my entire life story without never knowing me!”

“One of my techniques,” stated the Turtle Hermit. “A troubled mind is easy to read.”

“I-I think I need to sit down…” said the afroed man, gasping for breath.

“You are sitting, and to answer your earlier question, I want you to train under me so you can be a better representative of what martial arts are supposed to be like, what they once were. You’ve spent many years decrying and dismissing things simply because you lacked any insight into the world of the ancient martial arts. Modern fighting theory has its uses, don’t get me wrong, but what you have done has set back the art of fighting for centuries!”

The Champ shook with indignation at the ancient master’s accusations. “What are you talking about?! Martial arts has never been more popular than it is now! I practically drug the entire industry from being just a hobby to being a major part of the world’s culture-”

“And I’m grateful for that!” Roshi interjected, “But in doing so, you’ve dishonored yourself by destroying the reputations of every past champion just to build yourself up! That’s not what your master would have wanted, and it certainly isn’t what your wife would have wanted!”

At the mention of his late wife Miguel, Mr. Satan visibly deflated. His breathing ragged from old drugged up feelings, the man fell back into his seat.

“You need to learn to do well by doing well again! You know your daughter has lost all respect for you because of the life you’ve led. How can you be a father to that young woman and expect her to listen to you when you’ve lost that?”

“Now you’re hitting below the belt old man,” Mark growled.
“No, I’m telling you what you need to hear! I’m sick and tired of seeing the damage your life and your microphone has wrought on so many people! You’re a good man at heart Mr. Satan, but you need guidance every bit as much as those two kids out there. The unintended consequences of your fraud have done as much harm to the world as any of the unintended consequences stemming from Gohan or Goku’s past actions. I assume all of you want to help each other, but how can you do this when you are all clambering about in the dark trying to grope for answers? I’ve been guiding young people back to sanity for as long as I can remember, and you definitely need my help. It would be a disservice both to Gohan and to the people of the world if I didn’t offer you this opportunity.”

“So.., when do we start?” asked Mark with a defeated sigh.

“Tomorrow,” Roshi stated.

“How long will this take?”

“Not a day less than eight months,” answered the old master.

“Huh?! What about my daughter and her boyfriend’s schooling?!” Mark shouted.

“That’s why Gohan is gonna be training with us,” Master Roshi explained in a placating tone. “He needs to learn this for when he starts training her. When school starts back for him and Videl, he will be entrusted with completing her last five months of training under my program. Due to your being so far behind either of them, I will need you to stay here for the full eight months. After that timeframe, I’ll put both of you to the test.”

“What can I expect from this training?”

“Rebirth!”

‘I still haven’t lost my touch,’ Master Roshi thought, smiling to himself.

Oh, tomorrow’s gonna be a beautiful day.
“It’s good to see you three so bright-eyed and bushy tailed!” remarked the Turtle Hermit as he regarded the three folks in his charge. “I hope you slept well because today marks your first day of training under the Kame Style.”

Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan stood lined up opposite the aged master. Off to the side, Krilllin stood in uncharacteristic silence as he watched what he thought was gonna be a great show. The sun was just coming over the horizon and the morning still had a hint of the coolness of the previous night. Gohan, ever the morning person, looked to be in his element. It was apparent however, that the two Satans were not early morning risers.

It is said that people were slightly taller in the morning due to a relaxation of compression discs within the spine. Videl, being only five foot tall, looked almost comically short compared to Gohan and Mr. Satan. Master Roshi had a good private laugh at this.

‘Gohan’s just like his grandpa,’ thought Roshi chuckling to himself. ‘The boy must love them small girls! Oh, the wonders of sexual dimorphism…’ The girl’s head barely came up to her lover’s shoulder.

Last night had been the first night in which Gohan and Videl had slept in the same bed where Mr. Satan had full knowledge of it. The man cast a narrowed glance in both his daughter and her boyfriend’s direction. Needless to say, last night’s rest was elusive but only because the afroed man simply did not like the idea of his daughter sharing a bed with any man. This was gonna take some getting used to.

“Ugh…, 5:30 A.M. is not my cup of tea.” Videl brought a hand up to stifle a groggy yawn. She’d slept well enough, all things considered, but dragging herself out of bed at this hour was gonna take some getting used to.

“You’ll manage,” Gohan said assuredly. “Believe me, once you get used to it, being a morning person does a lot more for your daily life.”

With a wistful smile on his face, Krilllin looked out over the grassy field where both the Kame House and Videl and Mr. Satan’s capsule house now stood. Memories came flooding back to the former monk of a time long ago when he and Goku lived and trained in this same field with Roshi and Launch. The island where he and the Saiyan forged their friendship had hardly changed at all since those days.

“Now before we begin,” spoke the aged master, “I’m going to put both of you to the test. I wanna see just how far along you two are so I can set you out at a decent common starting point.”

Fishing in his pocket, Master Roshi pulled out a stop-watch. “I’m gonna have each of you run a 100 meter dash so that I can gauge your speed.”

“A hundred meters doesn’t sound too bad…” thought Mr. Satan aloud.

“Again, this is just a test, but I need you both to put everything into it.”

Videl chimed in. “I’ll go first!”
Roshi nodded once before digging a starting line into the dirt with his foot.

“The hundred meter mark is that large rock in the distance.” The old man pointed at a free-standing rock formation at the end of the field. Roshi hurriedly made his way over to the piece of geology. Videl took a moment to stretch before assuming the starting position.

“I’m ready!” she hollered.

Roshi whipped out a pistol in his other hand and pointed it into the air. “On your marks… Get set….and….GO!!!”

At the sound of a gun, Videl shot off at a blistering speed, covering the 100 meters like a human bullet. Just as she crossed the finish line, Roshi hit the stop watch. Seconds later, a light gale of wind whipped behind the small Satan girl, ruffling Roshi’s tunic.

Looking down, Roshi was taken back by the young woman’s speed. “Woah!! 6.7 seconds! Jesus tap-dancin Christ!!”

Upon seeing his daughter’s amazing feat of speed, Mr. Satan’s eyes literally bugged out. He was so floored that he collapsed onto his rear.

Seeing the elder martial artist’s reaction brought a smile to the girl’s lips. “What can I say? I’ve been practicing ki augmentation with my dashes for a while now.”

Looking up, Roshi quirked his eyebrows with a grimace.

“It shows,” he said with a nod. “But ki augmentation isn’t what we’re here for. The point of your training for the next eight months will be to recondition your physical body. I want you to run it again, only this time I want you to refrain from directly using your ki.”

“Got it!” she nodded. The girl ran back to the starting line and assumed another starting position.

“On your marks…Get set….GO!!”

Her feet kicked up a mound of dust as Videl once again ran the short distance. This time however, there was a marked difference. Everyone could tell. Roshi hit the stop watch yet again as she crossed the finish line.

“Impressive!” remarked the old master. “8.6 seconds! You’re easily in the top tier as far as speed goes.”

Breathing lightly, Videl offered a quick “Thank you” before the two turned in her father’s direction.

“Alright Mr. Satan!” hollered the Turtle Hermit, “Get ready!!”

“Uh… right!” The afroed man jumped to his feet and assumed his own position behind the starting line. He gave a few quick stretches before assuming a crouch.

“On your marks…Get set… and GO!!!”

The older man’s boots dug into the earth as he sprang forward. The man looked a little less at home in track and field and for a moment Roshi wondered if he would trip and fall. Still, the Champ managed to clear the short distance surprisingly well.

“Wow! 11.7 seconds!” Roshi exclaimed, genuinely taken back. “Not bad!”
Unlike his daughter however, Mark was a little winded. Years of decadence would do that to anyone. Sure he trained but nothing like what he did in his early career. Roshi and Videl took note of the man’s state.

“Dad, are you gonna be OK?” asked his daughter worriedly.

“Sure Sweet-Pea,” he said, waving off her concerns. The man was in his mid-thirties now, and in spite of his public shows of bravado, his best days were largely behind him. Jogging a few miles every morning just didn’t cut it anymore.

“Ya know…,” said Roshi, “For someone who’s supposed to be the current World Champion of Martial Arts, you’re looking pretty green around the gills.”

Mark chuckled dryly at the old hermit. “I told myself I was gonna get back in shape. Better late than never.”

“How…,” Roshi mused. “I wouldn’t worry about it. You’re just the oldest student I’ve taken up to this point. Truth be told, I’m surprised you’re still in as good a shape as you are. Even Gohan’s great grandfather, Son Gohan Sr. was still in his early twenties when he trained under me.”

“So Gohan was named after his great grandpa?” Videl queried.

“Son Gohan, the world renowned grand master of all martial arts was the first student I took on following the death of my master Moutaito.”

At the sound of the ancient master’s name, Videl’s jaw dropped. “M-Moutaito!! The Moutaito?!”

“Who’s Moutaito?” asked Mr. Satan, clearly puzzled.

“Dad, everyone who reads the history books knows about Moutaito!” proclaimed the young female grappler. “We studied him in school! He’s the greatest hero of the old era!”

Turning away from the two Satans, a proud smile graced Master Roshi’s continence. “It’s good to know that my old master’s sacrifice is still remembered. He was a great man…”

Rounding back on his newest charges, the elder master recomposed himself. “I guess we should continue.” Videl and her father simply nodded.

“Both of you are on your own level, at least as far as the uninitiated go. Before I lead you through early morning training, I guess the best place to start would be to discuss the overall philosophy of the Kame Style. Now, I don’t want you two going into this thinking there are many fancy moves associated with this style. Most of my students have gone into and passed this training with their indigenous fighting methodology intact. Aside from the coveted Kamehameha Wave and the Mafuba, there just aren’t too many techniques to actually learn. The entire philosophy is in the training itself. It is the reconditioning of the body through cruel, intensive regimentation for months and perhaps years. Depending on how far you can see yourself going, your abilities may reach unfathomable heights. You must surpass the innate limits of human biology; that is you must break past the ‘wall of humanity.’ It is the point where human and suprahuman become superhuman. I would tell you more but I think it’s better if I show you.”

With that said, the old Turtle Hermit handed Videl the stopwatch. “I’m going to run the 100 meters. I need you to pay close attention to my speed for an accurate reading.”

“Right!” she nodded.
The old master hobbled back to the starting line. Upon reaching it, he removed his turtle shell-like pack and hurled the thing the entire 100 meter distance.

Videl and Mr. Satan watched with stunned faces as the shell sailed over them and embedded itself within 4 feet of basalt.

“Holy Shit!!!” was their uniform yell.

“I’m ready!” hollered Roshi.

Bringing herself out of her dazed state, the Satan girl raised the pistol into the air. “On your mark…! Get set…! GO!!!”

A blast of dust was thrown up as the old master shot forward faster than any man could follow. Somehow, Videl managed to catch the old man just as he crossed the finish line. A strong gale of wind came roaring after the aged warrior.

Videl was left in a shocked stupor. Her father wore an equally stunned expression.

“So…, what was my time?” asked Roshi.

With trembling hands, Videl looked down at the display stammering, “T-t-three seconds!!”

“I’ve improved, it would seem,” he remarked. Almost nonchalantly, the ancient man reached up and yanked his prized turtle shell from its rocky prison.

“How much does that thing weigh?” asked Mr. Satan, referring to Roshi’s turtle shell.

“Oh, this? About 250 Ibs.”

Videl numbly mulled over the number in her head. “250 pounds…. Hmm.” After all she’d seen since being associated with her boyfriend and his father’s old group, it was getting harder and harder to feel surprised. She’d hit her limit for feeling overwhelmed for that day.

“250 pounds really isn’t that much,” Roshi commented. “I really should be using more. Oh well… such is the life of someone who’s best days are behind him.”

Videl raised her hand. “Master, before we begin, what can we really expect from this training?”

Roshi turned and gave the young female fighter a warm smile. “I’ll be frank. The training will be different from what either of you are used to. The methods used will be very unorthodox and they will sometimes seem downright silly or mundane, but you will have to trust me when I tell you that Goku and Krillin got their start doing that very training. It’s not going to be easy. Pain and fatigue will be a constant part of your daily lives for the next eight months or maybe more. We will be training from dawn till dusk.”

“I’m not afraid,” said Videl. “I’ll succeed or die trying!”

“That’s what I like to hear,” laughed the old master. “I think we’ve dawdled enough. If you two are ready, we’ll now begin our early morning training.”

Turning to Krillin, Master Roshi motioned for his former student.

“Yes, Master?”

“I want you to tag along with us on this first day,” Roshi requested. “There are other people living on
this island, and considering how well-known these two are, we’re gonna need someone to keep the
ankle-biters at bay. We need to do everything we can to discourage the paparazzi from getting in the
way of their training.”

“Uh…Right!” nodded the former monk.

“You can use intimidation if you want,” Roshi continued. “It’ll probably be the only thing that will
discourage some of the more adamant parasites. The first few days shouldn’t be too bad though. If at
all possible, try to explain the situation to anyone who asks.”

“Leave it to me! I’ll do my best!” Krillin declared.

With that, Roshi turned to his three charges. “Now that that’s been addressed, we’re going to start
with a light run. We’ll be roughly using the same route every day from here on out.”

With an affirming ‘OK!’ Gohan, Krillin, and the two Satans fell behind the aged master. The run
started out at a fairly moderate pace. Along the way, Krillain decided to strike up a conversation with
Gohan and Videl.

“So… Gohan,” he began in a curious tone. “I’ve been meaning to ask you about something that’s
been bugging me and Roshi for the past couple of days.”

“What is it Krillin?” asked the half-breed.

“Two nights ago we all felt a really big upsurge in your energy. It felt like you were going super!”

“I really don’t know how to explain that,” Gohan commented with a shake of his head.

“Really?!” Krillin queried, unconvinced. “The funny thing is we all felt a really strange power
increase coming from Videl at the same time. Videl, care to elaborate?”

Videl looked over to her father who seemed to not be listening. “I-It’s hard to explain. When we
were out in the desert, I pulled Gohan away from our camp site. We needed to have a heart-to-heart
about something important to our relationship. Things got heated after that. I seduced him and the
two of us did it.”

Krillin was a bit taken back by her openness on the whole issue. “Oh! So Gohan and you were
having make-up sex!” Krillin teased.

“Krillin!” Gohan hissed.

Videl rolled her eyes. “Anyway…, something happened, something strange. One minute Gohan was
like he normally was and the next thing I know, he pins my hands over my head and transforms into
a super saiyan. He’s not supposed to be able to become one anymore. There was something different
about him though. He became wild and uncontrollable. He was huge! He looked and acted just like
that Broly guy we fought.”

“Gohan, do you remember any of this?” asked Krillin with no small measure of worry.

The half-breed scratched the side of his face in contemplation. “I don’t but at the same time, I do. I
could have really hurt Videl. I felt all the sensations clear as day, but I just couldn’t control myself.”

A tint of pink spread across Videl’s cheeks as she visibly swooned. “Gohan, you have no idea just
how good you were that night! I was terrified at first, but I knew you wouldn’t hurt me. It felt like I
was having every orgasm I’ve ever had in one session! My mind was just completely blown away
with how good it felt!”

“Just the sheer thrill of having something that big and powerful at my beck and call…” Videl visibly shuddered as she gazed over at her half-Saiyan boyfriend with the same wild, predatory look she often did, as if he were a meal waiting to be devoured. Gohan, despite his apparent discomfort under such a gaze, felt his libido swell.

The predatory look Videl had for Gohan was not missed by Krillin.

“Woah! Gohan you hit the jackpot with this girl!” beamed Krillin in amazement. The former monk threw his long-time compatriot a thumbs up. “Jailbait for the win!” Unfortunately for him, Videl’s father heard everything.

“What the fuck did you call my daughter?!” screamed the Champ.

Videl’s face reddened as she fumed in anger at Krillin’s remark. “JAILBAIT!!! Who are you calling Jailbait you midget asshole?!”

“And you’re one to talk about midgets,” Krillin replied with sarcasm, obviously referring to Videl’s own height issues.

“You three tone it down back there!” Roshi yelled over his shoulder.

‘I tell ya…,’ thought the old master, ‘No matter how old they get, they always need adult supervision.’

Half an hour later the five martial artists arrived at their destination. It was a large white dome-shaped building with the word ‘MILK’ plastered over the front entrance. Off to the side sat a helicopter, likely used for deliveries.

The five of them came to a stop at the mailbox just out front. Gohan and Krillin hadn’t even broken a sweat, and Videl outwardly didn’t seem affected. Mr. Satan seemed a bit winded but was otherwise fine.

“Wait right here,” commanded Roshi. The old master jogged up to a white goat who was busy bringing out several large crates of milk jugs. Krillin recognized the old goat from his youth training. The years seemed to have treated the old Billy well.

Just then, Master Roshi turned to gesture the four of them over. As Videl and Mark got closer, recognition dawned on the old goat.

“Y-you’re Mister Satan!” he screamed. Mark visibly tensed. “The old master here told me he had some new students, but I’d have never thought you’d be doing this!”

“Er…ah, yeah! I wanted to learn a new style so here I am!” he declared with a little less fire than was his usual. Just then Krillin stepped forward.

“Umm… listen buddy,” he started, “Could you do us a major salad and not tell anyone about this? We need to keep these two focused and…” He was silenced when the old Billy brought up a hoof.

“Say no more! I’ll keep this to myself! I remember you from Master Roshi’s last training trip. How many years ago was that?”

“It really has been too long,” Krillin beamed giving the old goat’s hoof a handshake.
Taking this as his cue, Master Roshi motioned Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan to the stack of crates.

“You’re next daily exercise will be to carry these milk jugs to their intended addresses.” He explained. “We can’t dawdle too much in this endeavor or the milk will spoil.”

Gohan was the first to raise his hand. “What’s this exercise for, Master?”

“It’s about building up calves and core body strength for endurance,” Roshi answered. “Understand however, that this is the exercise that nearly broke Krillin so don’t take this lightly!”

Videl for her part seemed skeptical but thought nothing else of it. “How far will we need to travel?”

“15 miles.”

“Just like the police academy…” mused Videl as she, her father, and Gohan each picked up a grate.

“Exactly!” Roshi nodded. “However, in the interest of training your jumping and lunging, we will be skipping through the first couple of miles.”

“ Skipping?” asked Mark, clearly puzzled.

“Just follow my lead,” Roshi remarked. “Skip! Skip! Skip! Skip!…”

The following scene was almost comical. With old Master Roshi leading the pack, Videl, Mr. Satan, Gohan, and Krillin skipped like a bunch of prepubescent little school girls. Gohan wasn’t even phased by such an exercise. The boy could do this wearing two hundred tons and still not feel it.

Videl and her father however, were a different matter.

“T-this is a lot harder than it looks,” Videl complained, nearly losing her footing. For all her supposed grace engendered through field combat training, Videl could actually be quite the klutz when out of her element.

Much to Roshi and Gohan’s amazement, Videl’s father actually seemed to be handling this better if only because his height and weight offered him a more stable center of gravity for this part of the run.

“Well…” Roshi began, “At least we’re beginning to see where these two’s weaknesses lay. Hopefully, when we start having them wear weights, Videl will start to balance herself out.”

“She is the first girl you’ve ever trained,” Gohan stated. “I guess we’ll both be learning from this experience.”

At this, Roshi could only nod. For all his life, the old master had only either trained with or supervised the training of male fighters. Videl was incredibly strong, stronger than her father and even stronger than Krillin or Goku were when they started training under him. Still, he knew that Videl’s smaller than average size, even by adolescent female standards, and her female physiology would pose a few new challenges, challenges that she would have to meet head on.

Before long, the five of them had reached their first house. Luckily, when Mr. Satan exchanged one full milk jug for an empty container, he was able to do so without anyone meeting him at the door. It was a good thing too. They had 24 houses left to go and an entire rural island community to serve.

“Alright, that’s good! We’re making good time,” Roshi commented. “For the rest of your early morning training we will concentrate on running.”

“What’s the significance of delivering milk?” asked Videl curiously.
“Normally, I’m not so forthright about the underlying reasons, but since this exercise is just as much about teaching Gohan how to train fighters up from nothing every bit as it is for training you and your father, I’ll tell you. People improve far more quickly if they are under duress. Adversity builds character, and a stringent deadline serves this purpose! The milk jugs are for added weight whose sole purpose is to keep the student focused and off-balance.”

“I guess I’ll have to find an alternative to milk deliveries when I and Videl start school again,” Gohan mused. “That and a place outside of town to train in.”

“And with that, the five of them were off again. Roshi led the pack with Krillin and Gohan not far behind. Videl was behind them, and Mr. Satan took up the rear a little ways behind the group.

Mr. Satan’s lagging didn’t escape the old Turtle Hermit’s notice. The aged man fell behind to check up on the Champ.

Mark was beginning to show signs of fatigue. The afroed fighter flitted a look at the old master before grounding out, “Before you even ask, I’m fine!”

“OK…, just try to get the lead out! The training is going to be difficult until your body adjusts.”

“Hey, I’ll get it down,” Mr. Satan remarked indignantly. “I’m just out of season!”

Up ahead, Krillin started to make small talk with Gohan and Videl.

“So…, how long do you think it’ll be before Mr. Satan gives up?” asked Krillin. “Anyone wanna make a bet? 100 zenni says Mr. Satan either falls out or quits within a week!”

“I think Dad has what it takes,” Videl said, her voice pitched from the long run. “I know it’s hard for you guys to believe, but my father used to take his training seriously. It’s been several years, but I think the man he used to be is still in there somewhere.”

“What about you, Gohan?”

“If you want my honest opinion…” began the half-Saiyan, “I think he’ll do it. The stakes for him are different from ours. He’s too stubborn to quit and he damned sure won’t let himself fall. In fact, I’ll double that bet.”

Krillin scoffed. “What?! So you actually think he’ll make it!?” Gohan simply nodded.

“You don’t know who my Dad really is,” Videl said defensively. “There are sides to his person he keeps between us.”

In spite of all that had happened since Gohan and his friends came into her life, Videl fervently believed her own words. It wasn’t because she cared for her father’s honor, far from it in fact. Though she still loved her old man, his lies and the negative consequences those lies had on both her and her boyfriend’s life destroyed whatever respect she had for Mark in recent months. That isn’t to say she shut her father out. The man still had his moments. No, Videl had seen her father train in his younger years before he allowed all the money and fame to go to his head, and she knew that look her father now had. This was Mark Satan when all the trappings were taken away. This was him at the visceral level, at his most focused! Mark Satan the public blowhard and Mark Satan the real person were two completely different people.
As the morning wore on, the Gohan, Videl, and Mark completed the first half of their deliveries. It wasn’t until after the thirteenth house that the game changed completely for both Satans.

“What the?!” Mark gaped as he craned his neck so that he could see the entire mountainside stair case that he and Videl would have to climb to reach their fourteenth house. The stairs just seemed to go on forever. Videl too was left wide-eyed and speechless at this next challenge. It finally took some coaxing from Master Roshi to bring the father/daughter duo out of their shocked stupor.

“Well, what are you waiting for?!” asked the old man impatiently. “You don’t necessarily have to run on this part. Just start climbing!”

“R-right!” nodded Videl.

With that, the two Satans began their arduous climb. Gohan and Krillin were already halfway up so they were gonna have to do some major bookin it to catch up. The whole way, Master Roshi stayed on them.

It took over half an hour before they’d reached the top. At the mountain’s summit, there was a Shinto shrine presided over by a very old abbot. Bowing in greeting, the elderly clergyman smiled serenely at his old friend, the Turtle Hermit. Judging by the priest’s lack of recognition of them, Videl assumed the elderly man didn’t get out much.

“Master Roshi! It’s so good to see you!” he beamed happily. “I can’t believe you’re training again! It’s been so many years.”

“That it has old friend...,” breathed the Turtle Hermit.

“And how goes it with these two newest pupils?”

Master Roshi looked back at the two Satans in mock appraisal before answering, “It’s a little early to tell, but I think these two might gain more from this training than my earlier students.”

Beaming with a sense of pride, Videl gave a toothy grin from ear to ear. Her father’s expression didn’t change much at all.

“Are you training them for the World Tournament like your last students?”

“No, the case is a little different with these two,” Roshi answered. “The big one with the afro is actually the current defending Champion.”

His vision dulled by age, the abbot peered a little closer. Realization soon hit him. “It’s Mr. Satan!”

Roshi nodded. “Yeah, I requested that he train under me. We’re gonna try to keep these two low-profile as much as we can in the coming months.”

“Understood,” nodded the abbot in agreement. “I’ll tell no one.”

“I appreciate it.” Turning back to the two Satans, Roshi gestured for them to follow.

For the next two hours, Videl and Mark were put to the test by the various elements found on the island. Never had they faced a hiking track half as challenging as the one they did now. They crossed logs over raging rapids, trudged across burning wastes and salt flats, and found themselves beset upon by wild beasts.

“Fuck! This is cold!” screeched Videl as she waded into a raging mountain torrent. The crossing they
had chosen was situated right upstream from a high waterfall.

Wading in water that came to her upper chest, Videl stumbled in the fast current. Finding a secure footing was hard, and her short stature and lack of weight wasn’t doing her any favors.

Again, this was where Mr. Satan’s height and weight played to his advantage. He may not have been as strong or gifted as his daughter, but he still had the advantages afforded to him by size and a higher center of gravity.

One misstep was all it took to send Videl and her milk crate down the waterfall. She didn’t have time to scream when she felt her feet being swept out from under her.

“VIDEL!!!” cried Mr. Satan. The man looked on with fear and apprehension until finally, his daughter, milk crate in hand, came over the edge and levitated back into her previous place at the crossing.

“I-I don’t think I’ll ever get used to her doing that,” muttered the Champ. Even after several months, he still had a hard time wrapping his mind around the fact that his daughter could essentially go anywhere and everywhere unaided by aviation.

Upon reaching the other side, they finally caught up with Gohan and Krillin. Apparently, the two seasoned warriors were sitting around chatting the whole time. Master Roshi however, was having none of it.

“Alright, on your feet you two!” he commanded.

With a groan, the two lazy z-warriors picked themselves up.

Roshi sighed. ‘*They never grow up, do they?’*

They were now down to their last five houses, and everything seemed to be proceeding as scheduled. Master Roshi, Videl, and the others trudged across a great flat open expanse. There was little cover and evidence of predatory dinosaur activity was all about.

Using his enhanced Saiyan olfactory senses, Gohan took a whiff of the air. He was on edge. He didn’t worry as much for himself, Krillin, or Master Roshi, but a surprise ambush by a raptor pack or T-Rex could end badly for Videl and especially for her father. It didn’t take ki sensing to know that there were definitely some in the area.

Gohan ran up behind his girlfriend and her father.

“Videl, be on your guard,” he hissed in warning.

“What’s wrong?!” she huffed, clearly winded from the run.

“We’re being ambushed,” was his simple answer. Mr. Satan’s eyes darted around anxiously.

As if on que, a ground-shaking roar reverberated through the air. Videl and Mr. Satan looked on as three Tyrannosaurus, an adult and two juveniles, burst out of nowhere. The adult was practically on top of Videl, Gohan, and Mr. Satan when it emerged.

Videl gazed up in alarm at the massive reptilian predator as its massive, teeth-filled maul prepared to snatch her up like a French Fry. She dared not run for fear that her father could be on the menu. Unfortunately, her body was just too exhausted to attempt a ki shield.
She screamed.

Luckily for Videl however, Gohan seized the meat-munching seven ton beast by the throat before it could close the distance. The tyrant lizard thrashed and snarled in his vice-like grip as it tried desperately to chomp down on the half-Saiyan. Finally, Gohan reached up and grabbed both the lower and upper jaws before physically wrenching the skull of the massive predator in two.

Blood sprayed all over Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan as the creature fell dead. Seeing so much blood and the stress of such a situation caused something to snap inside Videl. Her milk crate all but forgotten, the young Satan girl screamed violently as she rose to her feet.

“Shit!” hissed Gohan. “She’s going on another rampage!”

“Rampage!!?” Mr. Satan repeated.

Her eyes blazed over with fury and saliva dripping down the sides of her mouth, the small teen grapplinger grabbed the downed T-Rex’s fore claw and, using her foot as a brace, twisted and tore the appendage from its’ former owner. There were still two juvenile tyrannosaurs left to take care of, and Videl was too damned blood-drunk in her PTSD fit to be reached.

Looking up, Videl began to run at one of the two remaining pack predators. She closed the distance quickly, and leaping high into the air, she brandished the dismembered fore claw above her head like a jagged spear as she stabbed the clawed hand right into the younger predator’s eye socket. The fore claw plunged through the eye casing and into the brain cavity before tearing out of the beast’s lower jaw.

The creature went rigid before falling over with Videl on top of it. Coming to her feet, she wasn’t finished. Still high on violence, Videl yanked the fore claw out and began stabbing over and over into the now dead reptilian meat eater.

Gohan and the others watched with awed fascination as this short raven-haired girl went into a seething blood rage. Her whole body was caked with blood and her wet shirt accentuated her ample heaving bust.

Gohan couldn’t help but feel morbidly aroused at the macabre though sensual sight before him. “Videl… wow!”

With the remaining juvenile T-Rex closing in on her, Videl snapped into action. Discarding the remains of the fore claw, she bolted to intercept the creature. Closing the distance, almost by instinct the girl brought her hands together and sent a massive transparent kaia wave straight into the dinosaur. The bipedal predator was hurled back by the invisible force and the ensuing momentum broke every bone in its reptilian body.

Coming to a stop some distance from the female fighter, the pitiful creature convulsed and writhed momentarily before having its life snuffed out for good by a throat stomp from Videl Satan. There the petite Satan girl stood, a puddle of congealed blood pooling at her boots.

Finally, Gohan and Master Roshi stepped forward. They could tell she was off in another world. Gohan approached his love interest from behind and wrapped her in a reassuring embrace. The girl flinched at his touch.

“Shh…” Gohan cooed. “It’s OK sweetheart… It’s OK! You got em!”

Videl’s face twisted in anguish before she collapsed back into Gohan’s arms in a fit of loud screams. Unsure of what else to do, Gohan stood there and let his girlfriend cry herself out. When she finally
did come to, the girl dropped to her hands and knees and began to dry heave.


Videl’s father on the other hand, was left floored by the whole experience. Here was a girl, his daughter no less, who had just taken two large carnivorous beasts and killed them in single combat. They didn’t even register as a speed bump! The man fell to his hands and knees gasping for breath. He was supposed to be the World Martial Arts Champion, but among all these powerful guys, his daughter included, he felt so small. It was crazy!

“It’s not just her boyfriend,” he said to himself. “It’s Videl too! It’s all of them! How could anyone be this strong?”

Looking on from the sidelines, Krillin could only stare blankly at what just transpired.

‘Incredible! Videl’s ki exploded!’ thought the former monk. ‘Gohan wasn’t just right about her! No…! His appraisal of her abilities didn’t even begin to touch on her hidden talent! Just how powerful could she get?!’

With this episode behind them, the five fighters and more importantly Roshi’s two newest students, soldiered on. Looking back, the Turtle Hermit couldn’t help but think about what other surprises training Videl and Mr. Satan would bring him before the day was through.

The rest of the day was gonna be beautiful…

Chapter End Notes

Author’s Note: I’m going to address a criticism I got recently from someone who claimed that I should watch Dragonball Super before bashing it. For everyone’s information, I actually did watch the first 30 episodes and I did not like what I saw. I do not like slice of life anime and it pains me that so much of anime is going in that direction. Some of us are into action oriented stuff, and seeing Gohan, Videl, and so many other characters that we grew up with turned into cannon fodder and relegated to joke status had us dying a little on the inside. I am vehemently against the Nerd-Han crowd and the whole crowd that uses the tired old Videl argument of ‘She had Pan’ to brush off our criticisms of Toriyama’s work.

Videl is a tragic story. Her character got butchered. She used to be a spirited warrior who saved lives only to become an outright quitter just because she got married to an outright quitter. I get sick and tired of the whole ‘She had Pan’ argument. So what?!! Most women in industrialized nations continue on with their work/careers after getting married and giving birth. Dragonball Z was made in Japan and Japan is an industrialized nation where most woman have careers. Mr. Buu could heal her of any damage child rearing or giving birth could have caused and that's to say nothing of sensu beans so the whole ‘She had Pan’ argument does not 'pan' out if Dragonball logic is to be believed. Videl and her father are filthy rich! Upper class woman are typically driven to achieve and strive for greatness. People don’t have 180 degree personality changes in only a year. It just does not typically happen. Anyone who argues with a strong-willed woman knows that they will literally fight to the death to win an argument. Videl and Mr. Satan have servants for crying out loud! Raising a baby while being a female warrior wouldn't
have been much of an issue at all. Videl is clearly a case of Akira Toriyama deliberately doing everything in his power to disrespect his earlier work and keep in with his tradition of trying to shove the whole 'women must be housewives' gender role down our throats. That, and he deliberately gave this interesting, compelling female character the curse of being a compelling side character who got built up only to be used as a whipping boy to raise the stakes for the heroes. That kind of thing worked in the past sagas, but Videl was not strong enough when Akira did this with her for it to have the same effect. It is for this reason that though I love Akira Toriyama's work, I have no respect for him as a writer.
Videl and her father had finally finished the morning milk route, and in spite of the whole T-Rex pack incident, they were making surprisingly good time. They now found themselves jogging with the others through the island’s agricultural district. The rich dark volcanic soil provided the backbone of the island’s local economy with its year round yields of chili peppers, okra, palm oils, and yams.

Videl breathed deeply. The country air was ripe with the scent of fresh tilled earth, the sea, and cow paddies. Off in the distance, a herd of oxen and a parked tractor could be seen next to a rickety barn.

“Your late morning training will consist of plowing this field,” Roshi explained, gesturing to the vast expanse of rolling hills behind him.

Upon hearing this, the faces of Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan took on looks of confusion. Off to the side, Krillin was doubled over laughing his ass off.

“Um…, where are the tools?” asked Videl, clearly puzzled.

“You will plow these fields with your bare hands,” the old man clarified.

The slack-jawed looks of Videl and her father were expected. Roshi however, held up a hand to silence their objections before they came.

“Let me explain,” he began. “Like most fighters, I’m fairly certain that the vast majority of your blocks and parries are done with your hands. I’m also fairly certain that both of you deal out most of your blunt-force trauma through your fists or some variation of hand strike.”

“Sadly, that’s not really the case here,” muttered Mark. “In my own dojo, the ratio of kicks to punches is around three to one.”

“Show me your hands,” Roshi ordered.

Gohan, Mark, and Videl held out their hands for the aged master who eyed them briefly.

“Gohan and Videl,” he said, looking at the two teens disapprovingly, “I can already tell that the two of you are sorely lagging in this one crucial area. Videl’s hands are too delicate, and Gohan has allowed his to grow soft and tender in the last seven years! They’ve lost some of their original character.”

At this, Gohan looked to the ground in shame. Videl looked over her own hands curiously. She still had the raised calluses that came with smashing through bricks and other hard ceramics as part of her father’s training. Her fingers however, were a little too dainty for what one would expect from a seasoned martial artist. Her palms also lacked the coarseness that provided a bedrock for certain kinds of hand techniques. In spite of her gender, this very thing often got her looks of incredulity from other members of her father’s dojo. Perhaps having well-conditioned fingers and palms were a must regardless of what school she practiced under.

“As for you Mr. Satan,” continued Roshi, turning to the afroed man, “Your hands are coarse and thick from just about every dimension. Under normal circumstances, you’d be the one most likely to initially excel in the next part of the training.”
“Uh… thanks, I guess,” muttered the Champ, feeling somewhat sheepish. The Turtle Hermit threw a wry smile his way.

“Alright you three! Start digging!”

With that, Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan sprang into action. Each one took a section of the field for themselves with Gohan being far off on one end, Videl choosing the middle, and her father taking the other end.

Getting down on her hands and knees, Videl dug her hands into ground that hadn’t been turned in months. The Bermuda grass, though eaten down by the nearby oxen, had roots that blanketed the surface and made turning the somewhat powdery soil harder than it should have been, and it certainly didn’t help that there were fair-sized rocks dispersed below ground that stubbed her fingers every so often.

Not surprisingly, Mark was having a much easier time. His large strong hands acted as adept shovels for tearing up turf and ripping through roots and clay clots. Uncharacteristic to his school, Mark Satan actually used to endurance train his hands by striking piles of fire-heated gravel so this particular part of Roshi’s training didn’t affect him as much. Such training had effectively dulled the nerves in his fingers to the point where he had a hard time feeling with his hands at all. If there was one thing Goku’s old friends couldn’t say about Mr. Satan, it was that his hands lacked toughness.

Lastly, there was Gohan. In half-Saiyan fashion, the young man tore through the ground at a blistering pace. Topsoil and grass-clods were tossed in wide arcs as he ripped a wide swath across the land.

Shoveling another handful of dirt, Videl withdrew her hand when she felt a painful prick. Pulling back, she found that she had dug into a long-buried piece of wood, and that she had a splinter. Upon further inspection however, the girl found that this was no ordinary piece of wood. It seemed to be part of something much bigger.

“Master Roshi! Come over here!” she yelled.

“What is it?” asked the old turtle hermit.

“I think I found something big,” she told him excitedly.

“Well…, we can’t just leave it buried in the field,” Roshi mused, “Might as well drudge it up.”

Brushing away more of the dirt, the object was revealed to be a treasure chest of some sort. The wood was darkened from years of moisture damage and the copper embroidery held a greenish-white oxidation. The front of the chest was sealed with a rusty padlock.

‘There’s something oddly familiar about this chest…’ thought Roshi. Videl had begun to beat the worn old padlock with a piece of basalt she had found nearby. With a loud ‘clink!’ the lock snapped off, and the contents of the abandoned chest were now accessible.

Reaching in, the raven-haired fighter gingerly fished out one of the many large translucent zip-lock plastic bags that preserved the chest’s contents.

Suddenly, it dawned on Roshi, and the elder martial artist took a trepid step back. “Oh no…, It couldn’t be! Don’t open those…”

Removing the bag’s contents, Videl’s eyes became as big as saucers. In her hands were a bundle of aged pornographic magazines.
Normally, Roshi would expect a girl to lose her shit and clobber the living hell outta him, so one can imagine his surprise when Videl put the offending material back in its plastic bag before returning it to the musky old chest.

“Y-you’re not gonna hit me?!” queried the old master, clearly puzzled.

Videl regarded Roshi with a look of interest before a half-smile crept onto the short girl’s face. “Of course not! It would be a waste of energy. Besides, I wanna save half of these for myself!” She then began to push the treasure chest back into the hole, seemingly intent on coming back later for some of its goodies.

Roshi checked himself to be sure he heard that right. He tried to find his voice but could only squeak a quick “W-what?!”

“You heard me!” she shot back. “I want half of those magazines for myself. I’ve got a boyfriend to please and I need some fresh ideas.”

“N-N-No….! Not my vintage stash!” the old man wailed. “Please! Hit me, chase me around with a baseball bat! Anything! Just don’t take my prized sweet-meat mags!”

Videl let out a heavy sigh. She hated to see an old man cry. Dusting her hands off, she waltzed up to the old man and looked him straight in the eye. “I’ll tell ya what Master Roshi! You lend me some of your newer stuff, and I won’t take your vintage sleaze porn. Deal?”

“Y-yes! It’s a deal! It’s a deal!” he rasped with relief. The old master couldn’t believe what was happening. This little raven-haired vagabond was about to do the one thing that would have been crueler than anything King Piccolo or Buu ever did. He almost wished she would have slapped him like Bulma, Chi-Chi, or Eighteen. It was downright sadistic! What bleakest of wombs could spawn such a greedy, evil little thing?!

“Good! Now we’re just gonna pretend like we never found these…” Videl brought some dirt over the old chest, and continued on with her late morning training like nothing had happened. Krillin however, had seen and heard everything.

“D-did that just happen?” asked the former monk, pointing his finger shakily.

“Yes…. yes it did Krillin,” he breathed. “It’s obvious why Gohan is going to such lengths to please her.”

Krillin didn’t know how to respond to that. He and his old master watched as Videl tore through topsoil with a new vigor she didn’t have before. The black spandex shorts she wore left little to the imagination.

“Forget what I said earlier,” remarked Krillin.

“Whatta ya mean?” inquired the Turtle Hermit.

“Gohan didn’t just hit the jackpot with this girl. He hit the freakin Comstock Lode!”

Two hours of mind-numbing work later, Videl, Gohan, and Mr. Satan found themselves around the table eating breakfast. For once in their lives, Videl and Mr. Satan actually found themselves eating almost as fast as Gohan. Master Roshi and Krillin sat at the table in stunned silence as the two Satans and the half-Saiyan inhaled their meal.

“Did I really eat like that?!” asked Krillin disbelievingly.
With his handkerchief, Master Roshi dabbed at the newfound perspiration his forehead adorned. “Krillin…, it was like having two Gokus living with me.”

Krillin for his part began to understand the full depth of the commitment that Master Roshi made when he trained anyone. It wasn’t just his time and energy he was putting into any student, but also the monetary expense involved in feeding a pupil whose metabolism had been increased from the massive levels of activity found in Roshi’s training. The former monk felt a pang of guilt for the burden he and Goku had most likely put on the aged master. At least Mr. Satan and Videl, being filthy rich, could cover their own food bill.

Seeing his thoughts, Master Roshi turned to his former student. “Don’t beat yourself up over it, son. You and Goku were the greatest students any master could want. You have nothing to be ashamed of.”

Hearing these words brought a very uncharacteristic blush of embarrassment to Krillin’s face. The short man mumbled a quiet ‘thank you’.

After breakfast, the five of them headed to the beach. Videl had changed into a tight-fitting set of matching black spandex shorts and tank-top. Her father and Gohan were each sporting black baggy pants and white T-shirts.

Mark Satan watched as his daughter sashayed her hips as she walked, looking back at Gohan every so often. It didn’t take long for the Saiyan teen to come up beside her and snake his muscled right arm around her tiny waist, resting his hand on her hip.

This would have been fine had it not been for what Videl did next. Reaching back with her left hand, she gave Gohan’s rear a quick pinch. His mouth agape, Gohan turned to his little girlfriend and looked down at her with a stunned, wide-eyed expression. Videl looked back up at the tall boy with a coy smile.

‘Wow… I can’t believe she did that in front of everyone!’ thought the half-breed.

Mr. Satan’s jaw literally hit the sand. It was then that he realized that his daughter didn’t just lead the boy on in their affair, she practically drug the boy into it. She really wasn’t kidding when she claimed to be the ring leader.

“Just like her mother…,” he muttered with a groan.

The beach was practically idyllic. Dunes of white sand rounded the shoreline, the air smelled of salt and sea foam, and dried out sea jellies and sea weed had washed onto the sand. Above, gulls and pelicans danced in the air.

Upon reaching the ocean, Roshi turned and faced the three of them.

“For the next hour or so, we will concentrate on helping the two of you iron out some of your less obvious physical weaknesses,” he told them. “Normally, I save this part of your training until later on, but because your circumstances are different from my last three students, I can afford to devote some time to your individual needs as fighters.”

“So this is a sort of special training?” Videl inquired.

“Yes,” answered the Turtle Hermit. “During your early morning training, I took note of some of your physical weaknesses, and I wanted to use this free time to address them.”

“I’ll go first!” Videl offered eagerly.
Master Roshi smiled at the young girl’s enthusiasm. “Always taking the initiative, eh?”

“It’s what I do,” she remarked, puffing her chest out.

Roshi gave her a quick nod. “Videl, for the next hour, you’re going to be doing dashes on the sand bare-footed.”

“Bare-footed?” she repeated, quirking an eyebrow.

“The object of this special training is to build up the muscles between your toes. There’s no nice way of saying this, but I’m sure you’ve noticed by now that when things go downhill, you turn into a total klutz.”

Upon hearing this, Videl looked downcast. It was no secret that she wasn’t the most graceful girl out there, and it didn’t help that the style she picked up from her father was more geared towards larger men. She had tried over the years to supplement her repertoire with training from other styles more geared towards female fighters, but by that point, her father’s style had become too much of a basis for her own way of fighting.

Roshi continued, “Along with dashing, I’ll be having Gohan and Krillin lead the two of you through various sparring sessions whose purpose will be to help you learn to exploit weaknesses and redirect your opponent’s strength. Keep in mind however, that I may decide to randomly change things up. Since Videl will only be training directly under me until she and Gohan go back to school, the real challenge will be to fit as much as I can in these crucial three months. After that, Videl will be expected to return every other weekend for an additional five months. During the week however, it goes without saying that Gohan will have creative freedom over how this part of her training proceeds.”

Without saying a word, Videl kicked off her boots and socks. The sand was warm and the noon sea breezeed air licked at her toes. The girl got ready to take off, but before she did anything, she was stopped by Roshi.

“Before you start, I think you should move closer to the water,” he told her. “Training on moist sand will force the muscles in your feet to work harder in adjusting to an inconsistent surface.”

“Yes,” she nodded.

With that out of the way, Roshi turned to his other student. “Mark! You’ll be joining your daughter in this exercise today. On other days, Krillin and I will have you both doing different things. Individual needs must be met.”

“Uh…Right!” The Champ threw off his boots and sprinted in the direction of the ocean.

Master Roshi then regarded Gohan.

“Boy, there’s something I need you to do either tonight or tomorrow morning.”

“What is it Master Roshi?” he asked.

“I want you to go visit Piccolo and have him give you a new set of weighted cloths. If you’re going to be training with us, you need to have something heavy enough that you too will get something out of it. You and Videl have an agreement, and you need to uphold your end by putting in some effort. You promised to train hard, and I intend to help her hold you to that!”

“Y-yes sir!” exclaimed the half-Saiyan, his brow furrowed in seriousness.
Roshi turned to watch Videl and her father sprinting back and forth across the sand. “That pretty little thing is a handful. I can see why you needed help in training her.”

“She is something all right!” he boasted proudly. “From the day we met, she’s been chasing after me in some way.”

“She loves you but she also covets you,” Roshi noted.

“What do you mean?” Gohan asked.

“It’s a complicated dynamic I picked up from her thoughts during our interview,” the aged master explained. “Her heart and mind loves you, but there are other parts of this aside from the romantic or companionate aspects that fuel her desire to have you. Before I go on however, I want you to understand that these aren’t necessarily bad things. It’s natural for girlfriends and spouses to feel certain ways towards their men, especially strong-willed gals like Videl.”

“Go on…” coaxed Gohan, intent on learning Videl’s inner secrets.

Looking up, Roshi locked eyes with the son of his greatest student. “Your relationship with Videl has a dozen hidden dynamics, some of which will keep you on your toes, both for better and for worse. The first one that needs to be brought out into the open is Videl’s jealousy. This is gonna be a real bombshell, but don’t let it get in the way of your and Videl’s love life! Now don’t get me wrong boy, but she is a very complicated woman! Her upbringing was very different from your own. Her personality is very similar to Vegeta’s, a little too similar in fact.”

“I’ve noticed,” said Gohan with a sigh. “She’s always got that hungry look. It’s as if she’s hunting something.”

“That’s because Videl sees you as the Goku for her Vegeta.”

It took a moment for the wheels to start turning in the young demi-Saiyan’s head, but when they did, the weight of this revelation hit him like an atom bomb. His eyes grew as big as saucers as the pieces of a larger puzzle came together.

“W-W-WHAT!? THAT’S CRAZY!!” he screamed. Gohan’s gaze flitted over in Videl’s direction. “W-we’re dating! We share a bedroom and bath! We’re planning on getting married!”

Master Roshi let out a belly laugh at the Son boy’s deadpanned reaction. “And I don’t think Videl’s one-sided rivalry will stop that! If anything, it makes her want to be closer to you more just so she can keep you close!”

“Wow…!” Gohan breathed. “No wonder she looks at me like I’m a prey item! Woah!”

‘So that’s why she has that look when she’s on top,’ thought the half-breed. ‘It’s a part of her struggle to gain dominance, and she probably doesn’t even realize it!’

“There’s also something else at play here. Videl’s desire to be the strongest also plays itself out in her wanting the strongest. Her feminism be damned, she thinks you have an earned right of the strong to her because of your status as the single strongest man alive. Then there’s another little thing…”

“What is it?” Gohan asked, almost afraid to know.

“She’s grateful to you but she also feels ashamed. She’s ashamed of the way her father made their fortune, and she feels horrible for the way you tried to save her from Buu only to be cheated out of your chance to be a hero for her. She feels like she owes you her entire world. She wants to delight
you with whatever she can offer you whether it be her body or what she sees as being your rightful fortune. She wants you to have a share in what she feels her father has deprived you of. Her agreeing so readily to let you have her body for life is a part of that. Don’t get me wrong though! She probably would’ve let you do whatever you wanted with her regardless, but her wanting to repay you is a part of that. Her pride won’t let it be any other way.”

Gohan’s shocked expression soon gave way to the biggest smile he’d had since the day Goten was born. “So you’re basically saying that as long as I stay in top form and take Videl’s training just as seriously, she’s really gonna let me have her whenever I want!?”

“Something along those lines,” was Roshi’s curt answer.

“Oh…, I absolutely love that kooky, beautiful girl!” he beamed excitedly. “Getting away from my mom was the best thing that ever happened to me!”

“OK…OK, calm down kid,” Master Roshi chided. “Let’s get our minds out of the gutter and back in the here and now. Chi-Chi was still your mother, and she did what she believed was best for you! It’s hard raising two kids without a husband. Don’t forget, Chi-Chi sacrificed a lot so you and Goten could have a roof over your heads. Give her some credit, boy!”

“Master, you weren’t there the last seven years!” Gohan growled. “You have no idea how much I missed out on just because my mother was under some delusion that she knew what I needed more than I did! She practically grief-vultured me into giving up on a part of myself, and if I continued to put up with her misguided attempts to dominate every aspect of my life, her bullshit would’ve bled over into my and Videl’s relationship! I absolutely refuse to allow that! I shouldn’t have to sneak around my pompous, hypocrite mother just to love my girlfriend the same way she and dad were loving each other when they were our age! My mother has no place and she has no business getting in my way!”

The ancient master cast a sorrowful look at the young man. “I’m sorry you feel that way about her. You were always something of a momma’s boy coming up, and I never imagined that-”

“No!” Gohan interjected. “Even mom acknowledged that I was always my father’s son, and she still rode me and rode me until I just gave her what she wanted! She had no right to force me to give up on every other aspect of my life just so she could have her perfect little academic. Don’t get me wrong though! I get enjoyment from scholastic pursuits, but if she cared so damned much about my studies that she literally felt she had to spy on me constantly just to pressure me into giving up on every part of my life, than she probably should have become a scholar herself instead of marrying my father!”

Clenching his fists, the half-Saiyan began to seethe with barely restrained rage. “She would always bitch and moan about how Piccolo and Dad were using me as some blank slate, but then she had the gall to turn around and do the same damned thing. Her blind-spot is so huge, it needs its own zip code! She chose to marry early without taking the time to decide on what she wanted in life, but she had no business trying to live hers through mine! She let her mistakes twist my upbringing! Grandpa is a king so she could’ve gone to college and did something for herself, but she cared more about her culture’s stuffy traditions than she ever did about my choice. At least Piccolo and Dad gave me the choice of not wanting to be a fighter!”

“I still can’t believe you held this much resentment for your own mother,” muttered the Turtle Hermit with a shake of his head. “And after losing her once already.”

“Don’t get me wrong though,” said Gohan continuing, “I resent myself far more than I could ever resent my mother because I let her do it to me. I was already strong enough by the time I was eleven
that she would have never been able to stop me from doing whatever I wanted! I let her do it out of some misguided belief that I needed her approval. I wasted my adolescence on her garbage, but I refuse to waste what’s left of my life! Let her stew in her own impotent rage at the fact that any control she ever had over me was an empty illusion engendered more by my own emotional weakness than any physical ability she ever possessed!”

Master Roshi regarded the boy with no small measure of concern. Just how long did Son Gohan keep these feelings bottled up? How many years did he repress his inner self just so he could please his mother?

Gohan let out a long sigh. “Let’s just drop the subject altogether. In my dad’s absence, my mother had seven years to figure out that I was my own person, and she still refused to see it! She’ll never change. She’ll always care more for grandpa’s outdated culture than she will for my feelings. Even her love for me is just an extension of that tradition! It’s best if I never deal with her again…”

With that, the half-Saiyan teen turned and walked off. Master Roshi was about to press the boy on the matter but decided against it.

“Another matter that will have to resolve itself…” he muttered with a deep sigh.

An hour later, the five martial artists found themselves dozing in hammocks. More specifically, Videl and Gohan dozed together in their own shared hammock while Roshi, Krillin, and Mr. Satan talked.

“It sure is peaceful here,” remarked Mr. Satan. “We don’t really get this in the city.”

“Sometimes, it’s good to step back and shoot the breeze,” said Master Roshi. “Even the strongest fighters need to rest.”

“What I wouldn’t give for a nice cold beer,” Krillin added. The former monk gave a quick stretch.

Master Roshi and Mark both regarded Gohan and Videl’s sleeping forms. The two lovebirds looked so peaceful together.

Roshi gave a wry smile. “They really do make a cute couple, don’t they?”

“Maybe…” was Mark’s short response.

“I’m sensing some misgivings here,” Roshi stated. “Care to tell me why?”

“You can read minds, can’t ya?”

The old master grimaced. “Sometimes, it helps to talk about things.”

“I’m afraid…” the afroed fighter grumbled. “…Of many things. I’m afraid that my daughter is going to make the same mistakes with that kid that I made with her mother. It’s not just that though. I have trouble sleeping at night because I’m so terrified of that boy.”

Roshi quirked an eyebrow. “Terrified?!?”

Mr. Satan nodded. “He’s too strong. I can’t protect my daughter from someone like that! He’s so powerful that I’d never be able to get him off Videl if he lost control! He man-handles Majin Buu! She leads him on so much, and I know what that kind of behavior can do to a hormone-driven teenager like him. As much as he hurt Videl by simply losing control during a sparring match, I can only imagine how bad it would be if he forced himself on her. And he could! He could force himself on her and never face any consequences. No law enforcement or army could stop him. He could take
whatever he wanted, my daughter included! He could kill her! And what’s worse, I can’t control my
dughter either! She’s so much stronger than me now that she’d steamroll me if I ever tried to rein
her in, but she still wouldn’t be able to get him off if he wanted it bad enough. I can’t even protect
her from her own reckless behavior!”

His breath caught in his throat, Mark Satan’s voice dropped to a shaky shuddered whisper. “I’m so
scarred… I can’t protect my daughter and no one else can either. Having anyone like that kid exist
just makes every choice I have feel false! I saw him in action at the Cell Games! The boy knocked
Cell around like he was a small child. Cell, the very bug-mutant thing that batted me aside like I was
a fly! It’s bad enough that my daughter wants to share a bed with that freak!”

“Your fears are somewhat ill-placed,” Master Roshi said. “Gohan loves your daughter too much. He
wants to have a life with her. He’d never intentionally hurt her.”

“What about unintentionally?!” pressed the Champ. “Death follows that boy and his friends. I don’t
want Videl caught up in that.”

Master Roshi let out a sigh. “I’m not taking Gohan’s side or anything because I know just how
terrifying that young man’s power can be, and I fear that what he’s shown from Old Kai’s power
raising could be the tip of the iceberg. The boy struggles daily with reining in his own power because
he respects everyone else’s rights. Truth be told, I’m surprised at just how gentle he can be in spite of
the sheer magnitude he is capable of bringing to bear. No, there’s nothing out there that even comes
remotely close to Gohan. What worries me is that Gohan is changing, and your daughter is
deliberately cultivating that change. Those two kids left a piece of themselves on the battlefield when
Buu killed them. She wants him to stop caring about consequences and just live like there’s no
tomorrow like everyone else their age.”

“That’s crazy!” Mr. Satan hissed. “Him throwing all inhibitions out the window would be a
nightmare for everyone!”

“She sees the strain that holding back puts on the boy, and she wants him to just let go. She salivates
at the thought of having that kid, of unleashing him, and having the boy who killed Cell as her man.
Even though Videl doesn’t want his protection, Gohan does make her feel safe. After all that’s
happened to her, this particular dynamic in their relationship makes her feel like she’s regaining
control of her own life. She craves it just like she craves growing her own personal strength. She
wants the Gohan that once was, the Gohan he’s once again becoming. Gohan won’t be forcing
anything on your daughter because she has already given him free reign in that department.”

“So…, my daughter’s really gonna let him do that with her?” Mark asked through ground teeth. The
very thought of such a thing scarred the shit out of him.

“Videl already sees Gohan the way a wife would her husband,” Roshi explained. “The truth is, she’s
been letting him do that with her. To your daughter, Gohan has a right to her. You might as well just
get used to the fact that Gohan isn’t going anywhere. With or without your say, the kid’s gonna wind
up your son-in-law. It’ll make it easier to deal with if you actually had a sit-down talk with the boy.
He needs a positive male influence in his life, and you’re not doing anything to help. Win your
battles where you can. If your daughter won’t listen to you, Gohan’s ears are more open to
suggestion. It couldn’t hurt your cause any more than anything else you’ve tried.”

Mr. Satan fell silent. There was wisdom in the old Turtle Hermit’s words. He was beginning to see
other options. Sidelining and treating the boy like a third wheel when he himself had already been
relegated to that status wasn’t getting him anywhere. Much as he hated to admit it, he’d have to work
through Gohan to protect Videl. He could accomplish more as an actual father-in-law figure than he
ever could working alone. Wasn’t that the reason he was somewhat glad her boyfriend started
fighting crime alongside her in the first place? As for the potential dangers the boy himself presented, he’d have to put that on the back burner. Everything regarding his daughter’s long-term safety would have to be handled based on his immediate ability to address it, and he’d have to handle the low-hanging fruit issues first.

His plan in place, or at least something resembling one, Mark Satan rolled into his hammock and tried to grab a much-needed nap.

Unbeknownst to Mr. Satan or Master Roshi, a certain raven-haired girl wasn’t as asleep as she pretended to be. Videl looked over her shoulder in the direction of her father’s hammock.

‘He’ll never accept Gohan…’ she thought to herself. ‘As soon as school let’s back, I’ll have to take matters into my own hands.’

Turning back into her boyfriend’s warmth, Videl snuggled into Gohan’s chest. A single tear rolled down her cheek. There would be a confrontation with her father, sooner rather than later. Videl had overheard most of what her father had said, and Mark Satan would not get away from this unscathed.

A while later, Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan found themselves in a deep quarry. All around them were steep, chiseled walls of white limestone. There were mine cart tracks laid out in a grid, and an assortment of hand tools were standing against the far walls unattended.

“For two hours every day, you three will be mining limestone,” Master Roshi instructed. “You will be using the hand tools provided to carve your way through solid rock. The whole point of this exercise will be to build up your entire upper body strength for everyday application.”

“I’m already built like a brick house,” boasted Mr. Satan, puffing out his chest.

“Not for this, you aren’t,” was Roshi’s reply. “Muscle size is one thing, but what those muscles are cultivated for is another. There’s a reason why your strength plateaued using modern training methods, and it is an obstacle that the ancient masters overcame hundreds of years ago. I’m still genuinely surprised that the practitioners of modern fighting styles haven’t figured this out! There is a big difference between that which is somewhat unnatural and that which springs organically from the body’s inherent capacity to change and adapt through rigorous conditioning.”

Videl quirked an eyebrow. “So it’s a salt of the earth kind of thing?”

“You could say that,” said the Turtle Hermit, stroking his beard. “Oftentimes, wisdom can be obtained from the seemingly mundane. You will discover this for yourselves with the fullness of time. For now, it’s time to get busy!”

With that, the three fighters under Roshi’s charge rushed over to the tools. Gohan grabbed a pickaxe, Videl a sledgehammer, and her father a shovel before each headed in opposite directions.

“Wait!” Roshi cried out. Gohan, Videl, and Mark stopped in their tracks.

“What is it? What’s wrong?” asked Videl.

“If you all work together on the same task, you’ll make more headway.”

The two Satans gave a quick nod of confirmation before exchanging their own tools for matching pickaxes. The daughter-father duo then followed Gohan to a rock face.

Having the two Satans work in a closed quarry was the closest Master Roshi could get to a facsimile for the construction work Goku and Krillin did years before. There were just too many people who
would recognize the profile of Mr. Satan and his daughter, and the last thing he needed was for the paparazzi to distract or embarrass his two newest students. They needed to stay focused and having them work in a closed off facility ringed with chain-link fencing was just the thing.

For the next two hours, the ring of pickaxes and the roar of heavy mine carts across tracks echoed throughout the quarry. Several onlookers stopped to watch the action from afar, but none of them could make out the identities of the three busy figures.

Later on in the afternoon, Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan were led to an open field of massive boulders.

“This is it!” Roshi barked, gesturing to the most massive of all the standing boulders. “When you can move this boulder, you will have reached the half-way point in your initial training!”

Videl looked up at the monolith that stood before them. The boulder in question was even larger than the one she had failed to move in the desert two days prior. Could she or her father really move this?!

Mr. Satan being Mr. Satan couldn’t help but ask “Could you move it?”

“I can and I will!” declared the aged hermit.

Roshi threw his tunic to the side, and bringing his hands to his flanks, the ancient master dropped into a horse stance. The old sage grit his teeth and bore down with all his will to bring forward the lion share of his latent power. It had been a few years since he had summoned his maximum power. The energy thrummed within him as if answering the call of a long-estranged friend.

“Is something supposed to happen?” asked Mr. Satan, confused. “He looks constipated.”

Suddenly, the old master’s eyes snapped open, his blue irises glowing a dim hue that was matched by the one cladding his entire body. The energy continued to build and billow up inside him until his musculature exploded in all directions. The ancient master’s formerly short, decrepit looking form rapidly grew two feet in height. His arms, chest, and midsection blasted out to an absolutely massive size.

Videl and Mr. Satan could only watch with astonishment as the once withered hermit was replaced by a hulking, ki-imbued brute. Mr. Satan was so shaken, he couldn’t utter a sound.

“Now..., watch this,” Roshi commanded as he stepped up to the colossal monolith. Digging in his feet, the elderly sifu pushed with all his earth-given might until the giant boulder shifted and then began to slide.

Videl was transfixed. Sure Gohan had moved a piece of rock this size with only one finger, but what this even more amazing was the fact that here was a three hundred year old man who was able to do this!

“I-I-insane....” She uttered, her jaw moving up and down like a beached fish.

“To think that old Master Roshi still had this much in him....,” Gohan mused.

With the task complete, Roshi turned back to his charges. His muscles deflated slightly under the strain of maintaining this heightened state.

“When your training is complete, you too will be able to move mountains! Your body cannot achieve what your mind cannot conceive! With enough practice, you might also be able to form a Kamehameha Wave!”
Master Roshi thrust his hands out in front of him before bringing both cupped hands to his right side. The blue glow around the aged man’s body intensified as more power was brought from within.

“Kaaaa…..!” Ki began to pool between Master Roshi’s hands.

“Meeee….!” The build-up of energy crashed in on itself as ever more imploded onto a focal point.

“Haaaa….!” A whitish-blue light overtook the area as bright as a welding flare. Videl and her father threw their hands over their faces to shield their eyes from the glare.

“Mee….!” The energy had only one way to go.

“HAAAA!!!!!!”

The old master threw his hands forward and released a brilliant beam of whitish-blue ki that ripped into the landscape with a thundering ‘Boom!’ The land in the distance fell in on itself in the face of such a tidal wave of raw power. When the smoke cleared, all that could be seen in the distance was a mushroom cloud.

Even after all she’d seen and experienced, Videl still found herself mesmerized by the things Gohan and his old circle could do. Suddenly, realization dawned on Videl.

“That’s Gohan’s move!” exclaimed Videl, wide-eyed.

“It is,” Roshi confirmed. “He learned it from his father who in turn learned it from me. I developed this move in memory of my late master. This is the move that killed Cell.”

Shaking her head to bring herself out of her shocked stupor, Videl’s face took on an aura of seriousness. “I wanna try it!”

“What? The Kamehameha?!” screeched Roshi incredulously.

“Why not?!” was Videl’s reply. “I’ve seen Gohan do this before. I’d like to give it a go!”

Roshi smirked assuredly. “Sure thing. Give it your best shot.”

‘I doubt she’ll do much at this stage,’ he thought to himself.

Mirroring the stance the Turtle Hermit took moments before, Videl brought her hands to the side. Momentarily, she wondered if this was a good idea seeing how her first day of training had yet to end. She had mastered producing ki shields and invisible kaia waves in the months after her resurrection, but she had never attempted something this big. Just as she had learned from Gohan, she listened to the inside of her body until she began to feel that same old familiar pull she felt when she tapped into her ki.

His arms crossed, Mr. Satan watched his daughter with an uneasy expression. Inside, he felt something akin to what animals felt when they sensed a coming earthquake, so understandably, he was a tad on edge. The hair stood on the back of his neck. He didn’t know how, but he knew something big was coming.

Unlike Mr. Satan, Gohan could feel the energy being summoned by Videl. He closed his eyes, seeing a kaleidoscope of different hues of blue, white, and yellow dance across his mind’s eye in a four dimensional picture.

Finally, a focal point began to form between Videl’s cupped palms. Had she no prior training with ki
manipulation, this would have been nigh-impossible. Slowly but surely, her latent power began to crash downwards onto the energy already resting within the focal point.

To Videl, this was different from every other time she had drawn her energy out. It was unstable, it was destructive, and it tested her. Tendrils of azure lightning coursed through her hands as she struggled to augment her palms with her ki in a bid to keep the blue implosion contained. Pain was a real issue here as she felt her forearms and hands spasm under the pressure. Her agony was not lost on Master Roshi or Gohan.

“Videl, that’s enough!” Roshi told her sternly, “You’ve got to get rid of it! Push your hands forward and force the attack the same way you would when you fly.”

The Satan girl didn’t even remember to shout the name of the attack as she threw her hands forward and willed the energy away from her. The beam was considerably smaller than the one released by the Turtle Hermit and lacked the focus of the one employed by the older man. Still, it shot forward straight and true.

The mass of energy carried through and impacted one of the larger standing rocks in the surrounding field with enough force that it split the stone monolith into three equal-sized chunks. In a flash of light, the blast percussion rocketed the surrounding area with charred shards of stone and grit.

When the dust cleared, Roshi and everyone present beheld Videl’s handiwork. Half the monolith was gone, and the remainder of the structure was divided into three pieces about roughly the same size.

Everyone was left wide-eyed and slack-jawed. Not for the first time that day, Mr. Satan fell on his ass as he tried to contemplate what he had just seen.

“Fuck!” squeaked the afroed grappler, again feeling small among all these monsters. Words eluded him as he once again struggled to grasp just what his daughter really was.

‘Forget five minutes! I wouldn’t last five seconds against my daughter!’

“H-How can she be this powerful?!” stuttered the aged hermit. “S-She’s much stronger than Goku was when he started training!”

Gohan beamed with pride at the girl he loved. There was no doubt in his mind that she would get through Roshi’s training without a hitch.

Master Roshi dabbed at the perspiration rolling down his forehead with a handkerchief. Videl’s display was certainly unexpected.

The Satan girl was doubled over gasping for breath. “So… How’d I do, Master?”

“I….I think I need to sit down…,” His legs giving out, it was Roshi’s turn to fall on his rear.

After the affair with the boulders, Roshi brought Videl, Gohan, and Mark to a wide saltwater lake not too far from the limestone quarries.

“For your next training, you three will have to swim to the other side of this lake,” the aged master instructed. “You will give me ten laps, now strip!”

“W-What?!” screamed Videl. “I didn’t even bring a bathing suit!”

“It’s nothing we haven’t seen before,” Gohan remarked quietly. Videl shot her boyfriend a silencing
“Come on you three!” the old man coaxed. “You’re wasting daylight!”

With a groan, Videl began to disrobe. Half undressed, Mr. Satan and Gohan stared wide-eyed as Videl’s cloths formed a pile next to their own. Master Roshi, though feigning indifference, got a nosebleed as he peered at Videl’s goodies.

Looking away, Mark caught sight of just what his daughter’s boyfriend was packin. Despite all the times Gohan had bedded Videl, seeing her in all her naked glory still had the teen Saiyan standing full mast.

“SWEET JESUS!!” he screamed.

Gohan quirked an eyebrow at the afroed Champ’s outburst. “What?!”

“Y-you’re freakin huge! Like everywhere!” Mark screeched.

“So?”

It was then that Mark began to see just why Videl went to such lengths over this kid. The Son boy could satisfy a mule! Considering Videl’s petite stature, he was seriously wondering just how his daughter was able to take him. What was he? Like ten inches!

Now completely bare, Videl awkwardly sidled out in front and brought her hands to her hips.

“Alright, let’s do this!”

Mr. Satan for his part, was about to blow a gasket, but before he could say anything, Videl broke into a run and dived right into the lake followed closely by Gohan.

“Get the lead out Mark!” Roshi ordered.

With a defeated sigh, Mr. Satan followed the two teens. Now was not the time and he certainly didn’t have the energy to be angry about his daughter’s vulgar bluntness.

About halfway out, the three struck up a conversation.

“Ya know… this part of the training isn’t so bad,” Videl admitted.

“Speak for yourself,” her father grumbled.

Suddenly, Master Roshi’s voice rang out over the lake.

“YOU THREE WATCH OUT FOR THE SHARKS!!”

“Sharks!?” the two Satans screamed in unison.

Sure enough, a dorsal fin began to circle the three of them. From the size of it, the shark had to huge. After four rounds, the fin disappeared below water.

Videl took to the air, pulling her father out of the water with her.

“Don’t worry Daddy! I’ve got you!” she groaned through gritted teeth. Her father was heavy even when he wasn’t soaked.

Tracking the shark’s ki, Gohan scanned the water.
“There!” he snapped just as the massive shark made a jump for his face. The sea-going beast didn’t stand a chance as Gohan wrapped his arms around the giant predatory fish. It’s toothed maul dry air-breathing, the beast thrashed wildly to get away from the half-Saiyan’s bone-crushing bear hug. With a loud ‘Pop!’ Gohan brought the large fish’s life to an end.

“Alright Videl!” hollered Gohan, “You two can come on down!”

“O-OK…” The girl dropped her father into the water and slipped back into the lake just behind her boyfriend. Even if it was just training, skinny dipping with both her boyfriend and her father was just too awkward. She would definitely have to bring a bathing suit tomorrow.

Two hours later, the three fighters found themselves tied to a thick mahogany tree.

“This next exercise will develop your dodging and reflexes,” explained Master Roshi. “I’m sure you are all wondering why you are tied to this tree.”

“The thought did cross our minds,” Videl remarked.

“The whole point of the ropes is to force you to stand your ground against your opponents and develop your close quarters dodging abilities.”

Mr. Satan quirked an eyebrow. “Our opponents?”

Without saying a word, the Turtle Hermit picked up a small stick. Aiming carefully, he drew back and chucked the stray piece of debris into the low-hanging branch of a neighboring tree, a branch that just happened to contain a soccer ball-sized yellow jacket’s nest.

The round paper nest thrummed with life as swarms of stinging wasps took to the air. The ensuing pandemonium was priceless. Videl, Gohan, and Mr. Satan darted about screaming in a panicked frenzy as they were set upon by the aggressive stinging insects.

“WHAT THE FUCK OLD MAN?!! AHHHH!!!” wailed the Champ as he flailed his arms around in terror.

Surprisingly enough, Gohan was throwing his arms and screeching around almost as much as Mr. Satan. There was just something about insects in general that gave him flashbacks from his battle with Cell.

“AAAAHEEEEIIIII!!!” Videl wasn’t handling this exercise any better. She was totally grossed out by wasps of any kind. She had her hands against her face as she screamed and kicked up her feet in her terrified state.

Off some distance away, Roshi issued commands from behind a tree.

“Don’t just bat away at them! DODGE!”

Upon hearing the word ‘dodge,’ Gohan had a momentary flashback to when his mentor Piccolo would always get on his case about dodging. Something about that dodging that always eluded him…

There were dozens of biting, stinging yellow jackets flying all around, but Videl was the first one to just roll with it, or at least try to. Girding herself to the painful stings, she began to hone in on individual wasps as she bobbed and weaved.

Her father though was still having issues just trying to sally through the stings. “Crazy ‘ouch!’….old
An hour later Roshi and his three charges were gathered outside their homes. Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan were all sporting some nasty stings on their legs, faces, and necks. The three of them were laid out on the ground panting like a bunch of whipped dogs.

“Congratulations! You three have made it past your first day of training,” declared Roshi.

“At least it can’t get any worse…” muttered Mark.

“Oh-Ho! If you think this was bad, just wait till you hear the next part.”

Both Videl and her father looked at the old man with a crestfallen expression that screamed “WTF?”

“From here on out, you’ll all be wearing weighted training cloths!” said the aged master.

Both Videl and Mark went cross-eyed as they fell back onto the ground in a state of utter numbness.

*Oh, tomorrow was going to be a beautiful day…."

Chapter End Notes

Let me say that this is the longest and probably the weakest of all the chapters I’ve written thus far. I felt that I needed to finish the first day of training in two chapters. I tried to throw a few funny scenes in here reminiscent of the classical Dragonball era, and I even hit on some pervy goodness for old Roshi. I can’t help but think that maybe I overdid it with Roshi’s mind-reading ability, but he’s trying his best to help grease the wheels for Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan by helping them assuage their doubts. He really is trying to be a good mentor to the three, and Mr. Satan and Videl are not making this part of his job easy. It’s safe to say that old habits for Mr. Satan die hard, and Videl’s patience with her father’s special brand of bullshit is being tested. His fear for his daughter’s safety and her desire to find an anchor through her relationship with Gohan is going to create some drama. Just as there was tension between Goku and Krillin in their time under Roshi, so too will there be between father and daughter.

With Videl, you’ll also notice that Roshi is being a little more low-key with his ability to read minds than he is with Gohan and Mr. Satan. Roshi has his reasons for this.

Also, notice the Team Four Star reference with Gohan at the end. I thought it was a very nice touch.

On another note, you’ll notice that throughout this fiction I keep placing emphasis on Videl being short. She’s somewhere between 4ft 10in and 5ft 1in tall and she was introduced in the series as being this short at the age of 17. Girls typically reach their full height at the age of 16 so I’m not sure why adult Videl was depicted only a few inches shorter than Gohan both in the last two episodes of Dragonball Z and in DBGT. Videl is not supposed to be tall. It’s just a nit-pick, but apparently the good people over at Toei Animation don’t know much about female physiology.

Going back and reading other DBZ fanfictions, I’ve noticed that there are more than a few where the issue of Saiyans aging slower than humans is brought up as if it were
some insurmountable obstacle for their human wives/girlfriends. I know it makes for good drama, but all of these woman are in the Z-fighter’s circle of friends. Think about that for a moment. How would them aging slower than their Saiyan husbands really be an issue when they have access to the dragonballs? If the dragonballs can grant immortality than using them to slow down their aging process so they could grow old with their Saiyan men should easily be within the Eternal Dragon’s power. Then there’s the fact that either Roshi or the Crane Hermit’s training can allow people to live a few centuries longer. Master Roshi is over 300 years old. The Crane Hermit, Master Shin, is as old as Master Roshi. Mercenary Toa was trained by Master Shin, and he was over 150 years old when he first fought Goku. Mercenary Toa barely looked middle aged in that fight! Surpassing the wall of humanity increases the average person’s lifespan by a massive amount so if Videl or Chi-Chi’s aging rate really is an issue they had to confront, I’m pretty sure that Goku and Gohan would have either gathered the dragonballs or drug their women off to get trained by Master Roshi at the drop of a hat. This is something that has always irked me in a way. Human aging gets brought up a couple of times in the series, and I for the life of me can’t understand why certain Saiyans aren’t putting two and two together and asking themselves “If Master Roshi is over 300 years old, why aren’t we getting Chi-Chi and Videl trained by him?” It just seems that the idea of people gaining a transcentennial lifespan through Roshi’s training would get more play, but apparently Akira Toriyama forgets some of the stuff he wrote earlier.
The Night After

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The first day of training under Master Roshi had just ended, and Gohan, Videl, and Mark decided to rustle up some grub. A crescent moon was coming over the horizon and the surrounding fields were abuzz with the calls of cicadas. Conveniently, there was already a large supply of red meat on hand. The delicious smell of mahogany-smoked T-Rex filled the air as Gohan and Videl darted around the roasting carcasses of the two juvenile Tyrannosaurs Videl had killed during their early morning training.

Dressed in nothing but a white T-shirt and panties, Videl bent down to baste their massive meal as it simmered on a stick over a hot fire pit. Off to the side, Gohan, likewise dressed only in his shirt and boxers, flavored the meat by adding a layer of Sassafras leaves.

Mark eyed the two teen lovers from a distance as they hurried about the task of alternately turning and basting the dinosaur meat. The afroed man couldn’t help but note how adept the two adolescents were at field dressing and preparing wild game on the spot. It definitely wasn’t something he’d expected from his daughter of all people, given her more cosmopolitan upbringing.

“How did you learn all this?” he asked Gohan.

The half-Saiyan teen gave the afroed man a quick glance over his shoulder. “My martial arts teacher stranded me alone in the wild for six months when I was a kid. He would only train me if I survived. Learning how to prepare and cook meat was a necessity.”

Mark’s face deadpanned. “And he did this to you when you were four?”

“Strange, isn’t it?” Gohan quipped.

“And you Videl?” Mark asked turning to his daughter.

“I’ve spent enough time out in the woods with Gohan and his little brother to pick up on some things,” she answered. “I thought it would be beneficial to learn some basic wilderness survival skills to help supplement my field combat application. Ya never know...”

“Wow... and to think the only thing I’ve ever learned in regards to hunting is how to shoot a gun,” admitted the Champ, scratching the back of his head sheepishly.

“Marksman class with the academy youth program was pretty fun,” Videl added. “I wasn’t the best, but I certainly wasn’t the worst!”

Turning another spick of meat, Gohan said “I’ve never used a gun. Living out in the mountains, almost every one of my neighbors had small arsenals, but my family never needed them. Grandpa kept a cache in his estate though. He had a fondness for hunting trips with my more distant cousins.”

This caught Videl’s interest. “Aside from your Grandpa and your folks, you never mentioned that you had other family.”

“My grandfather the Ox King had a few younger brothers. They died before I was born, but they have a few kids living around.”
“You should introduce me to them sometimes,” Videl suggested with a smile.

“We’re not very close,” said the half-Saiyan. “Succession issues came between my mother and the rest of them.”

“Must have made for some very interesting family reunions,” the Satan girl remarked with a chuckle. Gohan pulled a nicely cooked lump of meat from its spick. “My Dad’s adventuring made him a lot of enemies back in the day.”

“From what I’ve seen Gohan, I can only imagine some of the guys who have it out for you,” she remarked offhandedly. Videl removed a very handsome piece of T-Rex meat before gingerly biting into it.

The half-Saiyan took a big bite out of his portion. “I should probably tell you about a man named Dr. Gero. As you already know from the history books, my father was said to have beaten the entire Red Ribbon Army singlehandedly. However, their third in command and head scientist, Dr. Gero, managed to escape. He spied on my father for many years, gathering research on Dad’s battles to build a series of powerful androids and cyborgs for the sole purpose of one day killing my father and all his loved ones.”

Her own plate in hand, Videl crouched down in a semicircle with her and her father on either side of Gohan. “The guy sounds like he needed a hobby.”

Gohan snorted a laugh. “Among those androids was Cell.”

Upon having this bombshell dropped on them, both Videl and Mr. Satan stopped eating.

“Come again?”

Gohan too sat his plate down, something very uncharacteristic of him. “Among his most monstrous projects was a decades long genetic engineering endeavor to create the most powerful creature in the known universe. This entailed stealing DNA from the strongest fighters to ever walk the Earth. Cell was designed to kill my father in the event that Android #16 failed. More specifically, Cell was made to absorb two of Dr. Gero’s earlier creations in order to obtain his perfect form. One of those creations was Eighteen.”

Videl and her father’s faces deadpanned. “Krillin’s wife?!”

“Yes,” he answered. “Though Cell wasn’t initially able to absorb either of them until after he had grown strong enough to take them on. In order to gain that strength however, Cell had to consume hundreds of thousands of people. Let’s just say that his method of consuming his victims was nothing short of horrific. Piccolo and the rest of the old group tracked Cell for days in an effort to stop his massacre, but Cell was able to travel quickly in spite of his need to keep his ki presence hidden.”

“So that’s why Cell killed all those people!” Videl concluded.

“That and Cell got a kick out of killing for fun,” added Gohan. “I suppose his behavior does make sense though. He did inherit many of his genes from Vegeta, Nappa, Piccolo, and Frieza. Let’s just say that Vegeta and my mentor Piccolo haven’t always been with the good guys.”

“So what happened?” asked Mark.

“We failed to stop Cell from absorbing Eighteen and her brother Seventeen, and he obtained the
Videl quirked an eyebrow. “You?!”

Gohan nodded. “Cell found out about my hidden abilities and wanted to use me to test his perfect form’s complete power. He started torturing my father and friends to death until he got just what he wanted. I lost myself in the battle rage of my new form. The power warped my sense of reality and made me arrogant and cruel. I took my sweet time with Cell and tried to savor his agony as I picked him apart, but in one last desperate gamble to take me out with him, Cell initiated a self-destruct sequence in his own body. Because of my stupidity, my father got killed saving me and everyone else! I’ll never forget that last look my old man gave me before he used his instant transmission technique to whisk Cell away from everyone.”

“I thought you said you were the one who killed Cell?” Videl asked, clearly puzzled.

Gohan swallowed hard before continuing. “Cell survived his own kamikaze attack. He returned to Earth intent on finishing what he started. He killed a couple of my friends before Vegeta made one last attempt at engaging him. Needless to say, Cell was done playing around. I’d managed to save Vegeta’s life but at the cost of my right shoulder. What followed was the mother of all beam struggles.”

“What’s a beam struggle?” Videl inquired.

“You know how the Kamehameha Wave is fired as a beam, right? Well…, it all came down the wire with the two of us launching the biggest Kamehameha’s ever produced simultaneously. It was a gruesome stalemate. Only when my old allies started firing their own ki attacks into Cell was I able to secure a victory! Had we lost, Cell was prepared to turn the entire world into his own hellish playground.”

“Gohan?”

“Yeah, Videl?”

The Satan girl pulled her knees to her chest. “There’s something that’s been bugging me since our night in the desert.”

“Does it have anything to do with the transformation?” he asked.

“As a matter of fact yes,” she answered. “When the Old Kai raised your power, did you permanently lose your ability to transform into a Super Saiyan?”

“No,” was his reply.

This answer surprised her. “But you said you couldn’t transform anymore!”

“I’m sorry… I should have clarified what I meant by ‘couldn’t’. What Old Kai told me was that transforming into a Super Saiyan after the power-up was potentially dangerous.”

Upon hearing the ‘dangerous’ part, it was Mark’s turn to ask questions. “OK, I know you guys look pretty scary when you do the whole golden haired thing, but what do you mean by dangerous?”

“The power raising process has made me far more powerful in my normal state than my dad is in his Super Saiyan 3 form,” the half-breed explained. “Right now, my normal form is somewhere in the neighborhood of about seven to ten times stronger than Majin Buu. Because my power has been
increased so much, my transformed state is now further out of reach. If I do transform into a Super Saiyan, the power output could cause significant damage to the planet.”

“But you transformed out in the desert when we were together,” Videl added. “I really enjoyed having you in that state. You were awesome…”

“Videl, I really don’t know how that happened,” Gohan said adamantly. “If I really did transform into a Legendary Super Saiyan like Broly, than the overall power increase from the transformation was even more massive than it normally would have been. I couldn’t control myself! You really could have gotten hurt…”

Upon hearing this, Videl looked downcast. “Is there any way you could learn how to transform into the hulking giant again? I really, really enjoyed being with you when you were like that!”

“Videl…” Mr. Satan groaned. “I’m still not comfortable with you and Gohan having that kind of a relationship.”

Videl let out a sigh. “Dad, if I were a boy and Gohan were a girl, you’d be saying the exact opposite.”

“That’s not true!” her father snapped indignantly.

“Considering how much you tee-total with so many bimbos, I find that hard to believe. If you had a son instead of a daughter, you’d be nudging him with your elbow and saying things to encourage him! You’re so possessive that had Gohan not come into my life, I wouldn’t have been able to have a relationship at all. I just get so tired of the hypocrisy and the slut-shaming that women have to go through just because we want to enjoy sex just as much as guys. It really makes me sick!”

“What happened to you Videl?” asked the Champ. “You used to have some measure of decency.”

“Dying sort of has that effect on you,” replied the petite fighter. “I mean…what’s the point? Out here away from the paparazzi, what’s the point of caring what other people think? There’s no one around to care! Seriously though Dad, why do you think I spend so much time out away from the city with Gohan?”

“Is that what you do when you’re out camping with him?!” Mark demanded.

“What do you think Dad?” she shot back sarcastically, raising an eyebrow.

“Oh my God…!” Mr. Satan groaned, burying his face in his hands.

“Is that what you do when you’re out camping with him?!” Mark demanded.

“What do you think Dad?” she shot back sarcastically, raising an eyebrow.

Videl let out a long sigh. “Daddy, the truth is that aside from Gohan’s mother, you’re the only one we know who even makes a big deal out of this, and that’s pretty hypocritical considering your own history as a skirt-chaser. Besides Dad…, it’s not like me and Gohan could do any worse, all things considered. Unlike you, we at least have a faithful, monogamous relationship!”

“That’s not the point Videl!!” Mark growled.

“I know what you’re saying Dad!” she snapped, “But what I’m saying is that you don’t have a leg to stand on! You say me and Gohan shouldn’t be doing our thing, but the other side of issue is that people can’t live like you’re suggesting and be totally happy either. You have no justification in telling me and my boyfriend how we can love each other! You’re the last person who has any place!”

“I’m your father!!” Mark screamed. “I have every right!”
“A right you forfeited the day you lied to me!” his daughter screamed back. “You set me up to fail! I honestly believed that I was the second strongest in the world for years. Your lies kept me weak! Your lies caused me to aim low…, to dream small! Tell me Dad! How did you not think that Gohan and his father’s circle wouldn’t one day come back?”

Mr. Satan’s face was red with indignation. “Oh, for cryin out loud Videl! I tried damn it! I trained you as best I could-“

“Only to avoid fighting me yourself because you had a fake image to maintain!” Videl countered. “Couldn’t have that sullied, could we?”

“Do you want the truth Videl?! Fine! Yes, I knew you were stronger than me! You’ve been stronger than me for over two years, and yes, I’m sorry! I’m sorry I lorded a false image over you! I just wanted you to be proud of me!”

“And yet you never stopped to once think of my own wants or needs!” she shot back. “I couldn’t have a normal adolescence because of both your lying and your possessive overprotectiveness! I can’t help but think that your overprotectiveness regarding boys had more to do with keeping people from getting too close and discovering the truth. The more I find out about you, the harder it is to believe you ever did anything for my benefit!”

“Videl! How can you say that?!”

“Because I heard what you said to Master Roshi about Gohan earlier today!” she answered. “I heard enough of what was said!”

Hearing this, Gohan whipped around and regarded Mark with a puzzled look. With both sets of eyes now focused squarely on him, Mark started to squirm.

“What really irks me is that you think my boyfriend is a freak and you have so much distrust both towards him and the very idea of me and him being together, but you had no problem giving a home to the very freak who killed me and my boyfriend!” Videl hissed. “Your priorities are seriously out of whack if you think that my murderer is less dangerous than the boy who loves me!”

Mr. Satan had no argument for that. The afroed man closed his eyes in shame and fidgeted nervously under his daughter’s glare.

“Everyday…” she hissed. “Every day I have problems! Every day I take pills to help deal with your life choices, all of them! You lied to me! You made me think I was better than I really was, and then you moved that….that thing in with us after he killed me, tortured and killed my boyfriend, and everyone we ever knew! Hell, my body is the only thing I really own that wasn’t bought with money you made by screwing Gohan over! It’s really the only thing I have to give Gohan that’s actually mine, and if you take into account the fact that this isn’t even my original body due to the rules of resurrection using the dragonballs, I’m really just giving Gohan a facsimile of what I wish I could give him! You didn’t just stab me in the back! You rubbed salt in my wounds! Your betrayal of me is every bit as galling as your betrayal of Mom, and yet you think this kind of behavior is gonna make me trust you again?!”

Videl was seething so hard, she was visibly shaking. Her father couldn’t bring himself to meet her gaze. A part of him just wanted to comfort her, to let her know that everything would work itself out, but he knew that would never be the case. Ultimately, his fraud was what led to his daughter losing her identity. He set her up to fail by giving her a false idol for so long, and he would have to live with the fallout for the rest of his life. He really was a coward at heart and now that the blinders were off, his daughter had no respect left for him. He brought this on himself. He wouldn’t walk away
from this. He wasn’t there to protect her when she needed him, and he’d never be able to get her admiration back. He was lucky that his daughter still wanted to have him in her life at all. He’d take her tirades against him, tirades he rightfully deserved.

Videl’s glare glistened with tears. “You wanna know why I’m so open and carefree with my sexuality?! It’s because the nature of my love life with Gohan is one of the few things holding me together! The nightmares are why I changed!”

“Every time I fall asleep with Gohan in my arms, I know I’ll have a tomorrow. Gohan doesn’t have to protect me because he already makes me feel safe. At least when he’s with me, I don’t have nightmares! At least when he’s with me I don’t have flashbacks of Spopovich or Buu killing me! At least when Gohan’s with me, I don’t wake up screaming for help! Daddy, you can’t protect me from people like that, and I’d prefer it if I were allowed to protect myself. Believe me Dad! I’m not ruining my life! On the contrary. I haven’t felt this much like my old self in a long time!”

Mr. Satan let out a long saddened sigh. “I—I didn’t realize things had gotten this bad for you. You must really hate me now…”

“Dad…, I’m not saying that I don’t love you anymore, but you need to understand that I love Gohan. You know I do! There are no secrets left between any of us now. I just want you to try to treat Gohan like family and actually mean it! Why is that so hard?!”

“I’m sorry Sweetpea…” croaked the afroed man. The large man pulled his daughter in for a hug. “I’ve been a fool, haven’t I?”

“Let’s just finish eating before Gohan eats everything,” said the Satan girl. The petite fighter crouched back down beside Gohan and resumed her meal.

The three of them carried on eating like this for a few minutes until Videl felt the need for some much-needed intimacy. Her mind raced back to the image of Gohan killing that full grown T-Rex earlier in the morning, and she suddenly found herself getting butterflies in her stomach. The raven-haired girl sidled up a little closer to her lover and as she came to a full crouch, her camel toe stretched through the fabric of her panties. This was not missed by her boyfriend. The boy smiled as he thought of all the fun he and Videl were gonna have later.

The Satan girl saw where he was staring, and with a quick eyebrow waggle, gave her Saiyan boyfriend a devious little smirk before rolling her hips forward just enough to tease him with the smell of her titillating arousal. Videl knew about Gohan’s heightened Saiyan olfactory sense, and she often used it to suggestively lead him on.

Looking over, Mark saw what his only child was doing and scowled in disapproval. Just because she had him right where she wanted him didn’t mean he had to like it. Along with the way his daughter was behaving, he was also less than thrilled by her choice of attire or lack thereof.

“Ohem! I guess it is getting a little heated out here,” he grumbled.

“Yeah…” breathed Gohan. His girlfriend gave a quick shoulder shrug before turning back to her own meal.

“I have a question, Videl,” said Mr. Satan.

“Hmm?”

“I know I’m prying into you and Gohan’s love life again by asking this and that what’s done is done, but…” Mark trailed off.
“But what Dad?” asked the petite fighter in an annoyed tone.

“…When and where did you and your boyfriend manage to even do it?” was his question. “I mean… considering how much effort I put into setting boundaries, I still don’t see how you two ever got the chance to sleep together that often!”

Videl and Mr. Satan being on either side of him, Gohan’s eyes flitted nervously between the two.

“You forget that we can fly,” was her quipped answer. “I can fly over twice as fast as my jet copter so getting around quickly and discretely was never a big deal, but to answer your question, we usually did it in my bedroom. My balcony has basically been Gohan’s landing pad for three months. I always leave the door unlocked for him. Morning sex in the bath tub or shower was also pretty commonplace.”

Mark began to wonder why knowledge of her rendezvous with the Son boy never got back to him. Videl’s balcony was under video surveillance so that entailed that Videl probably bribed the estate security detail to loop the footage. Perhaps she rigged the surveillance equipment herself. She does have law enforcement field training after all.

“I can’t believe how oblivious I’ve been as a parent,” he muttered with a shake of his head.

Videl sighed. “Dad, you were about as prying as a parent could get short of attaching a tracking device to me. Gohan and I made the decision to have this kind of love life. We’d still be sleeping together in my room if the whole Barbella thing didn’t happen.”

Mr. Satan then turned to Gohan. “And what do you have to say in all this? You’re always remarkably quiet whenever this topic is brought up.”

“I don’t really feel comfortable talking about this sort of stuff,” said the half-Saiyan between mouthfuls.

“So you don’t do much guy talk?” Mark asked.

Gohan looked down sheepishly. “Not much, no, and I don’t like to exchange notes with other guys at our school. I don’t play Kiss and Tell, not like it really matters… They already know about me and Videl anyway.”

“Here’s one…,” said Mr. Satan, pursing his hands together in front of his face. “You’re half alien, right? So…, what effect does this have on your and Videl’s relationship?”

Gohan put his finger against his chin as he thought about the question.

“I-I can do it more often in one session with less rest than a full-blooded human. I get more active around the time of a full moon, and then there’s my sense of smell.”

“Smell?” Mark queried.

“My sense of smell is as powerful as a bloodhound’s,” Gohan explained. “It lets me know when Videl is ready.”

“WOAH! WOAH! WOAH!” Mr. Satan shouted holding his hands out in front. “Are you telling me that you actually know when my daughter wants to do it just by sniffing the air?! That’s crazy!”

Gohan went on. “It gives us an advantage over other couples. Sexual tension is rarely an issue. At least this way, when we have problems they are in fact actual problems.”
“Holy shit…!” Mr. Satan sat back wide-eyed.

“It is something, alright,” remarked the half-breed with a chuckle. “Things were so awkward after the whole Buu fiasco that my half-Saiyan traits were a primary factor in easing us into things. My dad also has this heightened sense of smell. He can actually track someone for miles just by following their scent!”

“That’s more than a little creepy…” muttered Mark. “You’re super strong too! How does this affect your time together?”

“Videl’s pretty light, so it’s a major plus,” said Gohan.

Videl’s face beamed with a mischievous grin. “Daddy, I absolutely love the way Gohan bounces me!”

“Woah… OK… I was not expecting that,” he muttered, somewhat uncomfortable and more than a little creeped out with his daughter being that blunt. “What’s your opinion on my daughter…, as a partner I mean?”

Videl and Gohan exchanged a quick smile before the half-Saiyan answered, “Mark, when we make love, her strength allows her to give back to me. She’s also very passionate, she’s very predatory and aggressive, she’s really fun loving, and she gives me a sense of fulfillment! I also think I like smaller girls, so it’s really fun being with her!”

Upon hearing this a deep blush rolled across Videl’s face. “So you like shorter girls Gohan?”

“I think so…,” said the half-Saiyan, “You’re small and cute! I just can’t get enough of you!”

“Aww… you have no idea how happy it makes me feel hearing you say that!” she cheesed.

“Videl! What about you?” asked her father.

“Dad, do you really want me to tell you half the stuff I’ve told my psychiatrist?” she asked with a hint of sarcasm. “How can I put this…?”

Listening carefully, Mark eyed his only child.

“I get butterflies in my tummy when we’re together. Gohan just makes me feel like a real woman! His body is so powerful and his muscles make him feel like silk stretched over steel. Every time we’re together, I just feel so possessive with him! When I’m with him, I don’t have as many nightmares of what happened during the fight with Spopovich. The nightmares I have from Buu don’t affect me as much. Daddy, I just don’t think I would’ve been able to get through the past three months without Gohan. He’s my home port!”

‘And there it is…’ thought Mr. Satan, grimacing.

“I-I guess this means the two of you really are that committed to each other, huh?” Mark asked. For the first time, Mark actually felt pretty bad for getting in the way of the Son boy and his daughter’s relationship so much.

His plate in hand, the Champ headed inside for some much needed sleep.

A short while later, Gohan decided to have a bath. More specifically, he decided to soak in an outdoor, fire-heated tub similar to what his dad used. He’d already showered so now all he wanted to do was soak and get his mind off of things.
The half breed sighed contentedly as he let the hot Epsom salt-saturated waters soothe his aches and worries. This was the life…

“Gohan…”

Looking up, Gohan was shocked to see Videl stepping towards the barrel. Being wrapped in a white towel, the girl was presumably nude.

The boy gave her a mischievous smirk. “So you decided to come join me, eh?”

The girl let the towel fall from her curved, toned form, and proceeded to join her lover in the hot bath. She winced as her skin came in contact with the searing liquid.

‘Ugh… it’s so hot! How does Gohan bath in water like this?’ she asked herself.

It took a short while, but once she had gotten used to the water, she closed the short distance between herself and Gohan. Sliding into his lap, the two teens began to kiss and caress each other in a heated make-out session.

Gohan left trails of kisses down her jawline, neck, and collarbone as he made his way to her breasts. Taking one into his hand, he kneaded, suckled, and ravaged the firm mound, eliciting contented moans from his aroused mate.

Videl’s body continued to respond to her lover’s ministrations as he kissed and nipped at her chest. Under the water, Videl could feel Gohan’s shaft rubbing against her nether lips, and she began to move her own hips back and forth along its length. The feelings were delicious as she felt the head of his arousal brush against the folds of her own. She didn’t want to do this too quickly though.

“Gohan…, wait!” she growled.

“What’s wrong?” he asked clearly annoyed at having his fun interrupted.

Videl smiled seductively at her half-Saiyan consort. She answered with a husky, “I just want to save this for our bedroom, that’s all. Right now though, my muscles are aching, and my back and thighs could really use a deep massage.”

Turning around, the heated girl grabbed the edge of the tub barrel and lifted herself up so that her sweet rear was on full display. Getting the message, Gohan reached out and used his strength to brace Videl’s lower half above the water. He then set to work with his strong hands.

Videl moaned contentedly as Gohan’s hands rubbed deeply into her thighs and buttocks. Occasionally, the boy’s fingers would slip into her moistened womanhood or brush her clt, eliciting coos and pleasured gasps from the girl. Videl’s eyes rolled into the back of her head at just how good Gohan was at massages. Her boyfriend really did have God-given hands…

“Mmm…Gohan…” she moaned huskily. This wasn’t the first time Gohan had given her a massage, and it certainly wouldn’t be the last if she had anything to say about it.

Gohan never would get used to the beautiful sight of his girlfriend’s sculpted rear. Despite all the scars and bullet wounds she bore from her years of fighting crime, her feminine muscled thighs, buttocks, and cute little nether lips would always bring out his inner animal. “I guess that means it’s time to start on your back.”

“Please…” she pleaded in a low mewling voice.
Coming to a stand behind her, Gohan began to apply the same pampering to her shoulders and neck. His hardness brushed against her entrance, causing Videl to buck her rear back into his crotch.

“Woah there, Sweetheart!” he chided playfully. “I thought you wanted to save this for the bedroom?”

“Sorry…, I got a bit carried away there,” Videl answered with a girlish giggle.

Just then, the two teen lovers found themselves interrupted by some guests. Krillin and his wife Eighteen came running out from around Mr. Satan’s capsule house.

“Hey, Gohan! What’s up?!” greeted Krillin.

Startled by the appearance of their neighbors, the two horny teens quickly slipped back into the hot water. The young lovers wore blushes of embarrassment as Gohan brought Videl to his chest in a bid to cover her nudity.

“I see what you two are up to!” Krillin teased. “Hey, Honey! Remember when we used to do stuff like this?”

“I do, and if I remember correctly, Roshi was seldom too far behind,” the cyborg dryly answered.

At the mention of her perverted martial arts master, Videl’s eyes flitted about nervously as she scanned the surrounding area.

“Hey, don’t worry! Roshi’s asleep,” Krillin assured her.

Videl let out an audible sigh of relief and let herself relax against Gohan’s chest. The last thing she wanted was to get groped by that dirty old man again. Roshi was probably the wisest martial arts teacher out there, but his perverted antics were downright cringe-worthy.

“So…,” began Krillin propping himself against the edge of the tub. “What was all that shouting about?”

“I was grilling my Dad about his special brand of bullshit,” Videl answered.

“Videl really ripped Mr. Satan a new one!” added Gohan. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen her that worked up.”

“So, you finally confronted your father for lying about beating Cell?” asked Krillin.

“No, I did that the night after Buu’s defeat,” she answered. “Let’s just say that this confrontation was more about the problems I’ve had to deal with because of my Dad’s lies.”

“Do tell…,” remarked Eighteen. “I’m feeling less and less guilty about blackmailing your father every day.”

“Guys, he’s not all that bad,” said Gohan. “He really does care.”

Videl huffed a sigh into her boyfriend’s bare chest. “Gohan…, you weren’t awake to hear some of the stuff he said about you.”

“Yeah!” Krillin agreed. “I heard his little conversation with Roshi too. The guy is absolutely terrified of you, Gohan! He actually thinks you’re going to harm his daughter! It’s looking more and more like you and Videl might have to invite a smaller crowd when you get married.”
Gohan had a look of disappointment. He’d already had a falling out with his own mother, and now it increasingly looked as if he wasn’t going to have a good rapport with Videl’s father. He really didn’t want the situation between Videl and Mark deteriorating any more than it had. He knew what it was like losing one’s father, and he did not want that for Videl.

“I’ve already harmed Videl,” he muttered as he buried his face in his girlfriend’s raven locks. “His worries aren’t entirely without warrant…”

“Gohan!” Videl shouted incredulously as she pulled away from him, starring into his eyes sternly. “That wasn’t your fault! You weren’t in the right state of mind!”

“I almost killed you, Videl!” he growled, gripping her shoulders. “Your father was there when it happened! I can’t fault him for feeling the way he does. If Buu hadn’t been there, you really would have died! Let’s face it! Any fear your father has of me has grown manifold since then. No amount of blackmail will completely sweep this issue under a rug…”

Any counterargument Videl had died in her throat right there. Much as she didn’t want to believe it, Gohan was probably right, but that didn’t mean she was gonna just let her father treat Gohan like an outsider.

“We’ll keep working on him,” she said leaning back into Gohan’s chest. “He’s the kind who will wear down given enough time and pressure. Let him be an ass! Hell, let him put on a public face of support. We’ve got all the cards in this game and he knows it!”

“I wish it didn’t have to be that way,” Gohan mused. “I really do want his approval.”

“That would entail making changes to our relationship that would make us unhappy,” Videl explained. “My Dad’s gotten his way enough over the years. He needs to be taken down a peg occasionally. Trust me Gohan! We’re doing the only thing that will make a believer out of him.”

“I suppose you’re right,” Gohan admitted. “There’s an old adage that say’s ‘It’s not so important that they love us so much as they fear us.’ I never really thought I’d have to apply that principle to your father just to have the kind of relationship we want. I don’t like being that way towards anybody.”

“Truth be told Videl…,” began Krillin, cracking his knuckles, “I was really looking forward to beating the shit out of your old man at the last tournament. I really didn’t like the idea of letting him continue his public show like this. In a way, I’m glad Piccolo never allowed us to make the wish. At least this way, Mr. Satan won’t be able to openly misuse Majin Buu himself for rigging tournaments.”

“Did he say he was gonna do that?!” asked Videl angrily.

“He mentioned it once,” was Krillin’s short answer.

“Oh my God…” Videl pinched the bridge of her nose. “As much as I hate having everybody at school pick on me for losing so badly to Spopovich, having Dad unable to rig future tournaments is a major plus!” As much as she hated it, at the rate things were going, she’d have to enter the next World Tournament and beat her father herself.

“They pick on you?!” shouted Krillin incredulously.

“Behind my back,” Videl muttered with a tinge of sadness. “Gohan almost killed one of them for doing it to my face.”

“And I would have too!”
“Gohan…,” she groaned, “That wouldn’t have solved anything, and it certainly would have caused more problems.”

“I hate to sound like Vegeta, but I fail to see how I would have paid for it,” replied the Demi-Saiyan. “I’m powerful enough to destroy the cosmos. What could they really do to me? The only negative I see emerging from that scenario is my mother throwing me out, and I wound up leaving home anyway. In short, they got nothing. Nobody is gonna pick on my woman after she’s been beaten half to death if I have anything to say about it!”

Videl rolled her eyes at her boyfriend’s kneejerk overprotectiveness. As long as it didn’t bleed over into their lives as fighters, she could tolerate it. At times it was endearing.

“Sounds like something Vegeta would say,” Krillin remarked crossing his arms.

“Anyway, I’m gonna head in,” said Videl. The young Satan girl climbed out of the tub and grabbed her towel.

Upon seeing Videl in all her naked glory, both Krillin and Eighteen threw some cat calls her way.

“SHAKE THAT MONEY-MAKER!” shouted Krillin.

“WOOH!! DO IT GIRL!” hollered Eighteen. “WILD CHILD!! YOU’RE REPRESENTIN!!”

A blush made its’ way across Videl’s cheeks. Wrapping her towel around her, the Satan girl looked back at her boyfriend. “Gohan, I’ll be waiting for you in bed.”

With that, Videl turned towards their capsule house, and without even getting a running start, leapt right over the building onto the front doorstep.

“Well guys… my duty as a man calls,” Gohan drawled in a macho tone as he climbed out of the barrel. The half-breed wrapped himself in his towel before chasing after his woman.

“Did that just happen?” asked Krillin, wide-eyed.

“Yes Krillin…yes it did…” was his wife’s dry answer.

Fast forward twenty minutes, Gohan and Videl found themselves giving each other some much needed attention. The air of their bedroom was permeated with the scent of their love making. Sensuous moans and grunts filled the room as the two teen lovers engaged in a passionate humping session.

Gohan’s lust-filled eyes feasted upon his girlfriend’s gorgeous backside as he pounded her tight wet cavern. Her warrior scent played across his Saiyan olfactory senses and her cute, seductive moans drove his body wild. Even after four months, he still marveled at her gorgeous fighting figure. Videl may have been barely five feet tall, looking almost like a kid compared to Gohan’s significantly taller more massive form, but she had the body somewhere between a sex goddess and a seasoned fighter. Etched across her toned, naked body were the tell-tale reminders of her adolescence of fighting crime. Faint scars from knife strikes, bullet wounds, and physical trauma were spread out across her torso. They gave Videl a certain character other women didn’t have. Eager hands traced the contours of her incredibly sculpted thighs before coming up to cup at her smooth yet powerful buttocks.

Moving up, he caressed the corded, springy muscles of her oblique and rib cage, muscles hidden under the surface of smooth porcelain skin before dipping down and rubbing the well-trained core muscles just above her raven hair-tufted pussy. Bringing his hands back up, he shuddered as he felt her flat, taunt abdominals, the awe-inspiring fruits of her intense midsection training.
Turning his lust-crazed gaze upwards, he looked upon the holy grail of Videl’s upper body physique. Her lats stretched up from her lower back to her shoulders. Her traps were raised and thick going all the way down in between her shoulder blades, and her deltoids and upper arm muscles were taunt and full. All of this testament to her training time well spent, and the whole package was tinted pink with an adorable sex flush.

Face down, ass up, Videl’s front rested on her ample bosom as she pushed herself back onto her Saiyan boyfriend in an effort to meet his powerful thrusts. Using her thighs and rear, the girl started twerking her sopping wet womanhood in tune with Gohan’s thrusts to repeatedly work her deep sweet spot.

“Oh…, look at that,” the half-breed breathed as he leaned back. Bracing himself with his hands, he jerked his hips at an accelerated pace as he met Videl’s pelvis twerks. “You good girl…”

“Faster…” moaned the raven-haired girl. “Give it to me deeper!”

Hearing this, Gohan threw all his restraint out the window. Gripping her thighs, he lifted her lower half right off the bed before embedding himself inside till their pelvises met. Videl continued to grind and twerk herself on his crotch, trying to work more sweet tension from his deep penetration.

Unbeknownst to the two teens, they had neglected to completely close the door. Feeling more spent than he had in years, Mr. Satan lumbered down the hall towards the bathroom. Just as he was passing by Gohan and his daughter’s room, he was stopped by the sound of sultry moans and ragged heavy breathing.

Looking through the cracked door, the man saw his daughter’s sweat-covered blushing body forcing itself back onto Gohan’s endowment, an almost drug-induced smile on her continence. The young man in question had his head thrown back as his short black locks swayed with his movements. Pulling a little too far back, Gohan’s member slipped out of Videl’s tightness and flopped onto her rump.

The afroed man’s jaw literally hit the floor. Pulling the door closed with a quiet ‘click,’ Mark turned and resumed his track to the restroom.

‘Damn, that kid’s hung! No wonder Videl does all the work!’ thought the Champ wide-eyed.

Mr. Satan’s eavesdropping did not go unnoticed by the young couple. Craning her neck around to look at her Saiyan lover, Videl flashed Gohan a mischievous smirk.

“Looks like he finally took the hint,” she remarked breathlessly.

Gohan returned her shit-eating grin as he reinserted himself into her tight loins. “I guess this means we win.”

“Naturally,” returned the young woman. With a euphoric sigh, she laid her head back on the pillow as Gohan got back to the task of making her tight pleasurable little pussy feel like a princess.

*Oh, tomorrow was going to be beautiful…*

Chapter End Notes

It’s safe to say that tensions are starting to rise between Videl and her father over not just
Videl and Gohan having premarital teenaged sex, but also over the nature of what and who Gohan is. You’ll also notice that Mr. Satan is pretty damned nosy. Well, if its answers he wants, Gohan and Videl will give him some. Videl’s trait of hating liars and wanting to be open about things is basically making her and Gohan’s love life an open book for her dad. Mr. Satan is now in the unenviable position of being an older single dad with the knowledge of just how much sex his teenaged daughter is having with her boyfriend and just how much she enjoys having it. Pity the poor man. Depending on whether you like him because you find him hilarious or you hate him because of his fraudulent opportunism, pity him…

Oh, and just to be clear, Barbella will be an important antagonist a little later in the story. The rematch between her and Videl will be both public and epic, and let’s just say that Barbella isn’t the only one she’ll be having a rematch with…Hehehehe!

On the issue of Videl pressuring Gohan to continue his training as a part of their agreement behind their continued relationship: Videl has already seen her father fall from grace partly because he stopped training seriously, and she does not want to have both of the most important men in her life be a couple of quitters. She’s already put up with that garbage out of her father and she isn’t about to put up with it out of Gohan. Her message to Gohan is the exact opposite to Chi-Chi’s: “Put all of our lives in danger by becoming a quitter and not training, and our relationship is over!”
It was just before dawn. The sun’s first light had yet to brighten up the tropical island that served as Roshi’s training grounds for Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan. The makeshift roasting pit where the three fighters enjoyed some wild cuisine the previous night, had burned out completely. T-Rex bones littered the yard and some of the island’s feral dogs nipped at the scraps.

Fully dressed in his blue training gi, Son Gohan stepped briskly into the kitchen for some morning coffee. It would be an hour or so before Master Roshi came to drag them out for their second day of training and Gohan had something he needed to do.

To his surprise, Videl and Mark were already up and about. Mark was sitting at the table checking his text messages, and Videl was already at the coffee maker humming a tune. The Satan girl wore a plain white T-shirt that came down to her mid-thighs just like the one she wore the night before.

Grinning wickedly, Gohan quietly snuck up behind his petite, raven-haired lover and snaked his hands around her midsection. This elicited a surprised “eep!” as the girl jumped.

“Morning beautiful…,” he whispered into her ear as he nipped at her neck, causing Videl to lean her head back as Gohan’s mouth worked its’ magic.

Bringing her hand up behind Gohan’s head, the girl craned her neck around to catch her lover’s lips in a quick smooch. “Getting started a little early, aren’t we?”

Mark sat and watched with a slack-jawed expression as his future son-in-law(God, he was gonna have to get used to calling him that!) slid one eager hand down onto his daughter’s muscled thigh before running it under the hem of her shirt. Had he a better angle, he would have seen Gohan caressing her exposed womanhood. His other hand found its way onto her bare ass cheek and began to mimic its’ twin.

Suddenly, Videl reached behind her and slide her hand up and down his crotch. Gohan hissed at the girl’s move.

“You know you like it,” the little Satan girl purred, giving him an eyebrow waggle.

His wicked smile still in place, Gohan nipped at her ear. “That’s because you know what I like…”

Videl squealed happily as her boyfriend picked her up and twirled her around in the air before setting her down towards the living room entrance. Bending forward, the Son boy whispered in the short girl’s ear.

“I’m gonna have a word with your dad real quick!” Turning Videl around, Gohan sent her out of the kitchen with a light smack on the butt that had the petite fighter giggling.

“Woah..!” was all Mark could utter at what just transpired. His attention was soon focused on Gohan as the young man stepped forward.

“She really is something, that girl,” muttered Gohan with a shit-eating grin. “Sometimes, I wonder
what she ever saw in me…”

“My daughter is a very special young lady,” the Champ said over his coffee.

“That she is Mark…That she is,” he said with a sigh. “I only wished I was good enough for her.”

“Why do you say that?” Mark asked, clearly intrigued by the Son boy’s somber self-depreciation.

“Because I failed her far more than anyone else I’ve been close to, and yet somehow she still loves me,” he replied with a shudder. “She may be your daughter, but she’s my woman. I love her more than you could imagine, but I’ve been a terrible boyfriend to her.”

Mr. Satan sat there and listened intently to the young man as he confided in him. This wasn’t the Gohan he knew. Gohan never poured his soul out to him. They’d had conversations sure, but they never really got past some imaginary lines in the sand they’d drawn in their dealings with one another. Not meeting his gaze, the half-breed took a seat at the table next to him.

“I want to protect her Mark, but she feels like I’m suffocating her every time I try. The most I can do is help her protect herself, and I couldn’t even do that without help. When we flew away to stop Majin Buu’s resurrection during the last tournament, she told me to go be a hero again, and I failed her not once but twice! I was too late to save her, and I couldn’t even avenge her! Sometimes, I think her not wanting my protection has as much to do with a lack of faith in my own competence as it does with her stubborn refusal to be ‘coddled.’ It’s no wonder she doesn’t want my protection. She wants me to take up the old mantle of protector my father left me following the Cell Games, but I failed so completely in that role that I allowed myself become weak enough that it got everyone killed.”

“Ya know Son…,” Mr. Satan began, “The more I get to know you, the more I realize just how much we have in common, both for better and for worse.”

This was the last thing Gohan expected to hear from “What do ya mean?!?”

“Isn’t it obvious?” asked the Champ with a wry smile, “We keep trying to protect Videl from herself, but we keep on failing. We both lied or omitted the truth from her in some way just to fulfill some selfish goal. We both stopped taking our training seriously in favor of living a lie. In spite of Videl being the most important woman in each of our lives, we each let her act like the man in our relationships…”

Gohan’s serious expression bore into Mr. Satan’s eyes. “Mark, I really am trying to be a man to your daughter! I was raised by my mother in a single parent home, and my father just can’t help me with the problems I have. I feel so confused sometimes. I try so hard…”

“How bad could it be?” asked Mark.

“Bad enough that Videl paid to get me professional help,” he shuddered. “Even then, there’s only so much I can really talk about without hurting you and Videl.”

“Why is that?”

Gohan swallowed. “Videl isn’t the only one with mental issues stemming from trauma. Throughout my childhood, I’ve seen horrible things. As a kid, I’ve killed grown men. I’ve seen my friends die right before my eyes. I’ve been at the other end of violence since I was four years old. During my training under my first teacher, I was thrown from a cliff into a ravine. Both of my legs were broken, but my mentor Piccolo would only save me if I was strong enough to crawl back up. He would only train me if I was strong enough to survive. I had my neck broken at the age of five in a fight with an
enemy mercenary. I had my skull shattered and every bone in my body pulverized by another enemy. I’ve been beaten unconscious more times than I can count both in fights with real enemies and in training. Cell tortured and killed some people I knew right in front of me.”

Mark shook his head. “I still don’t see why we’re the reason you can’t get help with those problems too.”

“If I get help with all my problems, I’ll have to talk about the Cell Games. Everyone would find out that I killed Cell! It would destroy your life and Videl’s! This is why I have to find some way to deal with my problems on my own…”

Mark didn’t know what to say. To think that the Son boy put himself through so much mental and emotional anguish just to protect both him and Videl.

Licking his lips, Gohan wrung his hands together before continuing. The teen started to shake as memories of past battles came flying back to him.

“I know you’re afraid of me, and that you’re afraid for your daughter. I’m so, so sorry for what happened out in the desert! Your daughter doesn’t want me to hold back when we train together and she knows when I’m holding back, but I can’t realistically give her what she wants without killing her! What happened in the desert is worse than anything Piccolo put me through. I made a commitment to Videl so I could help her find herself again, but I’m so scarred that I’ll hurt her!”

“But you did help her!” Mr. Satan asserted. “You led her to someone who could help her, who could help all of us! Just because you can’t help her directly now doesn’t mean it’ll never happen! Just let the next eight months play out, be devoted to my daughter’s training after you and her go back to school, and more importantly be devoted to her!”

Gohan eyes widened at what he was hearing. Since when did Mr. Satan support him courting his daughter?

“Why are you saying this?” asked Gohan, suspicion evident in his voice. “You’ve never liked me before, and I hardly believe that you’ve had some Earth-shattering change of heart this quickly.”

“Look Kid…,” Mark began with a sigh, “We’ve had our problems sure, but I know you love my daughter to pieces. For what it’s worth, I give you my word that I won’t interfere with what you and Videl have. Hell! I won’t even try to interfere with your nighttime activities! It’s too late for that anyway…”

“What I’m really after is your approval,” Gohan admitted. “I want to save your relationship with your daughter.”

“Why?!” the Champ queried in shock. “I’ve caused both you and my daughter more inconvenience than anyone! Why would you help me?”

“It’s because I don’t want Videl to go through what I went through,” explained the half-Saiyan. “I don’t want her to lose her father like I did. Videl was ready to pack her bags and leave you months ago. She still loves you, but she just can’t stand living a lie. I was really hoping that by offering to help retrain her and assuming full responsibility for what happened with both Spopovich and Barbella, I’d be able to shield you from being blamed. I share a responsibility for Videl not being as strong as she could be. I set her up to fail just like you did! I share a responsibility for her getting hurt over and over, but I’ve been trying to bear the full emotional deadweight in small part so I could save your relationship with your daughter.”
“So… in your own way, you’ve been protecting not just Videl, but me as well?” Mark asked, his voice cracking.

Gohan nodded. “I can’t do this alone Mark… You know your daughter better than anyone and I need help! I want to be a real man to Videl! I don’t just want her to covet me for the sake of possessiveness! I want her to be proud of me! I want to be the hero I once was, the person I was born to be, and the person she knows I can be! I want to be assertive! I want her to have the same respect for me that I have for her!”

“I can’t believe you did all this to help not just my daughter but me as well…” shuddered the Champ. “I was wrong in judging you, Gohan. My daughter isn’t doing all the work in your relationship! You’ve pulled your fair share and then some all along!”

“Does that mean…?” Gohan looked expectantly into the older man’s eyes

Mark mulled it over a moment before giving his reply. “You have my approval to marry my daughter. With that, I’ll also give you my formal approval to be with Videl any way you see fit.”

Gohan surged forward and wrapped his arms around the afroed man. Mr. Satan returned his future son-in-law’s hug with one of his own.

“Now, will I be expecting grandchildren soon?” asked Mark, a gleam in his eye. “I don’t think you two should have any until at least after you’re married.”

“Don’t worry Mark,” assured Gohan, “A kid is the last thing on our minds right now.”

Leaning back in his chair, Mr. Satan let out a deep sigh. “That’s a relief! I’m not ready to feel that old yet…”

“Anyway…” Gohan groaned with an eye-roll, “Master Roshi has an errand he needs me to run. I probably won’t be back until you and Videl start your late morning training.”

“Alright,” Mark nodded. “Be sure to let Videl know on the way out.”

“Will do.”

Leaving the kitchen, Gohan made his way to his and Videl’s bedroom. Opening the door, he saw Videl trying on her new weighted training cloths.

“So…, how does it feel?” he asked.

“Feels awkward…” was her simple answer. “I guess they’re designed to simulate the effect of Roshi’s turtle shell…”

“You’ll get used to it soon enough,” the demi-Saiyan said assuringly. “Um… Videl, Master Roshi is sending me on an errand to the Lookout to meet with Piccolo. I probably won’t make it back at least until late morning training starts.”

“How come?” she asked, bringing her hands to her hips.

“Roshi suggested I have Piccolo make some special weighted clothing for me,” he answered. “He can’t really make anything heavy enough with the materials on hand.”

The little Satan girl flashed him a warm smile before walking up and pulling him down for a quick kiss. “Hurry back then, sweetheart.”
“Sure thing, hun!”

With that, Gohan bolted from the house and blasted into the early morning light.

A short while later, the half-Saiyan arrived at his destination. The teen took a brief moment to look around at the Divine Palace and Popo’s gardens. This high up in the sky the air was extremely thin and how one perceived the shift between night and day was somewhat off. Thinking back, Gohan couldn’t help but wonder if the lack of oxygen may have hindered Videl, Bulma, and the others in running away from Majin Buu. Normal humans certainly would have trouble exerting sustained effort under these conditions.

Gohan was then brought out of his reverie by the sound of approaching footsteps. Looking across the platform, the half-Saiyan saw just the person he came to see.

“Piccolo! How’re things?!” he hollered, running up to his old mentor. Behind him were Dende, the current guardian of Earth, and his pudgy assistant Mr. Popo.

“Gohan! How ya doin?!” Dende greeted.

The tall Namek crossed his arms as he regarded his former student with a faint smile. “Hey kid. To what do we owe this visit?”

“Master Roshi suggested I come up here and get some weighted training gear,” he answered. This piqued the Namek’s interest. “Since when did you start training again? I thought you said you were through with going into battle.”

Gohan sighed. He knew this question was coming. “I was being stupid, Piccolo. I can’t be a protector of the innocent and not train. The two positions conflict with one another. Let’s just say that a certain cute girl talked some sense into me.”

“A girl?” Piccolo queried, raising an eyebrow. Then it dawned on him. “Videl?”

“Good guess,” replied the half-Saiyan. “So… can you do it for me?”

“Piece of cake,” the Namek remarked. Holding out his hand, the green-skinned warrior screamed as he tapped into his vastly developed esper abilities. A bright flash illuminated the area as his materialization technique worked its magic. When the smoke cleared, Gohan had to readjust himself to keep from falling over due to the sheer amount of added weight.

“A little much…, don’t ya think?!” growled the demi-Saiyan.

“As much as you’ve been slacking off, I should have made it heavier!” was Piccolo’s harsh reprimand. “But seriously, what did you expect? Your father wouldn’t be able to move in that. Come back in a month to exchange it for something heavier.”

“Right!” nodded Gohan.

“You said something about Videl talking some sense into you,” said Piccolo, “Care to explain why you’ve decided to get back in the saddle?”

“Sure thing.” Gohan went on to explain the situation with Videl and the Barbella incident. He talked about the incident out in the desert and how he, Videl and Mr. Satan were now training under Master Roshi. That last part however raised a few eyebrows.
“Mr. Satan?!” he barked incredulously. “I’ll be damned… So the fool is actually doing something aside from flapping his gums.”

“Yeah, it is something all right,” remarked the half-Saiyan. “Master Roshi said that he would only train Videl if her father agreed to be Videl’s fellow student. Believe it or not, I think Mr. Satan might make it through. He may not be as talented as Videl, but he’s actually a little more resilient than I gave him credit for.”

Piccolo’s expression shifted to something serious. “While you’re up here Gohan, there’s something important we need to discuss. Slowly but surely, something is welling up on Earth.”

“Uh-oh, this can’t be good,” muttered the half-breed.

His old mentor stepped up to the edge of the lookout and gazed down at the lower realm below.

“For the past two months, I have sensed a new evil growing on Earth, an evil very different from the kind we’re used to facing. It’s not one single entity as was the case with Cell and Buu. It’s a collective entity. It’s everywhere and it’s spreading like a cancer!”

Gohan’s face contorted into one of resolve. “Master Roshi alluded to this great evil, but he didn’t really tell me what we were up against. He said that Videl would likely be my most important ally in fighting this new adversary. He didn’t say why though. I really need to tell Videl about this so she’ll at least know what we’re getting into. She needs to know the stakes.”

“So I take it Videl is gonna be a part of the team from now on?” the Namek inquired. “From what we saw at the tournament, the girl has a great deal of potential. I still find it hard to believe that a human mastered flying in less than a week.”

“It’s amazing how much she’s improved on her own since then,” Gohan added. “And she did all that training just so we could be a better couple. I still can’t believe how blind I’ve been!”

“Now that your eyes are open, I think it’s time we had a little discussion,” said Piccolo, crossing his arms.

“What about?” asked the half-Saiyan feeling genuinely curious.

“As you know, I confiscated the seven star ball to prevent the dragonballs from being abused,” explained the former guardian. “The idea of erasing the memories of the people of Earth did not sit well with me. In the wake of Buu’s devastation, the wishes needed to be put to better use. This however, was not my only motivation.”

Gohan threw a glare at his former mentor. “If my memory serves me correctly, you didn’t just confiscate the seven star ball. You jumped in, made a wish, and then grabbed the ball as they were departing.”

“I had to,” asserted Piccolo. “You and the others were about to use the dragonballs for something the Earthlings needed to handle on their own.”

“Personally, I was really hoping we could of given the people of Earth a clean slate,” Gohan admitted sheepishly. “I wanted to keep them from going through the same closure issues me and Videl are having now.”

Piccolo shot a reproaching glare at the half-breed. “I didn’t see anyone give that courtesy to the Namekians after Freiza. We can’t keep doing this forever, Gohan!”
“Doing what?” Gohan was clearly puzzled by what Piccolo was getting at. To be fair however, he wasn’t cryptic like Master Roshi was in spite of having lived a couple centuries longer.

“Hiding the truth,” he answered. “Every time a major adversary attacks, we leave everyone on Earth without any kind of context. And why do we do it? Because a few of us can’t deal with a little extra attention.”

“Hey, I happen to be one of those few,” Gohan growled with indignation. “Some of us don’t want the press hounding us or our families!”

“Kid… listen! Letting Mr. Satan lie to the world is one thing, but actively trying to suppress the truth of what happened with Majin Buu by using the dragonballs to erase the memories of the people is a whole nother basket of apples and oranges. I get that you want to live a normal life, but what you were advocating just so you could go back to pretending Buu never happened… that was just plain sad! You’re supposed to be better than that! I can’t just stand by and allow the dragonballs to be misused so brazenly for such selfish ends! From here on out, the dragonballs are to be used only when it’s absolutely necessary.”

“So you’re saying that I should just live with the reality of the whole world knowing about me?!” Gohan asked angrily.

“It’s better than the alternative!” Piccolo fired back. “Actively keeping the truth from others has never worked out well! Doing so makes other people weak. Your girlfriend is living proof of this! The human race as a whole is living proof of this! Gohan, you need to stop treating everyone as if they can’t handle the truth! It’s the same kind of overprotectiveness you show towards that girlfriend of yours playing itself out on a grander scale. The unintended consequences caused by lying, by obfuscating the truth has reached a breaking point. We may have saved the world many times, but thanks to our efforts, there is no reference point or collective effort on the part of human kind as a whole to step up to the plate! We gave to them with one hand only to rob them with the other!”

“Piccolo…,” Gohan began, “Ever since the Cell Games, I’ve tried to live a normal life. I’ve tried to put the violence of my childhood behind me. More and more however, I’m starting to realize that it’s something I can’t have because I had the accident of being born the son of Goku. I was a fool to live in denial for so long, to have allowed myself to get lazy and let my abilities stagnate. I got everyone killed because of my selfish desires! I know it’s misguided, but normalcy is something I strove for because it was something I never had.”

Piccolo let out an annoyed sigh. “Gohan… listen. In my personal opinion, I do believe the gravest mistake you ever made was assuming that normal somehow denoted good by default. Extraordinary saves lives. ‘Normal’ is the hiding place of a spectator! You act as if the condition of being normal, being good, and being and acting like a human are somehow congruent with one another, but I’ll tell you from experience that you are wholly mistaken. The history of humanity is long indeed, and you need to get it through your head that denying one half of who you are in favor of the other half while operating under this assumption is a recipe for disaster!”

Piccolo turned around and gripped his oldest friend’s shoulders. “Let me tell you something about humans, Gohan. I’ve lived in one form or another for over 500 years, and I know your human half far better than you ever will. Before the establishment of the one world government under the House of Furry, humankind’s history was one never-ending cycle of war and aggression. Within the chest of every one of those so-called normal people, those humans, beats the heart of an aggressive jungle beast. They are a wonderful, friendly people as long as their bellies are full and their television sets are working. But take away their creature comforts… deprive them of food, sleep, hygiene…put their lives in jeopardy over an extended period of time, and those same friendly, intelligent,
wonderful humans will become as nasty and as violent as the most bloodthirsty Saiyan. This is why I scoff whenever Krillin or one of the others make light-hearted comments regarding your father’s or Vegeta’s love of battle. Wanting to be normal, more human, entails that you also wish to embrace the darker side of humanity with the light. In that sense, you’re playing a fool’s game! History itself proves that there isn’t one lick of difference between humans and Saiyans. The two races that gave birth to you share a hell of a lot more than just their physical appearance! The behavior and biology of these two primate races are too similar for either one to say anything about the other with a straight face. Tribalism, xenophobia, slavery, genocide, jingoism, bloodlust..., Humans and Saiyans have exhibited all of these with the fervency of a bunch of religious fanatics.”

“If that’s the case, then why aren’t there more humans with the same kind of dedication to combat?” Gohan asked.

“Nature vs nurture,” was Piccolo’s short answer. “The human culture no longer exalts the ideologies that promoted a mindset geared towards survival of the fittest. Social Darwinism and religions of war are no longer a part of the greater human monoculture and haven’t been in a few centuries. King Furry’s government may have a military, but it functions as a peacekeeping force. In short, the overall environment promotes a proclivity among humans that is at odds with their evolutionary nature.”

Gohan brought his hands to his hips. “It almost sounds as if you’re saying humans are naturally violent.”

“My Piccolo half has seen humans at their worst. It would be foolhardy to dismiss man’s inhumanity towards man especially since that is something you, me, Videl, and the others will be dealing with someday soon.”

“I fail to see how a purely human threat could be that bad,” Gohan scoffed.

Piccolo frowned at Gohan’s dismissive attitude. “Gero was human. The Dictator was human. Dr. Wheelo was human. A person doesn’t have to be an overpowered alien to sow the seeds of destruction. I’ve found that it’s often the weaker ones who get the ball rolling in that department. There wouldn’t have been a Cell without Dr. Gero. If a human threat to the rest of humanity is really that impotent, wouldn’t a human force for good be just as arbitrary? If you really believe that, why are you even taking Videl’s training seriously? Your attitude belies a glaring double standard. You really need to stop compartmentalizing your logic, Gohan. You’re better than this!”

“I seem to be getting my fair share of wake-up calls these days,” Gohan remarked with a world-weary look. “Leave it to my old mentor to set me straight.”

“It’s my job at this point,” stated the Namekian. “Lately however, Videl’s been doing that job for me.”

“She tries,” remarked the half-Saiyan with a laugh. “I’ve gotta get back soon. I’ll try not to be a stranger from here on out.”

“Before you leave Gohan, there’s one more issue I need to discuss with you.”

“That being...?”

“Three days ago, we all sensed a massive increase in both you and Videl’s power levels,” Piccolo answered. “Using our ability to look upon the lower realm, Dende and I were shocked by what we saw. Somehow, you managed to unlock the Legendary Super Saiyan transformation used by Broly. Care to explain that?”
Gohan shook his head. “Piccolo, I really don’t know how it happened. I couldn’t control myself in that form. All I know is that one minute me and Videl were mating and the next thing I know, I’m reduced to being a spectator in my own body. I felt all the sensations of touch, sight and smell, and I do mean all of them, but I sort of just gave up trying to control myself as soon as I realized that my body was basically doing with Videl what I would’ve done even if I hadn’t been in that form.”

Looking at the two Namekians before him, nothing could have prepared Gohan for their reaction. Piccolo buried his face in one of his hands as he struggled to stifle the chuckles that were so out of character for him, and behind him, Dende had fallen on his rear in a fit of laughter.

“Oh man, Gohan!” shouted Dende between laughs, “That’s just priceless! Seriously, though! Seeing an 8 foot berserker LSS giving the high hard-on to a five foot nothing human girl was freakin hilarious! You looked like a Rottweiler bonein a Chihuahua…!”

A blush made its’ way across Gohan’s face as the teen started to lose his composure.

“Err…. It’s not funny you guys!” he yelled. “I couldn’t control myself! Videl could’ve really gotten hurt!”

“From where I was standing, she seemed to be enjoying herself,” Piccolo said with a grin. “Besides, you’re so strong that every one of us could sense when you and her are going at it like drunk monkeys anyway, no pun intended.”

His face flushed with embarrassment, Gohan took to the skies without saying another word. His pride was thoroughly chaffed. That and he had to at least get back to Videl and the others before late morning training was over. His extra heavy weighted clothing however, made flying more than a little awkward.

Back at the Lookout, Piccolo regarded his oldest friend with the slightest hint of a smile.

‘I owe that girl one,’ thought the tall Namekian. ‘Thanks to her, Gohan might just get his old spark back…’

Later that day, Master Roshi was leading Gohan, Videl, and her father out to the same beach for another post-breakfast special training session. This time, both Eighteen and Krillin had joined them. His three charges had noticeable difficulties in adjusting to their weighted training cloths, though Mark was having the worst of it. It was decided that all of their daily special training sessions would take place on that same beach until Gohan and Videl had to return to school.

“Today, we’ll engage in some sparring!” announced the old Turtle Hermit. “You may use your indigenous fighting styles all you like. Since there are six of us, each one of us will have a somewhat comparable sparring partner, or at least as comparable as we can get.”

Roshi turned to Mr. Satan. “Mark! You’ll be sparring with me today.”

“Uh…sure,” muttered the Champ nervously. “You’ll take it easy on me, won’t ya?”

“Don’t be silly!” Roshi chided, “I’ve had over two hundred and fifty years to perfect my control. Wasted movements and energy are hallmarks of the uninitiated.”

“Two hundred and fifty years?!” the Champ shouted incredulously, his eyes bugging out. “Just how old are you?!”

The old master took a moment to think about it. “I’d say… about 330 years give or take. Gotta love that transcentennial lifespan! One of the many benefits of surpassing the wall of humanity.”
“So you’re saying that there’s a possibility that I’ll live that long if I complete your training?!” asked the Champ disbelievingly.

“I’m not sure,” was Roshi’s answer. “I’ve never trained someone your age before so I’m not entirely certain the full benefits would be the same. All of my other students were fairly young when they took my training. Your daughter however, is a different story. She’s still young enough that she’ll most certainly attain this added benefit. If Videl is diligent over the next eight months, she will, like me, attain a lifespan of a few centuries.”

It was Gohan’s turn to go all bug-eyed. “W-WHAT?!” The demi-Saiyan looked down at his petite girlfriend who gave his hand a gentle squeeze as she returned his look with a loving smile.

“That’s right, Lover-boy!” she said teasingly, running her finger over his bicep. “You and me are gonna be together for a long, long time!”

“Are you really gonna be able to live that long?!” asked Gohan, exasperated.

Reaching up, Videl Satan cupped her man’s cheek. “Master Roshi told me that barring certain conditions being met on my part, your Saiyan heritage would cause you to outlive me by many decades. With Roshi’s training, I’ll age slowly enough that we’ll be able to grow old together.”

“Oh, Videl…” moaned the half-Saiyan. Tears stung at his eyes as he turned to Master Roshi.

“Thank you…,” he breathed. Without saying a word, Son Gohan bowed at the hip in reverence and respect for an ancient master that never ceased to amaze him.

“You’re welcome Son,” rasped the Turtle Hermit. “Just be a real man to that young lady.”

Tilting Videl’s chin up, Gohan gave his girlfriend a warm, beaming smile that conveyed all the love he had for her before pulling her in for a deep kiss. “I can live with that…”

“Aww… aren’t they precious?” Krillin cheesed.

“Adorable,” Eighteen answered dryly.

“Ahem!”

Clearing his throat, Roshi beckoned for everyone’s attention. “Now that that’s been brought out into the open, let’s get on with today’s special training. Videl, your sparring partner will be Krillin. That leaves Gohan and Eighteen, seeing how they’re the two strongest people here.”

“Kick his ass honey!” Krillin cheered.

“If he doesn’t get his mind out of the gutter, I might have to kick his balls,” said the cyborg. It was subtle, but Gohan unconsciously started crossing his legs at her remark.

Krillin then turned to Videl. “Alright Shorty #2! Let’s do this!”

“What the fuck did you just call me?!” she growled. “You’re one to talk! You still have to look up just to make eye contact with me! Get a clue!”

“Only if you get a box! You pretty much need to stand on one just so Gohan can do you Colby-style.”

A blush making its way across her cheeks, Videl sneered at the former monk. “Better to need a box than a freakin step ladder! Again, those who live in glass houses! Hell, you probably needed to learn
how to levitate just so you could consummate your marriage!"

“Oh, you and me are gonna get along great,” the short man muttered arrogantly. Krillin fell into his own self-taught fighting stance, the same one he’d been using in all his battles since before the 23rd World Tournament.

Videl dropped into her own stance, one that was a composite between the one employed by Gohan and her father’s. “Besides, it’s not the height of a woman that counts! It’s the size of what she’s packin!’

With that, the little Satan girl shot forward with speed that belied the amount of weight she was wearing. This surprised Krillin a bit as he jerked his head back to the side to avoid a hard left from the petite fighter. Following up, the girl began to let into the former monk with a blitzed combination of kicks, palm strikes, and fists. The combination was so fast in fact that to any normal person, Videl’s assault would look like a translucent ripple effect in the air.

Krillin was absolutely amazed. He simply could not believe how strong Videl had gotten since her fight with Spopovich! Then again, could he really expect anything less from a girl who managed to stand up to Broly of all people? Yes, he was still able to easily parry and block her strikes and yes, her strikes wouldn’t even hurt him, but it wasn’t something he could do half-heartedly. He actually had to stay on his toes with her, and this was in spite of her wearing weighted training cloths. What the hell was this girl?! Just what kind of a girl did Gohan fall in love with?

It was then that Krillin decided to take things up a notch. Utilizing his advanced hyper speed, he phased out of sight.

Narrowing her eyes, Videl looked around frantically for the small man. She looked both behind her and above but still nothing.

“Excuse me?”

Whipping around, Videl looked down to see Krillin in a crouch at her feet. The man was making faces at her.

Her face growing red with anger, Videl began to shake furiously. Thrusting her left palm forward, the Satan girl let loose with a kaiah wave that pulverized a crater into the sandy beach. To her astonishment however, Krillin wasn’t even moved by the low-level ki attack.

Rising to his feet, Krillin tossed the spunky teen a cheeky grin. “And what was that supposed to do?”

Not wasting any time, Videl threw herself into the fray yet again. Side-kicks, round house kicks, toe kicks, heel kicks…, she put all her best footwork into trying to pin the shorter Z-fighter down.

‘She’s getting sloppy and predictable.’ Thought Krillin. “Come on, Videl! Switch it up!”

Videl cursed under her breath as Krillin again slipped behind her before smacking her in the back of the head. This had the unintended effect of jarring Videl so much that she staggered to her knees. Krillin meant for it to be a playful slap, but given his own history of fighting guys like the Ginyu Force, Freiza, and Garlic Jr., he like Gohan, sometimes had a difficult time controlling his own strength. He had to remind himself that Videl, despite her obvious talent, wasn’t as resilient to damage as the rest of them.

Much to Krillin’s astonishment, Videl shook it off fairly well. The Satan girl came to a wobbly stand, and turned to face him with a stare that could burn through lead. A calculating predatory smirk made
its way across the teen’s continence as she brought her guard up for another go.

Krillin admired this girl’s spirit. It really was no wonder Gohan had the hots for her. ‘Ya know?! I think I’ll put her actual toughness to the test…’

“Let’s change it up a bit,” Krillin suggested.

“I’m all ears,” stated Videl. “What did you have in mind?”

“I’m gonna come at you head-on with everything I have. I want to see just how resilient you are to a sustained assault.”

“I might surprise you,” Videl remarked confidently.

Without another word, the former monk kicked off at Videl and let into her upper body with a series of finger jabs and controlled punches. Videl brought her relatively short arms up into a turtle guard in an effort to wither punches that she still had no hope of seeing. She felt herself being battered around like a fleshy pinball as the pain began to pile up.

Videl was beginning to see red. Pain overloaded her senses and flashbacks from Barbella played across her mind. Her control giving way, her body went into full-blown fight or flight mode as a faint white battle aura began to manifest itself. Finally, she lost it and exploded on her sparring partner.

Krillin was again caught off guard as a hard left flew his way. Bringing his hand up, he caught the offending punch with little difficulty. What he did notice was that there was some real pressure behind it, something he didn’t expect.

“What the hell…” muttered Krillin, wide-eyed. Readjusting his senses, the former monk felt the massive change in Videl’s fighting power. Looking into her narrowed, rage-filled eyes, he saw that they glowed a white ember. It was off-putting to say the least.

Videl didn’t have time to react as Krillin drew back and let loose with a devastating roundhouse kick to her oblique that left her crumpled over. With her down, the short man resumed his earlier assault on the petite adolescent. Punch after punch battered the enraged girl’s guard as he poured on some steam.

Eventually, Krillin broke off and allowed the girl to recompose herself. He certainly didn’t wanna overdo it in a training spare. The important part is that he only put enough into it to keep things challenging for Videl. She was his junior after all.

Videl’s chest heaved with every breath. A smile contorted her features as she savored the familiar rush she got from going into fight-or-flight scenarios. A key factor that made this spar so different from all her others is that her partner was the first person she had ever practiced with who was smaller in stature than her. Having a reach advantage for a change was certainly a refreshing experience.

Meanwhile, Master Roshi led Mr. Satan through his own spar. Though significantly weaker and seemingly less talented than his daughter, the afroed grappler was far from hopeless. Much to the Turtle Hermit’s surprise, he had some tactical insight. However, the man still had to wade his way through years of compulsive show fighting, posturing, and telegraphing his techniques before this insight shined through.

“Megaton Punch!!” bellowed the afroed fighter as he threw his secondary signature move at the old master.
Master Roshi grimaced at just how habitual this little tick of Mr. Satan’s was. He easily caught the overly flashy punch in his right hand. “No Mark! We’re not in front of an audience. Pull your head out of your own fantasies!”

At the old sage’s admonishment, Mark Satan looked down sheepishly. “Uh…right!”

“You’re here to learn. Impress others should be the least of your worries. Treat this as you would any other exercise! Eventually, other people will figure out that you and Videl are training on this island, and when the inevitable wave of curious reporters do come, you need to be solidly grounded in the right mindset. Otherwise, this isn’t gonna work!”

Growling, the Champ rushed forward and let loose with a chain of kicks that targeted the old man’s medial line. The limits of modern fighting theory soon became too apparent to their most famous advocate as Roshi expertly redirected the force of the strikes with minimal effort. Modern fighting theory may have had its’ utilitarian uses, but it didn’t hold a candle to the hundreds, perhaps thousands of years worth of collective history that informed Roshi’s personal style.

“Remember Mark,” the Turtle Hermit began, “One of the main goals of this and other sessions will be to help you hold up a sustained assault. “You get too winded, too easily! Learn to control your anger at least until you’ve developed the stamina that will allow you to apply it!”

The afroed man only nodded in confirmation. He would get this shit down! He would prove to his daughter that there was some of his old self still there! He would find personal redemption!

Running forward, the man attempted to wrap his legs around the old master’s torso and take the fight to the ground. He soon discovered that, along with being super strong, the old hermit also had a near-iron hard posture that he could not bend. It also didn’t help that the old master had him doing this in fifty pounds of weighted cloths.

Reaching up with his right hand, Master Roshi grabbed the Champ’s chin and roughly pushed him to the sandy ground. “That was a good honest try Mark, but you’ll find that judo and pankration can’t be applied as easily to me.”

Wide-eyed, Mr. Satan stared up at the ancient man. Seeing the old man in action against nature yesterday was one thing, but actually being the one taking him on was another entirely. No wonder Gohan held the legendary master in such high regard. He stood once again and readied himself for his next charge.

Master Roshi smiled to himself. If there was one thing he had to give the current World Champ, it was his stubborn resilience.

‘Yep! Today is certainly a beautiful one!’

Chapter End Notes

I’ve been getting into a lot of arguments with the Nerd-Han crowd on Youtube lately, and I’ve had the whole ‘They had Pan’ argument thrown at me by the circle-jerk crowd trying to defend the Gohan and Videl empty suits of Dragonball Super. Every argument they’ve employed can just as easily be used to refute their position. Akira made the decision to nerf Gohan for the same reason he nerfs everyone: Plot convenience.
The fact that Gohan now has a family of his own is an even bigger reason to train and stay powerful. He finally has something of his own to protect and the villains never seem to stop coming in spite of his dad's best efforts. Then there’s the fact that his father is always late to battle. I know that Gohan is getting retrained by Piccolo now, but he should have never gone down this sub-arc to begin with. He was supposed to learn this lesson during the Buu Saga! Chi-Chi's desires stopped being remotely important the day Videl wound up being the new most important woman in his life. If history proves anything, it's that Videl encourages Gohan to be heroic and to get involved. Heck, when you consider the fact that Goku is the one who trains Pan, Pan isn't even gonna be around half the time for Gohan to play the perfect father role when she gets older anyway so Gohan is essentially living in denial and throwing every original reason Videl had for falling for him under a bus. That should be Gohan or Videl training Pan, especially Videl since she doesn't even have a job in Dragonball Super. That's why the whole 'they had Pan' argument doesn't 'pan' out very well. It ignores too many elephants in the room. Besides, he's out from under Chi-Chi now so she can't keep him from training anymore. I mean...what's Chi-Chi gonna do? Put a tracking device on a grown man?!

Finally, there's the fact that he is married to Videl. Videl has her father's money which is actually Gohan's money when you really think about it. Gohan doesn't need to be a breadwinner or a traditional father so his not training and putting his family in danger is borderline negligence. It is the ultimate disservice to both his wife and daughter as well as his mentor Piccolo, his father, and the sacrifice of Android 16.
It was another day, another post-breakfast special training session on the beach. Two months had passed since Videl, Gohan, and Mark Satan began their training under Roshi. During this time, Videl and her father, especially Videl, had made amazing progress, so much so that Roshi doubled the amount of weight Videl had to train with just so she could reap the full benefits of her training. Roshi, Krillin, and their three charges filed out onto the beach. In the distance, the island’s volcano was expulsing miasmic gases high into the tropical skies. On a neighboring beach, lava tubes poured hundreds of tons of liquid rock into the surf, creating a sauna effect that could be felt even as far away as they were.

“Today,” Roshi began, “I’m gonna teach you two about sensing energy. Normally, I don’t touch on this subject in my initial program, but since Krillin, Gohan, and myself already have this ability, I think it’s important that we pass this knowledge onto ya’ll. This is sort of advanced, but it’s good to know the principles behind it. Any questions?”

Videl was the first to raise her hand. “Aside from always knowing where another person is, what other benefits does this ability afford the user?”

“That’s a good question Videl!” stated the aged master. “One added benefit, which I’m sure you learned about when we were hiding from Buu on the Lookout, is the ability to ascertain how you stack up against a potential opponent. This can be absolutely vital in allowing one to avoid a life-threatening situation in the field. A second would be the ability to sense the state another person is in. You’ll eventually be able to read another person’s ki signature in such a way that you’ll be able to tell if they are depressed, frightened, happy, angry, sick, or injured. You’ll also have the added benefit of sensing deception.”

It was only for a moment, but Roshi spied Videl throwing a mischievous glance towards both Gohan and her father. The two must have caught the look because both Gohan and Mr. Satan looked like deer in the headlights.

‘Well..., there goes any chance I ever had of pulling the wool over Videl’s eyes,’ thought the half-Saiyan grimly.

Roshi turned to the half-breed. “I know what you’re thinking Gohan, but you sort of set yourself up to fail anyway. Seriously though, you’re the only one out of the whole group that made the mistake of teaching your woman bakujutsu.”

“Don’t remind me…” quipped Gohan.

“HA-HA!” teased Videl in a sing-song voice as she poked Gohan in the side.

“Baku-what?” asked Mark, scratching his chin.

“The ability to fly,” Gohan answered.

Mark’s mouth made an ‘o’ in understanding. “That begs another question. Videl, what’s it like to fly?”

Videl beamed a wide smile at her father. “It’s nothing short of amazing, Daddy! You have absolutely
no idea just how much simpler life is when you can just fly across town and get whatever you need from your favorite coffee shop in minutes! I’ve gotten so fast that I hardly ever use my jet copter anymore! I can fly all the way out to Gohan’s place in the 439 District in under 40 minutes!” As if to drive home this fact, Videl took to the air just above Gohan and her father and flew a few quick circles around them before landing.

“You’re kidding me!” shouted Mr. Satan, his eyes bugging out. “40 minutes! That’s like 500 miles away!”

“Yeah, and don’t even get me started on how easy it is to outrun the paparazzi when I can just take to the air and land in another part of town. And then there’s all the times I’ve been able to swoop down like a hawk and land on criminals in town! They never see it coming! There’s also the savings one gets from never having to buy gas again that one should consider. Oh, and let’s not forget all the times I’ve been able to skip all those pesky elevator rides. Then there’s the added benefit of me and Gohan being able to hook-up for some alone time whenever we want regardless of where we are! There’s no such thing as a long distance relationship with us.”

“Yeah, don’t remind me…” muttered Mark. “I’ve had to answer more than a few questions from reporters about all of that.”

“If the bottom feeders have a problem with me knowing how to fly, they can deal with it!” asserted Videl. “Constantly flying is one of the key reasons why my stamina is so much greater than it was before the whole Majin Buu thing. Heck, I’m surprised our friends at school haven’t lined up to ask me for flying lessons. You’d think me and Gohan landing on the front doorstep of our school every morning would get people interested—”

‘Ahem!’

Everyone present redirected their attention to Master Roshi. The old man had his hands on his hips in a show of impatience.

Looking down, Videl reddened in embarrassment. “Sorry…”

Master Roshi gave a quick smile before continuing. “Videl’s gonna love this next benefit! This ability also allows one to know when two other people are bumpin uglies! Once she learns this, Gohan’ll never be able to bang a live one behind Videl’s back. Cheating without the other’s knowledge will no longer be a possibility.”

Videl’s eyes widened at the possibilities. “OK, now I know I need to learn this! Err… I mean… I trust Gohan. It’s just…”

Gohan raised an eyebrow at his girlfriend’s remark.

Roshi turned to address Mr. Satan. “Understand this Mark. I’m not sure if you’re far enough along to learn this particular skill. If you do manage to pick up on this early though, it’ll be about the same as Gohan teaching Videl how to control energy before training her past the ‘wall of humanity.’ You’ll essentially be learning to run before you can crawl. If you’d like to opt out of this until after you’ve advanced more, I’ll completely understand. Sometimes seemingly simple things can be the hardest to learn. I don’t expect either you or Videl to get this right off the bat.”

“How hard can it be?” asked the Champ.

“It took Goku three years to learn this.”

“T-Three years?!” Videl asked incredulously.
“Now don’t get your panties in a wade,” the Turtle Hermit placated, “Goku might be a great fighter, but he really isn’t the sharpest knife in the drawer. Every move that man has ever mastered were moves developed by other people who did all the intellectual heavy lifting. Mr. Popo teaching him that ability was probably akin to a special ed class.”

Both Videl and Gohan covered their faces as they shared a laugh. Gohan may have loved his old man, but he had no illusions about his lack of intellectual curiosity.

“Err… Mark, could you come with me for a second?” the Turtle Hermit asked.

“Sure,” answered the afroed man.

The two men put some distance between themselves and the two teen lovers until Roshi was sure he was out of earshot.

“Alright, what’s this about?” inquired the Champ with suspicion.

“There’s something you need to realize,” Roshi started. The old sage took a moment to collect himself before continuing. “If you manage to learn this technique, you’re gonna know whenever Gohan’s with your daughter.”

Mr. Satan’s face reddened. “Considering how loud they are after lights out, it’s kinda hard for me not to know.”

“No, I mean you’re gonna know when they do it while they’re in Satan City and you’re still here,” Roshi explained.

“You mean I’ll be able to sense them from that far away?!” The Champ’s eyes bugged out. “That’s thousands of miles!”

“Dude, Gohan’s power level is so high, you’d be able to tell if he was with Videl if you were on Pluto!”

Mr. Satan’s jaw dropped. “How strong is that kid?!”

“Let me put it to you this way,” said the old master, making wide gestures with his hands, “If Krillin’s ki were a candle light, Gohan’s ki would be a blazing singularity! If he were a star, you’d be able to see him clear across the universe. Believe me when I say this Mark, knowing Gohan’s strength is one thing. Experiencing it in a metaphysical sense is a different story entirely!”

“This isn’t the first time I’ve heard about this,” Mr. Satan admitted. “Gohan mentioned it once when we were watching the fight between my daughter and that Barbella nut. Dende also said something about it when we were hiding from Majin Buu. If this really is the same thing, I’ve gotta know this!”

Master Roshi let out an inaudible sigh. “OK then, though it would have been easier for you to learn if you already knew how to manipulate your own ki.”

“Hey, I’ll learn it!” Mark asserted adamantly. “Where do you think Videl gets her smarts from? If my daughter can learn to fly in a week, than I can get this down!”

With that, the two men rejoined Gohan and Videl. Apparently, Gohan was already giving Videl pointers on this next lesson. Videl held a suspended ball of whitish-blue ki just in front of her outstretched left palm.

“That’s it Videl,” Gohan affirmed, “Now…, close your eyes.”
Videl did as her boyfriend instructed. “Now what?”

“Using the same principle to feel your own body’s ki, maintain the connection between the ball of ki and your own mind. Focus on that connection. You need to remember this connection because it will be essential in locating and interpreting the energy of others.”

“Okay…” she breathed. “I think I feel it.”

Gohan gave a slight nod. “Now without opening your eyes, move the ball with your will to a different spot.”

The petite fighter did as she was told and gave the energy ball a subtle nudge. The ball moved a scant few feet to her right.

Good,” Gohan praised. “Now using your finger, point in the direction of the ball.”

Tilting her head down to make it harder to cheat, Videl pointed at the mass of energy with her left index finger.

“Very good! As expected, you’re catching on fast! Now move it again, and repeat the same exercise.”

Again, the Satan girl did as she was instructed. The ball of ki drifted in the opposite direction, coming to rest to her left. Once again, she pointed to the left.

“Now all you need to do is develop an intrinsic grasp of the connection you have between your own will and sources of ki. It really isn’t so much of a leap going from sensing sources of energy that originated within your own body to those that originate from another ki source. You start sensing masses of energy originating from your own ki as a stepping stone towards building a sort of four dimensional map within your mind. This is something that you will need to approach in baby steps. It may take a while before you get this down pat, but once you have cultivated this sixth sense, it will become every bit as integral as your other five senses.”

Videl opened her eyes and regarded her boyfriend with a curious look. This got a curious eyebrow raise out of the half-Saiyan.

“What’s wrong, hun?” he asked.

“I’d like to try and sense your energy,” she answered.

“Uh…, d-don’t you think you should choose a smaller target?!?” stammered Gohan throwing up his hands in an exasperated, defensive manner.

“Smaller target…?” she repeated in a puzzled tone. “Listen Gohan…, I already have a good idea of just how powerful you and our friends are so I don’t think I’m gonna be seeing anything I don’t already know about.”

“Videl, I think you should listen to him,” Master Roshi advised. “With ki detection, the greater the difference in overall power between the user and the subject, the more toll the use of that ability may take on the user’s mind. Take it from me young’n, there are times when I have to brace myself mentally for when Krillin powers up, and Gohan’s ki makes Krillin’s look like a night-light!”

“Puhleease..!” Videl drawled out sarcastically, “What’s the worst that could happen?”

“Ooookay!” exclaimed the old master with an eye-roll. “Don’t say I didn’t warn ya…”
Closing her eyes, the petite teen began to hone in on any energy source in Gohan’s direction. She stretched out with her will and looked for any subtle disturbances in the same metaphysical medium in which all connections were established. She remembered the feel of her own energy and tried to glean something similar from Gohan.

She continued reaching out with this feeling in mind until she felt her will brush up against something… something mindboggling.

Videl’s breath hitched as her body began to shake violently. It was something she really couldn’t describe. It was like feeling an infinitely deep yet calm ocean. Colors flashed across her mind in a slowly emerging quasi-visual medium, colors of white light with beams flying out at her inner will. A blazing core resembling a tunnel with a bright, white light at the end, a mind’s eye took root in a backdrop against her brain’s other cognitive constructs. Her will was absolutely assaulted by the reticular parallelism of the opposing ki, that of her boyfriend.

It was all too much! Her legs buckling, Videl began to scream violently as she clutched her head. Fear overtook her, fear of a great discovered unknown, an unknown as terrifying as it was wondrous.

“Videl!” Gohan screamed at the raven-haired girl’s distress.

“Sweet pea!” came a second cry from Mr. Satan.

The half-Saiyan adolescent rushed forward and cradled her screaming, sobbing form to his chest. Mark tried his best to soothe his staggered daughter.

Roshi turned to Mr. Satan with a raised eyebrow. “You said Dende tried to get you to sense Majin Buu’s energy with him?!”

“Uh…, yeah he did,” Mark answered in a distressed tone.

“That foolish God!” Roshi cursed. “If you had actually done the same thing with Majin Buu’s ki as Videl just did with Gohan’s, you likely would’ve been just as overwhelmed as she was by sheer magnitude! Next time you see Dende, smack him in the back of the head for his aloof recklessness!”

“I-It… I felt it!” Videl shuddered as Gohan pulled her to a stand with him. Wiping her eyes, she wrapped her arms around herself. “It was like my senses collided with an ocean of ki that never ends!”

Patting her on the back, Gohan gave a wry smile. “That’s how it felt when I sensed Majin Buu’s ki for the first time. The power raising of the Old Kai has given my own ki a similar depth.”

“I-I even tried to draw on your ki the way I would my own,” she admitted. “It completely repelled me…”

“Yeah…,” drawled Gohan scratching the back of his head, “I thought I felt a flee bite or something across the corner of my inner conscience. This leads us to another lesson: Don’t try to draw on someone else’s ki! If the person you’re trying to draw from doesn’t have a voluntary mental exchange current of some kind established with you, you’ll get repelled, sometimes violently. It’s a built-in, non-corporal failsafe against adversarial lifeforms.”

Videl steadied herself against her boyfriend as she tried to catch her breath. “I see it! I see it now! I can’t believe how blind I’ve been…, how blind everyone I’ve ever known has really been! It’s still cloudy, but I see the world behind the world. Everything is in layers like an onion…”
Videl turned and looked at her father, really looked at him not with sight, but with this neophyte new sense. She wanted to test this out on a ‘smaller’ target.

Seeing the unnerving gaze his daughter was giving him, Mark started shuffling back. By now, he knew that look well. It was that same piercing gaze that Master Roshi and Gohan used every so often, like they were trying to look past something to see something else not entirely visible.

The Satan girl then turned her furrowed gaze downwards towards a coconut crab as it scurried across the sands. Reaching out with her newfound understanding of this ‘connection’ as Gohan called it, she felt its’ meager life essence move across the sands within its’ corporal body.

“I-I think she’s got it…” Roshi commented.

Videl’s cerulean eyes then bore into Roshi’s. Instead of shrinking under the girl’s unsettling gaze however, the old master returned the look with one of his own. Beads of perspiration began to form on the Turtle Hermit’s brow from being under the Satan girl’s deep scrutiny. The side of Videl’s mouth curved upwards into a smirk, like a kid who got to peek at her Christmas presents.

‘She knows…’ thought the old master. ‘She knows that she’s stronger than me now.’

Acting as if nothing had changed, Roshi turned to Gohan. “Always doing things assed-backwards, aren’t ya?”

“I really don’t know how this keeps happening, Master,” said Gohan sheepishly. “First she learns levitation on the first day, then she develops her sixth sense in one afternoon. Quite honestly, I’m a bit jealous.”

Hearing this, Videl rounded on her boyfriend with a curious smile. “You’re jealous?”

“Listen Videl, it took me two months to get this down. It took my dad three years! The only people I know who picked up on the whole energy sensing thing this quick were Vegeta and my mentor Piccolo, and Piccolo doesn’t count because most Nemakians are born with a penchant for manifesting metaphysical powers. As fast as you’re progressing, you have every reason to be proud of your abilities.”

“Do you really mean that or are you just saying it?” she asked.

“Videl, what you’re doing is almost unheard of, especially among pure-blooded humans,” Gohan defended. “How can you even ask that?! I’ll tell you right now that my not taking your training seriously from the start was probably the greatest disservice to both you and myself since I started letting myself go following the Cell Games. I was a total idiot!”

“I’m sorry, it’s just that you’re so much stronger than me that I can’t help but feel useless…” Videl felt a fresh wave of self-doubt hit her, and she couldn’t help but feel cold turkey. It was like she was having a mid-life crisis before she even got the chance to shine.

“Videl, look…,” began the Saiyan hybrid, “You really shouldn’t beat yourself up over this. You have nothing to feel inferior over. Your only crime was being born in the wrong place. You didn’t have to go through the kinds of battles me and my friends did when I was a little kid, and considering the mental problems I have, I’m glad you didn’t. Fighting bank robbers and terrorists and fighting planet-destroying overlords are two completely different beasts. There’s nothing glorious about watching your best friends die. Had history been different, I never would’ve been trained in martial arts at all.”

Seeing that his girlfriend’s mood wasn’t improving, Gohan decided on a different approach. “For
what it’s worth, I want you to know that most of the power I have wasn’t acquired through hard work alone. In fact, attaining the power I have now wasn’t just a matter of training. You could even say that I cheated.”

Finally, Videl met his gaze. “What do you mean? Your half alien status gives you gifts that I only wish I had!”

“Before Elder Kai raised my power, I wasn’t even a fifth as strong as I am now,” he explained. “And here’s the kicker! That’s not even the first time I had my hidden power unlocked by someone else. Then there’s the benefits I attained from training in the hyperbolic time chamber for nine months. Videl, at least you can actually take pride in what you have made for yourself! Looking back, I realize that I shouldn’t have taken my own gains for granted. I was a fool! You have no reason to doubt yourself, especially with the speed by which you’ve been making progress. It really is my fault that you didn’t get stronger sooner!”

“I really wish you wouldn’t blame yourself like that,” Videl remarked in a chastising tone.

“But it’s true,” Gohan replied. “You even said so yourself when we were out in the desert. I have my own demons to fight just as you have. Then there are my own feelings I’m having to deal with…”

“What feelings?”

Gohan swallowed before continuing. “All that happened with Babidi and Majin Buu laid a few things bare for me, things that were buried under the surface since at least my fight with Cell.”

“Things like…” Videl pressed.

“For one, I finally understand why Vegeta hated my father for so long,” answered her boyfriend, his tone taking an edge. “It didn’t matter how strong I was, my father always came out the victor! He took something from me that I’ll never get back. After Cell, he left me the mantle of protector only to snatch it away as soon as he got the first chance! He even had the opportunity to have me brought to the World of the Kais, and he still turned it down! He denied me my chance at redemption just so he could have one last hurrah! Believe me Videl! My mother wasn’t the only reason I had to get away from my parents. I love my father but he doesn’t understand that you don’t just cultivate someone from a young age just to tear the rug out from under them. I have to find a way to be who I am again.”

"But what if you got killed again?” Videl asked. “We wouldn’t have been able to have what we have now.” Smiling up at Gohan, Videl gave her boyfriend’s hand a gentle squeeze.

“Videl, you’re the only reason I kept on living. After our resurrection, I had you to lean on. You opened my eyes to the truth. Without you holding my feet to the fire, I would still be living a lie. I will never make the mistake of forsaking who I am again!”

“We’ve all had to find reasons to keep on living,” stated the Satan girl.

“It’s a lot harder when your only justification for existing has been taken from you. I still can’t believe that me being part Saiyan and you surpassing the wall of humanity is gonna have us living a few centuries. I guess one great consolation to all of this is that we now have a new mission.”

“What do you mean?” asked Videl, clearly puzzled.

Gohan let out a long-suffering sigh. “Videl, I should have told you this earlier. Piccolo and Master Roshi warned me about a new threat that is rising up in the world. Something wicked is brewing somewhere out there, something that’s going to throw everything out of balance. My greatest task
Upon returning to Satan City will be helping you in completing your Kame School training in preparation for this new threat. We’re gonna have to find some way to balance our training with going to school. I don’t want to put too much pressure on you, but it is absolutely vital that you rise to the challenge and meet this head on! Your training will ultimately be the thing that saves your life.”

“Did Piccolo tell you what this new threat was?” asked Videl worriedly. “I don’t think I’ll be much help against a Majin Buu or a Broly just yet.”

“From what Master Roshi and Piccolo have told me, this threat is very different. It won’t be a single entity so much as a collective one. They haven’t really said enough about this new adversary to know what we’re gonna be up against. I do know however, that Satan City will be a theater of war in this next great struggle for mankind’s future.”

Upon hearing this, the petite fighter’s eyes widened in shock. “Our hometown!?”

“Apparently so,” Gohan confirmed. “It is imperative that we use the next six months of training wisely. If Satan City goes, West Metro and King Furry’s power base follows.”

“What if I’m not strong enough?”

“Hun, from what I’ve seen, I highly doubt you’ll fail to meet the task. The whole point of this is to get you past the ‘wall of humanity.’ Once we’re done with Roshi’s program, that’s when I’ll be training you Piccolo’s way. Complete Roshi’s program and I’ll take you into the hyperbolic time chamber. We need you stronger so you can survive in there.”

It was then that Videl and Gohan noticed that both Master Roshi and Mr. Satan were strangely absent. This gave Gohan a fun little idea for Videl’s training.

“Videl, try to feel out Master Roshi and your dad’s energy.”

“Alright, I’ll give it a shot.” Closing her eyes, Videl stretched out with her will and tried to read the interspiritual medium for whatever ki signatures were in the area. Her first attempt was met with failure.

“I guess I still need practice…” she admitted, scratching the back of her head sheepishly.

“It’s OK,” her boyfriend assured, “You’re still new at this. Come with me.”

With that, Gohan and Videl took off towards the ocean. The two teens rounded the next sand dune before coming to the water. There, they were met with the sight of Mark and the Turtle Hermit conversing with a voluptuous red-haired woman in a scarlet Vegas showgirl dress. The woman was leaning against a crimson hovercar.

Upon approaching the three people, the ginger-haired woman’s eyes lit up in shocked recognition.

“Holy Shit! Is that you Videl?!?” the woman squealed.

“Hi Pizza,” Videl greeted with an offhanded wave.

Her father’s red-haired manager raced forward and wrapped the Satan girl in a big hug. “It’s been so long! Look at you! My Gosh! I can’t believe how much you’ve changed!”

“Really? I haven’t noticed,” muttered the raven-haired fighter.
“I don’t see why not,” Miss Pizza remarked with a ditzy giggle. “I mean wow! It’s only been like two months and your thighs are bigger, your hair is longer, and you look like you’ve added a cup size!”

“Can we please talk about something other than my boobs?!” growled the Satan girl, a blush spreading across her cheeks. Videl unconsciously ran a hand across her noticeably larger, perky breasts. Videl was getting older and her breasts, though already relatively large when her and Gohan started sleeping together, were starting to blossom out a bit more. The petite fighter was now easily packin some D-cup knockers. That or the estrogen in her birth control and her and Gohan’s consistent sex life were giving her some very welcome added benefits that had Gohan doing mental cartwheels. She really needed to invest in some larger sports bras though.

It was then that the ginger-haired woman turned her attention to Gohan. “I take it you’re Videl’s boyfriend I’ve heard so much about.”

“Unless there’s someone I don’t know about, that would be me!” answered the Saiyan proudly.

“Mmmhmm,” Pizza nodded, “You look like a stud!”

Gohan laughed awkwardly at the blunt compliment but took it in stride. “Really? I haven’t noticed…”

“Oh, and so modest too! I can see why Mr. Satan is OK with you dating his daughter!”

“So…,” Videl started, “To what do we owe the honor of this visit?”

“I heard that you and your father were training on this island. We’ve been trying to get some cameramen down here for a while just so we could make a documentary on you and your father’s training.”

“I’m not so sure that’s a good idea Pizza,” Videl warned.

“And why not?” asked Pizza, somewhat curious. It was no secret to her that Videl, unlike her father, was not much of a publicity senior though she didn’t see why a reality TV show or docudrama was such a bad idea.”

“It’s complicated…”

The red-haired lady crossed her arms across her ample bosom. “Videl, we’ve known each other for years. Try me!”

Videl let out an annoyed sigh. “For one, me, Gohan, and Dad are each training for our own individual reasons. We need to stay focused. Secondly, the training methods are unorthodox and may seem very silly to some so we really need to keep the embarrassment factor out of the equation. Third, Master Roshi doesn’t want to publicize his training program. He and his older student want to keep their private lives as much as they can.”

“I don’t see why though,” remarked the woman. “They could make a killing off this! Also, why are you and your Dad training under someone else anyway? Your Pops is the Champ!”

“You remember what happened to me, Piroski, and Caroni?” Videl asked.

“Yeah, so?”

“That’s why,” was Videl’s answer. “We got leveled. My dad’s style isn’t adequate for what I’ll be
fighting against in the future.”

“You?”

“From what I’ve heard, shit’s gonna get real in Satan City in the near future,” explained the female fighter.

“How real are we talkin here?”

Videl sighed. She really didn’t want to get into too many details, but she sure as hell didn’t want to lie to a woman she’s known for years. She decided to err towards the truth.

“You remember Cell, right? Something big is coming down the pike, something or someone that I’ll have to fight against in the future.”

Pizza’s eyes widened at this. “W-What?! Shouldn’t we warn someone?”

“We have no physical evidence,” answered the Satan girl. “Let’s just say that we have a few really good informants who are in the know.” She motioned to Gohan while saying the last bit.

“What does this fella have to do with it?” asked the redhead.

“Gohan here is my partner in fighting crime.”

“Saiyaman!” Pizza muttered numbly.

“That’s me!” chimed the half-Saiyan.

“Didn’t you and him fly off at the last tournament?”

“Let’s just say that Gohan and I were warned of Babadi and Majin Buu ahead of time,” Videl replied. “Humanities’ future was more important than some competition.”

“If my memory serves me correctly, isn’t this Gohan kid also the Gold Fighter? I recognized him from the Cell Games. You’re that kid, aren’t you?!”

“Uh… I… uh..” fumbled Gohan nervously.

“Leave it to Miss Pizza to figure out the obvious,” muttered Videl. “I know you aren’t the first one to make the connection, but you won’t tell anyone, will you?”

“Videl, what kind of a fool do you take me for?” demanded Mark’s manager, indignantly. “My career depends on me not rocking the boat. My lips are sealed.”

Gohan wiped his brow. “Phew! That’s a relief…”

Miss Pizza rolled her eyes. “Anyway… are you still against making that docudrama?”

Videl shot the older woman a glare. “Listen! I really, really don’t think that’s such a good idea!”

“Is there something I’m missing here?” Pizza asked, narrowing her eyes at the two teens suspiciously.

Gohan stepped back nervously. “Uh…”

“Ok, you want the truth? Fine!” growled Videl. “I moved Gohan in with us and we’re sharing a
bedroom! When we go back to school, I’m moving him into a shared bedroom with me!”

Miss Pizza’s eyes widened as it hit her all at once. “Oh my goodness! You’re not even out of high school, and your dad is letting your boyfriend sleep with you!? What is your pops thinking?!”

It was then that Mr. Satan decided to walk up to their little pow-wow circle.

“I don’t see what the issue is. We’re getting married anyway!” Videl mouthed smugly. “Besides, I’ve been sleeping with Gohan every other night since the whole Buu incident!”

“VIDEL!” bellowed Mr. Satan.

“What?” she asked, raising an eyebrow. “We’re all adults here. I’m proud of what me and Gohan have!”

“But what if he gets you pregnant!?” grilled Miss Pizza. “Your career as a fighter would come to a screeching halt!”

“How?” Videl asked. “Are you saying I can’t be a mom and a career athlete at the same time?! I thought you were a career woman yourself! Besides, I’m rich. I don’t intend to have any babies until at least after I’m out of high school, and even if I did, that doesn’t mean I can’t be a fighter and a mother. Seriously, what kind of misogynistic BS question is that!?

“Uh… point taken,” Pizza remarked.

The woman turned her gaze back to Gohan. “What’s your opinion on all this?”

“I don’t want to have children until me and Videl are at least out of high school. A kid is the last thing on our agenda right now.”

Videl gave her love interest a quick friendly slap on the shoulder. “Gohan and my birth control are in a death battle and Gohan is holding his own! I’m not really worried though. That’s what morning after pills are for.”

Mark eyed his future son-in-law out of the corner of his vision. The boy looked so embarrassed, he wouldn’t be surprised if Gohan just buried his head in the sand right there.

Miss Pizza was stunned. She turned to her ‘boss’ and began to pet his arm. “Wow… I can definitely tell where she gets it from. The girl really knows how to represent.”

Mark then regarded his only child. “You were saying something about being discrete?”

Videl shrugged her shoulders nonchalantly. “She wanted answers and she wouldn’t shut up, so I gave em to her.”

“Itn’t that just beautiful?” Mr. Satan muttered sarcastically.

“What? She knows us! We can trust her…”

Mark buried his face in his hands and began to weep. “Lord, where did I go wrong…?”

Videl threw her head back in mirth at both her father and her boyfriend’s obvious embarrassment.

*Oh, it’s a beautiful day… It’s the best of times and the best of times!*
An issue I think needs to be touched on is the assertion by some people on fanfiction.net that I’m somehow being too hard on Chi-Chi and Mr. Satan in this fiction, Chi-Chi especially. I’m writing the falling out Gohan has with his parents based on my own personal experience of being home schooled. No parent should be allowed to hide behind ‘parental rights’ when they are essentially ruining their kid’s life by socially stunting them from a young age. Gohan can fly faster than a jet so there really is no excuse for why Chi-Chi would home-school him other than seeing him as an empty vessel she could indoctrinate. There’s a big difference between parental guidance and what Chi-Chi did, and I will tell you from experience that as soon as a kid gets old enough to make his own decisions, he usually winds up hating his parents for not giving him a choice in the matter. Home-schooling is just another way of setting your kids up to fail by keeping them under your thumb for selfish reasons. If you take into account the fact that Gohan is nigh-invincible, Chi-Chi could not have been doing this out of some BS reason like protecting him. Even if Gohan never wanted to be a fighter like his father, there’s really no clear indication that he would have wanted to be a scholar in the absence of his mother conditioning him from a young age. I mean really! He marries Videl who is her father’s heir, he’s friends with Bulma Briefs, and his grandfather is the OX King so what possible reason could Chi-Chi have other than severe, borderline abusive control issues in keeping her son from being his own person? Why would Gohan ever need to be a bread-winner at all?! His powers alone would have given him a quick path to riches. As much as certain people like to laugh at Chi-Chi’s antics and seem to think it’s funny, I can tell you from experience that having a parent like that who goes on angry tirades and advocates home schooling is usually a highly abusive parent who just wants to get away with things behind closed doors that would normally have child services on their asses. There’s nothing funny about Chi-Chi and what she represents, so Akira Toriyama can once again take his penchant for romanticizing traditional Japanese family conventions and shove them where the sun doesn’t shine!
“ARRGH!!!” came a man’s scream.

“DADDY!!” came another, this one belonging to a girl.

“Come on guys! Keep up or you’ll be eaten!”

Mr. Satan leapt forward as he narrowly evaded the gaping maw of an adult T-Rex. Just out front, his daughter and her boyfriend ran like devils possessed in a bid to stay ahead of their reptilian pursuer. The two teens looked back every so often to make sure that the afroed fighter was fine. A sandstorm of dust was kicked up as the three charges of the Turtle Hermit and their massive assailant barreled across the island’s salt flats.

Three months had passed since their training began under Master Roshi, and for Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan, early morning training was progressing as it had since early May. Videl and Mark had both improved vastly, but Videl had really stolen the show with both her extraordinary advancements and her physical changes.

Milk crate in hand, the Satan girl fell behind her boyfriend and into line beside her father. Secured with a white hairband, long black tresses whipped behind her.

“Are you OK, Dad?!” asked the girl.

“W-WHY DOES THAT THING HAVE TO CHASE US EVERY DAY?!!” Mark screamed.

Her father had a point. Every morning for the past three months, the same Tyrannosaur had chased them across the wasteland. Following the first T-Rex incident at the start of their training, Master Roshi had forbade them from killing anymore predatory dinosaurs unless it was absolutely necessary, but considering how much Gohan and the two of them ate, it proved necessary more often than not. The one chasing them now however, had always managed to avoid the chop if for no other reason than the three of them having to meet their daily milk delivery deadline. Today was different in that Master Roshi had opted to stay home and let them do the early morning milk run themselves.

“Ya know what?! Screw this!” Videl spat. The petite fighter back-flipped onto the predatory dino’s 12:00 and delivered a powerful drop-kick to its’ muzzle that sent the seven ton beast sprawling. Using the momentum generated by the strike, the adolescent girl ricocheted back into line beside her old man.

“TAKE THAT YA PIECE OF LUGGAGE!!!” she screamed over her shoulder. Far behind them, the large meat-eater continued to roll backwards before its’ downed form came to a halt. Inwardly, girl giggled at just how easy it all was now.

Mark took one glance behind him before sending one his daughter’s way. “A little over the top, don’t ya think?”

“This coming from the fella who cornered the market on being over the top,” Videl returned.

Mr. Satan frowned at his daughter’s admonishment. “Touché’. Ya think it’ll live?”
“Maybe,” was her clipped answer. “I just don’t want that thing killing you after me and Gohan return home. Master Roshi is way too permissive with those creatures for my liking!”

“Hmm…” Mark had been far behind his daughter since the beginning, but with her and Gohan returning to Satan City, Master Roshi would be able to concentrate more on his own situation. He still couldn’t help but worry about the kind of trouble the two of them would get into having Satan House all to themselves for the next five months.

Later in the day, the Turtle Hermit again led Gohan, Videl, and Mr. Satan through their post-breakfast special training. Today, they were again engaging in heated sparring sessions. As usual, it was Videl being paired off with Krillin and Master Roshi taking on Mark. Due to Eighteen’s absence, Gohan was stuck practicing on his own.

“That’s the way!” shouted Krillin as he led the Satan girl through another exchange. “Let it lose! Let it lose!!!”

Videl threw flurries of punches, elbows, knees, and kicks in an effort to exploit openings her senior Krillin provided. It wasn’t that the short man expected her to actually hit pay dirt with any of her assaults so much as he was drilling her on taking chances wherever presented. She needed to learn to be a tactician in the context of practicing their kind of martial arts every bit as much as she was in law enforcement. So far, she was doing as well as expected.

Gone was the teenaged girl who became a total klutz when exhaustion set in. That girl was now a blossoming young woman who had grown into the role of a competent warrior. She’d fleshed out and muscled up in her thighs, core, and back while her already beautiful teenaged female assets had grown into those of a gorgeous Amazon. Her raven hair now hung as far down as it had before she’d taken flying lessons from Gohan, and her already ample breasts had grown rounder and fuller.

Noticing that the girl was beginning to tire, Krillin called for a time-out. Videl took a moment to move some stray locks that had fallen from her hairband. She’d likely either have her hair recut or start wearing pigtails again after her return to Satan City. Plopping down next to the former monk, she decided to strike up a conversation.

“Krillin…”

“Yeah Videl?” he asked.

“How did you ever deal with it?”

“I’m not sure I follow you,” was his puzzled answer.

“Dying, I mean…” the Satan girl clarified. “Gohan told me that you’ve died four times already. Considering the problems I’m having just dealing with the fact that this isn’t the original body I was born with, how do you cope knowing that you’ve gone through the whole death and resurrection thing so much?”

It was only a moment, but Videl thought she’d heard Krillin’s breath hitch. Perhaps she shouldn’t have brought it up? The little man looked down as if he were carefully thinking about his response.

“The truth is, I don’t,” the short man answered, swallowing hard. “After my second death, I promised myself that I would never dwell in a state of disconnect again. The first two times I allowed my mind to get bogged down in that depressed state, it nearly broke me. The enemies who killed me I could handle on an emotional level, but picking up the pieces after my first two resurrections did more damage to my sense of self-worth than anything Goku’s enemies ever could. In a way, I was
kinda happy that someone warned us all about Dr. Gero and his androids. Training in preparation for them gave me a way to preoccupy myself until the hurt numbed itself away. It gave me a way to keep on living.”

Videl furrowed her eyebrows in consideration. “Any advice you could offer me in dealing with my own circumstances?”

“You need to focus on what you have,” Krillin said. “In my opinion, you, Gohan, and the other kids your age have the right idea in trying to enjoy the moment, but you must also relearn to reel yourselves in. However, you still being young makes this easier said than done. You both still have some growing up to do. Believe me…, I’ve been there. My first death happened when I was 16, so I know what it’s like to strive towards attaining fulfillment from your second chance at life. Just try to enjoy what you have with Gohan. You’re lucky that you and he found love at such a young age. I didn’t meet my wife until I was about 30.”

Videl smiled at this. “Alright, next question!”

“Fire away!”

“Did you ever feel jealousy towards Goku and Gohan?” she queried. “Did it ever bother you that they were both so far ahead of you?”

Krillin sighed. He knew this question was coming sooner or later. “For many years, yes, but I learned to live with it. I didn’t really have time to be jealous until after the Cell Games because I was too busy trying to get strong enough to survive. Tien on the other hand is a completely different story.”

Videl’s eyes widened in shocked recognition. “Tien, as in former Champion Tien Shenhan?!”

“The very same,” Krillin replied. “He was Goku’s rival for several years. In fact, he’s the only human aside from Master Roshi and Mercenary Toa to have defeated Goku in a direct fight. He’s an absolute genius in fighting who is credited with developing many of the techniques that most of us take for granted today. From what I can tell, his situation is somewhat similar to yours. He never stopped training, but I don’t think he ever found closure. He tried so hard to regain his original place as Goku’s rival, but circumstances made it where Goku practically had vast new powers fall into his lap. Following the Cell Games, Tien left and never returned. I guess seeing Vegeta, Gohan, and Piccolo reminded him too much of his original place of relevancy.”

“Will that be my future?” Videl asked in a depressed tone.

“Hard to say…” answered the former monk. “All people grow at different rates. It took me three years to independently develop my own bakujutsu abilities. It barely took you a week. Even with a competent teacher, and I’m sure Gohan was new at teaching anything, you’d have to be one very, very special case to accomplish that. Something like a one in a literal billion people kind of case.”

“Since you’ve been there and done that, how high could I aspire in developing my martial arts?”

Krillin brought a hand to his chin in consideration. “Since most of the real groundwork was laid by Goku, me, Tien, Roshi, and the others, I think you’ll have a relatively easy time making up a lot of lost ground. Understand this: After my training under Master Roshi was finished, I had to spend far too much time just trying to figure things out for myself. For several years, me and the others picked up things both in our travels and our training. Between us, there is a great pool of knowledge that’s basically going to waste due to us not having a practical everyday application for it in the modern world. I’m very happy that Gohan brought you to us for training. In truth, it’s one of the best
decisions he’s ever made. You two have many things in common, including your obvious talent. It’s as if the two of you are in some video game and you’re enhanced with cheat codes or something.”

Krillin turned to his junior student with a furrowed, serious gaze. “Videl, you are in the enviable position that Tien, Yamacha, Choatzu, and I only wish we were when we started. You have all this potential and all this groundwork laid by past warriors that has effectively greased the wheels for you. None of us knew about things like the hyperbolic time chamber, gravity training, advanced forms of mind training, or Kami and King Kai’s training in the spirit when we started. You stand to inherit that which we fumbled around to attain for years, that which so many before you developed through their blood, tears, and even by their deaths. I honestly can’t tell you how high you’d be able to go because too many of us gave up from disillusionment or because we had to deal with the fear that we’d be leaving our loved ones behind if we continued to follow Goku’s lead.”

“I’m not really afraid of giving up certain parts of my personal life if it means catching up with you guys,” said Videl. “I’ve been doing that since I was really young anyway. Tuning out the distractions of the modern world can get pretty tiresome though.”

“Your greatest obstacle is often everyday life,” Krillin added. “That’s the main reason why Tien, Master Roshi, Goku, and I live out so far away from everyone else. This leads us to another issue: Have you and Gohan decided what changes you’re going to make to accommodate your last five months of training under the Turtle Program? You both return to Satan City tomorrow, and it’s important that Gohan has at least some of this already planned out.”

“Gohan has developed a few ideas,” she answered. “Some of them involve retrofitting my Dad’s dojo to help facilitate our own kind of training. The rest of our training however, is going to be pretty public given the nature of our early morning routine. Training in an urban setting is going to be interesting…”

“I’m sure it’s gonna get you a lot of looks,” said Krillin. “If you have to, you can ask Bulma to fix something up. Me, her, and Gohan go way back. She’ll help you guys any way she can. A gravity chamber would be a big help in Gohan’s own training.”

Videl made a mental note of everything she was told for later. It was then that Videl decided to change the subject.

“I have another question.”

Krillin raised an eyebrow. “Hmm?”

The monk listened intently to Videl’s issue. Taking a break from his own spar with Master Roshi, Mark staggered over and sat down on the sand next to his daughter. If Videl and Krillin knew he was there, they didn’t show any signs of acknowledgement.

“It has something to do with me and Gohan’s relationship,” she explained. “It’s something me and Gohan have only discussed with my dad.”

“Is it bad?”

“Depending on how you look at, it can be either good or bad,” supplied the petite fighter. “Do you and Eighteen have problems using protection?”

Krillin’s eyes widened in understanding at what the girl was referring to. “You’re asking if me and Eighteen are able to use condoms?! I take it you and Gohan figured out a long time ago that condoms won’t work with people like us?”
“Yes!” she all but declared. “So you and your wife understand what it’s like not being able to take advantage of what every other couple does on a normal basis?!”

“OK…, what kinda conversation did I walk into?” asked Mr. Satan, sounding a bit put off.

“Your daughter wanted to know if she and Gohan were alone in their situation, so I’m telling her the truth,” was Krillin’s answer.

The Champ flitted his eyes between the two of them. “Videl, if there’s one thing the past six months have shown me, it’s that I raised one strange girl…”

“I get it from you,” she remarked. “Who can be stranger than that?” Mr. Satan took this as a compliment and snickered.

“To answer your question Videl,” began the former monk, “You’re just gonna have to rely on birth control at least until you and Gohan start family planning. Me and Eighteen have the same issues and so do Gohan’s parents.”

Videl furrowed her brow in mild frustration at hearing this. “It’s just that I’m not sure whether my body’s changes in the last few months are more because of my being on birth control or because of my body’s natural growth. I’d like to think that my body is growing the way it normally would. Don’t get me wrong though! Sports bras be damned, I’ve always had a large bust. It’s just that I knew my assets were gonna grow more as I got older. I just hope that the other girls at school have changed as much as I have so that I won’t feel too awkward. I get enough attention from everyone as it is due to my being a celebrity.”

“Look kid, I’m sure it’ll be OK,” Krillin assured. “You and Gohan are still growing up. My wife will tell you that birth control doesn’t really change your looks that much. You’re still young and you’re still filling out. Considering that you’re a girl, at least all your growth spurts are over. Hell, Gohan won’t stop growing taller until he’s in his early twenties! I’m sure the other girls your age have changed just as much so don’t let it get to ya!”

“Sorry, it’s just that I normally don’t obsess over my looks like this. Here I am though, the tough tom boy crime fighter fretting over my body like some superficial, empty-headed bimbo…”

“Relax…,” Krillin chided, “You have nothing to be ashamed of! Hold your head high and be proud! I joke around with Gohan all the time about how he’s gonna join the rest of us in having his own cute little trophy wife, a short trophy wife, but a cute one regardless!”

“Oh, stop embarrassing me!” Videl giggled as she playfully punched the former monk’s bicep. “Besides, I’m only a few inches shorter than your wife…”

“And that’s still only a foot taller than me,” Krillin returned.

“Oh my God!” Face-palming, Videl let out a chuckle. The two of them shared some more laughs before Krillin made a move to stand.

“Well…” drawled Krillin, standing up and stretching, “I guess that’s enough rest. Let’s get back to sparring, shall we?” Truth be told, the conversation was getting a bit too weird for the older Turtle alumni’s tastes, and he just wanted out.

A smile beaming from ear to ear, Videl nodded. Shooting to her feet, the raven-haired teen brought her guard up for another round of thrashing.

“I’ve really gotta stop stumbling in on all these screwy talks…” muttered Mark with a shake of his
head. The afroed man slowly stood and returned to his own sparring sessions with the Turtle Hermit.

The following evening, Gohan lay sprawled out naked on his and Videl’s bed. Their last day of
direct training under Master Roshi had just ended and they had a big day tomorrow what with all the
errands they had to run upon reaching Satan City.

Thinking about all the changes Videl, her father, and he had gone through brought a smile to his
face. This summer had definitely turned into an adventure, one he wouldn’t trade for all the food in
the world. Inwardly, he wondered why his father and Goten never visited him.

Despite the problems that had surfaced between him and his parents since Majin Buu’s defeat, he
missed both his father and younger brother. On the issue of his mother though, the matter was still up
in the air. Were they giving him space so he could figure things out for himself? Maybe they were
trying to help him stay focused on his obligation to Videl’s training? Master Roshi or Krillin could
have called the Son residence and given his father the lowdown on the situation. His father could
instant transmission to his location on a whim so there wasn’t really anything keeping him from
visiting.

Just then, the bedroom door creaked open. Videl peeked into the room and flashed her half-Saiyan
boyfriend a mischievous smirk.

“Are you ready, Gohan?”

Gohan smiled to himself as his raven-haired lover, a towel wrapped around her presumably nude
form, slinked into the room. That’s when it hit him…

“Now there’s a classic look,” he remarked. For whatever reason, Videl was wearing her long black
hair in the very pig tails style she had when the two of them first met eight months ago.

“It’s an iconic look,” she commented, petting one of the pigtails against her right breast. Her eyes
held a wild, hungry look of longing as her cerulean gaze locked with his. “It was hard giving these
up.”

Chuckling, Gohan rose into a sitting position as Videl approached the foot of the bed. The vivacious
girl took his hands and pulled him to a stand. He wrapped his arms around her muscled, feminine
body and gave her cute butt a playful squeeze. Snaking an arm down her toned thigh, he reached
under the rim of the white cotton fabric and pulled the obtrusive towel out from around her. The
piece of cloth pooled at the floor and much to Gohan’s surprise, it revealed Videl to be dressed in a
pair of white silk panties.

Gohan’s heady gaze traveled up and down her toned curves as he relished the familiar sight of his
mate’s beautifully big-breasted form. From the time she’d blackmailed her way into his life, the little
Satan girl’s body had tantalized him. Now, changed by both Roshi’s training and her body’s natural
teenaged maturing, the female fighter stood before him. Her core was toned up, her thighs were
bigger and shapelier, and her now larger heaving breasts accentuated her hour-glass figure.

Videl returned his lecherous gaze with one of her own as she brought her hands up to caress his tall,
powerfully sculpted physique. She marveled at the fruits of Gohan’s training. Tentative small hands
traced the lines of his abs following a trail all the way down to his impressive endowment.

Taking the impressive girth between her firm tits, Videl began to work them around the rigid organ.
The petite fighter eyed the protruding head of his member hungrily as it repeatedly stabbed out from
between her impressive assets. Dipping her head down, she began to lick and caress it, applying
some teeth every so often for an added effect that reduced her half-Saiyan man to a simpering pile of
mush.
“Good God Videl…!” Gohan hissed, throwing his head back at the sensations. He buried a hand in her raven locks as he began to buck his hips to meet her skilled mouth. Videl looked up at her boyfriend with a lust-filled, wicked smile as she trailed her warm, wet tongue along the object of her interest.

Releasing his erection from its’ soft, fleshy prison, the Satan girl grabbed Gohan’s hips, and took him into her mouth. She set a delicious pace as she began to bob her head back and forth. Gohan’s audible gasps were music to her ears.

Before long, Gohan’s breathing became more erratic and his movements more desperate. Videl felt the boy’s member begin to spasm in her mouth, and with a few more strokes she felt his release at the back of her throat. She knew what to expect but that didn’t make her any more prepared for the sheer amount that Gohan could spurt in one go. Forcing Gohan’s hand away, she jerked her head back and collapsed onto the bed in a coughing, gagging fit. Even after six months of practice, it was hard not to choke on his seed.

“I don’t think I’ll ever get used to that…” she muttered, wiping some moisture from her eyes.

“Ditto…” Gohan wheezed.

On somewhat shaky legs, Videl stood once more before her still aroused boyfriend. Wasting no time, she took Gohans’ hands in hers and brought them to her hips where she hooked his thumbs around the strings of her panties.

“I want these off,” she growled mischievously. Doing as he was told, Gohan took the initiative and with one swift movement, yanked the offending undergarment down to her ankles. Gohan had no time to brace himself as Videl wrapped her thighs around his head and ground her raven-haired snatch into his face.

Once again, Gohan’s Saiyan sense of smell was assaulted by the familiar cocktail of Videl’s warrior scent and her female arousal. Grabbing her thighs, he crushed his lips into the flower of her womanhood in a deep tongue kiss. Above him, Videl threw her head back in a feral, pleasured squeal.

“Mmm…shit, Gohan!” she yelped as she fist through his black tresses. The Satan girl desperately sought leverage as she gyrated her hips to meet Gohan’s warm licks. Gohan growled into her pussy, sending shudders of delight through Videl’s sultry body.

The knot of tension continued to build in her womb until finally, Gohan shot his tongue as far into her heated kitty-cat as it could reach. Videl bit her bottom lip as the knot of heat and tension exploded, throwing her into a sea of carnal Nirvana. She felt white sparks flash behind her eyes as her lower body convulsed with pleasured contractions. With a hoarse cry, she drenched her boyfriend’s face with her love juices, which Gohan lapped up greedily.

Her body in a spent stupor, the Satan girl’s thigh lock gave out and she began to fall back onto the floor. Thankfully, Gohan reached out and caught the heated girl in his arms before bringing her to his chest bridal style. He deposited the raven-haired girl on the bed before joining her.

“Come here,” Gohan instructed as he pulled Videl atop him. The petite girl rubbed her front against her boyfriend’s as he wrapped his muscled arms around her waist for a brief make-out session. Videl tasted the sweet-salty flavor of her own love juices on her lover’s tongue as the kisses gained intensity. Videl smiled into his kiss as she felt her lover’s erection jab into her heated tightness.
“Come on Gohan!” urged the petite fighter. Her blue eyes peered into his with a desperate hungry look of predation, like a lioness on the hunt. She reached down and toggled his impressive length into position before wiggling herself down onto it. The two teens hissed at the tight intimacy as Videl braced her hands against his hard abs and pushed herself into a straddling position on his lap.

“Oh… you gorgeous, kooky girl!” growled the hybrid as his hands grabbed fitfully at Videl’s powerful, luscious buttocks.

The pig-tailed girl looked down at her fiancé with a wicked longing. “Gohan, let’s move down to the foot of the bed…”

Gathering his wits, the half-Saiyan cupped the sex-crazed girl’s rear and scooted down towards the end of the mattress. His legs now dangled off the side of the bed, and Videl, securing his erection inside her, started to twist herself to a sitting position on his lap facing away. Throwing a glance over her shoulder, the Satan girl gave her Saiyan lover one last playful look before she began to frantically bounce on his groin in the lap dance position.

“Oh God….Videl!” he yelped in a pained, pleasured tone. Due to the past three months of training under Master Roshi, Videl’s core muscles had become far stronger. As a peripheral benefit, her clinching muscles were far tighter, and the two teens absolutely reveled in it. Gohan threw his control to the wind and began to thrust up into Videl’s sultry body, making her black pig-tails and large, firm breasts bounce to their own rhythm.

“Gohan, I want you to woman-handle me…” she moaned, her breathing becoming increasingly ragged.

Aiming to please, the half-Saiyan took hold of Videl’s shapely hips and began to aid in her movements.

“Oh Fuck…!” squealed the girl in a sexed-up frenzy. Suddenly, she felt a warm pleasurable sensation billow up in her womb. However, that wasn’t the only thing she’d noticed. Looking around with lust-filled, hazy eyes, she found that the whole room was now aglow with the light of a raging sun. Using her recently acquired ki-sensing ability, she detected an absolutely massive increase in her boyfriend’s already God-like fighting power.

Looking over her shoulder, she found that Gohan had lost control over his Saiyan power and had transformed into a Super Saiyan. Unlike the episode out in the desert, this was his regular Super Saiyan transformation. Why this hadn’t happened any other time, she didn’t know. His face beheld a wild, feral look that sent thrills and chills through her body. Drool ran from the sides of her mouth and her head lolled back in a drugged out smile as tears streamed down her cheeks at the magnified carnal pleasure his raised ki sent through her. The butterflies she felt in her tummy were driving her crazy, and so much of her boyfriend’s ki bled into her that it vastly augmented her own. As was the case out in the desert, the ki continued to billow up inside the girl until her own body went super and her now blond hair strained against the ties on her pig-tails and took on an attribute as rigid as porcupine quills.

This unexpected turn of events left Gohan shocked, but before he could say anything, he felt Videl’s wet, hot, pussy clamp down on his member with a vastly increased vice-like tightness that had the teen’s head spinning. That was all it took for Gohan to lose it completely. The boy began to buck his hips wildly into Videl’s Super-enhanced body with a vigor that caught Videl totally by surprise. A cocktail of love juices drenched their laps, and Videl’s hands flew up to knead her large breasts. Not to be outdone, the Satan girl began to wiggle her hips as they squirmed in Gohan’s grasp.

Getting creative, Videl reached out with her ki senses and began to brush her own ki presence
against that of her boyfriend’s. This opened a floodgate between them that staggered Videl’s metaphysical being just as much as Gohan’s woman-handling did to her corporal body. Videl threw her head back and screamed to the heavens as she felt what could only be described as spiritual oneness with the boy she loved. Beneath her, Gohan’s inner will felt the same euphoric sensation as their ki’s melded, producing a cacophony of brilliant colors against their mind’s ki-sensing sixth sense that was akin to a purely religious experience. This was all it took to throw the two teens over the edge. With one final buck of his hips, the half-Saiyan held her rear to his lap as he released everything he had into Videl’s convulsing caverns. The force of his warm seed hitting her sweet spot brought yet another knot of tension flying apart in her uterus. It was all just too much for the girl. She threw her head back and screamed like a feral animal as her love juices drenched their thighs. Videl continued to grind and gyrate her rear on Gohan’s lap as he held her in place, cradling his Super-state enhanced maleness inside her as her womanhood milked him for everything he had.

Suddenly, the two teens were interrupted by a commotion from outside their room. Without warning, Krillin and Master Roshi came barging in, followed by Mr. Satan. Eighteen lingered in the hall outside. The sight they were met with was one they didn’t expect.

“Holy Shit!” screeched Krillin. “Videl, what happened to your hair??!”

Videl screamed as she and Gohan, brought their hands up to cover her nudity. The intrusion of the adults shocked the teenaged lovers so much that Gohan fell out of his Super Saiyan form which in turn cut off the power source from Videl. Their hair fell back to its’ typical raven color.

“WHAT THE HELL YOU GUYS?!” screamed Gohan.

“Get out! Get OUT!” screeched Videl, her face flushed with embarrassment among other things. The Satan girl chunked a pillow at Krillin who stepped to the side and let it hit Mr. Satan. Master Roshi stood to the side with a nosebleed at the sight Videl’s naked body.

Eighteen for her part had had enough. “OK, show’s over boys! Let’s go!” The blond cyborg sent a knowing look over her shoulder at the two teens as she ushered the three men out of the room.

“Oh my God!” groaned Videl. “I can’t believe those three! Remind me to give Eighteen a big hug before we leave tomorrow morning. And did you see the look the old master was giving me? I just know I’m gonna get groped before we leave…”

“Duly noted,” Gohan remarked. “I’m guessing Krillin and the others were responding to the sudden increase in our power levels.”

“My God that was humiliating!” the Satan girl groaned. “I’m not one for being an exhibitionist! And what did they mean by me going Super?”

“Videl, I don’t know how but your body went Super while I was a Super Saiyan,” he answered.

“OK…, that’s just freaky,” the girl commented. Videl looked away for a moment before suddenly turning back to her boyfriend with a pleading look.

“Uh…what is it, hun?” Gohan asked, his voice now carrying a nervous edge.

“C-can we do it again?” Videl begged in a low cute voice. “Please…”

“Uh…, I don’t know Videl. The Old Kai said-” Gohan didn’t get the chance to finish his sentence as Videl laid back and lifted her toned, muscled thighs. A perspired sex flush alighting her body, she looked at her half-Saiyan boyfriend/fiancé with pleading puppy dog eyes filled with raw want as she caressed her firm, luscious breasts and glistening, seed-covered sex. Videl simply would not be sated
‘The possible fate of the world or the best damned sex I could ever have with my woman? The fate of the world or the best sex of my life? Decisions, decisions…’

‘Oh, what the hell…’ With a quick transformation, Super Saiyan Gohan dove in for another round. Seriously, what the fuck did Old Kai know?! This was the same senile Kai who’s utter lack of concern for mortal lives caused him to be thirty minutes late in getting to the battlefield against Buu. When one thought about it, Old Kai could have been just as responsible for Videl and Goten dying as he was for letting himself go for seven years.

Outside in the cold night air, Krillin, Master Roshi, and Mr. Satan stood around discussing what they’d just witnessed.

“What do ya think it means?” asked the former monk.

Master Roshi furrowed his brow in contemplation. “It would explain why Videl’s power rose so much with Gohan’s three months ago.”

“Yeah, but Videl said Gohan became a Legendary Super Saiyan like Broly,” argued the former monk. “The power upsurge we felt from him was far, far stronger than what we’re feeling now. Gohan was just a regular Super Saiyan when we walked in on them.”

“The kid said something about that golden scary thing he does being dangerous to the planet,” said Mr. Satan. “He said something about some Elder Kai power raising nonsense or whatnot! Something about that short, purple leprechaun guy me and Dende met on that freaky planet when Goku, Vegeta, me, and Buu were trying to stop the bad Buu.”

“Yeah, well apparently Gohan was way off in his assumption,” replied Krillin. “Gohan learned to completely control that state’s power when he was nine years old, so I don’t know what led him or that Elder Kai to believe that.”

“That’s all Gohan told us,” Mark returned.

“None of us are Saiyans and neither Vegeta nor Goku are here to tell us anything,” Roshi commented. “We’ll figure it out in the morning. Since Eighteen isn’t likely to let us grill either Gohan or your daughter for information, we’ll have to wait until then. Mark, if you have to you can crash in my room.”

“That… was some freaky alien stuff!” Mr. Satan rasped.

“Welcome to our world, Mark!” beamed Krillin as he gave the afroed grappler a friendly slap on the shoulder. “When half your friends are extraterrestrials with otherworldly powers, this is the norm!”

Letting out an exhausted sigh, Mark Satan followed his fellow humans into Kame House for some much needed sleep. One thought played across his mind as he stepped across the living room threshold…

‘Between me looking like a 1970s porn star, a pill-popping, super strong, short daughter with trauma issues, a half-alien ridiculously overpowered son-in-law, and a ten foot bubblegum demon from ancient space, this is gonna be one strange-assed family…”

The following morning, Gohan and Videl readied themselves for their return to Satan City. Most of their bags had been capsulized the prior evening, and all that was really left was for them to say their goodbyes to the group they had spent three months living and training with.
“Videl…” Krillin began with a beaming smile, “In your time with us, you and Gohan changed a lot in both mind and body. Your dedication to self-improvement and your tenacity have put your status as a student on par with anything me or Goku could have done under Master Roshi, and as such, you’ve made us proud to have you as our youngest Kame School alumni. Gohan couldn’t ask for a better girlfriend and I couldn’t ask for a better junior.”

At her senior’s words of praise, a bright pink blush spread across the Satan girl’s cheeks and tears stung at the corner of her eyes. “I promise that I’ll make you all proud…”

“You’ve already done that Videl,” Master Roshi put in. “From here on, Gohan must supervise your training and retake his mantle as your teacher. Let life teach you both all its’ lessons for that is the Kame way.”

“And I’ll hold him to that till the end of my days,” she proclaimed with conviction. Over the summer, Master Roshi, Krillin, Eighteen, Marron, Turtle, and Oolong had become like family to Videl. A part of her wished to stay for the full eight months of the program, but she knew that given the circumstances, that was impossible.

The old man nodded his approval. “You’ll have to. Even if the boy’s heart is fundamentally pure, he too still has much growing up ahead of him. Before you go, I have something to give you.”

Reaching behind him, the wizened sage pulled out a small, wrapped something or other and handed it to the raven-haired girl.

“What is it?” she asked, clearly puzzled.

“Open it and see.”

Videl did as she was instructed. Tearing at the wrapping, she pulled out a baggy white T-shirt, a black spandex tank-top, and a bright orange gi. Looking over the articles of clothing, she found the Kame kangi emblazoned on both the front and the back of the shirt, the tank-top, and the Gi top. The tank-top however, bore both her father’s symbol on one breast and the Kame symbol on the other. Looking up at the man who had mentored her through one of the most trying times of her young life, her lip quivered as she rasped a low, choked “Thank you.”

The white bearded master smiled warmly. “Wear it proudly. You’ve earned it…”

“Then could you please remove your hand from my ass?!”

Looking down, the aged Turtle Hermit’s eyes widened with nervous, mock surprise. “OH! Silly me! Must be force of habit…hehehehe!”

Krillin shook his head at his old master’s antics. “You’re incorrigible…”

Videl’s glare softened and she wrapped the old man in a strong embrace. “Promise me that you’ll look out for my dad while he’s here.”

“Don’t worry kid,” Roshi said. “Both myself and Krillin will lead him through his last five months. Though it may not be as obvious, he’s become far stronger as well. He’s proven to be a lot tougher than I gave him credit for.”

Off to the side, Mr. Satan was having a private talk with Gohan.

“For the next five months, you’re the man of the house over at Satan House,” Mark spoke. “I know
how my daughter can be, but please try to look out for her. Just remember to not make it obvious that you’re doing it. And also, I want you and Videl to call me at least once a week.”

“Mark, I know it’ll be difficult, but try not to worry too much,” said the half-Saiyan in a placating tone. “Between our training and high school, we won’t have much time for trouble.”

The Champ frowned. “No, but trouble does seem to follow the two of you. Just try to be careful…”

“Will do,” he nodded. The afroed man pulled the Son boy in for a tight hug before the two parted.

“Daddy…”

Mr. Satan turned to see his daughter looking up at him, a sad, almost pitying expression adorning her features. Mark reached out and wrapped his only child in a tight embrace, one she seemed hesitant to return. Regardless he reached down and kissed her forehead.

“It’s alright,” he muttered, “I know you still don’t trust me.”

She gave her father a small smile. “Dad, for what it’s worth, you’ve regained my respect. I’ll probably never be able to trust you though.”

“I don’t deserve it,” said the Champ sadly. “I ruined your life. And for what it’s worth, I promise that I won’t keep the truth from you again. I’ve lied enough to you for one lifetime.”

“That’s why I’m gonna take matters into my own hands regarding me and Gohan’s relationship. I still can’t trust you not to get in the way of our relationship, but I still want to be fair to you.”

“Whadda ya mean?” Mark asked, somewhat put back. “I gave the boy my approval.”

The raven-haired teen let out an annoyed sigh. “Considering how much Gohan had to struggle just to get your approval, it’ll be all too easy for him to lose it if he screws up. As soon as we arrive in Satan City, I’m looking into obtaining legal protections for our relationship.”

“What kind of legal protections?” Mark inquired glumly, feeling a little betrayed.

“Me and Gohan are entering into a civil union,” she answered bluntly. “This way, Gohan and I will have power over each other’s medical decisions among other things. It will also ensure that we can still have a formal wedding after high school. It’ll make me feel better to know that Gohan can’t just be ran off if things ever go downhill between the two of you.”

Mark sighed raggedly. “It’s a waste of paperwork, but if it makes you feel better, do what you have to.”

“Don’t take it too personally though,” remarked the girl. “I’m also considering your reputation when I do this. It won’t look too good to the media heads if my boyfriend and I are just sharing a bedroom at our estate.”

Reaching forward, Mark cupped both sides of her face in his hands before resting his forehead against hers. “I wish things could have been different… I wish I’d never taken credit for killing Cell or Majin Buu!”

“It is what it is Daddy,” Videl muttered in acceptance. “Just take care.”

The Champ kissed his daughter once more on the forehead before she took to the air.

“Come on Gohan!” she hollered.
Without saying another word, the half-Saiyan joined his fiancé as the two of them sped off to their next adventure.

Oh, today was gonna be beautiful…”

Chapter End Notes

Another thing that really bothered me from both the Babadi and the Buu Saga was the way Gohan got jilted out his chance to get even with both Spopovich for nearly killing Videl and Super Buu for finishing what Spopovich started. That was supposed to be Gohan’s kill, and what happened? Babadi killed Spopovich. Gohan didn’t get a chance to avenge Videl in either case, and if one really thinks about it, Elder Kai is the one who ultimately cost Videl, Bulma, and the rest of his loved ones their lives by keeping him around an additional 30 minutes after the power raising process was already complete. It wouldn’t have been so bad if Elder Kai didn’t act so unconcerned about the whole thing. Akira Toriyama giving Super Buu a way to defeat Gohan by having Goten and Trunks fuse was the biggest dick-move in anime history because it robed Gohan of any closure he needed for character development. It effectively robed Gohan of his only chance to keep his promise to be a hero to his girlfriend. This is gonna be a very important plot point much later in the story when Gohan comes to collect.
Because this is an AU, I’m leaning towards having Videl’s physical appearance be a composite of several others. Like her appearance from Dragonball Super, Videl from chapter ten onwards has larger breasts due to her getting older as a girl transitioning into early adulthood. As of this chapter, she is just a few months shy of 18. Her hairstyle however will change throughout the story, though I’m a really big fan of both her short, frizzy haired look that she had at the tournament and throughout the Buu arc and her pig-tails look from when she was first introduced in the series.

“I can’t wait to see all our friends again!” Videl beamed happily. The female fighter did a pirouette around an incoming cloud as she and Gohan blasted through the sky. With her power level increased so much by Roshi’s training, her body now dawned a vivid white aura to match that of her fiancé as she flew at high speeds.

“They probably won’t even recognize us,” said Gohan, coming up beside her.

While it was true that Videl had undergone the most changes physically, Gohan too could hardly be called the same person. He’d muscled up a bit and his once short black spikes had grown out considerably, some of them drooping into his eyes. A haircut was definitely on his to-do list.

Looking down on the city below them, the two teens eyed the swarms of pedestrians bustling about during the lunchtime rush. Due to Satan City’s status as the home of the world’s ‘savior’, the metropolis’ commercial district was the busiest in the entire West District after nearby West Metro. Unlike West Metro however, Satan City despite its massive population growth in recent years, still had a great deal of room for development. Urban sprawl and overdevelopment were less aesthetically unappealing, and the city’s various public venues added a welcome touch of greenery to the concrete jungle.

Seeing the masses crowding the sidewalks, Gohan couldn’t help but wonder if any of them had a clue to what was coming. He thought back to what Master Roshi and Piccolo told him about some ever present and growing evil in the world, and wanted nothing more than to warn the citizens of what was now his hometown. In the back of his mind, he could now feel the pervasive malevolence that had begun to grow on the margins of society like a sea of tiny violent kis. That was the problem with being able to sense ki: You could feel a coming upheaval but you had no way of proving that something big was building up. The Son boy was soon brought out of his reverie by the voice of his woman.

“We have a lot to take care of today, and I think the best place to begin would be stopping by the city courthouse!”

Gohan nodded a curt “Right!” as he came closer. The half-Saiyan took the petite girl’s hand in his and gave it a quick squeeze.

They quickly sailed passed the city’s commercial district and entered the historic downtown area. The two teens reduced their speed to enjoy the scenic collage of landmarks their hometown had to offer. Satan City, formerly known as Orange Star City, was in fact originally chartered by one of
Videl’s own ancestors some 300 years ago as a service town for tourists traveling between West City and Capital Central, the center of King Furry’s world government. Because of this, Videl’s family held a special status as sons of the city even before her father became the 24th World Tournament titleholder. After Mister Satan lied his way to fame following the Cell Games, the city renamed itself in honor of the world’s savior.

“We’ll land here!” shouted Gohan, gesturing to a scenic park not too far from their destination.

“Sure, but I don’t see why we couldn’t land closer,” the petite fighter commented offhandedly.

“I just wanna enjoy the sights a bit,” replied the half-Saiyan, a hint of cheeriness in his voice.

Videl threw her lover a warm smile as she looped her arm around his. The two of them landed that way among a small group of gawking onlookers. Some of them were already fumbling for their smart phones in a bid to take pictures of the Champ’s daughter and Son Gohan.

“Isn’t that Videl Satan??” one of them rasped.

“They’re back! They’re really back!!” hollered a fanboy. “Our heroes are back!”

Amidst the excited murmurs and various questions, Gohan and Videl continued on their way to the district/city courthouse. Some of Videl’s longtime fans even pestered the two for autographs, only to be turned away. It didn’t take long before one of them decided to broach a conversation.

“Gohan.”

“Yeah, Videl!”

“I’ve been doing some thinking, and there’s something that’s been bothering me for a long time,” she said. “It has something to do with the state of the world in general.”

This piqued the half-Saiyan’s curiosity. “What is it, hun?”

“Have you ever wondered why King Furry’s administration never looked into developing their own army of ki-users?”

“What da’ya mean?”

Ignoring the group of fans currently following them, Videl looked up at her fiancé. “I mean, considering the history of ki-using fighters both in past World Tournaments and past battles for the fate of mankind, you’d think the military would give anything for something like that! One would think that someone would have looked at the past thirty years of calamities and woke up to some very startling realities. If you really consider what happened with past tournaments, Majin Buu, and Cell, I’m surprised a good number of people didn’t put two and two together. I just can’t believe our fellow human beings are really this obtuse! I’ve studied tournament history, and Master Roshi, Tien Shinhan, King Choppa, and Mercenary Toa are all ki users and former champions, so I’m still trying to wrap my head around how my father managed to bamboozle so many people into believing that ki was just a trick. You’d think the massive body counts would have been a canary in the coal mine! I mean… from what you’ve told me, both King Piccolo and Vegeta each wiped out the world government’s military, among other things. You’d think losses like those would raise a few alarms…”

Gohan sighed. “Truth be told, I have no answer for that. Me and the others ask ourselves that same question fairly often. You’d think the world government would be extending a contract out to anyone willing to train their soldiers in using ki. The people who could realistically train military
personnel in ki use are out there, so your guess is as good as mine. Between the short collective memory of the people and the way they’ve acted since their resurrection, I’m really starting to lose my faith in humanity. I keep thinking back to what you said in the desert about me living in denial, and I’m starting to think that forgetting certain things that challenge one’s perception of control is a pretty widespread coping mechanism.”

“I could never do that,” Videl commented. “Willfully deluding myself after all I’ve learned is the worst type of dishonesty! Out of sight, out of mind is something that works on infants. From this day forward, I’m going to do everything in my power to correct the mistakes of my father.”

“I’m not so sure that’s a good idea,” Gohan cautioned.

“And I’m not fond of the idea of leaving people as directionless as we’ve been,” Videl returned. “Leaving people in the dark about what’s been happening in their lives is often far more dangerous than telling them the truth. I’m living proof of that! Ignorance, especially organized ignorance, can give rise to evil far more effectively than direct malicious intent. Never underestimate human stupidity…”

Gohan snorted. “Point taken. That just leaves us with the issue of telling the people enough of the truth without it ruining your father. I don’t want to see you and him lose everything you have.”

“It doesn’t matter,” she replied nonchalantly. “It was never ours to keep anyway. Besides, that’s one reason, though a very small one, why we’re entering into a civil union. You’re the one who really killed Cell, so once we’re a legally recognized couple, my money is gonna be your money. I’m having your name added to our accounts so that even if the truth ever comes out, at least the rightful world savior will still have the money. I highly doubt they’d try to confiscate it from the real world savior.”

“W-WHAT!?” stammered the half-Saiyan. “Even if you can make that fly with your father, other people are bound to ask questions.”

Videl beamed up at her fiancé. “You’re gonna need access to funds if you’re going to help retrofit our home facilities for training, and that’s to say nothing about the resources you’ll need to facilitate your new role as a teacher. Master Roshi gave you a mission as one of his successors. Between the money we have and whatever substantial resources Bulma can pool, we’ll have what we need to prepare for this new threat Roshi talked about.”

“Wow…,” was all Gohan could say. “You’ve really thought this through, haven’t you?”

“I had help from Krillin,” she admitted. “I couldn’t let you do all the planning, could I?”

“I can’t help but think your dad is gonna lose his shit,” remarked the demi-Saiyan, a small measure of concern in his voice.

“He won’t miss a few zeni,” was Videl’s blunt response. “He spent the first three months following the Buu incident investing in real estate around the city. He’ll make it all back and then some. If he can foot the bill for Buu’s eating habits, than he can handle this.”

The Satan City Courthouse was an old granite building that had been renovated with white marble in recent years following the massive uptick in tax revenue generated by the city’s population growth. The front stoop was decorated with pillars of neoclassical design and the front area was laid out like a rectangular plaza wedged between two parking lots.

Upon arriving at the courthouse, the two teens were greeted by something they weren’t expecting.
The front area of the courthouse seemed to be hosting what looked like some kind of social gathering, a political rally perhaps. There was a stage set up with white banners flapping in the wind, and gathered before it were hundreds of people. Surrounding the large gaggle of men, women, and children was a security detachment made up of Satan City’s finest. This normally wouldn’t have raised an eyebrow if not for the way the police were milling about apprehensively.

Coming closer, Gohan was not prepared for what he saw.

“WHAT THE HELL!?” screeched the half breed, his eyes becoming as big as saucers.

On each of the white banners was a black calligraphic ‘M’, the symbol of Babidi, and on the stage stood a decrepit elderly man who was delivering a speech to the gathered crowd. The man in question was dressed in black and red robes, and across his waist was a belt. On its’ buckle was the Majin symbol.

It wasn’t just the way the man was dressed that caught Gohan’s attention however. Though the man’s ki was no stronger than that of a normal human, its’ character reeked of emptiness and vile intent.

Videl for her part was doing everything she could to hold it together. The sight of the symbol of the very monster that killed her had the girl on the cusp of a panic attack. Shoving her hand into a pocket, she retrieved her bottle of medication and threw her head back as she downed a pill.

Her uneasy state did not go unnoticed by her fiancé. Reaching over, Gohan pulled the petite Satan girl to his chest and held her close as he walked the two of them into the courthouse. All the while, the strange elderly man on the stage began to chant some creepy hymns or perhaps they were… incantations? The hundreds of people gathered before him, many of them with shaved heads, soon joined the robed man in unison, and their creepy voices echoed through the air.

Once inside, Videl collapsed into a chair and wrapped her arms around herself. Gohan plopped down into one beside her and continued to hold and whisper reassuring words to her in an effort to calm the girl’s nerves. To Gohan, it seemed as if Videl was going to hyperventilate. All this time, passersby in the lobby eyed the couple with interest. Finally, she found it in her to speak.

“That emblem…” she breathed.

“Yeah, I saw it too,” Gohan affirmed.

“What could it mean?” she asked, looking into his eyes.

Gohan frowned, his eyes filling with uncertainty. “I don’t know. Something’s not right. Whatever it is, it isn’t good!”

The two lovers sat like that for a few minutes until Videl made a move to stand. Turning to her boyfriend, she pulled him to his feet.

“Let’s do this.”

“Right!” he nodded, a wide smile gracing his features.

The two made their way back to the office of the district judge, passing several administrative workers and a few law enforcement personal in the halls. Each of them extended their hands in greeting to the city’s two teen crime fighters.

“Glad you’re back, Videl!” saluted one.
“You’re back! I can’t believe it!” cheered another.

Before long, the young couple arrived at their destination. Embroidered on the door in brass letters were the words ‘District Judge Javel’. Reaching up, Gohan gave the door a quick knock. The two teens didn’t have long to wait before the door creaked open, and the head of an older woman peeked out.

“Miss Satan?!” she uttered, puzzled.

“Not for long,” came Videl’s tort reply.

“What do you mean by that?” asked the judge.

“I’m here with my fiancé,” answered the Satan girl, motioning to Gohan. “We want to enter into a civil union.”

The district judge’s eyes widened at the former Junior Champion’s declaration. “Does your father know about this?”

“Not only does he know about this, he gave Gohan permission to marry me,” she supplied with a warm smile. “My father is going to be gone for another five months, and I want the two of us able to make medical decisions for each other in his absence. Considering what we both do in our spare time, you can see how that would be important.”

“Are you both over the age of 16?” the judge questioned.

“Yes,” the two teens said in unison.

“Then step into my office and I’ll get your situation taken care of.” The middle-aged lady stood aside and ushered the teenaged crime-stoppers in.

Back on the island, Master Roshi and Mr. Satan were relaxing following another after breakfast special training session. It wasn’t long before Mark decided to strike up a conversation.

“Ya know Master, I’ve been thinking…,” said the Champ.

“It’s about Videl and Gohan, isn’t it?” guessed the Turtle Hermit.

“Most of it,” he confirmed with a tone of sadness. “Videl is the one child I had with the only woman I’ve ever loved, and I absolutely failed as a single parent. I’ve let her mother down so much that I don’t even know where to begin fixing things. No matter how I look at it, I’ve ruined my daughter’s life…”

“Sometimes, the first step is the hardest,” spoke the elderly sage.

“But where do I even begin?!?” Mark asked in a somewhat pleading tone. “Videl and Gohan are just teenagers, and they put their lives on the line for others. They were both killed by Majin Buu, and most of the time all I did was cower behind some rocks! That shouldn’t have been my daughter taking a beating from Spopovich! That beating was meant for me… I’m the one who humiliated Spopovich, and I’m the one Spopovich wanted revenge on! That shouldn’t have been my little girl or her boyfriend dying against Buu! I’m the one who should have died! I deserved it after all my lies, after all the times I left my daughter without her father, after all the backdoor business deals! Kids shouldn’t have to die like they did…”

“My lies destroyed my little girl’s life… So many people got close to her just so they could get close
to me, and because of this, Videl became so untrusting and cynical. I made the problem worse by keeping her from having a love life in spite of my not being there for her! I was so paranoid that someone was gonna get close enough to learn the truth about me that I ruined my daughter’s adolescence. To top it all off, lying about Cell has put me in a position where I can’t do anything to reel my daughter in! She won’t listen to me, and she has so much dirt on me that I can’t tell her what to do even for her own safety. I set myself up where I can’t be a good parent, and if I even try to set boundaries and Videl makes good on her threats and decides to talk, we’ll both lose everything we have! Videl doesn’t realize just how much danger she’ll be putting herself in if the world finds out I didn’t kill Cell. Out of all the people who’d be coming to kill me for what I’ve done, a good portion of those will be out to get her. She’ll literally have to go into hiding for the rest of her life…”

“It is a bit of a conundrum…” Roshi commented. “At her current level however, I wouldn’t be so worried for her safety though. Videl has already surpassed the ‘wall of humanity,’ and her body is now durable enough that it’ll be able to withstand massive levels of trauma. She’s nigh bulletproof now, so gunfire won’t be a problem. Short of poison, I don’t think a normal person will be a threat to her.”

“How does that work though?” Mark asked. “Bulletproofing, I mean…”

The Turtle Hermit stroked his beard in consideration. “The stronger one becomes physically, the more internal pressure their increased living ki creates. It girds the body against external forces that would otherwise prove lethal. You have seen the scars and bullet wounds covering your daughter’s body, haven’t you?”

Mark scoffed. “How could I not? You had the three of us skinny dipping together for three months.”

“Your daughter has been on the cusp of superhuman for years,” the old man explained. “The training she received under me in the past three months has pushed her far far over the edge. She’s much stronger than me now…”

Mark’s eyes widened at this. “How strong are we talking here?!”

Roshi thought about it for a moment. “If I had to give a rough estimate, I’d say Videl is stronger than Nappa was when Goku fought him.”

“Is that good?”

“Mark, Videl is a full-blooded human,” Roshi reiterated. “That kind of power gain is unheard of in our species. Krillin didn’t get that strong until he was 26, and former World Champion Tien Shinhan was almost 30 when he achieved the same thing. No one has ever gotten that strong, that fast from just my training. At this point, you could drop a whole city block on your daughter’s head and she’d just laugh it off!”

“Holy shit…” Mark sputtered. The afroed fighter didn’t know how to process this. The idea that his daughter was that far ahead of him was downright scary.

“It’s just a theory, but I can’t help but think that Gohan teaching Videl how to harness her ki beforehand had as much to do with her increased growth as any training I gave her. At this point, even if you were somehow exposed, no one would be able to realistically threaten your daughter’s life. Gohan would kill half the planet if it came to her being in danger. It would be a battle to the end, and it would be everyone else’s end if anyone tried to harm Videl.”

Hearing this gave the current Champ some solace. With Mr. Buu living with them and the increase in his daughter’s abilities, it was only a matter of time before his charade as the ‘savior’ of the world fell
apart. He knew it was coming. Heck, how could he not know? It might be a year from now, it might be ten years. Heck! It might happen tomorrow, but it was going to happen. He’d be lucky if he died of old age before the world got wise onto him.

Suddenly, an idea came to the afroed man.

‘Gohan might just be our saving grace in more ways than one…’

The wheels were now turning in the Champ’s head. With Videl marrying the boy who actually beat Cell, there was a good possibility that even if he were exposed, his daughter would get to keep her entire inheritance if only because Gohan would have the money too. Of course, he’d have to leave the limelight forever, but at least his daughter would be taken care of. He was soon brought out of his ponderings by Roshi.

“Before I forget Mark, there’s something pertaining to your daughter and Gohan’s relationship that I think you need to know.”

“What?”

“I spoke at length with Gohan’s father yesterday morning,” the Turtle Hermit told him with a measure of hesitancy. “You’re not gonna like what he confessed to…”

“Considering how screwy most of these revelations have been, I’m almost afraid to ask,” the afroed man muttered.

“Goku told me that he was the one who encouraged your daughter to start sleeping with his son,” Roshi disclosed.

At this latest bombshell, the current Champ shot up from his hammock. “WHAT!? Please tell me you’re joking!”

“I wish I was,” said Roshi. “This isn’t the first time Goku has done something this assed with the misguided notion that he was helping a situation.”

Mr. Satan let out a long sigh. “Ya know what?! I’m not even gonna get mad. This might be a little out of character for me, but I’m somewhat happy with the way things have turned out!”

Roshi arched an eyebrow at this. “OK, now I’m the one who’s confused! We are talking about the same Gohan and Videl, right?”

At this, the Champ let out a loud belly laugh. “Think about it for a moment! Considering all the mental issues that Gohan has and how badly those issues affected his and my daughter’s initial love life, Videl getting Gohan therapy so early probably saved them the pain of confronting those issues after they got married. In a way, this was probably the best thing that could have happened! They confronted the problem head on and got the hard stuff out of the way.”

“That’s… actually a pretty mature way of looking at this,” admitted the Turtle Hermit. “Good job Mark!”

“Still…,” growled Mr. Satan, “If I ever catch Son Goku, me and him are gonna have a few choice words!”

Back in Satan City, Gohan and Videl finished up their legal business. Arm in arm, the young couple exited the city courthouse. Videl rested her head against her new common law husband’s arm as the two walked down the marble steps.
“Son Videl has a nice ring to it, doesn’t it?” the former Satan girl queried.

Gohan snaked one of his arms around the small of his little common law wife’s back as he gazed down into her cerulean eyes. “It suits you well.”

The half-Saiyan tilted her chin up as he bent down for a deep kiss. Videl wrapped her arms around her tall mate to gain more purchase to his lips. However, the two lovers were roused from their moment by the sound of an unexpected guest.

“GOHAN!!!”

The teen half-Saiyan looked up to see his younger brother Goten barreling towards them. Behind the young half-Saiyan were Goku and Chi-Chi.

“Goten!” exclaimed Gohan happily.

Gohan felt the wind knocked out of him as the small Goku look-a-like tackled his older brother onto the steps.

“GOHAN!!! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?! DON’T EVER LEAVE ME LIKE THAT AGAIN!!” wailed the younger Son boy. The miniature Goku began to sob into his older sibling’s gi as months of separation anxiety began to surface.

Gohan did what he could to comfort his little brother. “It’s OK Goten…Shh...! It’s OK. It’s good to see you…”

Videl smiled warmly at the touching scene before her. Being an only child, she could only imagine what Gohan and his younger brother had together.

The Son patriarch stepped forward and hoisted both Gohan and Goten to their feet. “You’ve changed a lot, Gohan! I mean…look at you! I almost didn’t recognize you…Wow!”

Gohan smiled weakly at his father’s praise. Out of the corner of his eye, he noticed his mother standing back and away from their little reunion. Was it just him or was she shooting a sour look in Videl’s direction?

“Thanks Dad…” said the half-Saiyan sheepishly. “I’m happy to see you too.”

It was then that Goku laid his sights on Videl.

“Woah..! Is that you, Videl?!” asked the Saiyan warrior in amazement.

“In the flesh,” remarked the petite girl with a giggle. The girl stepped forward and wrapped her ‘father-in-law’ in a strong bear hug. “How’re things, Goku?”

“When Master Roshi told me you two had changed, I had no idea what to expect. Especially you, Videl! I can’t believe how much stronger you’ve become…”

“I owe a lot to Gohan, Master Roshi, and Krillin,” the Satan girl praised. “I can’t imagine what I’d be doing if it weren’t for their support.”

“I guess that makes me your senior student now, huh?” bragged the spiky-haired Saiyan.

“I guess so,” she replied offhandedly. “Me, Gohan, and my father trained hard this summer.”

Goku smiled at his new daughter-in-law. “I’m still don’t understand why Master Roshi wanted to
train Mr. Satan though. Speaking of which, where is your dad?"

Videl crossed her arms over her deep bosom before answering. “Master Roshi has the three of us on an eight month training program. Because me and Gohan have school, we have to train around our classes to the best of our abilities for the remaining five months. My father however, will have to train the last five months the same way you and Krillin did.”

“How well is your dad doing….in the training, I mean?”

Videl beamed a smile at the veteran Turtle alumni. “It’s the first time I’ve seen Daddy take his training seriously in a long time! Honestly, he needed this as much as me and Gohan did. If anything, this training is gonna add another twenty years to his career. For the first time in years, I feel a little proud of him!”

“I noticed that you’re wearing weighted clothing,” Goku pointed out.

“And I’ll be wearing some from now on,” she remarked.

“At least until I take them off,” Gohan joked with a cheesy grin. The half-Saiyan’s continence took on a more serious look as he gazed over at his mother who seemed to be standing off by herself. “Is it just me, or is Mom deliberately giving us the cold shoulder?”

Goku let out a long-suffering sigh. “Your mother is still having a hard time dealing with the fact that you’re your own man now. She’ll come around…”

“I’m right here ya know!” Chi-Chi snapped. “And to answer your question Gohan, I’m still disappointed in you! I sacrificed a lot over the years just so you could go to school and use your head for something other than a punching bag, and you spat on all of it!”

“And you did all that without asking me what I wanted to do with my life,” added the half-Saiyan. “I said it once, and it begs repeating: The choice was never yours to make and you have no place shaming me for doing what I want with my life.”

Chi-Chi’s lip began to quiver as emotions began to overtake her. “You were supposed to amount to something! Why did you turn your back on your family?”

“Yeah, using your head as a punching bag!” the OX princess quipped.

Gohan pinched the bridge of his nose in annoyance. “Oh, for fuck sakes Mom! You were a martial artist yourself! You still do martial arts with Goten! You aren’t doing anything with your own life aside from being a homemaker! People living in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones!”

By this point, Videl had had enough. Tromping forward, she got up in the Son matriarch’s face and pushed her.

“What’s your hang-up?!”
“You really want to know?!” Chi-Chi growled. “How could you do it, Videl?! I trusted you with my boy, and you corrupted him!”

“I should be asking you that question!” Videl shot back. “There’s nothing wrong with wanting to excel in school, but what you wanted from Gohan kept him from being happy! I know I have some mental issues but you’re just fucking crazy!”

“Why I ought a…” ChiChi didn’t get the time to finish before Videl was at her again.

“You’ll what?!” the girl demanded. “Chi-Chi, don’t even pretend like you’ve got the moral high ground here! There’s a good chance that your emphasis on scholastic garbage in your son’s life after Cell contributed to all of us getting killed by Buu! Your misguidance killed your own sons and you’re too short-sighted to see it! You lost your moral high ground on the issue the day you pressured your son into turning away from the one thing that allowed him to do any real good in the world! The lives of the people matter a hell of a lot more than your little parental guidance fantasies so don’t even go there, mother-in-law!”

“Mother-in-law?” asked Chi-Chi, puzzled. “Oh my God! Don’t tell me you two got married!”

“Actually, Mom…” began Gohan coming up beside Videl, “Videl and I just entered into a civil union.”

“Civil union?”

“It’s another kind of legally recognized relationship,” explained the Satan girl. “Me and Gohan wanted to be fair to you, my father, and everyone else by not getting married until after high school. We want to have a formal wedding, it’s just that we also want our relationship to have some protections under the law. You’re welcome by the way…”

“Seems more like a cover for shacking up if you ask me…” said Chi-Chi derisively. “Don’t deny it! I’ve known about you and Gohan’s hanky panky ever since Goku fought Buu, and if you want my approval to marry my son—“

“-Love doesn’t need your approval any more than the weather does!” Videl interrupted testily. “We never needed your approval any more than we needed my father’s! Forgive me for saying this Chi- Chi, but it says a lot about your own over-bloated sense of self-importance if you think we do. Me and Gohan are grown-assed adults! I really don’t understand what makes you and my father think your opinion has any relevance in our decisions as a couple—“

While the two female fighters exchanged barbs, Gohan and his father listened to the speech being delivered over a microphone to the strange crowd congregating out on the courthouse quad. The strange man on stage bearing the Majin charm on his belt sounded more like a pastor giving a sermon, which he may have been.

“-And so my brothers and sisters, we must strive to build a new world with the knowledge that our lord and savior Babidi has left us! Through death and resurrection, he has brought about a new age, an age where the secrets of the life hereafter are opened to all of us! Like Prometheus, our messiah Babidi, blessings be upon him, has delivered us the secrets of the Gods! Through death, he has freed us from fear! Let us live in an age where fear no longer dictates our decisions! Let us build a world where we are no longer chained by consequences!”

“HAIL LORD BABIDI!! HAIL THE MESSIAH!!” chanted the crowd. Their voices reached a crescendo and rang throughout the Satan City historic district.
“Wow…,” scoffed Gohan, “There’s an actual cult dedicated to worshipping that slime!? That’s it! Stop this thing, I wanna get off! Just how crazy are people getting?!”

“You should see the cult that worships me,” Goku muttered. “Because of Babidi, the entire world saw my fight with Majin Buu over West Metro, and now everyone you can imagine is sneaking onto our property for souvenirs. Now, your mother has to keep the county sheriff on call.”

“Wait, what are they doing now?”

“Bring forward the new initiates!” the man on stage commanded.

From the crowd, three black-robed young people stepped forward, all of them in their late teens or early twenties. One was a girl no older than Gohan and Videl. She had long blond hair and pale blue eyes. The other two were young men with dark hair.

The three young people made their way to the stage where an ensemble of other regalia-sporting older men now stood with scissors and shaving razors. The girl was yanked forward by two of the robed men and had her cloak removed, leaving her completely nude for all to see.

Upon seeing this, Chi-Chi dove forward and covered her youngest son’s eyes. “What the hell is this?!”

“What indeed…,” repeated Gohan. To his side, Videl watched the spectacle with morbid shock as did the ensemble of police charged with providing security of the strange event.

The older men then laid the now naked girl on her back before forming a circle around the youth. Reaching into their robes, each man pulled forth a translucent crystal of sorts and raised them high into the air.

“I, Acolyte Cumber, will now instigate the branding ritual!”

Stepping forward, the strange speaker from before reached up to a medallion choker he wore around his neck and closing his eyes, began to chant mysterious hymns. He was soon joined by the group of men surrounding both him and the young girl.

Gohan, his parents, Videl, and Goten watched with hitched breath as an ethereal crimson ember began to glow from the medallion in question. Archaic energies began to flow like a vapor from the mystical icon into the crystals held high by the other men, causing them to take on an eerie magenta glow.

Videl wrapped her arms around her as a chill ran across her ki-sensing sixth sense.

“What is this cold burning sensation? This pressure?” she rasped.

“Videl… that is what pure evil feels like…,” her new spouse uttered in a whisper.

Beneath the men, the floor began to hum with dim runes in the shape of a pentagram around the prostrate girl. The hapless girl’s body rose clear off the floor as the runes lifted from the linoleum and began to wrap around her body in a bone-chilling, otherworldly dance of illuminated crimson and magenta symbols. The girl’s back arched painfully as she threw her head back in an agonized cutting scream. Upon her forehead, the outline of a calligraphic ‘M’ formed where the runes intersected.

Seeing this as their cue, men from the crowd rushed forward and secured the agonized teen’s limbs and torso. The girl thrashed violently as crimson bolts of energy coursed across her curvy form. Another man from the crowd brought forward a vat of red-hot charcoals with a heated iron rod
immersed within and presented it to the strange robed speaker from before.

Reaching into the burning charcoals, the robed orator brandished what was now revealed to be a branding iron. Drawing back, the man looked once more upon the girl who would receive the mark.

“*With this brand, I burn away the rot of your second life!*” With that, the robed man thrust the branding iron forward, pressing the searing metal into the girl’s forehead. The poor youth let out an ear-piercing scream as an insignia, that of an ‘M’, was burned permanently into her tender flesh. When the deed was done, the men restraining her lowered the girl and stepped away.

“*Behold!*” blared the strange man calling himself Cumber, “*This one has chosen truth! This one has chosen freedom from the chains of humanity! This... young, lost thing has joined our order, the Order of the Malign Spirit!!! Her heart now beats as one with all of ours as she aids us in bringing about the coming of a new age, the age of the Majin!*”

The now marked, nude blond rose to her feet before turning to the man named Cumber and dropping to one knee. “I, Bianca, pledge my heart and soul to the Order of the Malign Spirit and to the one true prophet!” Taking the man’s offered hand in her own, she laid tearful, elated kisses upon it.

Gohan gaped in awe at what he was now feeling from the blond girl on stage. By all accounts, save for the brand she now carried, her outward appearance was unchanged, but the girl’s ki told a completely different story.

“Do you feel that?” he asked. The Son boy shuddered at the unbridled negative taint that now bled through the girl’s life energy.

“I do,” Goku said. “That girl’s living ki has been twisted with hate…”

“W-who are these people?” Videl wondered aloud. The petite fighter for the life of her couldn’t understand how someone could knowingly give up their humanity so readily as if it were some disposable commodity.

“I’m not sure hun, but I can’t help but think that these were the people Piccolo and Roshi warned us about,” answered a now edgy Gohan.

This caught Goku’s attention. “What do you mean? Care to enlighten me?”

Gohan swallowed hard before answering his father. “Master Roshi and Piccolo spoke of some darkness growing in the world. They didn’t offer any details besides the threat being of human origin.”

Just then, the old man now known as Cumber began to sermonize once more.

“*Within the hearts of all people lies the potential to be free! We now know our end! We have nothing left to fear! All that is left is for every man, woman, and child to find their courage and take up the cause of our late lord and savior, Babidi, and his holy messenger, Inquisitor Gerkin! The truth is laid bare for all of us! The old gods are a mere delusion of man, but as you have just witnessed, the power of the holy messenger is the one great constant upon which our future can be made!*”

Just then, a loud, snarling voice cut through the quad.

“Arrgh! Don’t listen to that bollocks!”

Everyone present at the mass as well as Gohan and the others turned to the source of the voice.
Whipping around, Videl was shocked to discover who the voice belonged to. The petite girl suddenly found herself seized with an urge to kill like nothing she’d ever experienced. Standing barely twenty feet away was the man who had haunted her every waking nightmare. His ginger hair may have grown back and the charm of Babidi may have been gone, but Spopovich’s muscle mass, size, and his ever-present sneer made his appearance uncanny.

“You maggots don’t know what yer taukin bout!” the giant man slurred in his dingy British accent. “Babidi would’a kilt every bloom’n one a ya!”

Defensively, the police detail surrounding the gathering began to unholster their side arms as members of the cultish mass began to whip out automatic weapons of all kinds before pointing them at the brutish brawler.

‘This could get ugly…’ though Gohan as he prepared to make a move. He didn’t want to act too hastily for fear of exacerbating an already tense situation. Unfortunately, his new spouse had other ideas.

“BASTARD!!!” the girl screamed as she charged at the large, muscled man.

“What?” was all Spopovich could mutter as he found himself at the other end of a punch so strong, it sent him taxiing to a face-plant at the edge of the very cult gathering he had so rudely offended.

Shaking his head in a bid to get the cobwebs out, the large man pushed himself onto his knees only to find himself face to face with a host of angry cultists and the barrels of several loaded firearms. The man didn’t have any time to worry about them though as Videl wasn’t finished with him.

“You DIRTY SONOVABITCH!!!” Videl surged forward and let into the man with a barrage of punches and stomps. Recognizing their old crime-fighting ally and figuring she required assistance, some of the nearby Satan City Police detail pulled out their batons and started to beat on whatever part of Spopovich Videl wasn’t shit-stomping. To make matters worse, some of the offended cultists got in on the action and started hammering the back of Spopovich’s head with the butts of their guns. Before long, the whole quad had spiraled into a violent free-for-all.

“I know its hard son, but shouldn’t we step in and help him?” asked Goku reluctantly.

Gohan let out a long-suffering sigh. “I suppose so, if only so I can get a few shots in myself.”

After what Spopovich did to Videl at the last tournament, Gohan wanted nothing more than to double team the hulking brute with his spouse and take his sweet time. Dragging the bastard to somewhere more secluded would offer them just that. Videl could really use the therapy too.

His mind made up, the half-Saiyan surged forward and grabbed both his woman and the object of her vengeance and physically carried them away from the courthouse melee as quickly as his feet could carry him.

“Dad, Mom, Goten! Come on!” he screamed to his family. And with that, the Son family with Spopovich in tow, got the hell outta Dallas! Behind them, the cult and their own police security got into an armed altercation.

“Gohan! Lemme go! What the fuck!!?” wailed Videl as rounds flattened against her now bulletproof body on impact. Spopovich however, was dazed but miraculously, still conscious.

“I’ll make it up to ya, sweetheart!” he promised as another hail of bullets connected with their backs.

The Son Clan was so focused on getting away that they didn’t notice they were heading in the
direction of a man in a beige suit hobbling down the sidewalk. The youngest of the group, Goten, barreled around his family and tripped over the man’s foot.

“Ouch!” groaned the youngest Son boy.

“Are you hurt, lad?” asked the man in the suit. The man, a white, balding, older male in his early fifties reached down and helped the young demiSaiyan to his feet. Before Goten could say anything however, Chi-Chi grabbed the boy and the two of them had to play catch-up with their family.

“Inquisitor Gerkin!”

The middle-aged man turned and was met by the strange robed man from the cult gathering. The man in question, Cumber, was flanked by some of his followers.

“Who were those people?” the suited man questioned, motioning his cane in the direction the Son’s had departed.

“Troublemakers, your holiness!” Cumber rasped between ragged breaths. “I believe one of them was Miss Videl Satan, the daughter of Mister Satan!”

“Interesting…” he remarked.

“Should we keep her under surveillance?”

The man known only as Inquisitor Gerkin rubbed his chin in thought. “Perhaps later on. She’s of little consequence right now.”
“In here!”

The large grappler Spopovich had no time to raise his arms in a guard as he was roughly shoved into a back alley by his rescuers/kidnappers. The hulking brute let out a choked cry as he was hoisted to his feet by a very, very scary looking Son Gohan. Behind him stood both his father and his new spouse. Enraged, Videl was coiled to let into Babidi’s former servant at the slightest provocation.

“Who are those people and what is your connection to them?!” Gohan demanded fiercely. “I swear to whatever kais are listening that if you’re up to no good, I’ll send your sorry ass back to Hell!”

“Get bent!” was Spopovich’s snide response.

Losing his cool, Gohan slung the massive grappler right into a pile of garbage. Spopovich flailed aimlessly as he wrestled his way out from under falling bags of trash. The man glared hatefully at the half-Saiyan.

“After what you did to Videl, I should kill you nice and slow…” Gohan snarled.

“Mr. Satan’s little bitch?” Looking behind the enraged hybrid, Spopovich finally recognized the girl he’d humiliated back at the last World Tournament. Her now longer coal-black hair was in its’ original pig-tails haircut and she had changed a little physically, but there was no mistaking her face.

Guffawing obnoxiously, the muscled man came to a stand. “If we hadn’t been in front of an audience, I’d have done something else to her! Hearin that little bitch cry gave me the biggest woody!”

Just as Gohan was about to snap, Videl beat him to the punch. Surging forward in a burst of ki, the pig-tailed girl slammed her elbow into the giant’s temple, indenting his outline into the sidewalk.

“Apparently, the Eternal Dragon’s idea of what a ‘really bad’ person is happens to be pretty damned lenient because I’m still trying to figure out how you were allowed to come back to life!”

“W-What are you ramblin bout you crazy bitch?!” stammered Babidi’s former lackey. The man spit up a few teeth as he climbed to his knees.

“I’m gonna enjoy this!” she seethed icily, “I hope you enjoy this too…”

His mouth gaping in horror, the former servant of Babidi darted his eyes about in an attempt to find an escape route. Both entryways were blocked by Gohan on one end and Goku and Goten on the other. Behind Videl, glaring at the man with her arms crossed, ChiChi stepped up.

“You have no idea how much I suffered because of what you did to me…!” the Satan girl growled. Reaching forward, Videl grabbed the fearful man by the throat and stifled his sputtering screams with a crushing squeeze.

“You helped that bastard Babidi kill every one of us! You tortured and humiliated me in front of everyone I know! You destroyed my dignity over something my father did…”
Spopovich had no time to prepare himself as the heel of Videl’s boot struck his forehead, forcing the behemoth to eat asphalt. Pushing himself to his knees again, he looked up at the volatile, enraged young woman he had tortured and very nearly killed. He would have made the little bitch eat a ki blast if he still had his magical enhancements.

“Because you toyed with me, I’m gonna return the favor,” cackled Videl deviously. Bringing her thumb and forefinger together, with a snap of her finger the girl shot a ki-imbued burst of compressed air into Spopovich’s body that cratered him into the brick wall behind him.

“Sorry about that…” apologized the girl with mock politeness. To her amazement, Spopovich got up from the assault in a way that harkened back to the endless recovery rate he had in their fight at the tournament.

The large man looked on with fear as a faint bluish-white battle aura began to dance around the petite fighter, and he was more than a little creeped out when her predatory, cerulean eyes began to glow blue with ki. Stumbling onto his back, he did his best to scramble away from his assailant as she began to skulk towards him.

“P-Please...!” he begged, “I was under a curse. I-I couldn’t control myself!”

“Don’t listen to him Videl!” came a shout, that of Goku. “Vegeta had a great deal of control over his actions when he was under Babidi’s curse so I know he’s lying!”

His only hope for talking his way out of a severe beating dashed, the muscled giant kissed the pavement and covered his head in a bid to protect himself. Below him, a puddle of urine moistened the ground.

“Pathetic!” Videl sneered in disgust. Drawing her foot back, she put all her strength into a kick that connected with Spopovich’s forehead with such force he was summersaulted into the air. His large frame continued to spin in midair a few more times before coming to a gut-wrenching face-plant onto the roadside. The man was rendered unconscious.

Turning from her handiwork, Videl wore a scowl that could put Vegeta’s to shame.

“What’s wrong, honey?” asked Gohan, though he probably already knew the answer.

“I just can’t believe that I let such a sad excuse for a human being affect me so much,” she muttered with clinched fists. “All the nightmares, all the pills, all the pain… all because of him!”

Videl felt a hand rest on her shoulder. Looking behind her, she found her mate smiling down at her. Reaching up, she reciprocated his smile with a gentle squeeze.

“Let’s go,” said Gohan.

Holding her spouse’s hand, the young woman left the alley with her new in-laws.

Sometime later, the entire Son family and Buu sat at the Satan estates’ long dining room table and feasted upon whatever the Satan House chef could whip up on short notice. It took a lot of convincing on the part of Mr. Satan to keep the estate staff quiet about Mr. Buu living there, but with time, those who worked in the mansion saw the importance of keeping the rotund, child-like creature pacified with their service. The last thing they wanted was for the creature to go on yet another genocidal rampage. For now, the stories of Mr. Satan keeping the pink creature as a pet were regarded as an urban legend.

Videl’s butler, Robert, eyed the fat pink creature wearily as he traded Son Goku’s empty plate for yet
another serving. Having died by the monster’s hands, it was understandable that the old man was unnerved by his employer’s choice of house pets.

Videl for her part, was still weary of Bibidi’s creation. Contrary to what one may think, being turned to chocolate did not prevent her from feeling the pain of death when Majin Buu’s more powerful incarnation killed her on the lookout. She felt the sharp agony of being chewed to death even then. A shudder ran through her at the very sight of the pink taffy-like alien as it gulped down copious amounts of food, its’ appetite easily rivaling that of Goku’s. The voice of her new mother-in-law soon drew her attention.

“Goku told me Gohan got professional help,” ChiChi said. “Mind telling me why?”

This was something both Gohan and Videl dreaded talking about both to their friends and Gohan’s parents. Gohan instantly stiffened as his body began to tremble violently. To his side, Videl began to glare at the table top, trying her best to stay civil and not get into yet another back and forth with the Son Matriarch. Finally, it was Gohan who broke the silence.

“Mom…Dad…, some of the things we’re about to tell you are gonna sound pretty accusatory, but I’m asking you to please keep an open mind,” his voice quivered.

“Go on…” pressed ChiChi.

Videl swallowed hard before leaning forward. “Before we tell you why Gohan needed help, I think it’s important that we get some things out in the open.” She said this while shooting a dirty look in Goku’s direction. The Saiyan abruptly stopped eating as his face took on a visage of nervousness.

“Firstly, I’m the one who led Gohan on,” Videl confessed. “It happened about a week after Goku and Vegeta killed Buu. Everyone’s celebratory phase was beginning to wind down, and I noticed that Gohan was pretty depressed. Before I go on ChiChi, I would like to disclose a very important piece of information. It’s something that will hit a little too close to home.”

If ChiChi wasn’t curious before, she definitely was now. “How close to home are we talking here?”

Videl shot one last look at a mortified Goku before answering. “I want you and Gohan to know it was Goku who encouraged me to sleep with your son.”

At first, ChiChi did nothing but stare forward as her mind processed this bombshell. Then, the full weight of what Videl had told her hit like a Greyhound Bus.

“WHAT?!!!!” was both Gohan and his mother’s unified response.

“Now listen ChiChi-,”” Goku implored with a placating gesture.

“How could you, Goku?!” his wife screamed shrilly. “What were you thinking?! Were you even thinking at all?!”

“I didn’t see what the problem was!” he defended. “After all that happened with Majin Buu and their deaths, I thought the two of them needed some much needed relief. We were about the same age when we started doing it, so I really thought it would be OK! How was I supposed to know it would cause them so much grief?”

“How did you not know?!” Videl fumed. “Gohan’s trauma issues and his socially stunted childhood stigmatized our initial sex life, and that’s in spite of his Saiyan gifts! I didn’t even have a cherry to pop and Gohan still had problems! Neither of you have any business being parents! The two of you practically ruined your own son!”
“I did everything I could to raise my boy right!” declared ChiChi indignantly.

“You kept Gohan’s natural Saiyan instincts so repressed with your petty traditionalist garbage and your henpecking that it caused him to curl up in a simpering mess!” Videl charged. “I had to get Gohan professional help out of my pocket just so I could work him through this! I can only imagine how badly things would have ended if we took your advice and waited until we got married before we did it! And don’t even get me started on the flashbacks Gohan has because of all the shit he went through as a kid!”

ChiChi looked absolutely mortified. She had no idea just how many problems her parenting method had wrought on her own son. All of a sudden, feelings of emptiness found their way into the pit of her stomach as her eyes began to tear up.

“What have I done…” she whimpered silently.

‘Of course he would leave us…” the Son matriarch thought to herself. Given the choice between a mother who robbed him of his sense of self and the girl he loved, it was no surprise her son moved in with his girlfriend. She would too if she were in his shoes. Now, her son had a ‘wife’ and chances were, he’d never want his mother’s input on any aspect of his life from here on out. She broke down.

His meal forgotten, Goku looked down at the table in shame. Along with depriving his son of a father for so many years, in having his son assist with the battles against Earth’s enemies, he had inadvertently caused Gohan mental anguish that he would likely have to deal with for the rest of his life.

Sobbing, ChiChi darted around the table and wrapped her arms around Gohan’s neck in a tight hug. “I’m sorry…. I’m so, so sorry, son!”

“If you really are sorry-,” said Gohan returning the hug, “-Can you do one thing for me?”

Pulling back, his mother gazed into his eyes with a hopeful puffy look. “Please name it!”

“Promise me that you’ll let Goten be his own person. So far you’ve done a good job of letting him be himself, but I’d feel better if you continued extending the very courtesy to him that you didn’t see fit to give me.”

“Oh Gohan! I’ll try!” ChiChi wiped more unshed tears from her eyes as the waterworks kept coming.

“That’s all you had to say,” he whispered into her hair as he held his mother close.

Wiping her eyes, ChiChi held her estranged son’s hands and met his gaze with one of her own.

“It’s hard to accept, but maybe I’ve been emotionally selfish,” ChiChi admitted with a defeated huff. “In all my efforts to mold you, I inadvertently broke your spirit…I broke us. I took something from you that you’ll never be able to get back! Through my efforts, I spat on the one thing my husband…, your father left you. Why would you not leave me?”

“It was the only way I could have done what was needed…” uttered her son.

Closing her eyes, ChiChi looked down, her face contorted in misery and sorrow. She continued to pour her soul out to her eldest born.

“I knew Videl had replaced me as the most important woman in your life. I knew it the day she first arrived on our property, but I let my selfishness twist my love for you into something shameful. You
had to be a man to her, and I tried to keep you from loving and helping the one girl I wanted you to marry. I’ll leave you long before Videl does. A mother usually goes first, and when it’s all said and done, your wife is the one you’ll grow old with. She’s the one you’ll have to be devoted to. I can’t get in the way of that…”

Without saying a word, Gohan brushed a few stray black tendrils out of her eyes and bending forward, he laid a kiss on his mother’s forehead.

“I promise I won’t interfere with your life anymore,” she breathed. “It is the only one you have.”

“Can we start over then?” asked her son quietly.

“If you’ll allow me to at least be in your life…”

Videl looked on happily at the scene before her.

_Oh, today was beautiful…_

Later on, the two unionized teens went through the many spacious bedrooms located throughout Videl’s mansion. Videl’s old bedroom was fine for when Gohan was just visiting, but they needed a larger bedroom that they could share as a couple and the prime choices looked pretty promising. The estate had guestrooms fit for foreign dignitaries, VIPs, and business associates alike, so it was really a matter of taking their pick, so long as you didn’t mind Mr. Satan’s visage being plastered on everything.

“I like the room we checked in the west wing,” said Gohan. “Like your room, it’s on the opposite end of the mansion from both your father’a room and Robert’s quarters. It also has a hot tub and walk-in shower which is a major plus.”

“I can see its’ advantages,” Videl opined. “The first chance we get though, I’d like to invest in a fantasy sex swing. I’ve thought about getting one for us, and there’s no sense not putting that one empty corner to good use. Of course, we’ll have to order it online…”

“Why would you want your room on the opposite end from Mr. Satan’s?” asked Goku naively.

Feeling a bit embarrassed, Gohan scratched the back of his head in typical Son fashion. “Let’s just say that our nighttime activities can get pretty loud.”

“I can be pretty noisy,” Videl admitted with a faint blush, “It’s a habit I’ve had since Gohan got past his initial sex issues.”

“Oh…” Finally getting what she was implying, Goku nodded knowingly.

“Considering how strong Videl’s gotten in recent months, it wouldn’t hurt if we got Bulma to design a sturdier bedframe for the two of us,” suggested Gohan. “Something made with the same material she uses in Vegeta’s gravity chamber would be perfect for the long haul.”

Chi-Chi’s eyes widened at the words of her eldest son. “Exactly what kind of romps do you two have at night?!”

Gohan let out a heavy sigh. “Mom, I know this is gonna be a little too straight-forward, but bear with me! Before Videl started training under Roshi, we were at least able to make love without breaking down our bed by having Videl in the dominant position. After the first month of training with Roshi however, things changed. Videl’s gotten too strong for that, and now we’re pretty much reduced to sharing a mattress and box-spring set on the floor.”
“Videl, I still can’t believe how strong you’ve gotten!” Goku exclaimed. “Compared to where you were before Roshi trained you, it’s like night and day.”

“It was either get strong or become a footnote in martial arts history,” said the petite fighter. “Martial arts has too much importance in my life for me to just quit over one or two loses. If you and Krillin can get beaten and killed and still hang in there, why shouldn’t I be able to? My pride is the one thing I’ll always have, and Gohan’s shown me that I can’t let people like Spopovich or that crazy Barbella take that away from me. What was I supposed to do? Start living like my old man? Get where I couldn’t look at myself in the morning?!”

“Your personality is also different,” Chichi noted. “Videl, you acted so differently following your fight with that Spopovich fella from what you were when I first met you. You were so quiet and dare I say ‘submissive’ following the whole Buu thing.”

“Could you really blame me for acting different?” asked Videl. “I’d just got through getting tortured to death by some alien magic-empowered freak. To top it all off, I’d just learned that everything I’d ever believed in was an outright fabrication. I was still figuring things out.”

“But now it’s like you’re back to your old self again,” ChiChi added. “With your pig-tails, you really do look and act like that same girl who came over for flying lessons.”

“I had to find myself again,” the Satan girl told her. “Gohan had to find himself again! We were both losing our old selves. Some serious soul-searching had to happen before either of us could face the world.”

“Still…, you’re joking about the mattress and box-spring floor thing, right?” inquired ChiChi incredulously. “I mean… what? Do you two go at it every night?”

“Only three to five nights a week,” answered Gohan. “We usually sleep in the nude now. Even when Videl does wear something, it’s usually just a shirt or a nightgown.”

“I want Gohan to have better access to me. It’s part of our promise to each other.”

“Promise?” Chi Chi pressed, clearly puzzled.

“Me and Gohan had a discussion,” she explained. “Gohan gets to have me whenever he wants. In exchange, he has to take both my training and his training seriously. And before either of you ask, no! I don’t mind this arrangement at all. I’m the kind of girl who enjoys a more physical relationship, and I wanted Gohan to bed me more often anyway so this kills two birds with one stone.”

“OK…, how did you ever get your father to agree to this?” asked Chi-Chi, clearly curious.

“Blackmail,” was Videl’s blunt answer. “I threatened to pack my bags and leave Dad all alone if he didn’t let me and Gohan have whatever love life we wanted. Whatever money Dad has is rightfully Gohan’s anyway, so he knew better than to say no. Dad knows as well as I do that this is one battle he could never win. Whatever authority he ever held over me died the day two conditions came into play: My finding out that he took credit for Gohan killing Cell and Gohan becoming the most important man in my life. It’s not ethical, but it was the only way I could neutralize my father’s contrived bullshit.”

Chi-Chi slumped back into her chair as she processed all this. “So let me take this all in! You’re both horny teenagers who happen to be the single strongest couple on Earth, you have the second largest fortune on the planet at your disposal, and because Gohan has emancipated himself from us and you’ve sidelined your father, neither of you really have to answer to anyone. To top it all off, the two
of you can go at it like cats in heat and no one else can make an issue out of it because you’re in a
civil union and you both have this mansion all to yourselves for the next five months?”

“That’s about the size of it,” Videl remarked with a small grin. “It’s every wild child teenager’s
dream come true.”

“Unbelievable…” muttered the Son matriarch with a shake of her head.

“Believe it.”

“Not like it matters really,” Gohan commented. “We’re gonna be busy most of the time anyway.
Between my supervising Videl’s training, our going to school, renovating part of Mr. Satan’s dojo to
facilitate our training, and monitoring that strange cult, we’re gonna have our work cut out for us.”

“Aside from their ki presence feeling so twisted, I don’t really sense anything special about them,”
commented Goku dismissively. “They just don’t seem like that much of a threat.”

“Maybe not to you,” Videl began, clearly miffed by her father-in-law’s lack of concern, “But to the
everyday person, these people could be very dangerous. The issue with cults is the collective
intelligence, experience, and expertise they can pool from their growing membership. Believe me
Goku, they don’t need to be strong! That many organized lunatics armed with automatic weapons
poses a real challenge to both law and order and public safety.”

“Besides, their strength isn’t what we need to worry about,” Gohan cautioned. “If this cult continues
to gain followers, the amount of collective negative ki could very well denature the environment on
Earth. Long-term, they are a very real threat!”

“How long do you think we have before their numbers reach that point?” asked Videl worriedly.

Gohan gazed up at the ceiling in thought. “Hard to say… Judging by the feel of their current
numbers, they’re still on the margins of society. Over time however, they will ultimately make
inroads into the mainstream. I’d say we have about twenty years give or take to retool ourselves for
this long-term battle.”

“Twenty years? For them?!” Goku scoffed, his tone carrying disbelief. “I’d like to trust Piccolo’s
judgement on this, but I still don’t know…”

“Ya know…,” Gohan started, “Instead of outright dismissing everyday normal people because
they’re weak, wouldn’t it be more constructive to actually help them become stronger? I mean think
about it, Dad! They wouldn’t be so weak if you took the time to actually take on some students and
train them. You have all this fighting expertise, and yet aside from me, you never seem to pass on
any of that knowledge. You give a man a fish, he eats for a day, but if you teach him how to fish…”

Looking over at Videl as he finished that last part, Gohan caught her shooting him a knowing smile.

Goku scratched the back of his head in confusion. “I get what you’re saying, but those weird Babidi
worshippers don’t really seem like a major threat. We’ve fought magic users before so I’m not really
sold.”

Gohan sighed with frustration. ‘And to think at one point I thought the same way…’

“And this Dad is the reason Piccolo and Roshi tasked me and Videl with addressing this problem.
You’re a brilliant fighter, but this isn’t your kind of battle. You’re too forgiving and dismissive just
because you think someone isn’t a threat. Dr. Gero used to be a normal human, but he nearly got all
of us! We don’t know anything about these cultists! You never fight to prevent evil so much as you
wait for it to come knocking at our door, and then we wind up having to wish our friends back to life because they get strung along into a battle where they aren’t given the tools they need to survive! You could have taught at least one of us the instant transmission or the Kaioh-Ken technique and helped save many more lives, but you keep living as if yesterday never happened! The more I think about it, the more I realize that you saving the world so many times was more of an added bonus from your quest to find a good fight. You may care about people, but your desire for a good fight always gets in the way! Hell! Even you saving the universe from Buu was just damage control because you didn’t want to defeat Majin Buu over West Metro!”

“Aww… come on Gohan!” Goku pleaded. “Don’t think that way!”

“I’m serious, Dad!” asserted the half-Saiyan, narrowing his eyes. “I’m starting to realize that your death at Cell’s hands was your own fault because you were dumb enough to put a nine year old kid in that situation in the first place!”

“Gohan!” ChiChi wanted to admonish her oldest son but couldn’t fault him. Over the years, she’d criticized Goku enough for the same reasons. Gohan wasn’t finished yet though…

“For Christ’s sake Dad! You gave Cell a sensu bean! Your need for a challenge got people killed! Hell, you and Vegeta both put us in that situation! With enemies like you, Dr. Gero didn’t even need friends!”

Goku glowered at his oldest.

“OK…” Videl drawled with a dark chuckle, “So you gave Cell a sensu bean?! I can relate to your need to be challenged, but that just takes the cake! There’s a big difference between putting oneself in danger for an adrenaline high and putting others in danger!”

“Which is another reason why I never should have neglected my training,” Gohan added. “If history has shown us anything, it’s not the enemies we fight that we have to worry about so much as the messes Dad and Vegeta create just so they can have a ‘good’ fight. I suppose that’s the beauty of being part human: I might get a similar thrill from fighting, but my human side at least keeps me grounded in reality! At least my battles are fought from some sense of benevolence…”

“Look Gohan, I know I’ve made some mistakes but-“

“But nothing!” his oldest son interjected. “I tried everything I could to keep Goten out of the kind of crap I went through until he was at least in his teens! You even admitted that you could have defeated Buu as a Super Saiyan 3 over West Metro, but you opted for using the same contrived, assed approach you used during the Cell Games! What were you planning, Dad? Were you just gonna build him and Trunks up to inherit your mantle of ‘protector’ just so you could tear that out from under them too?!”

“So you’re still not over that?” Goku questioned in mild annoyance. “Look, I said I was sorry! What’s your deal?”

“Do you really wanna know, Dad?! OK, here it is! I heard from Vegeta that you actually considered having me brought to the World of the Kais so that I could have fought Majin Buu one last time! Instead, you kept me from having the one chance I needed to redeem myself! If you hadn’t taught Goten and Trunks that damned fusion dance, I could have beaten Majin Buu and avenged both my girlfriend and our friends! You stole that from me! You stole the very thing I needed to justify my own existence!”

Gohan clenched his fists in anger as bolts of golden lightning cascaded off his body. “Why did the
rest of us have to be collateral damage?! It didn’t matter if it was with Cell or whether it was with Buu! Me, Videl, Goten… none of us had to die!”

“Calm down, Gohan!” Goku beseeched. “Everything turned out alright in the end, didn’t it? We’re all alive again, you and Videl managed to get help with your problems, and Master Roshi got the chance to feel useful again! You and Videl even managed to get something good out of all the trials you’ve faced together.”

“In a twisted way, your father does have a point,” Videl remarked with a smile.

“Oh?! It was Gohan’s turn to be taken back.

Videl continued. “It may just be circumstantial, but there are several major benefits we’ve managed to get from the problems we’ve faced. We got to find ourselves again, we got an opportunity to spread our wings, we had the chance to build a life together with new purpose, and we even got to have a great deal of private time together without having to sneak around. When one really thinks about it, your father’s way of doing things may have been the very thing that allowed us to have what we have now.”

“There’s just one little problem with that, Videl,” Gohan argued, “We all died because of it. Me, you, Mom, Goten, all of us…”

“Good point,” she remarked. “We’ll just agree that it was all an unexpected consolation prize.”

“Look, Dad!” the demi-Saiyan said, turning back to his father. “If you’re serious about being sorry for all the fallout the rest of us have had to endure, there is one thing that you could do that would partially make up for it.”

“What would that be?” queried Goku.

“I want you to teach me the instant transmission,” the half-Saiyan stated. “Many lives could have been saved had you passed on that move to at least one other person.”

“Uh… sure!” agreed Goku. “We can start whenever you’re ready!”

“I’ll have to set aside a time later this week. For now, it’s getting late, and me and Videl have to turn in early if we’re gonna be up for our morning training.”

“Sure, I guess this means we’ll be going…” his father said.

“Would you all like to spend the night?” Videl offered. “We have dozens of rooms that you can sleep in.”

“Hey! That sounds like a great idea!” exclaimed Goku enthusiastically. “Whadda ya say, ChiChi?”

The former OX princess seemed to consider it. “It’s a nice offer but considering all the strife we’ve had between us the last few months, I’m not sure. I wouldn’t want to impose.”

“Oh, come on!” her new daughter-in-law implored, “It wouldn’t be any trouble at all!”

“Well…, alright,” ChiChi conceded. “If you insist! It would be a nice change of pace.”

“Great!” Videl beamed enthusiastically. “I’ll send a servant up to your rooms with some gratuities very shortly. Oh, and aside from Robert and Buu, my father’s manager, Miss Pizza, also has a room here so there’s a strong chance she’ll be around.”
“Good to know,” remarked ChiChi with a wide smile.

A short time later, the whole Son Family started to wind down. Goten had been sent to bed a little earlier so that Gohan and Videl could spend a little leisure time with the two older Sons. More specifically, they decided to use the estate’s bathhouse room.

Gohan sighed contentedly as he slid down into the steamy hot waters next to his new spouse. Videl, not wasting any time, crawled up into his lap and pressed her naked front into his. During their training time with Master Roshi, the two teens routinely bathed together in a fire-heated bathtub behind Mr. Satan and Videl’s capsule house, and Videl had gotten accustomed to having all the make-out sessions, massages, quickies, and conversations with Krillin and Eighteen that their bath time came to entail.

The two didn’t take long before they began to sensuously pet and caress each other. Videl squished her firm, large breasts into Gohan’s chest and began to rub them along his front in a way that tantalized his senses. The newly unionized couple didn’t have long however, before they were joined by their guests.

“Oh, man! Look at you guys…”

Blushing, whether it be from the heat or from embarrassment, Gohan and Videl spun around to see Goku and ChiChi entering the tub. By this point however, the young couple had grown used to having company when they bathed, so much so that Gohan kept his hands right where they were: On Videl’s butt and thigh.

“They remind us so much of ourselves when we were that age!” ChiChi gushed as she and Goku settled down in the end opposite from their son and new daughter-in-law. “You are definitely your father’s son, Gohan.”

“Thanks, I guess…” Gohan muttered. On his lap, Videl twisted around so that she was laying back against her common law husband. This of course gave her in-laws a clear view of the noticeably larger assets she’d grown in recent months and her alabaster skin’s various battle scars acquired over the years from her field work for the police. Her long, coal-black hair, now out of its’ pigtails, was splayed out behind, blanketing Gohan’s chest.

“Who’d have thought that the young girl who came to our house seven months ago would grow into such a beautiful, blossoming woman…” ChiChi praised. “Though I still disapprove on how you two came to live together, I’m glad you two made something together all the same.”

“Thank you, ChiChi…” Videl said sheepishly.

“Please, Videl! Call me Mom!”

“Sure thing, Mom,” the petite girl agreed, testing the word out herself.

Looking over at her new mother-in-law, Videl could see that being in her 30s, ChiChi was in far, far better shape than the vast majority of women her age. This was likely a testament to ChiChi herself surpassing the wall of humanity at some point in her youth as a result of the Ox King’s training. She was a few inches taller than Videl, and due to her own martial arts training, the Son matriarch’s lower body was very well built. Her chest however was where ChiChi really stood out. Her name didn’t translate to the word ‘breast’ for nothing. In spite of having nursed two hungry Saiyan babies in her life, her breasts were large, full, and firm.

“It sure feels great in here!” remarked Goku cheerily. “It feels just like the hot springs on Frying Pan
“We hope you two don’t mind, but we added some Epsom salts,” Gohan told his parents.

“That would explain the extra soothing quality of the water,” said ChiChi. “It feels nice…”

“Do you have room for one more?”

The tub’s four occupants spun around to see a towel-clad, voluptuous, thirty-something redhead with amber eyes approach the edge. She had shapely legs and the white towel she was sporting barely stayed in place due to the sheer size of her bosom.

“Oh, hi Pizza,” Videl greeted flatly.

Letting the towel flutter to the floor, the ginger-haired beauty lowered herself into the water right next to Gohan and Videl. The two resident males couldn’t help but ogle her massive female assets.

“Ya know…,” began Goku, addressing Miss Pizza, “I can’t shake this feeling that I’ve met you somewhere before.”

“Now that you mention it, you do have a resemblance to someone I’ve seen,” mused the ginger-haired woman. “But that’s impossible! You couldn’t be that guy. He had blond hair!”

‘Looks like Miss Pizza’s picking up on things again,’ Videl thought to herself.

“Oh! You mean like this?” A golden light flared throughout the room as Goku transformed into a Super Saiyan.

Pizza’s jaw hit the floor as recognition hit her like a truck. “Y-you’re that guy from the Cell Games! I was there! You fought Cell!”

“Now I recognize you!” declared the Saiyan. “You were with those other guys!”

With wide eyes, Pizza turned to Gohan. “So it is true! You are the Delivery Boy!”

“Yeah, that was me…” muttered Gohan sheepishly.

“OK, quick question! The golden hair thing! How do you do it?”

“I think by this point my alien heritage is common knowledge among the people of Satan City,” said the half-Saiyan. “It’s a transformation that only we can do.”

“An alien… right! OK, that’s weird…” was all Pizza could say.

Videl slid off her spouse’s lap and took a seat in the water between him and Pizza. “When you hang around Gohan and his friends, you get used to the strange stuff pretty quickly. The trick is to keep an open mind and not get too overwhelmed.”

“Thanks for the warning,” Pizza remarked awkwardly, giving Videl a crazy-eyed look. “So…, when were you gonna tell me that you and your pops actually knew all those strange guys from the Cell Games?”

“Honestly,” Gohan began, “We were hoping no one would find out.”

“There’s something you’re not telling me, isn’t there?!”
Videl sighed in annoyance. “Pizza, you might wanna sit back and take a deep breath because what I’m about to tell you is gonna turn everything you ever knew upside down.”

“I can handle anything you can throw at me, Videl!” the ginger-haired vixen asserted, crossing her arms.

“OK, you asked for it…” Videl drawled with an eyeroll. “Gohan, you tell her!”

“Pizza, I don’t know how to tell you this but... Mr. Satan didn’t defeat Cell,” said the half-Saiyan hurriedly.

The ginger-haired manager’s eyes widened in shock. “Y-you’re kidding!”

“Nope!” said Videl shaking her head, “It’s true. In fact, my spouse here is the one who really landed the finishing attack on that overgrown bug!”

“So… all of the powers they had…”

“-were real.” Videl finished.

“That would explain how you learned to fly!” shouted Pizza, jumping from the water.

“Astute as ever,” muttered the Satan girl. “So… are you gonna tell anyone?”

“What do you take me for, Videl?! Some kind of idiot! My career is glued, bolted, and welded to Mr. Satan’s at the hip! It has been since before he even won the 24th World Tournament! If this ever got out, I’d sink with you as would the over 17 million people who have a job because of your father’s lies! Satan City would go under overnight! They’d have to shut down over half the city! Families would be completely uprooted and the lives of everyday people would be destroyed!”

Videl’s eyes widened at this. In her anger against her father for all the problems his lies had caused in her life, she never once stopped to think about the peripheral consequences for the residents of her hometown and many others if her father’s fraud were ever exposed. In a very real way, her home city depended on her old man for it’s lifeblood.

“Seems I have some things to think about,” she pondered aloud. “I was thinking about adding Gohan’s name to me and my father’s accounts so that even if my father were ever exposed, there’d be a very real chance that they would never take the money from the real savior of the world.”

“Well that works out fine for you and him!” Pizza fumed, “You’ll both keep your billions and laugh all the way to the bank, but what about the rest of us!? Did you ever think about that you selfish brat!?”

Videl lowered her head in shame. “Look, I’m sorry, OK?! Me and Gohan have had our hands full with training and planning for this new threat that’s coming! Compared to the continued safety and freedom of the world’s people, their livelihood hasn’t been on our list of priorities…”

“Massive unemployment would provide this Majin cult a vast new pool of recruits,” explained Gohan. “Their numbers would explode and we’d be swamped.”

“What would you suggest then?” asked Videl, feeling a little deflated.

“I have a plan,” her spouse stated. “It’s a long shot and it’ll probably piss off your dad royal, but it just might work.”
“I’m all ears!” Videl quipped. Goku and ChiChi bent in to listen as well.

“Starting soon, we’ll co-opt your father’s dojo and use it as a recruitment center for drafting volunteers we could train up to help us fight a turf war with those cultists. We could pass off Master Roshi’s program as a secret Satan Dojo training regimen that would allow us to increase our numbers as well. Of course, we’d have to be honest to whoever we can get to volunteer so that they would know what they were getting into.”

“Between this and school, it’s gonna cut into our own training time,” Videl said glumly.

“That’s why we’re gonna wait until after your training under Roshi is complete,” Gohan explained. “We’ll set this plan into motion after I take you into the hyperbolic time chamber.”

Videl’s brow furrowed. “That’s still five months away. Is there any way we could get one of your friends to supervise these hypothetical volunteers while we train ourselves?”

Bringing a hand to his chin, the half-Saiyan considered his spouse’s idea. “It would free up our hands for taking care of our own situation first. The only real question is who do we ask to be our surrogate? I highly doubt Yamacha would be up for it, and Krillin is busy helping Master Roshi train your dad and let’s not even think about asking my grandpa! He’s got a country to run so that rules him out!”

“What about me?” Goku chimed in.

“Yeah, what about Goku?” asked Videl.

“Goku!” squealed Miss Pizza, “As in former world champion Son Goku?!” Mr. Satan’s manager gaped wide-eyed at the spiky-haired Saiyan sitting next to her.

“It would give Dad a part to play in this whole thing that could benefit everyone long-term,” pondered Gohan aloud.

Crossing her arms, Videl smirked at her spouse. “We could even pay him to train new people so that he’d at least have a job too. It would be a win for everyone!”

“Do it Goku!” implored ChiChi. “It would be good for everybody, and you’d even get paid to do what you do all the time anyway!”

“So… it looks like we have a plan,” Videl noted.

“It sounds like a damned good plan,” Gohan remarked. “I say we make it happen!”

With that, the four Sons jumped out of the hot tub, leaving a very confused Miss Pizza sitting up to her shoulders in steamy water.

“What just happened?” she asked, puzzled.

Chapter End Notes

I would like to say that this chapter probably should have been handled better. I struggled with several bouts of writer’s block just trying to get this chapter to work as a resolution chapter between Gohan and his mother and father. I tried to avoid getting too
out of character with Goku, but it probably happened anyway. I really thought about having a scene where Gohan and Videl visit Videl’s grandmother that was alluded to in chapter 3, but I think I’ll save that for a future chapter.

I will say that the glaring hypocrisy of the Z-warriors regarding Mr. Satan’s ignorance is downright sad at times. I’m not even a fan of Mr. Satan’s character, but I still want to give him a fair shake or at the very least take his character seriously. There’s a big difference between Mr. Satan’s ignorance and Goku and Vegeta’s outright nihilism in that Mr. Satan never actually hurt anyone with his ignorance. He may have set martial arts back several centuries, but he never put anyone in direct danger. Contrast this with Vegeta helping Cell attain his perfect form and Goku giving Cell a sensu bean and you see where I’m getting at. Mr. Satan’s buffoonish public behavior has only ever hurt him.
It was morning just before dawn in Satan City. The sun hadn’t even peeked over the horizon and already Son Gohan had his new spouse Videl S. Son, joining him in an abridged facsimile of Master Roshi’s daily regimen. D awned in their weighted training gear, the two teen fighters blazed a trail down the sidewalk in an effort to cover the long route they would have to meet just to simulate what they had done on the island.

“It feels good to run my old jogging route again,” Videl commented as she and Gohan passed another car in the suburbs.

“We’ll have to switch it up every other day just so we can maintain terrain variation,” advised Gohan.

“To simulate the different environments of the island, right?” asked his wife.

“Only without the predatory dinosaurs,” the half-Saiyan remarked with a chuckle. The duo leaped over a car as they sped on ahead. Several other early morning risers gawked at the pair as they barreled down the street faster than the actual traffic.

“I can see what Master Roshi and Krillin mean by ‘embarrassment factor’…” said the Satan girl.

“Don’t let it bother you,” Gohan told her. “Training in front of so many people is going to present its own challenge.”

“Do you really think we’ll get that many training volunteers?” Videl asked. “I can’t help but think all those years my father spent bashing your dad’s legacy will get in the way of Goku’s recruitment search.”

“That’s where we come in,” Gohan stated. “You and I will have to help him in his initial search by hosting an unofficial conference of sorts at your dad’s dojo during business hours. We can give him an endorsement in front of a good deal of the dojo’s current membership.”

“Having the city’s two resident heroes behind him should count for something…” the girl mused.

As the young couple continued their early morning routine, Videl’s gaze flitted over to her new spouse every so often. This didn’t go unnoticed by Gohan. She seemed troubled.

“What’s wrong, hun?” asked her husband.

Videl looked down with sadness as the sidewalk passed under them. “Nothing much…”

“Come on, you can tell me,” her spouse coaxed.

The two young lovers slowed to a stop at a park bench. Turning to her new husband, Videl’s eyes were beginning to brim with tears.

“Gohan!” she sniffled. “I’ve been so selfish!”

“W-Whadda ya mean?!” stammered the half-Saiyan.
“Sweetheart! I talked you into a civil union just to head my father off at the pass over a trust issue, but I never gave you a reason to trust me!” she sobbed, burying her face in her hands. “I’ve been such a hypocrite for so long…!”

“Videl…., please.”

“No, listen!” she pleaded. “You’ve done so much for me, and all you’ve ever really asked for is my love! Back when you left with the others to fight Babidi, you shouldn’t have been the one to apologize! I should have been the one apologizing! I really did like you, but instead of trying to earn your trust, I blackmailed my way into your life! I… I’m so sorry…”

With that, Videl broke down and buried her face into her new husband’s chest. “I’ve been so unfair to you! You gave your life against Buu just so I could have a second chance. Instead of using that second chance to make things right with you, I keep screwing up! I never deserved you, but you still made a place for me in your life!”

In her anguish, Videl felt her legs give out from under her as she continued to weep. Seeing this, Gohan brought his own arms up around the small of her back to offer some support.

“Shhh! It’s OK, honey!” Gohan soothed, “None of that matters now! So what if our relationship had a rocky start?! If blackmailing me got the two of us together, than you can blackmail me whenever you like!”

“Gohan…” she choked, “I went to lower Heaven after I died. If I was half the hero you thought I was, I would have been with you after death! I wasn’t a selfless person…”

Gohan buried his face in his new spouse's hair before whispering, “Listen, sweetheart. A little bit of selfishness on your part couldn’t have kept you from keeping your body after death. If that were the case, than my father shouldn’t have been able to keep his. You are selfless at heart! No selfish person would have the kind of courage you do and I don’t wanna hear otherwise!”

Videl’s cerulean gaze locked with his. “But what if we’re separated forever?!”

“We won’t be,” was his reassuring answer. “I’ll turn down passage to the Grand Kai’s planet before I allow that to happen. Besides, as soon as Dad teaches me the instant transmission, there’s a little favor I intend to collect from both the Supreme Kai and Elder Kai. After the way Elder Kai’s negligence cost you and Goten your lives, I’ll be giving him an offer he won’t be able to refuse…”

Wiping her eyes, Videl gave her mate a small smile.

“Something else is troubling you?” the Saiyan guessed. The Saiyan hadn’t said anything about it yet, but part of his assuming the mantle of teacher from Roshi entailed taking his mental training in a whole new direction. Learning to read minds would be an absolute must in his new role just as it was with Roshi.

“It’s just… I can’t help but think we should’ve done something akin to a honeymoon last night. I know we’re not in a formal marriage but our civil union still grants us spousal status. I want to do something special together. We haven’t gone out on a date since spring!”

“You’re right…” Gohan conceded, his own voice now carrying a hint of sadness. “With Mom and Dad spending the night, we really didn’t get a chance to spend quality time together. I wanted to take you right there in the hot tub…”

“I’m sure your parents wouldn’t have really minded us doing it in front of them,” Videl reasoned. “I was on your lap and we were all naked anyway. They probably would of done it themselves if we
weren’t there. Hell, your dad probably would have been giving us pointers.”

“It certainly would’ve given Miss Pizza a show!” laughed her spouse. “But in all seriousness, is there something special you had in mind?”

“I know we’re only starting the new school year today, but perhaps we could take Friday off from school,” suggested the petite fighter. “That would give us three days that we could devote to both our training and more importantly, to us…”

“That’s a great idea!” beamed the Son boy. “But where would we go?”

“It would have to be someplace nice,” Videl said. “There’s a great Korin restaurant downtown that I haven’t been to in a while. They serve real wild venison (deer steak) and fried squash there. The corn bread is also to die for!”

“Sounds fantastic!” he remarked dreamily. Resuming their morning training, the two teens closed the distance between them and turned their heads to share a smooch.

Later that morning, Gohan and Videl arrived at Orange Star High School for the first day of the new school year. The unionized couple landed on the front step amidst a group of other teens from various grades.

Immediately upon seeing the young couple, crowds of onlookers began to whisper and gossip among themselves. Gohan with his Saiyan hearing, picked up on most of what was said. Needless to say, he wasn’t particularly fond of some of the things many of the other boys were saying about his wife.

“Holy Shit! Videl’s gotten stacked!” remarked one teen. “Check out her tits…and those thighs…”

“Better not let her fuck-toy hear you say that!” replied another.

“Betcha he was given her the old in-out all summer! Lucky half-alien fucker!” commented yet another.

Unfortunately, Videl heard this last remark and marched right up to the oblivious teen in question. She stood toe to toe with the boy, a tall kid from a few grades beneath them, and glared at him with a look that could burn through lead.

“For your information bucko, Gohan can do whatever the hell he wants with me!” fumed the raven-haired girl.

Hearing this, a new wave of murmurs spread through the gathered students. Not wanting to deal with anymore of their gossip vine tripe, Videl looped her arm around Gohan’s and together, the two walked into the school.

Backpacks slung over their shoulders, the two teens continued down the halls. They made their way through the bustling student body, but just as they were about to reach their lockers, they were stopped by a very familiar voice…

“Videl! Gohan!”

Whipping around, the young couple were met by their friends Erasa, Sharpner, and Penn.

“Oh my Gosh! Look at you two!” gushed Erasa as she waved her arms around. “You’ve both changed so much! And look at you, Videl! You’ve grown back your pig-tails!”
“Look at us?!” quipped Videl incredulously. “Look at you! Long hair is definitely you, Erasa!”

“Damn, Gohan! You put on some muscle, didn’t ya?” asked Sharpner, wide-eyed. “Seriously, if the villains of Satan City didn’t need to watch out before, they sure as hell do now!”

“I see you’re sporting some body art there, Sharp!” Gohan observed gesturing to a series of tattoos on the blond jock’s forearms.

Sharpner puffed out his chest in a show of bravado. “Chicks dig the tats!”

“So Videl, how did your training trip go?” Erasa asked. “We haven’t heard from you all summer! After you were beaten in that fight, we were all really concerned!”

“Let’s just say I wouldn’t have traded this last summer for anything,” Videl commented with a wry smile. “From dawn to dusk, I, my dad, and Gohan trained together. We’re still not through with the program though.”

“Whaddaya mean?” Erasa inquired with a perplexed expression.

“The three of us still have five months left in the program,” answered the petite girl. “We’re required to return to the island for training every other weekend at least until December.”

Erasa looked down in sadness. “Oh… After not being able to be together for three months, I was hoping we could spend some time catching up.”

“I’m really sorry Erasa…” Videl’s apology was tinged with sadness. “It’s just that our new martial arts master made the terms of our training quite clear.”

“Woah! Woah! Woah!” shouted Penn holding up his hands, “Did you just say your master?! I thought you were being trained by your old man! And did you say that Gohan trained with you as well?”

“Yes and yes,” was Videl’s simple answer.

“Master Roshi tasked me with supervising Videl’s training,” Gohan explained.

“I still don’t see why Mr. Satan needs a master,” Penn scoffed. “He’s the Champ! He beat Cell and Majin Buu!”

Pinching her nose, Videl let out a restrained groan. Out of all of her friends, Penn had always been the biggest Mr. Satan cultist in their class. Even dying like everyone else didn’t change that. Like Gohan, Penn was remarkably gifted academically, having been Orange Star High’s valedictorian before Gohan began attending, but he could be so grating in how he would hang on her father’s every word.

“Everyone has teachers,” Gohan remarked. “Some martial artists study under several different teachers over the course of their lives. It’s important to remember that regardless of how much someone thinks he knows, he can always learn more.”

“How much could this Master Roshi know?!” asked the bi-speckled boy.

“Oh… enough to win the World Tournament eight times,” answered Videl smugly.

The looks on the faces of Sharpner, Penn, and Erasa were absolutely priceless. “E-e-eight times…?!”
“Just who is this Roshi guy?!?” Sharpner asked, his voice betraying no small measure of curiosity.

“A very wise old man,” Gohan replied. “And a very good friend. You could search the whole world and never meet a more venerable—“

“-Or lecherous,” Videl cut in.

“-martial arts master,” the half breed finished.

As Gohan said this, his eyes and ki sensing abilities caught something that put him on edge. Walking in their direction were a small group of students, five in all, bearing a calligraphic ‘M’ upon their foreheads.

Gohan wasn’t the only one to catch sight of them. To his left, Videl eyed the group of Majin cultists wearily as they approached, looking for any reason to throttle the lot of them. The two watched with baited breath as the youths passed their little get together before continuing out into the parking lot. The young couple were brought out of their trance by the voice of Sharpner.

“What was that all about?” the blond male queried.

“It’s nothing…” answered Gohan.

“Didn’t seem like nothing to me,” Penn commented.

“Let’s just say that me, Gohan, and his folks had a bad run-in with their lot,” Videl supplied.

“When was this?” asked Sharpner.

“Yesterday, at the city courthouse,” she answered. “They were holding a perverse convention of sorts on the front quad. There was a ruckus followed by a shootout between them and the police.”

“Damn, you two can’t even unpack your bags without having to deal with the dregs of society!” Sharpner quipped.

“Actually, me and Videl were at the courthouse for a different reason,” Gohan said with a big, goofy grin.

Videl smiled warmly at her friends as a bright pink blush spread across her cheeks. “Me and Gohan entered into a civil union!”

Whether the others understood what Videl meant or whether they were simply rendered speechless, they weren’t sure. “W-what?”

“I’m Gohan’s common law wife!” beamed the raven-haired girl, bringing her hands to her cheeks.

Elsewhere back on the training island, Master Roshi was presiding over Mr. Satan’s late morning training with Mark slogging barehanded in the islands’ moist chili fields. Due to both having the weight of his training cloths doubled and last night’s bad weather, the job today was significantly more arduous. Off to the side, the Turtle Hermit walked alongside him over some untilled ground. The standing silence was soon broken by Mark.

“Something’s been bothering me lately,” remarked the Champ as he tore loose another batch of roots.

Roshi raised an eyebrow. “You mean, aside from Gohan and Videl’s decision to get unionized?”
“Yeah,” he admitted. “Aside from the ones we’ve discussed, were there any other reasons why you took me on as your student?”

Stopping, Master Roshi let out a long-suffering sigh before turning his back to the afroed man. For a moment, Mark thought he shouldn’t have asked. It wasn’t long however, before the old sage spoke.

“Truth be told Mark, there are,” the old man admitted in a somber tone. “Before I answer though, I will say that you are remarkably sharp-witted, probably more so than your daughter.”

“Thanks, I guess…”

“As to your question, the other reasons I had for having you trained have a lot to do with something I warned Gohan of right before I took you and your daughter on as pupils.” This revelation was put forward with a tone of foreboding that was not missed on Mark Satan.

“Go on…” he pressed.

“Mark, I’m sure you understand that Babidi, Bojack, and Cell were not the first people to threaten the Earth,” spoke the elderly sage. “Gohan has already told you about the various other battles he, his father, and the rest of us have fought for humanity.”

“I’m aware,” replied the Champ. “Me and my new son-in-law have discussed this. I understand it’s not Gohan’s fault that he has issues.”

“Well…,” Roshi began, “Gohan’s tragedy is about to play out again.”

“What do you mean, Roshi?” Mark asked demandingly, narrowing his gaze.

“A new threat, this one being entirely home-grown, is on the rise,” the old man explained. “It’s pervasive, having wormed its’ way into every major city on the Great Northern Continent, and due to its’ nature, it’s one that most of Goku’s friends are not tailor-made to fight.”

The old master then turned back to his student. “The truth is Mark, if you didn’t undergo this training, your very life would one day be in danger. You’re a very high-profile figure, and these people, whoever they may be, are a very dangerous threat. Sometimes, I don’t understand why, but everything happens for a reason. Piccolo’s actions in preventing the memory erasure wish had their own unintended consequences.”

The Champ snorted. “Don’t remind me. For the life of me, I still don’t know how I’m going to reveal Buu to the public without causing a mass panic.”

“Mark, Goku being unable to keep his promise to you is the least of your worries,” said the Turtle Hermit. “The people I’m talking about are brewing up one hell of a cluster-fuck that all of mankind will have to deal with for the next hundred years. It’s not something that we can just fight in some single climactic battle like we could Majin Buu or Cell! Because of the side of Piccolo that is Kami and Nail, humanity will have to wait until time itself brings closure. We’re likely gonna have to preserve the light of the world and outlive this current threat until the memories of what has happened with Buu have dulled in humankind’s collective memory. For this reason, I am sending you in addition to Gohan onto the world.”

“Well, I can understand Gohan, but why me?”

“For one…,” Roshi started, “Ill-earned or not, you have major pull. Whoever these people are, eventually they will come for both you and your daughter. You are symbols of hope to the people. They need to destroy that hope. The speed with which this great new evil had spread throughout the
world in the last four months is a sign of a sinister intelligence at work. In this age of cynicism, your very existence is like a blight to them. Your death would speed up the downward spiral of humanity every bit as much as it would if you were exposed for lying about Cell. You need to survive because your clout is gonna be key in saving the world just as it was on the World of the Kais. The weight on your shoulders is going to be every bit as great as the task I and Piccolo have entrusted to Gohan and Videl.”

“So, you’ve already told my daughter about this?!” asked the Champ.

“I left that up to Gohan,” Roshi answered. “As for why he didn’t tell you, he needed to make sure that you didn’t have any other distractions that would hurt your training. He did it for your long-term safety and for Videl’s peace of mind.”

“Always taking on everyone else’s emotional deadweight…” Mr. Satan muttered with a shake of his head. “Now I see why my daughter was always so frustrated by Gohan’s way of dealing with things. The boy really shouldn’t beat himself up like that. Not everyone is made of glass.”

“Gohan cares too much about people in general,” said the Turtle Hermit. “Your sense of self-worth was just as important as Videl’s. This is why Gohan lies by way of omission. Only since the Buu incident has he started to realize that a purely self-sacrificing approach can cause just as many unintended consequences as being selfish. He needed you to get strong enough to survive whatever these people threw at you. You have to surpass the wall of humanity for there to be any hope of that happening. Both Gohan and Videl are gearing up to face this evil. They know this is gonna be something they will be fighting against for decades to come.”

Suddenly, it dawned on Mr. Satan. “That would also explain why you needed to help Videl by giving her the conditions she’d need to grow old with Gohan!”

“Correct,” Roshi confirmed. “Gohan needed a clear head for the task ahead, and worrying about Videl’s safety would have kept his hands tied. Your daughter’s brash impulsiveness, her confrontational approach, and her need to prove herself through battle would have kept Gohan bogged down in domestic issues. This way, Videl won’t be low-hanging fruit for whatever this adversary can throw at them. There’s also the very crucial element of Videl being the only one of us with any actual law enforcement training to consider. She needs to be a long-term part of this endeavor! Don’t get me wrong though, I wanted Videl able to grow old with Gohan as a favor to the boy for all the good he has done. It’s just that given the history of Gohan and the rest of us, it was only a matter of time before your daughter wound up getting pulled into these conflicts”

“Has anyone ever told you that you’re just full of surprises?” Mark quipped.

“Every day,” Roshi answered with a smile.

Back at Orange Star High, several hours have passed since Gohan and Videl revealed their unionized status to their closest friends. In high school however, gossip travels fast and within a short period of time, most of the school knew about the new young spouses. A small crowd of curious students were now huddled around, as the two teens attended lunch with their friends. Off on the fringes of the lunch room, teenagers were groping and fondling their boyfriends and girlfriends in public, some of them with their assets exposed. Such was the issue of resurrection: People stopped caring.

“I’m still having a hard time believing that your father actually allowed you to not only move Gohan in with you, but also allowed you two to share a bedroom,” Erasa shrilled incredulously. “That doesn’t sound like the Mark Satan we know. There has to be more to it than what you’re saying, Videl!”
Videl swallowed a mouthful of beef hash before bending over and whispering in her best friend’s ear. “Oh, there is! I’ll tell you everything later.”

Nodding her head in understanding, Erasa let out an “Oh…”

“Let’s just say that there’s nothing my dad can do about it now even if he did change his mind,” said the raven-haired girl. “Gohan and I have a legal right to be together.”

“So…” Sharpner began, “Does this mean that you two can have sex without sneaking around behind your parent’s backs?”

“I think that’s one of the benefits of being common law spouses,” Videl remarked with sarcasm.

“No way!” the blond jock all but screamed. “So you’re saying that despite being the same age as us, you and Gohan can do it all you want?!”

“That’s what I said,” Videl replied with an annoyed scowl on her face.

“Woah…” The blond jock couldn’t help but smirk at the Son couple. “Seriously Gohan! You’ve got it made!”

“Yeah…” said the half-Saiyan sheepishly. Beside him, both his petite spouse and Erasa giggled at his embarrassment. Erasa turned back to her food and just as she was about to start eating again, something caught her eye…

“Oh, my God, Videl!” she shrieked.

“What?!” asked the raven-haired girl, quirking an eyebrow.

“What happened to your hands?!” she gaped in apprehension.

Morbidly curious, the blond reached over and examined her life-long friend’s fingers and palms. Videl’s palms and fingers were coarse and callused. There were also signs of various cuts and her fingernails were darkened at the tips from having shoveled dirt bare-handed for so long.

“Oh, that…” said Videl nonchalantly. “That’s a product of me and Gohan’s training regimen. We had to toughen our hands through various forms of back-breaking labor. The first few weeks were the worst, but after that, it wasn’t so bad…”

“If your hands weren’t so dainty, they’d look like a man’s,” remarked the bubbly blond. “A trip to the cosmetics shop is definitely in order.”

“You’d be wasting your time,” Videl stated. “Like I said, me and Gohan have five months of this kind of training left before we’re through with the program.”

“Well that sucks…” Erasa griped.

With a shake of her head, Videl sighed. “You can thank my master for that.”

Just then, Penn chimed in. “There’s something that’s been bothering me for a while now, Gohan.”

“What’s that, Penn?”

Pursing his hands together, the bi-speckled ginger cleared his throat before speaking. “You’re half-alien and from what you’ve told the rest of us, your alien heritage grants you all kinds of awesome powers. I mean… you are the Great Saiyaman! I guess my question is… where were you when
Majin Buu was killing us? Didn’t you fight him?"

Gohan put his fork down and looked up at his friend. Off to the side, Erasa and Sharpner leaned in to listen.

“I didn’t just fight him, Penn,” answered the hybrid, “I tried to stop both Babidi and Majin Buu three times.”

“I’m guessing there’s a connection between you two and all those other guys flying off and Babidi’s appearance with Buu?” queried the ginger.

“There is,” came an answer, this one from Videl. “Spopovich and Yamu were under the influence of Babidi’s magic. The two of them were sent to the World Martial Arts Tournament to drain fighters of their living ki for the purpose of gathering enough to resurrect Majin Buu.”

“What’s ki?” the ginger asked.

“Ki, Penn, is the energy found in all living things,” explained Gohan. “It is the power source behind me and Videl’s ability to fly.”

Videl continued, “Picking up where I left off, both contestant Kibito and contestant Shin came to the World Martial Arts Tournament to warn all of us about Babidi’s plans. We left to help fight Babidi and his minions, but because my flying abilities hadn’t developed as much as the others, I was advised to return and warn their friends. Gohan can tell you the rest…”

“Upon arriving at Babidi’s spaceship, we were attacked by a particularly nasty guy named Dabura, the King of the Demon World. Due to the nature of Babidi’s ability to possess others, many evil warriors from other worlds fell under the wizard’s sway, chief among them the Demon King of the Shadow Realm.”

“I remember Dabura,” Videl added. “Me and the others met him in lower Heaven after we died. It’s hard to believe that someone as nice as him was once the single most wicked demonic presence in the known universe.”

“Videl, isn’t it a bit ironic that your name is a derivative of the word ‘devil’ and that you met the actual Devil in the afterlife?” asked Sharpner. “ Seriously though! A beast of a girl like you could probably sit at the same table with the Devil and still laugh it off.”

The group of friends had a quick laugh at this.

“Anyway…” said Gohan picking up where he left off, “Kibito was killed in the first exchange and Dabura turned a few of our friends into stone. We pursued Dabura into Babidi’s ship and proceeded to fight our way through various stages in the ship designed to drain our ki energy for the purpose of siphoning it towards Majin Buu’s containment ball. We managed to fight our way down to the third stage, where I fought Dabura myself. I may have been slightly stronger than Dabura but having not done any serious fighting, aside from a battle me and Videl had against another alien named Broly before the tournament, Dabura was able to lead me around by the nose. It was during that fight that I came to regret my decision to stop training after my father died. Eventually, Dabura withdrew from the fight. At the time, we had no idea that he was planning on having Babidi possess one of our allies, thereby turning him against us. Afterwards, Babidi used his magic to teleport the lot of us back to the World Tournament stadium where our possessed friend attacked and killed the audience.”

“Yeah…. We know that part!” Sharpner interrupted. “We saw what that pointy-haired guy did to the people in the stands. For a second there, we thought we were gonna be caught in that guy’s line of
fire.”

And so, Gohan and Videl went on to tell them everything about their exploits during the battle against Majin Buu, covering topics such as the Z-Sword, the old kai and his power raising, Gohan’s two battles against Majin Buu, the circumstances of their deaths, the various transformations of Buu, and planet Earth’s destruction. As they spoke, several more of the other students joined the small crowd around the table and listened.

“It’s just so hard to believe any of this,” remarked Erasa with a shake of her head.

“To think that you two were basically working alongside gods this whole time…” Sharpner mused.

“Not that it did us a lot of good,” muttered Gohan, his tone one of sadness. “We all still died. The Earth was still destroyed. I still failed you all in the end.”

“At least you tried…” Penn told him sadly. “Hell, at least you were able to do something! I couldn’t even help my little sisters.”

“Everyone I know was counting on me though,” the hybrid choked.

“You can’t win em all, Gohan,” Sharpner remarked with a wry smile. “Super powers or not, you’re still flesh and blood.”

“With what’s coming down the pipe, we won’t have the luxury of not winning them all,” the Saiyan replied in a hushed whisper.

This got the blonde’s attention. “What do you mean?”

“I mean that something else is coming,” Gohan warned. “This is gonna be the focus of me and Videl’s training for the next five months. I can’t give you any specifics just yet, but there is another great terror coming to Earth in the not-so-distant future. A silent shadow is spreading across the land. Me, Videl, and a few others have seen its’ power first-hand. Everything in our lives from here on out will be a game of chess.”

“If it’s really that bad, is there anything we can do?” Sharpner asked, his voice betraying a measure of worry. “I’ve already died once! I’m in no hurry to make a return trip.”

“Thanks, but I’m not sure if any of you will be much help. I would tell you to pray, but the gods have already shown that they couldn’t care less about Earth’s survival. What me and Videl are looking for are people who are realistically able to give up their personal lives for a few decades if need be. Those kinds of people are few and far between. If you have personal dreams in life, there’s a good chance this battle will force you to give them up.”

“Well that’s a bummer…” muttered the blond.

Staring up from the table, Gohan once again eyed the same small group of students who had joined the Majin cult as they walked through the school cafeteria. Each one showcased a branding upon their forehead. On the surface they acted normal, but to Gohan, their ki told him otherwise.

To his side, his new wife’s head jerked up as she felt the cold-burning pressure of the student cultist’s living ki walk past their table to the food counter. Casting a glance to her side, she sent Gohan a knowing look that he reciprocated.

The half-Saiyan bent over and whispered, “For everyone else’s safety, we’ll have to keep an eye on them.”
Videl simply nodded before taking her tray to the repository.

At school’s end, Gohan and Videl found themselves ambushed by a large gaggle of paparazzi at the school exit. Unlike his new common law wife, Gohan was not used to dealing with the bottom feeders of the entertainment industry and did his best to just ignore them.

“Videl, is it true that you’ve entered into a civil union?!”

“Videl, what last name should we use when addressing you?”

“Miss Satan, we have inside sources confirming that you and Mr. Son have been sharing a bedroom with your father’s approval! Care to comment?”

“Videl Satan, did your defeat by the fighter named Barbella have anything to do with your summer disappearance?! Or perhaps your loss at the hands of Spopovich?!”

“Mr. Son, what do you have to say to the families of the gunmen you killed last spring?”

To each of these questions, Videl gave a quick “No comment!” Gohan pushed a camera out of his face as he took his spouse’s hand. Having had enough of their garbage, the two teens took to the sky.

“Ya know…” said Videl, moving some stray hairs out of her eyes, “If these people were half as dogged in their pursuit of the truth when my dad lied as they are with us, I’d have a little more respect for the media.”

“I know what ya mean,” Gohan replied. “Considering my grandfather’s status as a king and my dad’s status as a former champion, I’m surprised these people didn’t badger my family! I liked my privacy, but still, it’s like people forgot my dad beat the Red Ribbon Army and King Piccolo entirely…”

“The people are fickle, Gohan,” she stated. “It’s said that the human mind can only hold seven items at any moment. I don’t think the people are even capable of recognizing more than one hero at any given time. There’s a very good chance that if we ever have another crazy situation like the Majin Buu incident and you decide to take credit for saving the world, those very same people may just forget my father ever existed. Next time something like that happens, I really think you should.”

Gohan couldn’t believe what he was hearing from his new wife. “And have people actually scrutinize me and the others?! I think part of the reason why we’ve been able to do so much good in the first place is because we’ve been able to stay low-key. I mean…let’s face facts here, Videl. Among our group is a former assassin, an alien who destroyed both East City and King Furry’s military, an alien who overthrew King Furry’s government and tried to institute a regime of genocide on the rest of the world, and a planet destroying pink demon who killed everyone on Earth less than seven months ago. I understand that even if people knew, they wouldn’t be able to do anything due to our friends being so strong, but there are still other more important reasons why most of my father’s old circle are so adamant about keeping their privacy.”

Videl raised an eyebrow. “Those being?”

“For one honey, the dragonballs,” the hybrid answered. “The number of people outside our group who know the truth behind the dragonballs is relatively small. Most people still think they’re a myth. If everyone in the world knew about the power of the dragonballs, the number of people trying to acquire them for wicked ends would skyrocket.”

“I have to disagree with you there, sweetheart,” said Videl.
“Why so?” asked Gohan.

“Because Piccolo confiscated the seven star ball, remember?” she reminded him. “Even if the number of people in the world actively seeking the balls increased, they’d have no means of finding where Piccolo hid the last one. Ergo, we take credit next time we save the world! I’m convinced it’s the only way by which we can attain the credibility needed to start rolling back my father’s narrative. I really don’t want historical revision from my father’s camp winning out completely! The people need a context so they can have a new starting point. As I’ve told you, leaving people in the dark about what’s really been happening in their lives isn’t an option either. It just creates more long-term problems that we all wind up having to deal with, and I don’t want our grandchildren having to clean up messes created by our bullshit. It’s the principle of the thing!”

“As usual, you’re probably right,” Gohan muttered with a long-suffering sigh.

Smiling to herself, his new common law wife crossed her arms. “Mmmhmm…!”

“Of course, when we do tell people the truth, we should do it in small doses like we did back at the school cafeteria,” the half-Saiyan advised.

“As a half-way point, I can live with that,” Videl conceded.

Later on, Gohan led Videl into one of the many public parks around the city. The sun was still high and city pedestrians were running about engaged in various recreational activities. Every so often, the couple had to turn down autograph requests from random fans of Videl’s father.

“And here we are!” Gohan beamed, gesturing to a pile of boulders. “This hun, is where your next exercise will take place.”

“Alright! What do I do?” asked the petite fighter.

“Videl, this exercise is known as the ‘testing stone.’ The object of this training is to beat a stone with your legs, fists, and feet into as perfect a spherical shape as possible. This is an ancient training methodology that goes back thousands of years. It’s more difficult than digging through dirt, but it has added benefits. The downside to doing this as opposed to say digging through dirt with one’s hands is that you don’t walk away unscathed until your body has grown tough enough to withstand it. I don’t think you should have a problem with that though. You’ve gotten well past the point where this exercise would cause you to get hurt.”

“Right!” Videl nodded. The girl took off towards the nearest stone, intent on doing some serious rock polishing.

“Oh, and before I forget…”

Videl stopped momentarily to listen.

“It’s best if you try to devote equal time to knife-hands and finger jabs as you would using conventional punches,” Gohan suggested. “At least with this training anyway. Understand though that we will be switching between this exercise and the one Roshi employs fairly often.”

“OK…”

With that, Gohan and Videl spent the next two hours flaking, pummeling, and chipping a series of boulders into atlas stones. Indeed, the training was tougher than Roshi’s method, but if Gohan could do it, by God she could too!
As she and Gohan trained, a group of onlookers gathered on an adjacent sidewalk, some of whom were brandishing digital cameras.

“Is that Videl?”

“Is that her new husband?”

“She married her boyfriend already?!”

“What’re they wearing?!?”

Finally losing her cool, the raven-haired girl chunked one of the stones into the air, and just as it was tumbling to the ground, she shattered it with a hard left.

“DON’T YOU PEOPLE HAVE REAL LIVES?!” she screamed. “For God's sakes, it's your second chance at life and you're wasting it! Do something productive! Do it for yourselves! Jesus…”

“Well I never…!” shrilled one onlooker, this one an old lady.

“With an attitude like that, maybe we should build Spopovich a statue…” remarked another.

“They’re defacing public lands. I’m callin the cops!”

“Come on, Videl,” Gohan coaxed. “Let’s go home. We’ll do some sparring in the dojo.”

Sighing in annoyance, the petite fighter simply nodded before taking to the sky behind her spouse.

Chapter End Notes

I don’t know if it’s just me, but in the past year or two, I’ve noticed that there has been a considerable drop in the number of Gohan/Videl stories written. I can’t help but think this has something to do with the way Dragonball Super presented the couple. It’s as if Akira Toriyama is telling us that Gohan and Videl’s story is finished. Just because Akira Toriyama ruined the couple in his new series doesn’t mean we the fans have to treat Dragonball Super with any credibility. The whole series is a complete retcon anyway. My advice to anyone is to just ignore anything that happens after Dragonball Z episode 288 when it comes to writing good Gh/Vi fanfics, and just prescribe to the death of the author theory. Akira Toriyama had some good ideas, but he just can’t write a decent romance story. He invested too much into having Gohan and Videl be the only couple we actually see fall in love in the series only to botch it completely by the end of the Buu arc. There were too many opportunities missed for character development.
Throwing the Gauntlet

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The Northern Wastelands, also widely known as *Hell’s Way In*, was a foreboding blot on the Great Northern Continent that could be seen from the Earth’s restored moon. Cushioned between Yunzabit Heights to the north, the Northern Mountains and North Metro to the West, the Lands of Aninee to the East, and Victory Plains (The sight of the Cell Games) to the South, it was the largest and most inhospitable desert on the planet. Being situated smack-dab in the middle of so many mountains, there were places in the Northern Wastelands that hadn’t seen rain in over a century. Factoring in its’ remote location, one would hardly expect to see a mass gathering of any sort.

Across the desert, processions of black-robed men, women, and children marched in pilgrimage to a place far removed from any civilization. Holding candles, in unison they sang chants and hymns that resonated for miles.

Somewhere deep underground, a middle-aged white man, perhaps in his late 50s, stood among a group of nine others in a chamber. Each was clad in black and red robes laden with ancient symbols, regalia that harkened back to days of mysticism, and around the waist of each was a belt displaying the symbol of Majin.

The chamber itself was built like a rotunda, designed to amplify the voices of its’ occupants. From the ceiling and the floor hung/stood silver conduits that crackled with crimson bolts of some otherworldly power. Each one fed a continuous stream of red photons into a large magenta crystal suspended over a shaft of fire leading to untold depths beneath the earth. The floor of the chamber bore deep runes carved in an intricate pattern of interlocking circles, triangles, and other geometric designs that thrummed with a faint blue hue. Along the walls, white banners hung prominently showcasing the calligraphic ‘M’ in black. Above each ‘M’ was the symbol of a flame.

“We shall now commence the essence transfer ceremony!” rang a voice, that of the middle aged man.

As one, the other nine men present brought their hands up to their necks and touched a talisman held within a choker worn by each. All ten men present then began to chant. The runes on the floor pulsed with a brighter crimson ether as streams of some creepy, almost fog-like energy began to flow into the talismans.

Aboveground, the chants of the black-robed parishioners gained intensity as faintly glowing tendrils of blue energy seemed to creep across the sands themselves. All of them seemed to converge on one focal point. An aurora borealis played across the night desert sky in vivid colors of red, blue, and magenta as crimson/golden lightning cascaded clear into the horizon.

As this ritual was transpiring, in the upper realm far away, three sets of eyes, those belonging to Piccolo, Dende, and Mr. Popo, looked down upon the processions with ever-increasing anxiety.

“To think that so many people would choose this path…” spoke the Earth’s current guardian, his voice tinged with worry. “What have we done…?”

“A person’s true character comes to the surface during times of adversity,” Piccolo commented. “Though their numbers will always be relatively small when compared to the overall population, those humans who actively choose evil tend to be more driven…more organized towards some petty
imperative than those who choose good.”

“We could still use the dragonballs,” Dende suggested. “We still have time to erase everyone’s memories.”

The older Namek shook his head. “No, Dende. We can’t just wish away the world’s problems. This is a domestic issue that ultimately will not threaten the continued existence of the planet under your stewardship or that of the cosmos at large. The people of Earth won’t learn if we keep handing them easy outs. The people of Namek had to deal with the issues of closure following their genocide at the hands of Freiza. Adversity builds character, and the people of Earth need to do some of the work, otherwise they’ll never come into their own.”

The young guardian simply nodded at his mentor’s words. The two Nameks continued to watch events unfold as they have for months.

The following day at the Satan Dojo, Gohan, Videl, and Goku tried their hand at recruiting some of the existing members of Mark Satan’s martial arts school to their cause. Among those gathered were Piroski, Caroni, and Videl’s long-time ally Satan City Police Chief Wilkerson who was currently off duty.

“OK, here’s the deal!” Videl started, standing before a small crowd of her father’s students. “Both I and the Great Saiyaman need at least seven volunteers for a new training program. Now I’m not going to lie to you, if you do commit to this, you will have to give up on your jobs, families, and your overall daily lives for the next eight months, and there’s a good chance that you might be killed by someone!”

Just then, Gohan cut in. “We need any help we can get! Something big is happening in this city and there are only the three of us to deal with it. We understand that many of you have careers, kids, girlfriends, hobbies, etc., but if any of you consider yourselves serious martial artists, you owe it to yourselves to consider this opportunity! Both Mr. Satan and my spouse here are currently following this new program, and I can tell you both from experience and from knowing other past tournament finalists who have used this program that it does produce results.”

“Unfortunately,” said Videl, picking up where she left off, “Neither I nor Gohan will be able to directly train you due to both school and our own training taking up all of our free time for at least the next five months. Because of this, your training will be supervised by my father-in-law and former World Champion, Son Goku.”

Stepping forward, the Saiyan led with his typical chipper greeting. “Hi, everyone! My name’s Son Goku! It’s really nice to meet you. I can’t wait to start working with you!”

Though some returned the Saiyan’s warm greeting, there were others, chief among them being Caroni, who started laughing and murmuring amongst themselves. Finally, it was Caroni, rose in hand, who stepped forward.

“Videl, before I give my two cents on the matter,” started the blond grappler, “Allow me and everyone present to congratulate both you and your significant other on your recent unionizing. With that out of the way, would you mind explaining to us why we should listen to the very man your father has repeatedly derided as a charlatan since before he became World Champion?”

The petite girl let out an annoyed sigh before answering. “The truth is, my father and Goku had a meeting of the minds of sorts after the whole Majin Buu thing. They buried the hatchet. That’s the short end of it. I wouldn’t ask this of any of you if I didn’t know how important this was. Lives are gonna be on the line in the near future, possibly your own, and we’re looking at a scenario where
things could potentially get as bad as they were with Majin Buu.”

At this, every set of eyes in the gathered crowd widened. Some even started to shuffle off in a bid to make themselves scarce.

“What is this threat you keep talking about?” inquired the Chief. “What or who are we dealing with?”

“You remember the cult gathered outside the courthouse?”

“How could I forget?” the Chief muttered with a grimace. “The entire security detail got shot up pretty bad. We’re having to host funerals for five of our guys.”

“Chief! Have there been any strange occurrences since this group first started showing up?” Gohan asked.

The old grizzled man brought his hand to his chin in thought. “Now that you mention it… there has been a marked increase in kidnappings in recent months. Then there are the ritualized torture scenes.”

Videl raised an eyebrow. “Torture scenes?!”

“Yeah! The bodies of animals have been found mutilated, some of them still breathing. A common factor with all these incidents has been the presence of strange patterns in either dirt, concrete, or stone. It’s really weird! At first we thought it was just a bunch of teenagers doing some séance nonsense, but reports kept coming in of groups of adults being present. They were said to be dressed in black robes.”

“How many of these guys do you think there are?” she asked.

“At first, they were very sparse, appearing in groups of two or three, but as time went on, their numbers kept growing at a steady pace. When they first appeared, everyone thought they were just a bunch of hokey, religious whack jobs so no one took them seriously. As the weeks rolled on however, they started reaching out to the public with their message. At first, their converts were the homeless, disaffected youth, common street thugs, and the mentally ill. Now, this cult has followers from all walks of life. Tomorrow, it could very well be your garbage man joining them. If I really had to hazard a guess, I’d say that there are thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of these ‘Majins’ living and working in the West Metro area, possibly even Satan City alone.”

“And you’d say they’ve gotten more dangerous?” Gohan queried.

The old police chief looked at him resolutely. “Without a doubt! The central government has even brought in a special task force agent from King Furry’s Royal Bureau of Investigation to help combat possible right-wing terrorism. According to his findings, there may have been a link between these Majins and the terrorists you and Videl subdued at the 3rd Satan City Bank in the spring. Forensics found some occult paraphernalia bearing an ‘M’ on the cadaver of the gunman you threw from the roof.”

“So, you think these people might already have me and my wife on their radar?”

“Hard to say,” answered the grizzled man. “Their city-wide numbers were very negligible when you two busted up their little bank party. You might have fallen off their priorities list when you left with Mr. Satan for your summer training trip. Videl’s little stunt with Spopovich at the courthouse might have stirred up a hornet’s nest though.”

The chief regarded Videl momentarily with a stern gaze. The girl seemed to shrink back a bit which
seemed to surprise Gohan a bit. Apparently, his new wife had a great deal of respect for the old law enforcement official.

“Listen Videl… I know that man hurt you real bad at the last tournament, but that doesn’t mean you can just fly off the handle like that! Believe me! When I saw that bastard hurting you, I was this close to whipping out my sidearm and using Spopovich for target practice. Still, you need to show some restraint! Several of my officers got killed because of that stunt!”

Looking down at her feet, Videl began to tremble nervously. “I-I know chief. I’m really sorry for what happened! I just couldn’t control myself! I have so many nightmares because of what that bastard did to me! I lost my shit in the wrong place and at the wrong time. Let the families of the downed officers know that we’ll compensate them for their losses.”

Rubbing his temples, the chief sighed. “What did you two do with Spopovich anyway?”

Laughing awkwardly, Gohan scratched the back of his head in the typical Son fashion. “I, Videl, and my folks sorta drug him off to a back alley so we could pay him a humble (A humble is a term used by police to describe a situation where a group of cops beat the crap out of a perpetrator just because they can).”

The chief’s eyes widened. “I’ll pretend I didn’t hear that…”

With that out of the way, the two teens turned back to the other gathered members.

“So how about it?!” Gohan offered, “The costs are great, potential rewards are few, but at least you’ll be able to grow as martial artists while you work to help defend both our hometown and your loved ones from near-do-wells.”

There was another wave of murmurs among the gathered Satan students. Just as it looked as if Gohan and Videl’s efforts would be for nothing, a voice called out from the back of the room.

“I’LL DO IT!”

The gazes of Gohan, Videl, and Goku fell on a tall, bulky, middle aged white male. The large man stepped forward with a slight gait. His hair was greying, with some very noticeable balding in the middle, and he had a pronounced beer paunch that stuck out a few inches past his belt. On each of his arms, he wore tattoos indicating past military service.

“The name’s Bob!” barked the large man in greeting, holding out a hand.

“Don’t get me wrong, old-timer,” started Gohan, shaking the man’s offered hand, “We’re grateful for your offer, but aren’t you a little past your prime for this?”

“Nah,” the man remarked with a shake of his head, “I don’t think I have too many years left, and I’m retired anyway. Like everyone else, I already know where I’m going when I die, and I might as well do something to keep on living! Next time I see that King Yemma fella, I wanna be able to say I did something useful with what time I had left.”

The large man then turned to the rest of the crowd. “And the rest’a ya should be ashamed of yerselves! These two are kids for Christ’s sake! You’re adults! Grow some balls!” The man yelled this last part as he pulled out a whiskey flask and took a big gulp.

“No you don’t, Grandpa!”

All those present turned to see a sandy-haired young boy, perhaps a few years older than Goten and
Trunks run from behind Piroski’s massive form.

“Billy Jack! You better get’chour ass back dere!” harped the large man in a redneckish drawl.

The boy stopped in front Gohan and Videl. “If Pappy here wants to do this, can I?”

“Uh… honestly kid, we were hoping for someone a little older,” said Gohan. Next to him, Videl smiled down at the little kid sweetly.

“I’m sorry little fella, but you’re not old enough for this,” said Videl in apology. The boy hung his head in a sad state as he trudged away.

“Why’d you do that?” asked Goku.

“I’m not about to put a child’s life at risk,” answered the petite fighter.

Goku gave her a sour look. “I prefer training fighters up from a young age. They get more out of it if you start them out young. Besides, if the mood of this small crowd is anything to go by, we’re not getting much to work with.”

“I’ll concede the point Goku,” Videl relented with a groan. “You’re the one who’s gonna be training them anyway so it’s your decision to make. The thing is, a kid that age is still attending school, so it’s probably not a good idea to take on any students under the age of sixteen.”

“I’ll try to remember that,” said the Saiyan glumly. “It just seems like such a waste. Perhaps if I just trained the kid around school…”

Nodding once to her father-in-law, Videl again turned back to the now even noticeably smaller group of remaining students.

“As for the rest of you, are there any among you who are currently unemployed?” Videl knew it was a fairly stupid question seeing how much her father’s dojo charged for monthly membership costs, but there was always a chance. To her surprise, a hand shot up towards the back.

“I am!” The student, an eighteen year old she recognized from her school, stepped out from the group.

“Name?”

“Brinner,” he answered.

“What’s your story?” the Satan girl asked.

“I’ve been unemployed since I graduated from high school this last spring. I need a job so that I can keep my membership with the dojo.”

“Would you be interested in our program if you were paid to train under it?” Videl asked.

“Yes!” was his quick answer. “I need a job badly, and if I could kill two birds with one stone, I’ll take it!”

Videl sighed. “It’ll have to be under the table then. Beggars can’t be choosers. Still, how do I know you won’t turn tail and run at the first sign of trouble?”

“That’s just it,” said the young man. “You don’t!”
“I suppose it can’t be helped…” she muttered. “Alright, stand over there with what’s his name again?...Oh! That’s Right! Bob! Stand over there with Bob, and Goku will give you the lowdown.”

The young man in question sauntered over to where Gohan was interviewing the man named Bob from before.

Videl once more turned to the last of the gathered students and addressed Caroni and Piroski specifically. “Considering how much you guys wanted to follow in my father’s footsteps, I’m somewhat surprised you turned this down.”

“We have a tournament to train for,” Caroni told her. “We don’t have time to invest in a program we’ve never heard of. We’d prefer to stick with what we know.”

Videl raised an eyebrow. “Tournament?!”

Her father’s top disciple chuckled. “Oh, that’s right! You’ve been gone a few months! Let’s just say that unlike you, there are those of us who actually care about avenging our dojo’s loss.”

“Avenging our loss…?” Suddenly, what the blond show fighter was talking about dawned on her. “You don’t mean…?!”

“Yes! That’s right!” he confirmed. “The same crazy bitch who clobbered us just happens to be competing. She’s been talking a lot of smack about using competing Satan Dojo members for toilet paper! You should hear some of the shit she’s said about you in recent months.”

“When is this tournament?!” Videl demanded. “I have to know!”

“The competition will be hosted by the Martial Arts Society at the Satan City Stadium in one week. Anyone who wishes may compete, regardless of their weight, age, species, or legal standing.”

‘Barbella…. I’m coming for you, you bitch!’ Clenching her fists at her sides, the Satan girl’s body began to glow with the thrum of her living ki as a black dragon of rage coiled inside her. Her body unable to contain it any longer, a bright white battle aura burst forth, sundering the floor tiles beneath her in a circle around her feet as she began to levitate. Her cerulean eyes glowed blue with ki and her raven hair strained against her pig-tail clips.

Their faces slack with awe and fear, both Caroni and Piroski couldn’t fathom what they were witnessing. The two disciples of Mr. Satan tepidly backed away from their old mentor’s daughter. Off to the side, police chief Wilkerson, the large middle aged man who’d volunteered before, and his grandson grabbed a nearby support column in an attempt to shield themselves.

“Videl, calm down!” Gohan ordered sternly.

Her common law husband’s voice bringing her to her senses, the young lady struggled to reel herself in. All around her, members of her father’s dojo looked like they were ready to high-tail it to the next county.

“W-what was that?!” stammered Piroski.


“It’s a long story…” was her answer. “It’s a manifestation of the very power that allows me to fly.”

Coming up next to her, the police chief began to kick at the broken floor tiles around her.
“It would have taken a high-explosive round to damage the floor in such a way,” the chief commented. He then looked up at the girl. “I think you have more explaining to do.”

“No shit, she does!” railed Caroni. “The last time me or Caroni saw something like that, we were with her father at the Cell Games!”

Letting out a long-suffering sigh, Videl hung her head in shame, shame for actively keeping the truth from so many people so close to her, albeit tacitly. Coming to stand beside her, Gohan wrapped his arms around his common law wife.

“I guess we owe the three of you an explanation,” she shuddered.

Elsewhere, a great human travesty was unfolding. Flames and columns of smoke climbed high into the sky as anguished cries and the screams of the dying filled the air. It was an outlying village of sorts located in a less advanced part of the Great Northern Continent, and it was under attack from a mysterious group of assailants.

“KILL THE MEN AND THE OLD!!!” shouted one man, presumably the leader. “Throw the babies down the well! Take the women and children with us!”

The man, his forehead showcasing a calligraphic ‘M’, swung wide with a sharpened lawnmower blade as he decapitated an elderly woman. Her husband, promptly dropped to his knees beside her and wailed in anguish at the feet of her murderer. His head soon joined hers on the dusty ground.

All around, the village square was caked with dried blood. The watering troughs were stained pink from the headless corpses hap-hazardly thrown into them, and the very same assailants proceeded to poison the town spring in the hopes of killing any stragglers they may have missed. Still another group was busy salting the fields so that nothing could grow. It was total desecration, the absolute sundering of anything that could support civilization in this remote location.

“LET THE WORLD KNOW!!!” shouted a black-robed character. “THIS IS THE AGE OF MAJIN!!!”

His fellow marauders let out a euphoric scream as together they waved bayonet-armed assault weapons over their heads. Off to the side, young girls, their hands tied, were being loaded into a transport. One young girl fell to her knees and wailed fiercely as a large burly man with an ‘M’ on his forehead hacked her parents to death with a machete Rwanda style.

“Let this world know…” growled the robed man. “Those who hunger for answers are here to collect!”

Back at Satan House, Satan City Police Chief Wilkerson, Caroni, and Piroski sat upon a couch across from Gohan and Videl. The five of them were drinking beverages from Mr. Satan’s whiskey cabinet as Gohan and Videl told them everything about Gohan and his father’s circle of friends, the Cell Games, Majin Buu, Bojack, Broly, and finally Videl and Mr. Satan’s training under Master Roshi.

“I knew it…” breathed Caroni. “Somehow, something told me that Mr. Satan was lying that day but I just couldn’t bring myself to say anything….”

Beside him, Piroski nodded solemnly. “Mistro Satan got creamed by Cell, but we refused to see it!”

“So…,” Caroni said coming to a stand. The blond man waltzed up to Gohan. “You were that kid, the Delivery Boy. Why didn’t you say anything back then?”
“I didn’t want the fame,” Gohan answered, his gaze cast towards the floor. “That and too many of my friends are former villains of mankind that people would recognize. They’d be ostracized or worse. I kept my powers a secret because my secrets are other people’s secrets.”

Caroni then turned a nasty glare, one matched by his long-time associate Piroski, towards the daughter of his fraud teacher. “Still…, one has to wonder why you wanted the daughter of the one man who took your credit. I can’t help but think you and Mr. Satan had a silent agreement or sorts.”

“That’s bullshit!” snapped Gohan, surging to his feet. “After Buu, Mr. Satan didn’t even like the fact that me and his daughter were dating!”

“So what happened?” fumed the blond fighter. “Did you blackmail him so you could get his little girl? Or did he just throw her up on a stage as if he were offering her as a twisted consolation prize?!?”

“Videl and I have been through a lot together!” growled the teen. “That’s why we’re in a relationship! She didn’t even know her father lied about beating Cell until after Spopovich almost killed her. She figured out the truth on her own!”

“Look!” barked Chief Wilkerson, “I’m not gonna let either of you take this out on Mrs. Videl Satan, or is her last name Son now…? Whatever! The point is, this young lady has saved more lives than I can count! She’s put her life on the line to protect my men! She’s off limits!”

“Fair enough!” Caroni remarked. “But I’m gonna be having some words with her father the next time we meet….and maybe a few fists!”

“Piroski, you’ve been awfully quiet,” Videl observed. “What do you have to say?”

“I don’t know what to believe anymore,” the muscled, bald-headed man replied. “But I do have one question. Can anyone learn to use your powers?”

“That was the whole point behind us looking for volunteers,” Gohan answered. “We need to find at least seven other people for my father to train in the Kame style. I’ll warn you though, this is not a commitment you should take lightly! Fatigue and pain will become a fixture of your life for almost a year if you choose to take up the training.”

“I’ll do it!” he declared. “I’ll do it because I don’t like the idea of so many people being stronger than me! For so many years, I believed my physical strength was the greatest in the world. I can kill a bull with one hit! I can out-pull twenty elephants, but my abilities don’t hold a candle to yours.”

Getting up, Videl walked over and laid a comforting hand on her old Satan Dojo alumni’s shoulder. “I know how ya feel. I used to think my fighting abilities were as high as I could possibly reach. I used to think my father’s abilities were something to aspire for. Boy, was I wrong… Believe me, I know. It hurts. I’m still dealing with issues from this.”

“But how could your father lie to us?!” demanded the large man. “We’re the closest people he knows!”

Videl sighed. “He got greedy, and he thought Cell and Gohan had killed each other. It was blatant opportunism at its’ worst. I’ll probably never trust my father again because of what his lies did to both me and Gohan’s friends.”

“The world needs to know,” Caroni asserted. “He can’t get away with this!”

“And what would that accomplish, Caroni?” Videl asked in a steadfast tone. “I thought about doing
it myself, but Miss Pizza advised against it. We’d all lose everything we have, and our entire
hometown would have to close up shop. Millions of people would lose their jobs, their homes, their
lives… the suicide rate would go up even more than it has since Majin Buu was subdued! Nothing
good would come of it! For once in my life, I don’t have a choice but to help perpetuate a fraud that
I’ve been against since I finally woke up!”

“Well… I for one am in no hurry to lose my job,” the chief broke in. “If the city goes under, a good
number of my officers will wind up in bread lines. Their families will starve! We’ve got to make sure
that as few people know about this as humanly possible!”

“That still doesn’t mean I’m gonna actively support my father’s narrative,” Videl argued. “Future
generations need to one day know about what really happened. Bulma Briefs of Capsule
Corporation has the largest pool of real evidence against my father, and as a member of me and my
spouse’s circle, she’s dead-set on remaining quiet. Sleeping dogs will lie.”

“I might lose my career if people find out, but I still don’t like it!” snarled Caroni. “Nonetheless, most
of the people buying your father’s merchandise are folks with more money than common sense
anyway so I’ll stomach it! As well as going along with this concerted effort to hide the truth, I’ll also
commit to training under your spouse’s father.”

“It’s gonna be tough,” Videl stated, “But I promise you that you won’t be disappointed. Again,
understand that I don’t like this anymore than you do. Even my father has come to regret his mistake
because of all the harm it’s caused to the people in his life.”

“So I take it he only started feeling guilty when his own lies started to affect him?” Caroni scoffed.
“Out of sight, out of mind!”

“I’m really sorry, everyone,” Gohan muttered in apology. “Now we have a real situation that could
affect everybody. If I had known just how many problems would arise for so many people, I would
have taken credit for Cell just to prevent this.”

Videl walked over and pulled her man down for a quick reassuring kiss. “Gohan, you were nine
years old. You were almost dead by the time your fight with Cell was over. So many people you
knew died by then that long-term consequences were the last thing on your mind. It’ll take years to
repair the damage caused by Dad’s short-sighted greed, but in the meantime, the lot of us will lay
whatever groundwork we can to fix it. We know what we have to do…”

“Yes,” the half-Saiyan concurred. “We owe Master Roshi a great debt, but that debt is only matched
by the debt we owe ourselves. We’ll carry forward and strive towards the goal he set for us.”

“Now…” the petite girl purred, wrapping a lovely muscled thigh around Gohan’s. “Tonight’s gonna
be Thursday night. We’ll have Friday, Saturday, and Sunday all to ourselves. I hope you’re ready to
satisfy my body’s ravenous hunger…”

Gazing into her man’s eyes, the Satan girl licked her lips as she brought her new spouse’s hands to
her cute, shapely rear. As she pressed herself against Gohan’s tall muscular form, she felt her mate
harden from their close intimacy.

“So which is it?” he breathed huskily, “The bedroom or the hot-tub? There’s a full moon this
weekend, so you know I’ll be going at it for hours.”

The newest member of the Son family smiled warmly at her new spouse. “That’s OK. It’s been a
few days since we’ve made love. I want this to last a while!”
With that, Videl Son reached up and released the holdings on her pig-tails, allowing her coal-black hair to cascade over her shoulders and onto her ample, firm bosom.

“Come on,” she coaxed, taking Gohan’s hand and guiding it down to her womanhood. The Saiyan could practically feel the heat coming off her most intimate spot.

Without another word, the unionized couple walked out of the lounge, leaving Caroni, Piroski, and the chief to banter amongst themselves.

“We need to make a pact right here and now,” the Chief asserted. “Due to the real problems everyday people will face, ourselves included, what we have learned in this room will never leave this room!”

“I’ll drink to that!” Piroski guffawed in his Eastern European accent. The large, muscled bald man raised his glass.

Caroni let out a sigh. “Fine… I don’t like it, but I sure as hell don’t want to lose everything I’ve worked for!”

The three men lifted their glasses and downed their contents in one gulp before standing to leave.

Back in the hallway, Videl and Gohan kissed and caressed each other passionately as they stumbled their way through the West Wing to their shared bedroom. By the time they’d reached their destination, Gohan had the girl’s short form lifted off the floor and plastered to his muscled chest. Videl, in her lust-crazed state barely found the doorknob to their quarters.

Stepping inside the bedroom, Gohan, still kissing his new spouse, sat her down. The two young lovers promptly began to throw their clothes off as they scurried into their bathroom where their hot-tub awaited.

As the two of them waited for the tub to fill, they busied themselves with a heavy, heated make-out session. Bending down, the half-Saiyan left a trail of kisses down her jawline before working his way down to her full, large, perky breasts. Flicking out with his tongue, he left an electric trail across Videl’s erect nipples that had the girl mewling his name.

“Gohan…” she shuddered as a series of chills and thrills rocked her body. “M-make me a promise.”

Pulling back, the half-Saiyan reined himself in just enough to ask, “What is it honey?”

“Promise me that you’ll take me whenever you like,” she moaned huskily. “It’s yours from now on! My body is yours! You don’t even have to ask me! Yank my panties off and take me whenever you want!”

“Is that really what you want?” he asked sincerely.

“Yes, please!” she all but begged as tears began to run down her flushed cheeks. “Sweetheart, you gave your life against Buu just so I could live again! You gave your life so that we could have each other! Everything I’ve ever had, everything I’ve ever been is because of you! I belong to you! Please… take me…”

Their lips locking in a sensuous kiss, Gohan transformed into a Super Saiyan as he lifted Videl into his arms bridal style and carried her to the tub. Far into the night, the sounds and smells of their rapturous lovemaking filled their bed and bath.

Oh, what a beautiful evening...
Gohan and Videl are my favorite Dragonball couple because we actually see these two fall in love. The time we’re shown in the Great Saiyaman Saga where these two slowly get together is also the time in which we get to see Videl’s actual depth. We get invested in her character and we see why Gohan originally fell in love with her to begin with. He didn’t fall in love with a traditional housewife type of woman with the characteristics of his mother. Gohan fell in love with her because of her bravery, her fighting spirit, and her willingness to put herself out there which makes the decision of Akira Toriyama to present her adult character as a bubbly, empty-headed, domesticated home-maker in Dragonball Super a real head-scratcher. This is a girl/woman who trained, willingly I might add, every day from a young age. Unlike Gohan, she actually wanted to fight and train. She was more like the traditional older Z-Warriors than any other female character, and we’re given no real context behind why she gave up in Dragonball Super. People don’t lose their original lifelong personality traits and faults in only a few years unless something happens.
Parental Talk

Beautiful! That was the only word either Gohan or Videl could use to describe the previous evening. Now, the young teenaged spouses lay tangled in the sheets as they dozed peacefully. It was just before dawn, and just as they had planned, the two teens were taking Friday off from school so they could have a three day weekend for a sort of mock honeymoon. Of course, they still had their daily training obligation to meet, but today it would be more of an afterthought.

Gohan slowly opened his eyes to the sight of the gorgeous girl laying atop him. Videl’s long black tresses splayed out every which way, and her large breasts were squished against his sculpted abs. The way she was laying had her thighs straddling his left leg, and this caused her warm raven hair-tufted pussy to rub languorously against him as she ground her hips in her sleep. Even as she slept, her face sported a small dreamy smile from their previous night’s activities.

Taking a wiff of his surroundings, Gohan found that the whole room still smelled strongly of both Videl’s arousal and her warrior’s scent. It was a cocktail of scents that drove him over the edge. He just couldn’t get enough of it! It was something that brought Saiyan males to their knees. Due to the phenomenally close genetic similarities between Saiyans and humans, human females of a certain character also produced this titillating scent. Mixed with the scent of her female arousal, Videl’s warrior scent played across Gohan’s Saiyan olfactory senses like a gifted pianist.

It also didn’t help that there was going to be a full moon tonight. Early on after Buu’s defeat, Videl and Gohan were quick to learn that if they wanted to have really wild sex, the night of a full moon was the best time to do it, Gohan’s trauma issues be damned. The effect moonlight had on Saiyans, even those who had lost their tails, was akin to that of a powerful aphrodisiac. On those nights, Videl rode Gohan like a mechanical bull, her squeals of ecstasy lasting into the late hours.

The half-breed couldn’t take it anymore. Gently rolling his woman over, he got atop her still sleeping form, and being as careful as he could, he grabbed Videl’s ankles and lifted her shapely legs. When they were fully extended above her, Gohan opened her muscled thighs.

Gohan was so hard, he couldn’t stand it. The sight of her breath-taking little cooch spread out before him had his vision clouded with lust.

Soon, Videl began to stir. She felt a strong pair of hands lifting her lower half off the bed. Squinting in the darkness, she was met by the sight of her new spouse holding her legs as he tried to initiate morning sex. Instead of her being angry or upset however, a mischievous grin spread across the girl’s face.

“Well, good morning, Loverboy…” she purred softly. Gohan’s shocked gaze rose to meet hers.

“Videl!” he gasped raggedly. The young man bore a look of guilt that pulled at the girl's heartstrings.

“Gohan…” she said breathlessly, bringing a hand up to his cheek, “I’m all yours whenever you want me. You’re doing exactly what I want you to. Don’t hesitate. We have three days to enjoy ourselves. Majin Buu taught us that we only live once. Please… Take me, and indulge in the best thing of your life…”

His feelings of shame assuaged, the Son boy relaxed as he felt Videl’s dainty hand toggle his erect endowment in line with her heated core. Once he felt his head part her folds, he pushed forward, working himself into her moist tightness. Looking into the baby blues of the gorgeous, raven-haired goddess beneath him, Gohan was convinced that yes, yes he did love shorter girls.
Gripping the sheets, Videl gave a pleasured moan at the feel of Gohan’s Saiyan size. Being only five feet tall, her shorter stature, even for a teenaged girl, made it something she never got tired of. His size was God’s gift to her, and she was gonna milk the benefits as long as she and Gohan were young and restless.

Gohan for the life of him could never get over how tight Videl always seemed to be, and ever since she started training under Roshi’s program, the strength of her core muscles increased her delicious snugness manifold. The boy threw his head back as the familiar feelings of having his cock wrapped in a vice-like, undulating sheath of heat, wetness, and pleasure overtook him.

Maintaining her composure, Videl reached out with her will and began to meld her living ki with her spouse’s, eliciting another pleasured gasp from Gohan. Videl’s ki was essentially mating with that of her spouse. This was all it took for the Saiyan teen to lose control and start pounding into her with a quicker, more powerful rhythm.

“Faster!” Videl urged breathlessly, “Harder…Don’t stop! Please, Gohan!”

Videl’s whole body was aglow with an adorable sex flush, and her large, perky breasts bounced with every powerful thrust from her Saiyan consort. Reaching up, the Satan girl took Gohan’s hands and led them to her jiggling bosom. Her nipples were so hard, they felt as if they could cut glass. His touch sent a thrill through her sultry body that had her mewling his name. Bending down, Gohan took one into his mouth and began to suck and nibble.

“Gohan…!” Videl squeaked. The girl wrapped her thighs around the Son boy’s waist, pulling him deep into her pleasurable, quivering heat.

The two teens carried on like this for a short while. Before long however, Videl felt the building knot of tension explode in her womb as Gohan’s warm seed hit her sweet spot like a water gun, causing her back to arch clear off the bed. Gohan quickly wrapped his arms around his mate’s petite, toned form as he brought her into his lap so she could ride out their release. Her thick, long raven tresses swaying behind her, Videl screamed with passion as her muscled body convulsed around the boy she loved. Pulling her frame to his, the half-Saiyan bent in and locked her mouth in a deep tongue kiss. Videl ground her dripping snatch onto her husband’s maleness as her spasming insides milked him dry.

Their energy spent, the unionized couple fell back onto the bed. Gohan pulled his wife atop him and the two shared another deep, passionate kiss.

Breaking away for air, Gohan stared lovingly into his common law wife’s blue eyes. “I should take you like this from now on.”

Videl giggled as she began to twirl her finger on his muscled chest. “I told you you’d like it! You really should dominate me more often…”

Gohan frowned. “Honey, I would, but considering how much it hurts you when I get involved in your fights, I’m so afraid I’ll make you feel like I’m suffocating you.”

“Gohan…” she groaned. She guided her husband’s hand back to her heated core. “On the battlefield is one thing. In the bedroom is a very different story…”

Bringing a hand behind her head, the half-Saiyan pulled her in for another heated lip-lock.

Basking in the afterglow of their lovemaking, the raven-haired teens held each other for a short while. Like most good things, this too had to come to an end. They had early morning training and
the two of them reeked with the odor of sex. However, just as the two were about to head to the shower, Videl’s smart phone went off.

The two lovers were given a start at the offending noise. Groaning, Videl grabbed it from their nightstand. She eyed the caller ID momentarily.

“I wonder why Dad’s calling us so early?” she wondered aloud.

“Different time zones?” Gohan fancied a guess.

“Maybe…” Touching the screen, the girl brought it to her ear. “Hey, Daddy! How’s the training going?”

“Videl! Sweet Pea! How’re things going with you and Gohan?”

“Very nice…” the girl answered huskily. “Me and Gohan entered into a civil union as soon as we got back. We’ve already moved into a shared room in the west wing. Training around school is kind of tough though, but we’re managing. I can’t help but worry that our progress is gonna suffer because of this though…”

“I didn’t think you’d actually go through with the whole civil union thing.” The man sounded somewhat disappointed.

“Considering what me and Gohan are gonna be fighting, I wanted Gohan able to make medical decisions for me in case something happened,” replied his daughter.

“So…” started the Champ, “I know you two aren’t formally married, but are you gonna have anything similar to a honeymoon? Even if you’re not married, spousal status of any kind is sort of a big deal. In a way, Gohan is your new husband.”

“Actually Dad, that’s what me and Gohan were doing last night,” Videl answered. She paused momentarily before adding, “…And this morning.”

“Did I interrupt you two?! asked the man incredulously. “If that’s the case, I’m very sorry! This was a special moment for you!”

“Daddy, calm down!” Videl placated, her face growing red with embarrassment, “It’s OK. You missed us by about ten minutes. I know our final year of high school just started, but me and Gohan are taking today off so we can have time to enjoy our new union. Between training, school, and taking care of some other odds and ends, we can’t seem to find the time to enjoy being a couple outside the bedroom.”

“Hey, no problem Pumpkin!” said the Champ in a show of support. “It’s fine! I know how it can be juggling so many things at once. Me and your mother had the same issue when we started out. You’re both still young…really young. You and Gohan trained hard all summer too, and you need to be a couple sometimes. Master Roshi’ll understand.”

“We’re still gonna train this weekend, though. In fact, we’re about to shower and head out right now, assuming my spouse can keep his hands off me for five minutes…” Her eyes flitting over to Gohan, Videl giggled like a schoolgirl as she finished the last part.

“Well, you’re both still teenagers. A boy Gohan’s age is gonna be hard to satisfy. Still, I wish you and him would’ve at least waited until after high school before you made this kind of commitment. I know people used to get married young back in the old days, but those were different times.”
“Dad, I have a personal question.”

“I’m almost afraid to ask, but what is it?” The trepidation in the Champ’s voice was evident.

“You’ve had hundreds of women over the past seven years,” she started. “I’m not sure if this is something I should be asking you over the phone, but have you ever asked any of them what sex was like for a woman?”

“Err… occasionally,” was her father’s answer. “Why?”

“It’s just that… I can’t seem to get enough of Gohan’s body,” beamed the girl. “His kisses drive me wild, and whenever he touches me I just want to melt! I’m practically addicted to the feeling of having his strong, naked form laying beneath my own when I sleep. Is that how any of those women felt with you?”

“A few…,” Mark breathed guiltily. “Aside from your mother, I just never wanted any other woman to feel that way around me. Because Gohan makes you feel that way, you should cherish him. It’s my own experience that tells me that kind of good thing never lasts forever. Me and your mother didn’t have a long marriage before she died, and I just can’t see myself loving anyone else. Just make him happy…”

“Despite your reservations, you sound pretty supportive,” she noted with a warm smile. “Considering how you were before, it really means a lot to me! Thanks Daddy…”

“Anyway… Have the house staff managed to keep Buu hidden?”

“So far, so good,” was Videl’s short answer. “Leaving him with Bulma was the best choice we could’ve made. The house staff have remained cooperative so far, but we have a new problem.”

“What kind of problem?” queried the Champ, a tone of dread tinging his voice.

“Coroni, Piroski, Pizza, and Police Chief Wilkerson know that you didn’t beat Cell,” she answered.

“What?!!”

Videl winced at her father’s uproar. “Calm down, Dad! Breath deep and count to ten! I managed to get an oath of silence from the three of them.”

“Wait…what?!” The afroed man’s tone shifted from panicked to puzzled. “How did you manage that?!”

“Long story short, the four of them realized real quick that if you went down, they’d all lose their careers. Their entire livelihoods are connected to yours at the hip. They can’t afford to see your ship sink. I can assure you that your secret is safe, though you’re probably gonna want to work on an explanation to satisfy Caroni. The guy looked like he was ready to start a manhunt!”

“Jesus…” muttered the Champ. “As if this couldn’t get any worse.”

“You got lucky, Papa,” Videl remarked. “I was able to contain the problem fairly quick. On another note, I’ll be entering a martial arts competition in six days.”

“A competition?! In Satan City?”

“Yes,” his daughter affirmed. “I found out that Barbella is competing. It seems that in our absence, that psycho has been hamming it up over my humiliation. Pictures of me hanging from a hook have
circulated in the media and on the internet. She’s been humiliating me all over the martial arts world for months!”

“That bitch…” Mr. Satan growled. “I’ll sue her ass for this!”

“Don’t bother,” Videl sneered. “That bitch is mine! I was able to pull twelve buses before we even started training under Roshi. Now, I can’t imagine what I could do! I haven’t caught up to Gohan or even Krillin, but I’m pretty confident I can decimate her now. Believe me, Dad! Barbella’s gonna pay dearly for what she did to me…!”

“Sweet Pea! Show that screwy bitch what happens when someone messes with a Satan!”

“I swear, Dad!” she hissed, “When I get my hands on her, I’m gonna beat her bloody, tear her clothes off in front of the whole fucking stadium, and post the pictures on revengeporn.com! I’m gonna make what I did to Spopovich earlier this week look tame!”

“Spopovich!?"

“Yeah…” Videl shuddered in ecstasy. “I caught him and whooped his ass! My damaged pride won’t be sated so easily…”

Later that day, Goku, Gohan, and Videl led their new volunteers for the Kame Training Program out to a local asphalt quarry within the West Metro area. It was decided between them that the best way to economize the trip was to have everyone engage in this part of the training together. Each one of them carried tools ranging from pickaxes, to sledgehammers and shovels, and Piroski and Bob each had a wheel barrel slung over their shoulders. Out of the seven, Gohan, Goku, and Videl were the only one’s wearing weighted training cloths.

On the issue of Mr. Satan’s disciples, Piroski, Caroni, Bob, and Brinner had only been training under Goku in the Turtle Way since that morning so it was understandable that they would be burnt out. Videl could only imagine how fatigued the four men would be when Goku had them outfitted with their first set of training gear tomorrow.

“And here we are!” beamed the Saiyan warrior, gesturing to the massive open pit mine. “This is where your next bit of training will take place!”

“So…,” Caroni began, “What do we do here?”

“This is where we dig,” Videl replied.

“Say what?! Caroni, Piroski, and Brinner looked at her as if she’d grow two heads.

“I get it!”

The three men whipped around to regard Bob with a puzzled look.

“I worked in the mines for ten years as a union man!” the hefty, aged man bragged. “If you wanna build some good workin muscles, heavy manual labor is the way to go!”

“Correct!” Videl chimed. “Master Roshi had me, Gohan, and my dad doing this two hours a day for three months straight. It’s a very organic way to build oneself up from scratch.”

“For me and Krillin, Roshi used construction work,” said Goku. “The reason for this is that the Turtle Way is supposed to be about learning as much as it is training.”
“Master Roshi told us,” said his daughter-in-law. “Construction work was out of the question due to me and dad’s public profile. I personally didn’t care either way so long as I got the training.”

“Come on guys!” Gohan urged, “Let’s get to work!”

With that, Gohan and Videl took off into the mining pit, followed at a distance by Piroski, Caroni, Brinner, and even further back by a limping Bob. The condition of the oldest member of their group did not go unnoticed by Videl and Gohan.

“Do you think he’ll be OK?” Videl asked her husband. “I really don’t want that old guy falling out…”

“I know what ya mean…,” Gohan remarked with a sigh. The half-breed threw a look back at the large middle-aged man as he sauntered after them. There were definitely some gout issues there. “It can’t be helped. We’ve already explained to him just what he was getting into when he signed up for this. He’s a stubborn fella.”

For the next two hours the seven martial artists hammered, picked, and shoveled at a rock formation the size of a small skyscraper. Piroski and Bob made round after round with their wheel barrels as more and more asphalt was cast aside by Videl, Gohan, and the others. Gradually, the group managed to wither the standing structure down.

Off in the distance, some of the actual employees of the work site stopped to watch their activities from a close distance. One of the spectators, presumably a fan, whipped out his cell phone and aimed the camera lens at the group.

“This is definitely going on social media…”

Later on, Goku brought everyone to a remote lake in the 439 District. The location itself wasn’t too far from the Son Residence.

“For this exercise, we’ll be developing your endurance,” explained the Saiyan Warrior. “You’ll swim 10 laps, now strip.”

“What!” screamed Caroni, Piroski, and Brinner in unison.

Wide-eyed, the three men stared disbelievingly at the former Champion, but not nearly as disbelievingly as they did Gohan and Videl when the two teens complied. The young couple shrugged off their sweaty weighted clothing before working on their undergarments.

The jaws of the men present hit the dirt upon seeing Videl’s panties flutter to her feet, giving them a clear view of her toned, nude backside. The girl’s lats, deltoids, and traps were raised and thick, and her buttocks, though powerfully shaped, were smooth, full, and feminine. This was all supported by muscled thighs and shapely calves.

“Holy Shit! Look at those scars!” Caroni cried out, referring both to Videl’s collection of crime fighting keepsakes and to Gohan’s own collection of battle scars from as far back as his time under Piccolo.”

Fully disrobed, the unionized couple took off towards the water and dived in. Much to everyone’s surprise, old man Bob wasn’t too far behind the two.

“This is gonna be awkward,” Caroni stated. Beside him, Piroski and Brinner nodded in agreement.

Late afternoon saw Gohan and Videl engaged in heated sparring sessions. It was after work hours at
the Satan Dojo and the two teens had commandeered two of the training rings. Due to the lack of comparable sparring partners, Majin Buu was drafted to practice with Gohan.

As was the case between Gohan and Eighteen, the power disparity between Gohan and Mr. Buu was apparent to anyone fast enough to follow them, albeit to a lesser degree. Buu may have made Eighteen’s strength and speed pale in comparison, but because of the Old Kai’s power raising, Gohan was far, far more powerful than Buu in his base form. It also didn’t help that Buu was only really able to use his arms in their practice match due to his legs being so short compared to the rest of his massive, rotund body. On a positive note, his body’s extreme resistance to physical damage and his advanced magical regenerative abilities granted the large pink demon a level of durability that allowed Gohan to totally cut loose, which was good considering that Gohan had worked out a great deal of the rust he’d had from not training for seven years.

Off in an adjacent ring, Videl was practicing with Chi Chi of all people. The older Son wife was dressed in an orange spandex shorts matching two piece in contrast to Videl being decked out in weighted training cloths. It took a little bit of coaxing from Goku to get his wife to consent to this, but somewhat reluctantly, Chi Chi relented.

From the time she and Gohan arrived back in Satan City, Videl found her ki-sensing ability overwhelmed from two different directions. On the one hand was her spouse’s vast ki presence feeling ever so much like an infinite ocean of light against the backdrop of her mind’s eye, and on the other was the magically-enhanced power of Majin Buu. Being able to sense ki signatures allowed Videl to finally understand just how dire the situation was when Babadi unleashed the pink demon on an unsuspecting world a little over six months before.

Gohan danced around the magical pink demon as Mr. Buu threw wild sloppy swings at the teen. With every overextended shot, Gohan darted in and delivered a pepper spray of powerful jabs along the creature’s medial line. As expected, the rotund Buu took the shots like a trooper and kept on coming.

The newest addition to the Son family tried to remain focused on her and her mother-in-law’s sparring session in spite of all that was happening in the adjacent ring. It wasn’t a perfect match up, but it was the closest thing she would get to fighting another female opponent in preparation for her and Barbella’s rematch.

Videl easily stepped to the side as Chi Chi lunged forward with another precision knife-strike. To Videl, it was apparent that despite her training Goten, Chi Chi wasn’t really on her level anymore. Surprisingly, Gohan’s mother may have surpassed the wall of humanity, but she wasn’t adept at using ki for even mundane in-fight applications such as flying. Much as she didn’t want to believe it, Videl may very well have been the only female fighter on Earth with an intrinsic connection to her living ki. The most the Son matriarch could do was manifest a battle aura. Compared to sparring with Krillin, sparring with Chi Chi was a major step down. She figured this was the problem with sacrificing every other aspect of one’s life for stuffy tradition: You stagnate as a person.

“You fight like a man, Videl,” noted the Son matriarch with a certain measure of disdain.

“It’s the only way I’ve ever fought,” the Satan girl stated. “Being raised around almost exclusively male fighters sort of does that to ya.”

“I’m sort of disappointed though,” said the older woman as she delivered a palm strike.

“How….so?” Videl gritted as she blocked the attack.

The former Ox Princess jumped back in a bid to make some distance between her and Videl. “Not
too many women know how to fight anymore using styles geared towards female anatomy.”

Raising her left leg, the older Son woman launched a precision side-kick to Videl’s temple that was parried with relative boredom. Videl threw a finger jab into her mother-in-law’s unguarded midsection that staggered the older female.

“There’s a reason for that,” Videl said, bringing up a defensive guard, “Since my father became Champion, so much of what passes for mainstream martial arts is geared towards brawling, pit fighting, and pankration that provincial female styles fell out of favor. Of the few serious female contenders out there, almost all of them were too afraid of being too physically frail to bother with provincial styles.”

“What about you?” Chi Chi inquired. “Muscles or not, your body is even more petite than mine. I mean, what are you? Five foot, nothin?”

Glowering, Videl sped forward and aimed a hard left at the former princess’ face. Unfortunately, she overextended her punch and received a painful nerve strike to the shoulder for her troubles.

Rubbing her left shoulder, Videl staggered back and ground out, “Don’t take this the wrong way, but I see adapting provincial styles oriented towards females as a surrender of sorts. I refuse to perpetuate the stereotype that women are too weak to beat male fighters at their own game!”

Chi Chi wiped the perspiration from her brow. “But that’s just it, Videl! Men and women are different. We have breasts and our hips are wider for child-rearing. In addition to this, our center of gravity is lower, we’re smaller, and our reach isn’t up to par with that of a man’s.”

“I know that, Mom,” Videl affirmed, “Don’t get me wrong though. I’ve tried incorporating elements of female-oriented styles into my own since I was thirteen. It’s just that my base style is geared so heavily towards male brawling that I’m having to work with what my own muscle memory is used to. A mixed style is best. That’s why I’ve moved more and more towards using the fighting style Gohan learned from Piccolo as my base. I’m still getting the whole nerve strike thing down though.”

Surging forward, the Son matriarch rounded on the balls of her feet, and twirling in the air, came down on her daughter-in-law with a back-handed ridge-hand. Seeing the strike just in time, Videl threw up a loose cross guard to absorb the impact. It was then while still exchanging shots that Videl changed the subject.

“Are you still … disappointed about me … entering into a civil union with Gohan?”

Grimacing, Chi Chi continued to pour on the pressure. “I’m still disappointed about a lot of things.”

Their fists colliding, the two females broke off.

“It’s just that… I never thought that with the way I raised Gohan that he’d do this,” Chi Chi remarked sadly. “I wanted you and my son to get together but not like this.”

Videl groaned in annoyance at the older woman’s hang-ups. “It isn’t just because we wanted a legal relationship. People get hurt, Mom. Accidents happen during training, especially considering the people we train with on a consistent basis. In the absence of my father, we needed to have our bases covered. It was both something we wanted and a necessity.”

“It just doesn’t seem as real,” said Chi Chi with a shake of her head.

“As opposed to what?” Videl quipped. “Me and Gohan have relationship issues too so I don’t want to seem like a hypocrite, but you said it yourself: Your own husband didn’t even know what a
wedding was. Gohan and I at least took time to fall in love before we took the next step. We had an actual meeting of the minds. Besides, aren’t Bulma and Vegeta in a legal domestic partnership? You’re her best friend but you don’t seem to make an issue out of it.”

“B-But if your relationship has the same legal standing as my marriage, what’s the point of me and Goku even being married?!” stammered the older Son woman.

“Mom, I don’t see why you’re worried about that,” Videl returned. “How can our relationship status devalue the worth of your marriage? I don’t get it.”

Unbeknownst to either Gohan or the two women, a trio of young people, more specifically Erasa, Sharpner, and Penn, had entered the dojo through the employee entrance to pay their two friends a visit.

“Hey Videl! What’s goin on?” chimed Erasa as she jogged up to the ringside. However, both the bubbly-headed blond and her two friends soon found their attention drawn to the sparring match in the adjacent ring, specifically to one of its’ participants.

The profile of Majin Buu swung his fists wildly as he tried to connect with Gohan. The pink demon had lost his composure a short while ago, and steam was shooting out of the various vents lining his fuchsia-colored body. He screamed with rage like a petulant little two year old at his inability to keep up with his demi-Saiyan opponent as Gohan puck-marked his rubbery body with painful craters. His narrowed eyes glowed with a dangerous red ember.

Videl’s eyes became like saucers. She’d gotten so wound up in her and Chi Chi’s sparring match that she didn’t even sense her friends entering the building. The jig was up…

His mouth working up and down like a gaping fish, Sharpner found himself so terrified that he couldn’t find the strength to speak. Finally, it was Penn who screamed…

“IT’S MAJIN BUU!!!!”

Immediately, both Gohan and Buu stopped and turned towards the ruckus. His eyes widening, Gohan ran forward to calm the situation.

“Guys, listen!” urged the half-Saiyan.

“I-It’s Majin Buu!” shuddered Erasa as she fell back on her rear. Terrified, the blond-haired girl hurriedly scooted away until her back was to the wall. Sharpner and Penn on the other hand, made a break for it.

In a screaming fit, the two boys bolted down the corridor and rounded a corner for the exit. Upon reaching the front doors however, they found them locked.

“Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!” Penn screamed repeatedly as he and Sharpner rattled the doors, “We’re boned!”

“Guys, hold it!”

Coming to their senses, the blond jock and the speckled ginger turned to see Gohan and Videl jogging into the lobby.

“Gohan! We’ve got to warn everyone!” Sharpner screamed.

The half-breed sighed. “No Sharpner, we don’t!”
The blond jock looked at Gohan as if he had brain damage. “Are you crazy?! We need to get the police, the government, the army, the air force, everyone!”

“Sharpner…” Videl groaned, “Stop and think for a second. If the military couldn’t stop Buu last time, what makes you so certain they could do it now?”

At this, Sharpner collapsed to his knees in hollow despair.

“You two seem pretty nonchalant for two people who died like the rest of us!” Penn noted.

“Look guys,” Gohan told them, “It’s gonna be OK! Without Babadi calling the shots, Majin Buu isn’t a threat.”

“How can you say that?!” demanded Penn. “That thing killed every one of us! My house collapsed on my little sister when that…that thing came through before!”

“That thing also can’t be killed,” Gohan informed them. “At least not without having massive ramifications for all of existence. He had to continue existing in some form. Majin Buu is a physical manifestation of a specific force in the universe. Befriending him and taming him was the only way to ensure mankind’s continued survival. Believe me, we don’t like it any more than you do, but this was the only way.”

“Taming?” Penn pressed. “What do you mean by taming?”

“Let’s just say that my dad has some strange tastes in house pets,” Videl muttered. “If there was a way to get rid of that thing, I would have done it myself.”

“W-Wait! Are you saying that Majin Buu lives with you and Gohan?!” Sharpner asked hotly.

“Don’t remind me…” remarked the petite fighter. “The food bill is downright atrocious.”

“I thought your dad said he beat Majin Buu?!” Penn asked, his voice laced with anxiety.

“Beating someone doesn’t necessarily entail fighting them,” said Gohan. “Sometimes, you have to make friends. In this case, Mr. Satan beat Majin Buu by making friends with him. So many people were so busy getting themselves killed trying to stop Buu by force that no one ever thought that maybe he needed a friend. Mark was the only person who actually took that route, and it would have worked, barring an unforeseen complication. It was the only way any of us would have a future.”

“And besides…,” Videl added, resting a hand on her husband’s bicep, “If Majin Buu ever does get out of line again, my husband here can take him, especially now!”

Gohan beamed at his spouse’s vote of confidence in his abilities to protect her and everyone else. It was certainly a refreshing thing to hear.

“I’m having a hard time believing that Gohan could take someone Mr. Satan couldn’t,” Penn said with a tone of conceit. “I’m gonna need to see it to believe it! I want to see Gohan fight Majin Buu! That, or I start talking to the press!”

“Penn…,” Videl growled between gritted teeth.

Seeing that his spouse was about to go off on the ginger-haired boy, Gohan stepped forward.

“Listen, Penn…” Gohan implored, “Me and Videl really don’t need this right now. The two of us have a lot on our plate, and we’d really like to devote this weekend to a sort of honeymoon for us. A
fight with Majin Buu would take forever to finish, and the collateral damage to the entire planet would be catastrophic! I’m fully capable of beating Buu easily, but Buu’s magical regenerative abilities would draw such a battle on for far too long.”

“Fair enough!” Penn remarked, crossing his arms. “We’ll simply postpone you and Buu’s fight until Monday!”

Gohan’s eyes widened. “W-What?!”

“You’re on!”

Both Gohan and Penn turned to Videl. “The Majin Buu you see in there isn’t half the monster that destroyed Earth. Gohan’ll mess him up!”

“Listen, Videl,” Gohan said imploringly, “Your dad really loves Mr. Buu, and I’m pretty sure he’s not gonna like it if we traumatize his favorite house pet.”

“Relax…” she chided in dismissal, “What’s the worst that could happen?”

“Oh, I can think of a few things,” was Gohan’s comeback.

“Monday it is then,” Penn stated.

Gohan threw his hands in the air in surrender as Videl and the bi-speckled ginger shook on it.

‘This could get real ugly…’ thought the half-breed.

Just then, Chi Chi stumbled down the hall with an unconscious Erasa slung over her shoulder. Upon seeing the state of her long-time best friend, Videl rushed to their side.

“She fainted from shock,” explained the former Ox Princess, handing the blond over to the gathered teens.

“I’ll get the smelling salts,” Videl offered as she laid her friend on a nearby couch.

With his spouse leaving to fetch the item in question, Gohan turned to his two friends.

“You guys can’t tell anyone about Buu!” he said waringly. “You’ll have the entire world spooked!”

“Oh, we won’t just as long as you fight Buu later this week,” Penn replied smugly.

Gohan hung his head in defeat. ‘Blackmailed again…’

Oh, today was just beautiful…
“We’ll have five orders of the peta bread chicken wraps, twelve orders of the venison back-strip, four baked potatoes with bacon bit toppings, five charbroiled catfish fillets…”

Still looking through her menu, Videl peeked up at her spouse every so often as the boy ordered for the two of them. Due to her increased metabolism resulting from their intense training regimen, Videl routinely found herself eating at least half as much as Gohan in any given sitting, and right now, she was absolutely famished.

Sitting across from her, Gohan was dressed casually in a white T-shirt and brown khakis. Earlier in the day, the half-Saiyan had gotten a much-needed haircut, and was now sporting the same spikey cut he’d had when he first started attending Orange Star High eight months ago, albeit with somewhat longer spikes. Completing the look, he even had the same stray lock that dangled down his forehead.

Videl, uncharacteristically, was wearing a form-fitting, sleeveless red dress that came midway down her thighs proudly sporting the symbol of her father’s dojo across the top of her bosom with black spandex tights and white, wide calf boots. Around her waist, she wore a leather belt. For the evening, she opted for wearing a red hairband to hold back her long, black tresses. (Hint: The way she dressed in Battle of the Gods)

The Korin eatery was a favorite of Videl’s, a place she and Gohan went to a few times after their revival. The room was spacious and tables were richly decorated with embroidered table cloths featuring the Korin tribes’ mythologies. Atop each were lit green apple-scented candles. In the background, jazz music played over the speakers. It was a veritable mishmash of ancient and modern aesthetics.

The Satan girl threw her head back as she downed a glass of red wine. In the first three months following Buu’s massacre, both she and Gohan found themselves attending a lot of parties with friends from school, parties that just happened to involve drinking. Across from her, Gohan mimicked her action on his fifth glass of the evening.

“Easy there, Tiger!” she chided teasingly, “You know how you get when you drink too much.”

“You only live once,” the Son boy stated as he reached for the whole bottle. This earned him a fit of giggles from his petite consort.

Setting her glass to the side, Videl reached into her medication bag and fished out her cigarette lighter and a pack of Papaya Island Lights. She promptly gave one to Gohan before lighting her own and sitting back for a quick relaxing smoke.

During their three months of training under Roshi, the two teens had come to miss the little smoking get-togethers they would have with Erasa and Angela after school. They had tried sneaking into town to buy some cigarettes, but after one particularly awkward episode where Krillin and Roshi caught the two having a drag behind Kame House, they quickly gave up the indulgence under threat of having the training program ended.

“Ah, man…!” Videl breathed, exhaling a cloud of second-hand smoke, “This is relaxing...”
“Risk of lung cancer aside, this is very soothing,” commented her spouse. Tilting his head back, the half-breed blew a doughnut cloud towards the ceiling.

When the waiter arrived with their oversized meal, the unionized couple snuffed out their joints in a nearby ashtray, and donned their napkins. For the next half hour or so, the only sounds that could be heard were those of Gohan and Videl scarfing down enough helpings to feed a platoon. The food and drink flowed as the jazz music played on. Soon however, the two young lovers found their meal interrupted by a loud ruckus.

“Come here you little bitch!” came a man’s deep yell. This was accompanied soon after by a girl’s terrified scream.

Whipping around, the two teen fighters were met with the sight of three large burly men assaulting one of the female waiters in the far corner of the room. One of the three men held her arms behind her back, while the other two started to tear at her blouse and skirt.

“Is there a problem here?!” Videl demanded, stepping forward. Her posture was a little unbalanced due to the alcohol in her system, and the Satan girl steadied herself against a nearby chair. Equally inebriated, Gohan came to stand beside her.

To their shock, one of the three large men turned towards them to reveal a calligraphic ‘M’ branded on his forehead. In their half-drunken state, neither teen was able to sense the man’s wicked ki.

“Shouldn’t you two be at home in bed?” the man holding the assailed waiter quipped.

“You look like you could use a drink,” Gohan slurred. Reaching behind him, the half-Saiyan grabbed a half-finished wine bottle, and pulling back, swung in a back-handed fashion, catching one of the men across the face and knocking him clear across the room.

“YOU SONOVABITCH!!!” Dropping the hapless waiter, the two remaining men flung themselves at Gohan and Videl. Needless to say, this did not end well.

Ducking inside her attackers outstretched arms, Videl reached down and grabbed the man’s balls, and with a shrug, catapulted the large man right into the ceiling. The man’s face went through a light fixture before he crashed through a table at the far end of the room.

Still brandishing the neck of the broken wine bottle, Gohan thrust the sharp end forward and stabbed his own opponent in the gut. The Majin cultist grabbed his abdomen in pain as blood poured onto the floor. Gohan however, wasn’t finished. Drawing back, the demi-Saiyan let loose with a backhand that put the cultists’ head through a picture frame.

“Oh my God!” sobbed the rescued waiter, “Thank you! Oh, thank you…!”

Being too drunk to say much of anything, Videl shoved a big tip into the distraught girl’s hands before giving her a quick pat on the shoulder.

Dropping the bloodied bottleneck, Gohan snaked an arm around his little spouse’s torso before turning back to collect Videl’s medication bag. As they were leaving, Videl grabbed an open bottle from a table they’d passed, and tilting her head back, took a big swig.

Upon reaching the cash register, the fighting duo slapped a wad of cash onto the counter. The waiter minding the counter looked at the two teens with wide-eyed disbelief.

“’hic’ When the police get here-,” Gohan was so wasted, he could hardly speak. “Tell em that dinner is on us.”
With that, the two adolescents turned to leave. On the way out, Videl stumbled into some hedges near the entrance and ralphed. Coughing and gagging, the black-haired girl held her knees for support as her dinner decided to make another appearance. Brushing her hair out of her eyes, Gohan patted her on the back in a soothing gesture.

“So…, what would you rate this ‘hic’ date?” the Son boy murmured.

“I’d give it a nine outta ten,” Videl slurred.

In spite of the alcohol, Gohan was visibly taken back. “Just a nine? I must be losing my touch…”

“Don’t worry ‘hic’,” she cooed playfully, wrapping her arms around his waist, “When we get home, I’ll make it an eleven.”

“I’ll make it a twelve,” he returned. He wrapped an arm around the girl’s upper back and pulled her in for a sloppy, drunken lip-lock.

With their first date in months officially over and the two of them too inebriated to enjoy much else, the couple made their trek home. Unbeknownst to the young pair, they were being watched.

“They sure made short work of our sacrificial lambs, those two, huh?” asked one of the pair. He was an ugly fellow, standing taller than the average man and showcasing yellow eyes and a grotesque nose that would be more befitting for a troll than a man. He was decked in predominantly red robes that were secured by a leather belt whose silver buckle bore the symbol of Majin.

“That is why I’ll leave them to you, Mage Brae-Og,” spoke the second. “Videl S. Son is entering the martial arts competition at the Satan City Stadium scheduled to take place in five days. Our men have rigged the selection process so that out of the sixteen or so high profile fighters competing, she will allotted slot one. You will be her first and last opponent. Kill her! I don’t care whether or not it looks like an accident! Use every black art we have trained you in at your disposal. Afterwards, we’ll destroy her spouse…this Son Gohan, this…Great Saiyaman. Their deaths will send a message to everyone that we’re the new management!”

“Yes,” the large man nodded. “With her death, we’ll be ridding ourselves of a very real nuisance. We’ll finally be able to make real inroads in taking over this city!”

“It was never in doubt…” the other man hissed. “His Holiness will someday reward me with a governorship over this economically vital district once the final overthrow of King Furry is set into motion.”

Sunday came and went uneventfully. After training with Goku and the others during daylight hours, Gohan and Videl enjoyed one last night of fun before returning to school the following day. Monday class hours passed quickly, and due to Penn’s blackmail, Gohan and Videl found themselves far out away from civilization.

‘Why am I even doing this…?’ Gohan asked himself ruefully as he stared at Majin Buu from across an arid grassland. The ten foot pink demon seemed to be in good enough spirits as it pumped its’ fists in preparation for the ensuing slobber-knocker. Videl floated through the air some distance above the two would-be opponents.

Off on a distant hillside, Penn, Sharpner, and Erasa laid a quilt out on the grass. Videl’s jetcopter lay parked a short distance away, a getaway vehicle for the three teens in the event things got too heated.

“Alright you two!” Videl hollered, “Here are the rules: No turning your opponent into candy, no
Super Saiyan transformations, no blowing up the planet, and most importantly, no killing your opponent! You can start when you’re ready!”

Making some distance between herself and the battlefield, Videl landed next to her friends where she sat Indian style on the quilt between Erasa and Penn. Erasa handed her a bag of popcorn and a soda. Sharpner was the first one to break the silence…

“Um… Videl, I have a question.”

“What is it, Sharp?”

“Well, you and Gohan said you had something like a honeymoon this last weekend. Does that mean you two were…”

“Yes, Sharper!” Videl snapped in annoyance, her face turning red with both embarrassment and anger. “I had Gohan knee deep in my treasure box all weekend! That’s kinda what spouses do!”

This blunt outburst from Videl had Penn and Erasa doing the mother of all spit-takes. Sharpner’s eyes grew as big as saucers and his jaw hung slack.

“VIDEL!!! COME ON! TOO MUCH INFORMATION!!” squealed Erasa.

“Err… look! I’m sorry guys, but Sharpner keeps bringing it up every time we hang out!” fumed the petite fighter. “This isn’t how I envisioned spending my last year of high school! How is me fucking my husband any different from how we fucked when we were just boyfriend and girlfriend?! Seriously! Enough already!”

“Well…excuse me!” Sharpner fired back, bringing his hands to his hips, “I just don’t think it’s fair that you and Gohan get to have as much sex as you want while the rest of us are stuck having to sneak around our parents! What kind of dirt could you possibly have on your father that would let you and Gohan get away with something like that?!”

“Believe me, Sharpner! The amount of dirty laundry my dad has in his closet would make your head spin!”

“You do know I’m the editor of our school paper, right?” asked Penn, raising an eyebrow. “As a fan of your dad, I’d love to hear about some of this dirty laundry you’re referring to.”

“Let’s just say that there’s a reason I added my husband’s name to me and my father’s accounts,” Videl said with a wink.

It was now Penn’s turn to go slack-jawed. “You mean Gohan has access to all of you and your father’s money?! OK, now I am curious!”

“Guys, look!”

Everyone looked to where Gohan and Majin Buu stood only to find that Buu had disappeared.

“Where is he?!” asked a now puzzled, anxious Penn as they looked around. Being the only one among them with the ability to sense ki, Videl stared intently at the battle that was taking place, or… at least she tried to.

‘Damned! Where is he?!” she wondered.

They didn’t have to wait long before Buu seemingly phased into existence right over Gohan. The
pink homunculus attempted to bring a massive hammer fist down on Gohan’s head, only for the boy to reach up and casually block the seemingly powerful attack with one arm! Still, the force of the strike was so great that a wide pressure crater formed out in every direction at Gohan’s feet.

Buu then led off with a blistering, sustained hand-to-hand assault. Gohan easily side-stepped wide haymakers and an uncalculatable number of hard straights without having to move from his original position. The pink creature threw in a head-butt in a lame attempt at catching the half-Saiyan off guard.

With so much of the rust Gohan had acquired from not training for seven years gone due to his training in recent months, seriously fighting Buu now was nothing short of child’s play. Smiling to himself, Gohan couldn’t help but think back to Videl’s words that one life-changing night they spent in the desert:

“You could’ve beaten Majin Buu! You could’ve saved all of us! You could’ve saved me! Passivism has never been a final solution to evil! It made you a pussy when you could have been a real man! You’re half human, but I have yet to see one thing from you that shows that you share in our people’s indomitable will! You seem to be intelligent, but everything you do keeps creating unintended consequences that we all have to live with! You could have been the hero I know you could be if you never let yourself go, the hero I fell in love with!”

Exchanging blows with the beast, Gohan had a hard time believing that this form of Buu was the one that nearly killed both him and Supreme Kai six months ago. Due to Elder Kai’s power raising, even without re-sharpening his fighting sense, he was able to bat Super Buu’s initial form around like a small child. He could only imagine how things would have changed if Buu had never attained the monstrous form that killed Videl and his mother…, how ridiculously easy things would have been had history turned out differently. If only he had trained hard enough to keep his fighting sense, he could have killed Dabura before Vegeta had been brought under Babidi’s sway! He could have kept his purpose in life!

Soon, old resentments began to resurface. The victory over Buu should have been his, not his fathers’! Not the man who only fought for thrills like some drug addict! Not the man who threw children into fights they had no business being in in the first place! Not the man who built people up from a young age just to rip the legs out from under them!

Gohan’s thoughts began to take a turn into darker territory. Looking into the face of Buu as he peppered him with compact shots, he couldn’t help but see the monster that killed his wife, his little brother, his mother, everyone he ever knew. He couldn’t help but see the thing that almost killed Supreme Kai, and most importantly, he couldn’t help but see the one creature whose murderous rampage rendered every act of heroism he’d ever performed from the time he was four years old absolutely arbitrary. His whole first life, all his work, undone by this infuriatingly child-like creature. Memories of old battles played across the young half-breed’s mind as he dodged, parried, side-stepped, misdirected, and blocked his rubbery opponent’s hits. Garlic Jr. Nappa, Freiza, Cell…

As was the case with Videl in the desert, Gohan lost control of his emotions. Drawing back with his right fist, he delivered a mind-stopping upper-cut to Buu’s gut that had his real power behind it. The force behind the strike was such that the teen’s arm went right through Buu’s torso reminiscent of his doing the same to Bojack.

There Mr. Buu stood, impaled on Gohan’s arm. Regenerative abilities or no, the pink demon from ancient space felt everything if for no other reason than for the sheer power behind it. The pink monstrosity gaped like an air-drowning fish at just how much percussive force Gohan could bring to the fore.
Off on the hillside, Videl and the others tried to watch the fight. Unfortunately, none of them were able to keep up with any of what was happening.

Videl however, could feel that something had changed in her common law husband’s ki. What was once a calm infinite lake was now a tumultuous, raging sea storm.

“There’s something I have to do,” she remarked. Standing up, she took off towards the fight.

“Videl! Where are you going?!” Erasa called out.

Videl looked with urgency towards her friends back on the ground. “Something’s not right with Gohan! I’m going out there!”

Back at the scene of the fight, Gohan had completely lost control. As was the case during his fights with Nappa, Freiza, Cell, and Garlic Jr., he was caught up in a berserker state. He plowed into Majin Buu with punches and kicks that would have knocked Cell to pieces at the height of his power. Finally, Gohan drew back and delivered the mother of all spinning heel kicks that sent Mr. Buu’s rotund body flying… straight towards the very hillside where his friends were watching the fight.

Colliding with the ground, Mr. Satan’s best friend bounced and rolled until coming to a taxiing stop at the edge of the quilt Erasa, Sharpner, and Penn were sitting on. Seeing the creature of their nightmares so close, Erasa and Sharpner bolted to their feet and hurriedly put some distance between themselves and Bibidi’s creation.

In a panic, Penn jumped into Videl’s jetcopter, but in his haste to get the hell out of Dallas, he forgot one minor detail: Erasa had the keys. The terrified ginger pressed his face against the glass as the enraged, cratered form of Mr. Buu came to a slow, staggered stand. The creature’s eyes glowed with a dim ember as his body regenerated yet again.

Videl looked upon the scene with a deep-seeded guilt, guilt that she had put her friends in danger by pressuring her spouse into consenting to this fight. Stupid, crass peer pressure led to this, and now she had to get Penn out of danger.

“All of you! Take my jetcopter and get out of here, now!” the petite fighter commanded.

“What about you?!” asked Erasa with worry.

“I’ll be fine!” she assured, “Now please, GO!”

Ignoring her long-time friends’ protests and without missing a beat, Videl powered up. Her body clad in a white, translucent battle aura, the girl blasted off towards the sight of Gohan and Mr. Buu’s confrontation.
Upon reaching the sight, what awaited her was a scene of carnage. Gohan was absolutely blood-drunk as he and an enraged Majin Buu lost themselves in a state of violence. The pink creature's eyes glowed red as it wailed and screamed in frustration like a petulant child at its’ inability to hit pay dirt with any of his strikes. The ground itself gave way as rocks and debris were wrenched into the air by the two combatant’s massive kis being brought to bear.

Videl was soon joined by a few other spectators. Goku blinked into existence, courtesy of his instant transmission bringing Piccolo with him.

“Videl! What’s going on here?!” demanded her father-in-law.

“I’m so sorry Goku!” she screamed. “We were just having a little fun and-”

“What did you do?!?” growled Piccolo.

“Our friends found out about Buu, and one of them blackmailed Gohan into fighting him!” explained the petite girl.

“Shit…! This is gonna get ugly!” the Namek hissed.

For miles around the very crust began to buckle and give way under the intense universe rending power of Gohan and Buu. Rapid fire ki blasts, most of them missing, were exchanged between the two as they moved at hypersonic speeds through the air. These blasts effectively reduced the surrounding region of grassy foothills into a parking lot. Clouds billowed in the air as tornados touched down around the two superpowers. Golden and azure lighting cascaded from the highest of heavens.

Far away in the Northern Wastelands, a group of nine black and red robed older men gathered in a great rotunda chamber. Each one wearing the symbol of Majin, regarded the atmospheric disturbances with interest as the skies darkened and lighting and fierce winds whipped through the desert.

“What could it mean?” asked one, bringing an aged bony hand to his chin in contemplation.

“There’s no way to know,” answered another. “We still have yet to master the creation of enchanted crystal balls. Of all the secrets we attained from the wreckage of Babidi’s ship, making one is proving to be most difficult!”

“We should be lucky there was anything to recover at all,” remarked a third, this one a middle-aged white man of average height. “The information provided by that Yamu fella has proved invaluable to our grand imperative. We’ve come remarkably far in a short amount of time, all things considered.”

“Yes, your Holiness,” a fourth agreed. “Still, Inquisitor Gerkin, something has been niggling at my mind as of late.”

“If you’re worried about Mr. Satan, don’t be,” spoke the middle-aged man. “We’re already gearing up to deal with him. Once his daughter has been killed, we’ll move on to snuffing him out! In the event that Acolyte Cumber’s little monster fails at the Satan City Tournament, I’ll be directly supervising an assault on Satan City with the express purpose of drawing her and Saiyaman into a confrontation with us. We won’t need to win, just fight them. Plan for the long game.”

“Of course, Holiest of Holies,” another said in agreement. “With your gifts, mankind will be led to the promised land!”

Back at the site of Gohan and Mr. Buu’s battle, the two combatants were still duking it out in the
sky. Pressing his advantage, Gohan continued to land massively powerful blows upon the pink
demon as he seemingly phased in and out of existence around his opponent. Buu had tried to turn the
tide by creating clones of himself, but those had proven to be a minor nuisance to his opponent.
Finally, with one heart-stopping axe-handle, the enthralled half-Saiyan sent the rotund bubblegum
alien tumbling to the Earth below.

Megatons of rock, ash, and other debris were jettisoned into the air as Majin Buu’s massive body
sundered the land that stretched for miles in two directions. A vast mushroom cloud billowed
through the stratosphere, knocking a hole straight to the ozone layer.

Gohan levitated high above the site of impact. Looking down at his handiwork, the violence-crazed
young man cackled sadistically. His eyes had turned teal and his ki had begun to manifest a strange
greenish battle aura that was out of the ordinary.

Both Videl and Piccolo however, knew what was going on. The former guardian of Earth’s eyes
widened in panic as his one-time pupil began to tap into the same power he had in the desert three
months prior.

“Ah, crap!” cursed the Namek. “It’s happening again!”

Quirking an eyebrow, Goku turned to him. “What?! What’s happening, Piccolo?”

“He’s changing!” Videl answered in an exasperated tone. “I’ve seen this before!”

“He’s becoming like Broly again!” Piccolo stated.

Goku’s eyes lit up with palpable fear. “WHAT!?”

Back on the ground, Mr. Buu quickly tore through the hundreds of feet of rubble Gohan’s attack had
buried him under. At last, the pink creature blasted to the surface with a flaring explosion of fuchsia-
tinted ki before coming to a stop just across from Gohan.

Buu’s body was contorted with deep impact craters and both of his arms had been torn clean off, all
of them injuries that were regenerating even then. His pudgy face bore a deep scowl as he glared at
the cackling half-Saiyan levitating across from him.

“Buu gonna make you hurt…” growled the rotund pink creature.

Suddenly, things went downhill. Gohan threw his head back and cried out to the heavens as power
surged through him. The electric maelstrom in the surrounding area intensified as rippling waves of
green energy poured out of him, each successive wave discoloring the surrounding environment. The
rocks and other debris that had been pulled into the air by his and Buu’s battle came tumbling to the
ground.

As this was taking place, Mr. Buu attempted to charge the berserker half-Saiyan only to find that he
couldn’t even approach him. Off to the side, Piccolo and Goku held Videl to prevent her from being
swept away by the massive rush of energy cascading off Gohan.

Her eyes stinging with tears, Videl watched with horror as the green aura around Gohan gained
intensity. Her ki sensing mind’s eye was overwhelmed by the sheer power coming off her enthralled
spouse.

With one final feral scream, a massive dome of bright green bioelectric power exploded outwards
from Gohan in every direction. All those present needed to shield their eyes before the magnitude of
the Son boy’s horrifying transformation. When the light receded, they all stood transfixed by Gohan’s shirtless, hulking Legendary Super Saiyan form. His body had grown by about two feet, and his golden spikey locks had increased considerably in length. His now colossal body was encased in a blazing greenish-yellow aura and his eyes were a plain, hollow, pupil less white.

Videl wiggled out of Piccolo’s iron grip and made a go for her husband.

“Videl, wait!” hollered Goku in warning.

“Gohan!” Videl screamed, flying towards him. The girl stopped just a few feet away from her now radically transformed spouse. He looked just like he had during their night together in the desert. As good as he’d been to her that night in this form, she was certain Gohan would at least acknowledge her.

The demiSaiyan teen turned his feral gaze towards his little mate and gave her a predatory smile that sent chills and thrills through the distressed Satan girl before turning back to his original target.

“You’re going to suffer and die…” he snarled in a malevolent voice that was completely out of character. Now visibly frightened, Mr. Buu shrunk back under the withering gaze of the transformed Son boy.

“Oh Oh…, Buu no like this…” quivered the alien demon.

Blasting forward, Gohan closed the distance between him and Buu and seized the pink, pudgy creature by its’ antennae before pulling back and delivering a Earth-shattering head butt that caved Buu’s rubbery face in. Still gripping Buu’s antennae, Gohan let into the alien demon with another round of pummeling. All that could be heard through the sounds of Gohan’s fist colliding with Buu’s body were Gohan’s echoing cackles of morbid delight.

Elsewhere, Erasa, Sharpner, and Penn tried desperately to navigate the maelstrom of radical winds and lightning as they made some distance between themselves and the battle between Gohan and Buu. Gripping the controls, Penn struggled to keep Videl’s jetcopter steady as a large tree branch throttled one of the landing studs. Erasa and Sharpner held onto whatever they could to keep from being jostled in their seats, seatbelts be damned!

“I still think we should head back!” Erasa asserted as she held the door handle tightly.

“Are you crazy?!” Sharpner snapped. “I don’t know if you’ve noticed this, but we’re a bit out of our leagues here!”

“They’d do it for us!” the bubbly-headed blond fired back.

Listening to the exchange between the two blonds, Penn weighed his options. What good was running if this really was the same Majin Buu that killed them all half a year before? He’d already run once, and his act of cowardice in leaving his younger sister to die alone amounted to nothing. What was the point of being afraid of death when one already knew his end? Besides, he wanted to know Gohan and Videl’s secrets! His resolve hardened, the bi-speckled ginger glanced over at his two friends.

“We’re heading back!” he barked, jerking the joy-stick roughly to the side.

His eyes widened in shock, Sharpner looked at his red-headed friend as if he’d lost all his marbles. “What the hell is wrong with people these days?!”

“We all died! That’s what!” was his short answer.
“CHARGE!!!” came Erasa’s shrill battle cry as the three friends made a beeline for the epicenter of the action.

Back at the battle site, Gohan was swatting Mr. Buu around like an insect. The magical demon’s ki was beginning to run out and Gohan had barely broken a sweat.

“We’ve got to save Buu!” said Goku resolutely. “Piccolo, grab Videl and get her out of here!”

“Right!” the Namek nodded. Without wasting a minute, the green warrior made a go for his former pupil’s spouse.

Bringing his hands to his sides, Goku tapped into the deepest recesses of his power. Bypassing both his Super Saiyan and Ascended Saiyan forms altogether, the Saiyan warrior of Earth went right into Super Saiyan 3. His galvanized locks grew down to his thighs as the golden glow intensified around the Saiyan warrior’s body. The electric maelstrom dancing through the sky became a raging tumult as his own ki’s massive pressure pushed almost feebly against that of his berserker son. He could only hope that this form would slow Gohan down.

Videl looked on helplessly as her father-in-law joined the fight on the side of Majin Buu. She then felt a strong arm wrap around her torso. She looked over her shoulder to see the large turbaned form of Piccolo standing behind her.

“Let go Piccolo!” she cried as the Namek began to tug her away from the battlefield.

“This is all your fault, you little fool!” the green warrior barked in a gruff tone.

“So let me do something about it!” she screamed as she struggled against the Namek’s hold.

“What could you possibly do in this situation?!” Piccolo scoffed.

Ignoring Piccolo’s dismissive tone for the moment, the petite fighter shot back, “I’m certain I can get Gohan to come to his senses! Just let me try!”

The Namek warrior took a quick glance back at the carnage taking place between Goku, Buu, and a berserker Gohan as he pondered his decision, before casting a calculating look at the girl in his clutches.

“Pfft, Fine! Do what you have to…” he said, releasing the girl. Without saying a word, Videl sped back to the epicenter of the chaos now gripping the region.

Son Goku brought up a turtle guard and weathered his eldest son’s punches to the best of his abilities. He’d charged the Legenady Super Saiyan teen under the assumption that his fighting sense was still lacking like it had been during his fight against Dabura and Super Buu six months prior. Much to his dismay, Gohan was a different beast. Goku took a powerful shot to the kidney that had the Saiyan doubled over. This led to cracks forming in his tight guard that his berserker son was quick to exploit.

On the ground below, Buu was barely hanging in there. His ki reserves were dangerously low, and the fatigued creature struggled to stay on his feet. It was a certainty that he wouldn’t survive another exchange with Son Gohan as he was.

Videl stopped just short of her spouse and battered father-in-law. In his current condition, Goku couldn’t even maintain his Super Saiyan 3 state. In his Legendary Super Saiyan form, Gohan, despite having fought both Goku and Mr. Buu, looked no worse for wear. The massive, hulking teen turned to face his petite mate.
“Videl, what are you doing here?!” yelled Goku. “Get outta here now!”

“I can help!” Videl called back, approaching her now giant, crazed husband. “Let me reach him…”

Videl floated up to Gohan until she was eye level with him. She was now face to face with him and could practically feel the excess power radiating off his skin. Without warning, she lunged forward and wrapped her arms around her spouse’s neck as she crushed her lips against his.

Just as Videl had hoped, her berserker spouse reached around with his now massively muscled arms and cupped her rear as he reciprocated the kiss. Her hands beginning to explore, Videl felt herself swoon against his broad, hulking chest. Memories of both Gohan in this form and of the wonderful night they’d spent together in the desert brought a hungry gleam to her eyes. If only he’d have transformed into the legend under different circumstances, preferably in their bedroom. She wanted to feel the hard, engorged muscles of Gohan’s Legendary Super Saiyan form under her touch… to have the pleasures only that kind of power could bring at her beck and call.

Goku couldn’t believe what he was seeing. He’d gotten creamed trying to stop his son’s new transformed state, but here was this short young woman doing with her feminine wiles what all his power had failed to.

“You’ve got to be shitting me…” Piccolo remarked as he watched events transpire. Soon enough, Gohan reverted back to his old self, his body returning to normal.

“Gohan…” moaned Videl, pulling him in for another kiss.

“Hun…” he breathed, tightening his hold around her waist.

The two lovey-dovey teens lowered themselves to the ground, being followed closely by Goku and Piccolo. Off to the side, the skulking, rotund form of Buu hobbled over to them. Seeing the condition Buu was in, Videl approached her former enemy.

“Sorry this happened Buu,” she apologized. “I’ll try to make it up to you. How does five gallons of ice cream sound?”

The pink former demon’s face lit up with child-like glee as he began to clap his hands with giddy anticipation. “Ooooh! Buu like! Buu like! With sprinkles too?”

“It’s all yours Buu!” she offered, patting him on the back, “You’ve earned it!”

Just then, the sound of a jet engine could be heard approaching. Staring up, Videl and the others were mildly surprised to see her friends had come back.

“It looks like Erasa, Penn, and Sharpner decided to brave the worst,” Gohan commented.

Penn brought her yellow, bug-like jetcopter to a soft landing before the three teens hopped onto the rubble-strewn ground.

“Sweet Jesus…!” Sharpner rasped, “The whole place has been demolished!”

Erasa couldn’t believe her eyes. “Gohan and Buu did this?”

Penn however, was less concerned with the state of the surrounding region than he was the cause of its’ destruction.

“Alright, Gohan! Start talking!” demanded the freckle-faced ginger. “I got a bone to pick with you!
First you change into the gold fighter at the tournament, then you, Videl, and Majin Buu showcase abilities like those guys at the Cell Games! I want answers!"

Gohan let out a heavy sigh. “You may not like what you hear. Do you really want to know?”

“As your friends, we deserve to know!” Penn asserted, bringing his hands to his hips.

“Then I’ll let Videl tell you.”

“Penn…” the Satan Girl began, “You might wanna sit down for this. This is gonna throw your entire world for a loop. I know you’re completely enamored with my dad and all, but not everything in life is as it seems.”

“Cut to the chase!” the ginger ordered. Videl grimaced at the tone of her long-time classmate’s voice.

“My father wasn’t the one who beat Cell,” she finally let out.

The reactions of all three teens were to be expected. Videl could sense through their ki that Penn was having the hardest time swallowing this new information. His face was completely blank, as if his mind didn’t want to process this information. Out of all her schoolmates, Penn was the single biggest Satan cultist that she knew.

“Y-you’re joshing us,” Penn said in an accusatory tone. “Come on, Videl! You’re not really serious are you?”

The redheaded teen looked into the eyes of the daughter of his greatest hero, hoping to find some sign that she was just playing with them. The look Videl was giving him betrayed no humor.

“No…” He shook his head in denial. “No, no, no, NO! NOOO!!!”

“Videl, come on,” Sharpner chided, “If your father didn’t do it than who did.”

Videl cast a sidelong glance to her spouse, one that told both Sharpner and Erasa all they needed to know.

Erasa’s eyebrows shot up to her hairline. “No way….! G-Gohan?”

“Yes,” she nodded in shame. “I only found out myself after my fight with Spopovich.”

“That would mean that your husband is…” Erasa began.

“…the real world savior.” Sharpner finished breathlessly. “That’s why he was able to fight Majin Buu!”

“Videl, tell me,” Erasa spoke numbly, her eyes searching those of her friends, “Did your father also lie about Majin Buu?”

“No and yes,” Gohan cut in. “Mr. Satan did help save the world against Majin Buu, but it was more of a collective effort.”

“All of the money I spent on Mr. Satan merchandise, all of that time I wasted…” Penn stammered. The teen glared angrily at his long-time ‘friend.’

“You!” growled the ginger, pointing an accusatory finger, not just at Videl but at Gohan as well. “How could you two do this to everyone?!”
“Penn…” Videl groaned.

“No, shut up!” he screamed, “I want answers! How could you let your father get away with this?!?”

“I didn’t!” the Satan girl sneered. “I can assure you that he didn’t get away with it unscathed.”

“Is that the dirty laundry you were talking about earlier?” Sharpner pressed.

“Yes,” she nodded guiltily.

“So you’re holding that over your father’s head as a form of blackmail so you and Gohan can share a bed?!”

“There’s more to it than that, but yes,” Videl answered.

Hearing this, Sharpner raised an eyebrow. “How much more?”

“You remember that new threat me and Videl told you about in the school cafeteria?” asked Gohan.

Erasa and Sharpner nodded.

“Well…, Gohan needs access to funds if he’s gonna recruit and train enough volunteers under our program to make a difference,” Videl explained. “So far however, we can’t seem to get enough people interested. I thought my endorsement would help Gohan and his father with the cause, but my credibility took a major hit when both Spopovich and Barbella humiliated me.”

“Don’t beat yourself up, hun,” said Gohan, taking her hand in his. “Every major endeavor has it’s ups and downs. Things will get better.”

“So instead of doing the right thing, you used the dirt you had on your father for purely selfish reasons?!” growled Penn with incredulity. “I guess the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree!”

Having enough of Penn’s accusations, the Satan girl bowed up at him. “I did it because Gohan loved me enough to help me face tomorrow!”

“Really?” he queried snidely. “Given what we know now, one has to wonder whether you really are in love with Gohan or whether you’re just throwing your body at him out of some sense of self-preservation! Wouldn’t wanna wind up on the streets if daddy’s lies ever came to light, would we?!”

Videl stared at the ground, her body trembling in anger. Finally, she ground out, “Don’t you dare judge me…!”

“Why not?!” Penn inquired fiercely. "How can any of us think anything except that you and Gohan have some kind of arrangement going on? It smells fishy no matter how you slice it..."

Stepping forward, Videl grabbed the redhead by the shirt before hoisted him off the ground. Bringing him forward, she glared dangerously into his eyes.

“Don’t you ever, ever accuse me of not loving my husband…!” she hissed. “I know I don’t deserve Gohan! I love him more than you could imagine, but I utterly failed to earn his trust before we got together! I blackmailed my way into that wonderful boy's life and I've hated myself for it ever since! If I could, I'd turn back time just so I could have another chance to make him feel like a king! He’s done so much for me in spite of my behavior. I can never give back to him enough! He’s done everything he could to help me find myself again in spite of all the mistakes I've made! I'll admit that I've been hypocritical, but let me tell you this, Penn: I’m gonna spend the rest of my life making it up
to him! I’ll make things right! I’ll give Gohan my love because he’s the only boy who’s truly loved me!”

Much to her surprise, the usually timid Penn stared back at her without a trace of fear. “And there it is... That same attitude that grates on everyone’s nerves! And you wonder why so many people at school were high-fiving themselves when you got beat by Spopovich…”

Wide-eyed, Videl dropped the teen unceremoniously and stepped back as he came to his feet.

“It doesn’t matter how defensive you get at something, Videl!” he asserted. “At the end of the day, we’ll say whatever the hell we want! You didn’t learn a damned thing from Spopovich except how to double down on the whole self-entitled shtick! You can dish out humble pie, but you sure as hell can’t take it! Unlike your father, you might be a real hero, but you aren’t beyond reproach! Its one thing to be spirited, but being a bitch is another! Just grow the fuck up already!”

“My whole life was a lie…!” Videl snarled, her eyes practically boring into her classmate’s. “Believe me! Unlike you, I didn’t just die! I had my whole world ripped away! Life kicked my ass more than Spopovich ever could! I’ve learned more than you could possibly imagine!”

“Perhaps…” Penn remarked. “It still remains to be seen. Maybe you should pull your head outta your ass and stop pretending that you were the only one who lost a part of herself.” With that, the ginger walked away, leaving the petite fighter to stew in her own anger.

Videl stood there seething with bottled rage. Her ki rolled off her in a battle aura that cracked the ground beneath her. Just then, she felt a big hand rest on her shoulder. It was her spouse’s.

“Don’t let him get to you, Sweetheart,” Gohan advised. “He’s just venting. Let it go!”

Her face now red with anger, Videl whipped around to face her mate. “But he’s right, Gohan! I spent years blowing everyone off over a lie! I derided you for being dismissive, but I was so wrapped up in raking you over the coals that I never saw this flaw in myself.”

“Just because you’re guilty of something, that doesn’t preclude you from leveling criticisms at others who rightfully deserve it,” he explained in a soothing voice, pulling her into an embrace. “Don’t dwell on trivial things. Being an introvert is my sttch. I just want you to be happy with yourself. The last thing I want is for you to stop being the girl I fell in love with just because some disillusioned fan of your dad’s takes his frustrations out on you.”

Videl smiled up at her common law spouse. “You’ve always been good for my self-esteem. Still, I really wish you wouldn’t carry my emotional baggage like that. The truth hurts, but I can take it.”

“I know…” he breathed solemnly. "Old habits die hard."

Tilting her chin up, the half-Saiyan bent in for another heated smooch. The two of them didn't have long before their tender moment was interrupted by Erasa and Sharpner.

"Gohan, I have a question," said Sharpner, stepping forward. "If you're really the one who beat Cell, what were you doing after the Cell Games? I mean... before you started attending our school?"

Giving his blonde friend a long-suffering smile, the half-Saiyan simply answered, "Living in denial."

With that, the lot of them returned to Satan City, some of them with more questions than answers.
One thing that always bothered me in later episodes of DragonBall Z was how the world, particularly the government, just seemed to forget that Goku and his friends exist. King Furry and his administration already knew about Goku from his exploits against King Piccolo and the whole world already knew about the existence of Earth Special Forces from when they fought Vegeta and Nappa, but by the Cell arc, everyone just seems to forget. Was this for plot convenience or something, or did Akira Toriyama not read his own material? Just a thought…

Another thing that sorta bugged me was how the everyman in DragonBall Z just seemed to so readily treat the threat of Cell with such a lack of concern just because Mark(Hercule) Satan claimed all of Cell’s abilities were due to planted explosives or special effects. Even if Cell was just a mad-bomber with explosives expertise, he still wiped out the entire world’s military. If anyone in our world managed to depopulate several cities, destroy an entire archipelago of islands, and annihilate the combined militaries of the world with explosives, that person would be considered a very dangerous, real world threat. By claiming that Cell did it all with planted explosives, Mr. Satan unknowingly admitted that Cell is anything but a trickster. Again, Akira’s shitty writing, but then I get that by this point in the series, Akira Toriyama was sick and tired of it.
Echoes of Yesteryear

Between training and school, the days following the fight between Gohan and Buu passed quickly, and soon enough, the night of the Satan City Tournament arrived. Built soon after the Cell Games, the Satan City Stadium was a large, roofless, superdome-styled complex designed to fit a maximum capacity crowd upwards of one hundred thousand. It was a major tourist attraction that in recent years played host to some of the greatest martial arts competitions just short of the World Tournament on Papaya Island, courtesy of Mr. Satan’s popularity. It was a shining testament to just how important Mr. Satan’s business empire had become to the economy of the West Metro area.

Videl arrived with Gohan and his family a couple hours early to complete her registration. Much to her and Gohan’s surprise, Goku decided against entering himself for favor of letting her have a largely unencumbered shot at rebuilding her public reputation which was left in tatters following her defeat at the hands of Barbella.

Now, here she sat with Miss Pizza in the women’s locker room doing some last minute prep before heading out on the floor. She slipped on a sports bra before dawnning a spandex two-piece consisting of orange shorts and a grey sleeveless top proudly showcasing the kanji of Master Roshi’s Kame School. Tying her hair into its’ iconic pigtails, she unconsciously ran a hand through her coal black tresses.

Taking a moment to check herself in the mirror, the raven-haired teen reflected on all the training she’d done with Gohan, her father, Master Roshi, and Krillin to reach this point. She’d fought dinosaurs, took beatings, moved mountains and dug canyons with her bare hands, and pushed herself past her body’s human limits to attain a power that would have easily made her the strongest thing on Earth had this been twenty years earlier. She had much to be proud of. This was it! This was the night in which she would come into her own. This was the night in which she, Son Videl, would become the person she always saw herself becoming.

Stretching out her ki senses, she felt both her husband and Police Chief Wilkerson waiting outside the locker room. Much to her surprise, aside from her spouse and his father, she felt many powerful kis out there, one of them being around her level. It was a nasty-feeling ki. She was sure Gohan and Goku felt it too.

Looking around, the Satan girl couldn’t help but wonder where Barbella was. As presumably the only other female fighter in this competition besides herself, Videl was surprised to find that the object of her focus, her hatred, didn’t go out of her way to get into a skirmish in the locker room. She figured the redhead from Hell deemed her too insignificant to bother with. Oh… how she couldn’t wait to wipe that crazed, smug look off that bitch’s face!

‘I’ll make her pay for what she did to me…’

The seething Satan girl clinched her fists so tightly her knuckles turned white. Her thoughts were soon interrupted by the voice of Miss Pizza.

“It’s time, Videl,” the ginger informed her.

With a slow nod, Videl followed her family’s long-time agent into the hallways leading to the arena. As she left the room, Gohan, who’d been sitting in wait on a nearby bench, stepped in alongside her. Chief Wilkerson, who was in full uniform, was finishing off another box of doughnuts.

“Are you feeling OK?” asked the demiSaiyan.
“Just having a case of pre-fight jitters, I guess,” she answered truthfully. “It’s hard to believe this is it.”

“It’s to be expected,” he commented. “Though normally I wouldn’t support the idea of you entering a competition for revenge, Barbella needs to be taken down a peg. Just remember one thing…”

“What?” the girl asked.

“Don’t lose sight of what’s important,” the half-Saiyan advised. “When you look into the abyss, be weary of becoming it. As Roshi would say: You’re not here to win, only to learn. Use this opportunity to hone your in-battle applications.”

“Is that all you want to say to me?” the raven-haired teen asked coyly, bringing her hands to her hips.

“Videl, you’ve come so far in such a short amount of time,” Gohan praised placing a firm hand on her shoulder. “No matter what happens out there, I want you to know that I’m proud of you.”

Reaching up and giving his hand a gentle squeeze, the petite fighter flashed her spouse a warm, loving smile.

“As am I,” added Chief Wilkerson, stepping forward. “You are a daughter of this city, and our greatest local champion. Regardless your father’s moral failings, remember that your family has shaped the history of our city for generations. You’re our true hometown heroine!”

“That’s right!” said Gohan enthusiastically. “You’re an ethical, courageous person at heart! Let go of any doubts! Crush them! They’ll only hurt your resolve, and you’re going to need a clear head in the coming fights. Be the strong, independent, fierce girl we all know and love!”

Grinning sheepishly, the Satan girl’s cheeks flushed red with modesty. “Thank you, sir.”

“Um… Chief,” Gohan said, addressing the man, “Why are you in uniform anyway?”

“Due to the high capacity of the crowd and the nefarious backgrounds of many of the contestants, the Satan City Police Dept. has dispatched a security detail to monitor the event,” the Chief informed the pair. “I take it only Videl will be competing?”

“That’s right,” Gohan confirmed. “I’m sitting this one out. This tournament is my wife’s moment to shine! Getting to fight Barbella means too much to her. I don’t doubt her abilities, but if we got matched up too early, I’d just get in the way.”

Videl tossed an arrogant smirk her spouse’s way. “Maybe, but someday I will catch up to you sweetheart!”

“With the way your strength has grown in such a short time, I wouldn’t rule it out,” he said in praise.

“I’m still having a hard time believing that our city’s two greatest crime fighters have a legally recognized relationship,” commented the Chief with a shake of his head. “Pretty soon, there’ll be little Videls and little Golden Warriors running around.”

At this remark, the now blushing teens smiled lovingly at one another.

“Oh, believe me, Chief!” said Videl, “As soon as we graduate high school, we might just surprise
you.”

Gohan’s blush of embarrassment only deepened as he tried to look anywhere but at his wife. Seeing this, Videl brought her hands to her hips and gave a good ole’ hearty Satan laugh.

Together, the four of them made their way to the room where Martial Arts Society officials would determine which participants would be allowed to compete and in what order they’d be competing. As Gohan walked, his now regrown monkey-like tail swayed behind him.

Sometime during his fight with Buu, the boy had regrown the mark of his Saiyan heritage. Needless to say, the sight of the alien appendage had every other teen in school poking, prodding, and making crass jokes about him and Videl.

Beside him, Chief Wilkerson eyed the furry, prehensile appendage with some measure of curiosity. His curiosity finally getting the better of him, the old officer reached over and grabbed it.

Gohan felt a paralyzing pain shoot through him, and the next thing he knew, he was falling face-first to the floor. The SCPD Chief was so surprised he immediately released the boy’s tail. Videl was horrified.

“Gohan!” the girl screamed with concern. “W-What happened?!”

“G-Grabbed my tail…” whimpered the Son boy.

“I didn’t mean it!” the Chief defended, holding his hands out in front. “I meant no harm! I just wanted to know if it was real!”

Ignoring the older man, Videl bent down to help her common law husband to his feet.

“Noe to self…” Gohan muttered under his breath, “Train my tail.”

“Freaky…” remarked Pizza.

Upon reaching the qualifiers room, Gohan and Videl were greeted by the somewhat off-putting proximity of many stronger than average kis ranging in intensity from Piroski on one end of the spectrum to a few that felt exceptionally strong.

Off in a far removed corner of the room, a tall, pale man in red and black robes eyed the two teen fighters as a wolf eyes a flock of sheep. Crimson tendrils of energy coursed over his body and faint runes hummed with a dim azure glow. Around his waist, he wore a belt bearing the symbol of Majin.

In the center of the room stood a tall, blond man in thick armor. Around his forearms and ankles, he wore ridiculously oversized iron shackles. A short distance from him sat a large, thick-muscled, winged reptilian monster. The creature had dark blue skin with a creamy underbelly and sported a short, stubby horn on its’ muzzle. It contented itself with chowing down on a leg of lamb.

“Well, well, well! If it isn’t the little Satan slut?!?”

The hair on Videl’s neck stood on end, and a surge of intense rage ran through her at the voice of her most hated enemy.

Turning around, Gohan and Videl were met with the unwelcome sight of Barbella sauntering up to them. The muscled ginger had her hands on her hips as she carried herself with an air of conceit. Barefooted, she was dressed in green and yellow spandex shorts with a matching sleeveless spandex top. The right side of her deep bosom showcased a black and red kanji patch for the word ‘Crane.’
Gohan scrutinized the former street thug. Looking deep into her ki presence, the truth became painfully clear: Barbella had used the last few months well. No longer was her ki untrained. Now, the redhead’s fighting energy was a focused weapon whose strength was just as great as Videl’s.

At either side of her was a strange man, one of which Gohan vaguely recognized.

“Mercenary Toa…?!”

The once cybernetic assassin had regained his full flesh and blood body, likely resulting from the rules of resurrection through the dragon balls for those who no longer had a body.

The man in question quirked an eyebrow in confusion at the Son boy. “Do I know you?” Just then, the pony-tailed man caught the sight of Gohan’s furry tail twitching behind him. Flashbacks of his maiming at the hands of another monkey-tailed boy played across his mind, but he remained outwardly calm.

His face twisting into a scowl, Gohan stepped forward til he was face-to-face with the tall man. “Does the name Son Gohan ring a bell?”

It was the other man’s turn to speak. “Son Gohan? Would you be any relation to a Son Goku?”

Gohan regarded the noticeably shorter second man. He was very old, ancient even, with sunken, almost skeletal facial features. He had a thin, wavy mustache and wore a pair of sunglasses reminiscent of those worn by Master Roshi. The elderly man sported a cap that looked something like a water fowl and his grey-cobalt hair was styled to resemble wings sprouting from the back of his head. For cloths, the odd old man dawned a green and yellow tunic also showcasing the ‘Tsuru’ or Crane kanji.

What really caught the DemiSaiyan’s attention was the strange elderly man’s ki. It was strong, far stronger than a normal human’s. If he had to rank it, he’d put it just below Master Roshi’s. Unlike Roshi however, this elderly man’s ki was filled with bitterness and anger.

“As a matter a fact, yes!” answered the half-breed. “I’m his son!”

“WHAT?!” Panicked, the man stumbled back in fear.

“Master Shin, what’s wrong?” Barbella asked.

The Crane Hermit’s eyes flitted over to Videl. It was then that he saw it, the black and white Kame School kanji on her left breast.

“YOU!” the old man yelled, pointing an accusing finger at the teens, “You were trained by that gutter-minded, no account, Roshi!”

“Err… hey! Don’t you dare insult my master!” barked the Satan girl. “That’s my job!”

“Teach! What’s this all about?!” Barbella demanded.

“Well, my student, it seems some gutter trash wormed its’ way off the streets!”

Barbella gave the old man a shit-eating grin. “The janitor must be on strike.”

“Gutter trash?!” Videl shot back hotly. “Look asshole! I don’t even know you, so why don’t you just step the fuck off?!”

“Whatever…” remarked the Crane Hermit snobbishly. “A little bitch like you isn’t worth my time!”
With that, the ancient rival of Master Roshi turned to walk away. Barbella however, kept stirring the pot.

“I’m surprised you even slithered back, all things considered,” the muscled woman remarked snidely. “One would think you’d have enough common sense to know when you’re in over your head!”

“If I let someone like you run me out of the industry, I’d have to hang myself!” Videl seethed.

Taking a quick glance at Gohan, Barbie decided to aim below the belt. Bending down so she was eye level with Videl, the tall, muscled ginger continued to taunt her old nemesis.

“I bet you love that big, floppy, half-alien, monkey prick, don’t ya?!” she prodded mockingly. “You really will sleep with anything! I bet that poor boy stays up late at night dreamin about having a real woman!”

“Oh, spare me!” Videl scoffed, rolling her eyes. “My Gohan’s not into girls with herpes!”

“Just for that, I’m gonna make what I did last time look like kiddie shit!” she snarled through clenched teeth.

“This time, you’ll find that I’m a completely different person,” Videl bragged.

Barbie snorted. “Yeah, you got a boob job! Big woof!”

“I’m not gonna waste any more words on some back-alley, glory hole servicing, screw-bag!” Videl remarked arrogantly with a toss of her right pigtail.

“That’s funny coming from some pill-popper with a Napoleon Complex!” Barbie shot back. “Do your inadequacy issues come into play when Hubby bones you?”

Right there, Videl lost it! Having enough of the former street thug’s trash talk, she tried to make a go for her. Just as she was about to kick off, she felt Gohan’s strong arms wrap her in a full nelson.

“Calm down, Videl!” her spouse yelled. “Don’t let her drag you down to her level!”

Struggling against her mate’s iron grip, the berserker girl began to scream and wail furiously. “LET ME GO, GOHAN! LET ME GO! I’LL FUCKIN KILL HER!! I SWEAR TO GOD I’LL RIP HER FACE OFF!!!!

“Twinkle, twinkle little whore…, Close your legs they’re not a door!” the red-haired woman sang coyly, leaving a completely ballistic Videl struggling in Gohan’s hold.

“Videl, stop!” Gohan ordered. “Save it for the ring!”

Finally relenting, Videl clinched her fists as a white and blue battle aura burst forth around her.

“Mark my words, Gohan! I’m gonna take that bitch to a wood-chipper!”

“Son Gohan…”

Both Gohan and Videl turned to see Mercenary Toa slowly closing the distance between them. When the assassin was within arm’s length of the two teens, he dropped to his knees and began to weep. Videl eyed the pony-tailed man uneasily. Gohan on the other hand, looked puzzled at the hitman’s uncharacteristic behavior.

“It was you, wasn’t it?” asked the distraught killer.
“What do you mean?”

“You brought me back to life…” shuddered the man. “After all I’ve done, you still made room in your hearts to give me another chance at life…”

“It wasn’t intended,” was Gohan’s blunt response.

“Please listen, Son!” pleaded Toa, grabbing the hem of the teen’s black gi. “I have done horrible, unspeakable things in my life! I’ve killed the blameless for money and for sport! I’ve laughed at the suffering of others! I’ve stolen, cheated, connived, and extorted from the innocent from the time I was an adolescent! I don’t deserve this second chance…”

“Are you asking me for forgiveness?” queried the Son boy.

“Yes, but not so much you as I am your woman’s,” answered the now former assassin uneasily.

Videl quirked an eyebrow at this. “Me?!”

“I cast the dye that discolored your family’s honor,” he stated.

“I don’t get what you’re saying,” said Videl as she looked into the kneeling man’s face.

“Some time before the Cell Games, I murdered your father’s master and gravely injured your father in a bar fight,” Toa admitted with great sadness. “I was a different man then. I treated life as if it were some disposable commodity. Please…please! I beg for your forgiveness!”

“Why are you doing this?” asked Gohan, clearly puzzled. “You’ve never cared about the pain you’ve caused others before, so why start now?!?”

The former killer took a deep breath before answering, “Death showed me the ultimate price for my violent, cruel ways. I don’t want to go back to that horrible place…”

“So you’re only asking for forgiveness because you don’t want to go back to Hell…?” It was more of a statement than a question.

“No…” he answered tearfully. “I’ve come to realize that the more pain I cause others, the more pain I’ll receive in turn. That path led me to becoming a cripple, to becoming more machine than man! What my brother, the Crane Hermit, does with his life is his own business, but I’m going legit from here on in!”

Gohan let out a deep-suffering sigh. “If you really want repentance for all your crimes, we might be able to help you.”

“Please! I’ll do anything!” begged the Crane assassin.

“You, like Master Roshi, have decades of experience in the martial arts. You are one of the paltry few alive today who has long surpassed human limits. That kind of experience can do a lot of good for mankind if given a proper channel. How would you like a job?”

“A job?! What would it entail?” asked Toa, now curious.

“Before I tell you, I want you to know that you will be working alongside my father as a coworker,” explained the Son boy. “Are you still interested?”

“Yes!” was Toa’s quick answer.
“If it’s OK with Videl, the job is yours,” Gohan told him.

The former world’s greatest assassin looked hopefully towards Videl, who seemed to be pondering it. Finally, the Satan girl met the man’s gaze.

“What exactly can you bring to the table?”

“Forbidden techniques,” he answered. “I’m a former World Champion and I was the sensei of former Champion Tien Shinhan. Unlike the Turtle style which has no set stance or fighting system, the Crane style has both. Of course, the style is geared towards direct attrition, ki control, and many of its’ forbidden techniques come with a costly backlash.”

This got a raised eyebrow out of Gohan. “You taught Tien?!!”

“Yes,” Toa answered. “Though my method of teaching was cruel, I pummeled the principles of the ancient martial arts into the former Champion. Baptism by fire is the ultimate tempering for a living weapon.”

“How many students do you think you could handle at a time?” Videl asked.

“I’ve never trained more than two pupils at once,” the man said truthfully. “A teacher has to be just as committed to the training as his students. I would train more than two if the need arises though.”

“Videl! You couldn’t possibly consider hiring this man!” the Chief commented indignantly. “He’s a wanted man—”

“He’s a wanted man who wants to change,” Gohan interrupted. “I gave Piccolo a chance and he’s been a better father to me than my actual dad. I know times are tough and it’s hard to have faith in people anymore, but I still don’t like the idea of not offering this man the same courtesy. He has a lot to offer our cause.”

“Against my better judgement, I’ll do it,” Videl offered. “I didn’t trust Gohan at first, and my blackmailing him is something I’ll never forgive myself for. If I could take it all back and earn his trust the right way, I’d do it! In the name of trust for trust’s sake, we’ll hire him.”

“Thank you!” rasped the man in gratitude. “I promise that I’ll live up to your expectations!”

“We’ll see…” Gohan remarked.

“ALRIGHT EVERYONE! LISTEN UP!”

The whole room turned their attention to a diminutive, portly man dressed in a referee uniform who’d just walked into the room. He had a half-finished burger in one hand and a Styrofoam cup in the other. He looked as if he’d run a mile to get there.

The short, squat man made his way to a podium situated in the center of the room. Taking a moment to survey the gathered crowd, the official cleared his throat before addressing the gathered contestants.

“Hello! Hello! Is this thing working? Good… Let me start by addressing the elephant in the room. I’m sure you’re all wondering about the low entry turnout. Due to events in the past seven months, the Martial Arts Society has seen many of its’ long-time alumni retire from the industry altogether. Those of you who have stayed on the straight and narrow path are a testament to the dedication of spirit this business asks of its’ adherents.”
“In this year’s Satan City Tournament, there are only eight spots open. Because we have 25 entries, contestants will be decided by way of punching machine. Personally, I prefer the old-fashioned qualifying round method, but my boss is an asshole and I’m retiring tomorrow anyway so the hell with it. Majin Buu happened, yadda, yadda, yadda… Due to last year’s champion being absent, the runner up will be providing the litmus test score to beat. I’m sure every one of you has been issued a number. Will Mr. Pirowski, a.k.a #1, from the Satan Dojo please come forward?”

Mr. Satan’s longtime former disciple stepped up to the machine. He’d only been training under the Turtle School program for a week so whatever gains he’d have attained under Goku’s tutelage would be negligible. Still, he’d made a commitment to participate, and by God, he was gonna do it!

With a loud bellow, the muscled behemoth drew back and put everything he had into a seemingly powerful hard right. The blow connected with a low boom that set the machine to work.

“143!” came the official cry.

There were some audible gasps from the crowd. Even Mr. Satan had only attained a score of 137 at the last World Tournament, though his score was dwarfed by that of many of the other finalists.

“Will contestant #2 please come forward?!”

Caroni was the next to step up to the plate.

“I’ll give you all something to gawk at!” Pulling back, the bland-haired show fighter delivered a punch that earned him a decent 145.”

“145! Very beautiful! Next!”

The strange blond man in armor came forward. He was tall, and the suit of plate armor he wore was very broad. His feet trumped loudly with every step. Raising the back of his right hand, he jerked his fist forward in a one-inch punch that earned him a respectable 165. This had the tournament officials scratching their heads.

“Uh… could you do that again sir?”

Again, the man did as he was told and tapped the pressure pad with a short punch. This time, the machine recorded a higher number of 170.

“OK….170!” announced the official uneasily. “Would the next contestant please come forward?”

Next up was Toa Pai-Pai, brother of the Crane Hermit. The tall, pony-haired, supposedly former assassin was decked out in a provincial styled green tunic bearing the Crane Kanji. Lifting a finger, the man quickly jabbed the offending digit into the machine, earning him a 210.”

“2-2-210!!” stammered the official.

At the official’s flabbergasted expression, Toa quirked an eyebrow. “Why is that surprising? I’m a former World Champion.”

“Uh…no sir!” the official said defensively, holding his hands in front of him. “It’s fine! It’s fine!”

The man who stepped up after Toa was a somewhat older, dark-skinned man. He was tall and bore a red chakra mark in the middle of his forehead. His hair was tinted with greying along the edges and his body seemed powerfully built, albeit a bit top-heavy.
The man turned to the pressure plate and let into it with a powerful palm strike.

“170!!”

Off to the side, Gohan and Videl were watching the proceedings with great interest.

“Wow Videl! It looks like you’ve got some pretty steep competition,” Gohan remarked.

“I’m not too worried,” she replied. “Their ki signatures are higher than average, but aside from Barbella, I don’t think I have much to worry about.”

“Careful now,” Gohan chided. “You’re starting to sound like my dad.”

“Ugh… sorry,” she groaned, pinching the bridge of her nose, “It’s just that this ki sensing stuff makes it too easy to be dismissive. I’m starting to see why you and your friends were always this way. It’s like being a kid who got to peek at her Christmas presents.”

“Just remember what Master Roshi said,” Gohan lectured. “Use this tournament to learn. Getting even with Barbella is all good fun, but don’t let it distract you too much from the more practical training standpoint this competition offers you.”

Videl gave a simple nod at her spouse’s words. “I’m sorry. It’s just that I can’t get what she did to me out of my head.”

“I know,” Gohan replied, putting a hand on her shoulder. “I was there too. I remember every gruesome detail. Looking back, I wish I would have intervened.”

“Don’t beat yourself up, Sweetheart,” Videl said. “I was the one who chose to fight to the bitter end. It was my decision. It looks like I’m up…”

The teen fighter stepped up to the machine. Off to the side, Barbella was making cat-calls and lewd hand gestures in a bid to get under her skin.

“Hey little Miss Satan!” the muscled woman hollered out, “Is it true that your fraud father only kept you from dating because he was tappin’ that ass himself?!”

Aside Barbella, the Crane Hermit snickered at her outbursts. Ignoring the astonished looks coming from the other participants, the old man was clearly enjoying Videl’s misery.

Videl’s face flushed red with anger. The veins on her forehead were practically throbbing. Her father was many things, but a pedophile was not one of them. After all the buffoonish, greedy, opportunistic things he’d done, she still loved the old goof. Looking over her shoulder, she cast a murderous glare towards the redheaded Amazon.

“Umm… Miss?”

“WHAT?!” screamed the petite fighter hotly as she whipped around. The tournament official cowered under the enraged girl’s glare.

“It’s your turn…” whimpered the poor man.

Bringing a hand to her mouth, Videl’s face went red with embarrassment. “Oh, I-I’m so sorry!”

Gohan glowered at the female who continued to childishly taunt his wife. There really was no need for this kind of hazing during the qualifiers.
“Now you hit that pad real good little girl!” Barbella teased. “Hit it like you hit your father’s-“

That was all Videl could take. With a loud, shrill scream, the raven haired girl hauled off and threw everything she had into the punching machine. Her left fist connected with a loud, resounding ‘FOOM!’ Braces buckled, nuts and screws popped out of place, and mounts came apart at the seams as the petite fighter’s punch followed through. Nothing could stop the massive machine as it was sent hurtling across the room where it embedded itself in the far wall.

As the dust settled, the results of Videl losing her temper were made plain. The light fixtures in the room flickered amidst the rubble. The punching machine, though largely intact, was not in serviceable condition. The counter spasmed wildly as sparks flew out of the ruined machine.

The entire room gaped in awe at the damage Videl had wrought with one simple hard left. The girl herself breathed heavily as she did an about face and glared wild-eyed at Barbella.

For whatever reason, Videl’s red-headed nemesis looked almost amused. Her nonchalant attitude did not go amiss.

‘Why is she so calm?’ the half-Saiyan wondered as he appraised the Crane student. ‘Her fighting ki is around Videl’s level, but she’s acting a little too composed for my liking. What is her secret?’

“W-Wow…” stuttered the tournament official. The man’s eyes were as wide as saucers.

Next to Barbella and his borther, the Crane Hermit stood transfixed, his jaw practically touching the floor.

Off on the far side of the room, the same tall man dressed in red and black robes stared wide-eyed at what had just transpired. He clinched his fists in frustration as crimson energy sparks rolled across his pale form.

‘Acolyte Cumber wants me to kill her?!’ Sweat dripped down the now nervous Majin cultist’s brow. ‘I’ll have to use every weapon at my disposal…’

“Well, at least I got my turn,” Barbella smirked.

“Barbella!” rasped an exasperated Master Shin. “Can you really take someone like her?!”

The muscled ginger smiled down at the old Crane master. “I don’t see any reason to be worried, Teach. I’ve fought her before and won. She’s prone to mind games. Once a lot of hype, always a lot of hype. The bitch is tailor made for me. She lost this battle before she was ever born.”

On the far end of the room, the tournament officials looked over the wrecked punching machine.

“We’re gonna have to get the other machine,” said the squat official from before.

Gohan meanwhile, cautiously eyed the paled-skinned man in red and black robes. The Majin symbol on the strange man’s belt stuck out like a sore thumb, and he couldn’t help but wonder why the followers of the cult would have someone like him enter the tournament. The man’s ki was absolutely wicked! That the man was using some kind of ki-augmentation was obvious, but how could someone outside his old group of friends have acquired that kind of knowledge?

‘He might be weak, but he’s as cold and empty as they come…’ the Saiyan thought ruefully.

It took another thirty minutes before the other machine was set up for use. After the top eight qualifying contestants were chosen, the order in which they would fight was decided.
“Each of you will draw a ball from this box,” explained the head official. “That ball will have a number on it that will determine your placement in the quarterfinals.”

“First up is 20th World Tournament Champion, King Choppa!”

The old former champ stepped up to the box. Reaching in, he fished out a lime green ball with a #7 in black ink sloppily written on it.

“King Choppa is #7!” announced one of the men. Stepping away, the tall, dark-skinned fighter smirked to himself.

“Would Barbella please come forward?”

Sporting her cocky, Cheshire cat grin, the muscled young woman drew #5.

“Next up, we have Videl Son, daughter of the current World Champion Mark Satan!”

Coming forward, Videl shot a venom-filled glare towards her despised rival as she walked past her. Barbella puckered her lips and made a few lewd prison gestures at the short teen.

Mumbling something under her breath, the angry Satan girl withdrew #1.

“Huh?! First fight right off the bat…” she said to herself.

“Videl is #1!” stated the official.

Closing her eyes, the raven-haired girl smiled to herself. “Damned right I am!”

“Will Brea-og please come here?”

The pale-skinned man in red and black robes stepped forward. As Videl went to rejoin Gohan, the Majin cultist regarded her with hate-filled yellow eyes.

Turning to the box, the sallow complexioned man reached into the box. His hand in the box, he concentrated with his inner will and transmuted one of the balls with an otherworldly power. Withdrawing the ball, the man held it up for the officials to see.

“Brea-og is #2!”

Thinking his little ruse had gone unnoticed, the robed cultist stepped away from the box. Gohan however had felt everything.

“I don’t know what he did, but he rigged the drawing with his energy,” the Saiyan commented.

“You mean he wants to fight me?” Videl queried, raising an eyebrow.

“It’s the only explanation,” Gohan answered. “And if this feeling from his ki is anything to go by, he’s as bad as they come! The other cultists we saw in front of the courthouse last week had kis that were tainted with a negative spirit, but this man is just malevolent…”

“Great…” muttered the petite fighter, “Fighting against two Majins two tournaments in a row…”

“Former Champion, Toa Pai-Pai!”

The once world-feared assassin came forward. Reaching into the box with a certain air of dignity, the tall man plucked out #4.
“Toa Pai-Pai is #4!”

“Would Unbridled Fury please come forward?”

The man in thick, heavy armor approached the box with a grace belying the weight behind his heavy footfalls. Reaching into the box, he pulled #8.

“Unbridled Fury is #8!”

Just as the man turned away from the box, he was stopped by the head official.

“You will take that stuff off before the fight, won’t you?” asked the tournament overseer.

“Of course,” remarked the man in a gruff tone.

“Will Giran the Destroyer please step up?”

The reptilian beast who had to this point been feeding on raw meat-cuts, lumbered forward on its’ haunches. He could barely fit his large, taloned hands into the cut-out hole. After a bit of doing, he managed to hook out #3.

“Giran is #3!”

Upon hearing the creatures’ name, Gohan quirked an eyebrow in puzzlement. “Huh?! I remember my dad telling me about a monster named Giran. I wonder if this is the same beast…?”

“What was that, Gohan?”

The half-breed turned to his new spouse. “I think I know that creature. I’ve heard stories about him from my father’s friends.”

“I guess that leaves Caroni with #6.”

Upon hearing this, the hair on Caroni's neck stood on end. Looking behind him, Mr. Satan's former top disciple visibly paled at the sight of Barbella blowing him a kiss.

“Caroni is #6!”

His head hung low, a visibly frightened Caroni staggered to Gohan and Videl on shaky knees.

“Guys,” he began, addressing the two teens, “I think I’m thoroughly screwed here…”

“Considering what she did to me, my advice to you would be to forfeit,” Videl advised. “It might save your career.”

“She’s right Caroni,” said Gohan. “If you drop out, you’ll at least be able to start fresh tomorrow without injury. Think of it as a strategic withdrawal.”

“My career will be ruined if I don’t find an easy out!” the show fighter stammered. “I’ve got to save face!”

“And there you have it folks! The annual Satan City Tournament roster! The rules are simple! Matches will have a time limit of 30 minutes. You will lose if you fall out of the ring, are knocked unconscious, stay down for more than ten seconds, or give up! Killing your opponent will result in disqualification! Refreshments are in the fighter’s lounge if you get hungry! We have a full medical staff on hand in the event of any mishaps, so don’t worry too much! Just go out there and give the
people their money’s worth!”
"Ladies and Gentlemen! Welcome to the 8th Annual Satan City Martial Arts Tournament! This year's competition will prove itself to be a special though somewhat outside the norm spectacle, for we have two former world champions returning to the ring!"

The long-time ZTV pundit and one time Cell Games announcer paused for added effect. He was not disappointed. The crowds soon erupted into a boisterous applause that shook the Satan City Stadium down to its' very foundation.

"Along with returning fan favorites, this tournament will also play host to a few dark horse fighters in addition to an older returning Martial Arts Society alumni! For those hardcore traditionalists among you, keep your seats warm because this event will offer something for everyone!"

The bi-speckled man took a moment to look out over the crowd in attendance. Though the vast majority of the folks seated were there to enjoy the show, the overall character of the audience was a far cry from that of earlier tournaments. It may have been a maximum capacity crowd, but even here, the residual effects of Majin Buu's worldwide massacre could be seen among the resurrected spectators. Tomfoolery and debauchery of all kinds were prevalent. Even older adults were carrying on as if they were at some frat party.

Scattered among the frothing masses, Majin cultists egged on the people's downward spiral into decadence. Some were even working the crowd, acting as street preachers out of some morbid excerpt from *The Grapes of Wrath*. There were even a few former soldiers from the long-disbanded Red Ribbon Army dressed in their old uniforms standing among the rabble as they openly derided King Furry's government. Many of these public agitators found themselves forcibly led out in handcuffs by either stadium security or the police.

Up in the stands, Goku, Chi Chi, and Goten sat with Erasa and Sharpner as they all bore witness to the post-Buu state of the human condition. Chi Chi for her part had given up on trying to shield her youngest son's eyes from the surrounding spectacle.

"Look at these people!" griped the Son matriarch. "They're acting like a bunch of drunken servicemen!"

"You should see some of the parties I invited Videl and Gohan to," said Erasa.

Narrowing her eyes, the wife of Goku raised a suspicious eyebrow at the young blond. "Do tell…"

"Oh, just the usual…" the bubbly girl remarked coyly. "Lots of loud music, drinking, hanky panky…"

"Oh my God…" groaned the Son woman, pinching the bridge of her nose. "My boy's become a delinquent!"

"If it makes you feel any better Mrs. Son, the two of them only fooled around with each other at these parties," Erasa assured.

"Fantastic…” muttered the woman.
"Hey, where's Penn?" Sharpner asked as he scanned the surrounding bleachers. "Didn't he say he was gonna be here?"

Erasa let out an annoyed sigh. "He's still feeling a bit miffed over his long-time hero being a fraud. I don't see why though… The guy put too much emotional investment in Videl's father. Heck, Videl even reimbursed him for all his Satan merchandise. If that's not enough, than let him act like a child!"

"Still, he took it pretty bad," Sharpner stated, "I still can't believe Gohan is the real world savior. To think we've been friends with our world's true hero this whole time…"

"I'm surprised Videl kept practicing martial arts after learning the truth," replied Erasa. "She trained for years to beat her father. How did she even stay motivated after having that bombshell dropped?"

"Her pride."

The two blond teens turned their attention to Chi-Chi.

"That girl isn't a quitter," the wife of Goku plainly stated. "This is what she knows. Without it, she wouldn't have anything. She knows that everything she's ever owned, everything she's ever been was the product of her father taking credit for my son and husband's deeds. She wants to accomplish something to her own name that she can be proud of."

Beside Chi Chi, Goku and Goten practically inhaled a massive tub of popcorn. Their meal was cut short however when a shirtless, large older man sporting a beer gut accidently fell back onto them, crushing their popcorn and spilling Satan white ale all over the two Sons.

"Eww…!" squealed Goten, "Nasty! He got it in our popcorn!"

Goku was about to say something until he realized just who it was that landed in his lap. "Bob? Is that you?"

"Sup, Teach?" slurred the hefty man. "I tell ya! Them damned girls right dare are wild as fuck!"

"Girls…?" Goku looked up from his student to see two topless teenaged Majin girls bending over the two of them. One of the adolescent hotties held out a whiskey bottle and poured the contents right into Bob's waiting mouth.

"Holy Shit!" exclaimed Sharpner enthusiastically, "Me next! Me next!"

At the sight of the two half-naked teen Majins, Chi Chi threw a hand over Goten's eyes before yanking her younger son to his feet. The woman then proceeded to make a mad-dash for the exit.

"Children shouldn't see such things!" the Son woman told her son.

"But Mom…! I wanna watch Big Sis fight!" Goten whined.

"We'll find a better place to do it. I don't want you exposed to that filth!"

Down in the fighter's lounge, Videl sat with Gohan as she awaited her first match. Close by, a sitting Miss Pizza fanned herself with a folded magazine. Due to tournament rules, a fighter's handlers could join him or her in the lounge during waiting periods.

This whole time, the two teens kept a close eye on Videl's first opponent, Brae-Og, who stood in the arena causeway. The hate and the cold emptiness that permeated his living ki polluted the very air they breathed. He in turn cast a few subtle, weary glances in their direction.
"Ya know...,

Videl said, "His energy feels as bad as it gets, but he doesn't really seem all that strong. I could probably handle this guy in my sleep. Hell, he looks like he'll die if I blow on him hard enough."

"Videl..." groaned her husband disapprovingly. Gohan did not like how nonchalant his spouse was being given the evil they were both feeling.

"Oh come on, Gohan!" she chided teasingly. Stepping up to her soon-to-be opponent, she gestured towards him with outraised arms. "I almost feel like a bully just having to fight this guy!"

Brea-Og just stared slack-jawed as the Satan girl gave him a quick slap on the shoulder.

"Grr.... How dare you look down on me...!" he hissed at the short teen.

"Uh... excuse me!" Videl remarked arrogantly. "Who was it who thought he was being slick by rigging the drawing process? Seriously, you think we didn't notice?"

"H-How?!" the tall pale man asked incredulously. "That's impossible! You couldn't have known!"

"And you couldn't have been less subtle if you wore a big placard around your neck that said 'Big Evil Magic Man'!" she fired back. "I mean, you just admitted to it! You're about as one-dimensional as Tetris!"

Videl then turned her back on the pale-skinned man to briefly regard Gohan. "Seriously Gohan, I think whoever paid this guy to kill me needs to get his money back!"

The robed Majin was now seething. "You little bitch! Just for that, I'm going to bring all my dark arts to bear!"

"Then pull a rabbit outta your hat and be done with it, ya geek!" she sassed. "Seriously, why would someone like you waste his second chance at life?! Why would you give up your humanity when you already know what's waiting for you in the afterlife?! It makes no sense!"

Looking down with sadness at the short girl, the red-robed Majin simply answered, "Zero sum."

At this, Videl quirked an eyebrow in curiosity. "Come again?"

"I went to Hell after Majin Buu killed me," he told her, his voice laced with sorrow. "I was set up to fail before I was ever born. One doesn't simply turn off being a sociopath. Empathy can't be learned. Every good deed, every attempt I make at redemption will ultimately be something I did to help myself, so why bother? There can never be true selflessness with me. I'm doomed. I may have come back to life, but resurrection didn't solve my real problems. My place is in Hell..."

Just then, the announcer's voice blared loudly, catching their attention.

"Will the first two combatants please make their way to the ring?!"

As Videl walked out onto the field, she glanced at the man out of the corner of her vision. "Just so you know, I'm gonna come at you with everything I have."

"In our first march, it's newcomer versus Martial Art Society fan favorite! Everyone give a big round of applause for Videl Sat-err... Son and Brea-Og!"

Stepping into the ring, Videl eyed the man more warily than her earlier bravado let on. By the looks of it, her opponent was every bit as much a freak as Spopovich was, only this time she had a decent
idea of what to expect. She just hoped that history didn't repeat itself.

Back in the fighters lounge, Gohan continued to eye his common law wife's opponent. Unlike the case with Spopovich at the World Tournament, this man had a traceable energy signature that fluctuated normally.

"At least with this guy, what you see is what you get,' thought the Saiyan, smirking to himself. 'Evil or not, if his fighting power stays the same as it is now, Videl's got this easily.'

"GO VIDEL!" cheered Erasa.

"Get em, girl!" hollered Sharpner.

Goku however, was fixated on his daughter-in-law's opponent. Ever since arriving at the stadium with the rest of his family, the Saiyan warrior had sensed a relatively weak, though malignant ki that stood out in his mind's eye like a sore thumb.

"As I'm sure you all know, Videl is the daughter of our savior, Mr. Satan, a man who needs no introduction!" blared announcer Firecracker. "After suffering two horrible loses in her young career, first at the hands of Spopovich at last winter's World Tournament and later at the hands of newcomer Barbella, Satan City's long-time crime-stopper is back in the ring for another swing! You've really gotta love this young woman's tenacity! Still, can she finally rise to the challenge and fill her father's shoes?"

Videl scoffed. "If they only knew…"

The announcer gestured with one out-raised hand to her mysterious opponent. "As for her opponent, Brea-Og is a virtual unknown. He has no fighting record to speak of, so it's going to be interesting to see how he stacks up against the former Junior Division World Champion!"

Neither of them assuming a stance, the two combatants faced one another.

"Let the first match begin!"

"I intend to use any and all means at my disposal to send you back to King Yemma," declared the sallow-skinned Brea-Og. "Observe…"

"Let's see what you've got," taunted the Satan girl.

Videl watched as her opponent reached up and unclasped a broach near his collarbone, allowing his crimson robes to fall from his shoulders.

"It looks as if Contestant Brea-Og has decided to ditch some clothing!" the announcer pointed out. "But then, who could blame him? That get-up simply was not designed for combat sports!"

The articles of clothing pooling at his feet, the now bare-chested Majin stepped forward to reveal an intricate pattern of dim azure runes etched across his face and torso.

"So this is your thing, huh?" the petite fighter queried incredulously. "Don't get me wrong, I've been thinking of getting a tramp stamp myself, but a little body art isn't gonna help you win this match."

"Just keep talking," the Majin dared.

The man then crossed his forearms out in front, bringing the etchings together to form a complete spell pentagram. The azure hew lightly illuminating the runes soon took on a magenta color as Brea-
Og's yellow eyes began to glow like a pair of miniature ochre suns. All that remained was for Brea-Og to recite the priming incantation.

"Everyone, Contestant Brea-Og is glowing like a welding rod!" announcer Firecracker commented. The man held his hands out in front in a bid to shield his eyes from the blinding light. "What could this mean for the daughter of our savior?!

Standing outside the ring, Gohan watched as his spouse's cultist opponent threw his hands forward, screaming a short incantation he never thought he'd hear again.

"PAPPARAPAH!"

All around shadows in the surrounding area began to feed into his own as the runes on the pale man's body began to burn like a flash fire. Up in the audience, individual majin cultists peppered among the crowd writhed in agony as they found themselves affected from being in such close proximity to the spell. Their Majin brands pulsed red with an eerie, otherworldly power as their negative ki began to percolate onto Brea-Og.

"Folks, I don't know how to explain this!" screamed the announcer. "It looks as if everyone's shadow is seeping into the blazing light that has engulfed contestant Brea-Og! What could this mean? It defies all logic!"

Videl's eyes widened at the change in her adversary. It was as if there were ten of her opponent.

"It's just like with Dad's spirit bomb," Gohan noted. "Only… the energy is twisted… and denatured!"

Suddenly, the pressure of the additional power came crashing down on him, and Brea-Og soon found himself falling to his knees in exquisite agony. Veins pulsed and muscles spasmed as bolts of crimson lightning coursed across his quaking form. All about him, pieces of grit and small rocks began to rise from the ring floor.

Overhead, the night sky was a churning, oxidized tumult as dark clouds began to billow over the stadium. Bright red bolts of lightning cascaded across the horizon in all directions.

Brea-Og threw his head back and released a gut-wrenching yelp as his body began to expand and contort in obscene proportions.

Videl could only stand transfixed, a feeling of dread rolling through her, as the once sickly, pale-skinned man grew and grew.

"Folks at home!" Jimmy Firecracker started, "If you're watching this, I want you to know that I'm seriously freaking out! Contestant Brea-Og just keeps getting bigger and bigger!"

There seemed to be no end to it. The Majin cultist kept expanding. His arms quintupled in length, and his chest cavity bloated out grotesquely until finally, six lumps appeared on his back. They swelled and festered until they each burst open in a shower of bloody flesh, releasing six hydra heads situated atop long sauropod dinosaur-like necks bristling with spikes. The heads themselves sported jaws as big as a grown man lined with rows of spiked teeth. To crown this gruesome transformation, Brea-Og’s true head sprouted a long, bony rhino-like horn from the bridge of his nose. His legs however, remained their original length, instead growing thicker and stockier. This gave his body the appearance of an upside-down pear.

"Oh, you've got to be kidding me!" yelled Videl.
Outside the ring, Gohan could only smile to himself.

"Hey, Videl!" he called out. "You've got this! This fella's weaker than you by a long shot!"

"What?!" The now giant Majin regarded Gohan with humored disbelief. "Me weaker than her?! MWAHAHAHAHA! You're pulling my leg!"

Calming herself, Videl once again turned to the ki-sensing abilities she'd developed under Gohan. Her eyes closed, she reached out with her inner will and felt the pressure of her opponent's ki push impotently against her own fighting presence. When she opened her eyes, a shit-eating smirk quirked its' way onto her face.

Brea-Og was taken back by the sudden change in his target's demeanor.

"What are you smiling about?!" he snapped.

Videl's face took on a hungry, predatory look as she sauntered forward like a tigress on the hunt. "Oh…, just thinking about how long I want to drag this out. Oh, and by the way! Thanks for making yourself a bigger target."

"YOU LITTLE FOOL!"

The now giant, misshapen Majin thrust his hands forward and conjured a whirlwind of fire and black lighting.

"Eat wither lightning you filthy little bitch-dog!"

The black bolt-laced vortex spiraled across the ring where it connected with a loud thundering 'Foomph!' A spout of flames burst forth, blackening the linoleum ring floor.

"OH NO! The daughter of our people's champion has met a fiery end…" wailed the announcer.

"VIDEL!" screamed Erasa and Sharpner in unison.

"Don't worry."

The two distressed teens turned to see Son Goku smiling their way. "Videl's fine…"

"What..?"

Down in the ring, Brea-Og cackled haughtily at his handiwork. Due to his now massive size, the noise of his laughter had a deep, rumbling quality to it that carried throughout the stadium.

"How was that? You were talking a good game a few seconds ago. What happened?"

Stepping into the ring, the announcer cleared his throat before offering his final judgement. "Due to the rules against unnecessary force, Brea-Og is disqualified!"

Ignoring the bi-speckled man, the Majin cultist continued to ham it up. "Like I give a fiddler's damn! My work here is…"

Brea-Og's eyes widened in abject shock as the wall of raging flames parted like Moses and the Red Sea, revealing a completely unharmed and unaffected Videl Son. The girl's entire form was shrouded in a translucent, spherical ki shield that seemed to repel the blazing inferno.

"Folks, it looks as if Videl has conjured some kind of bubble or force field!" explained announcer
"But how could she generate a force field that localized, and where would she hide the equipment needed to pull it off?!"

"T-That's impossible…" stammered the Majin. "You should be DEAD!"

Enraged, the colossal practitioner of the dark arts swiveled the six hydra heads now protruding from his back. Each one opened their gaping jaws and let loose with a torrent of azure lightning, all of it aimed at Videl.

Smirking to herself, Videl threw her hands up, bringing another ki shield to bear, as lightning rained down upon her. When the seemingly brutal torrent finally relented, the girl was again unharmed.

"You're gonna have to try harder than that," she boasted. "You don't understand the power source you're using. True power is that which you build for yourself! Unlike you, I don't need to draw energy from other people to fight my battles."

"ARRGH! I'll crush you to death!" the misshapen giant roared. Due to his legs being so short and squat in his new form, the grotesque Brea-Og was forced to use his elongated arms to clumsily waddle forward.

Seeing how much trouble her opponent had just trying to move, Videl fell on her ass in a fit of laughter.

"This should be rich," Gohan commented with a bit of humor. "The guy looks like a four story, upside-down ass with worms coming out."

"STOP LAUGHING!"

Drawing back, the enraged Majin brought his elongated right arm down on the Satan girl in an oversized hammer fist. Before the hit connected, the petite fighter seemingly phased out of existence. The fist slammed into the ring floor with a reverberating 'thump'.

"Did I get her?" Brea-Og asked aloud.

"Hey, Scrotum-Face!"

The gargantuan Majin slowly turned only to be met with a vicious spinning hook kick to the face. The power and pressure behind the kick was such that upon contact with the ring floor the cultist's massive body skidded half-way across the ring. The crowds went wild…

"Holy shit!" screamed one spectator.

"I didn't see her move…" commented another.

The announcer, Jody Firecracker, readjusted his glasses as he tried to make sense of what he was seeing. "Folks, I have no idea what just happened! Just as it seemed Contestant Brea-Og was about to crush Videl to death, Satan City's long-time heroine seemingly vanished into thin air before reappearing out of the blue with a kick that was simply out of this world! How did she do it?! Or perhaps a better question would be how did she cause someone that large to slide across the ring floor with one kick?! It defies logic!"

Crossing his arms, Gohan smiled to himself. "They haven't seen anything yet…"
"S-She's stronger than Tien was against my brother…" stammered Master Roshi's old rival.

"It's a good thing too…" Barbella remarked.

"How is that a good thing?!" demanded her ancient teacher.

"Your brother's strength pales in comparison to my own," boasted the muscled red-head. "As does the ugly tub of shit little Miss Satan is currently fighting. The stronger she's become since the last time I beat her, the sweeter it'll be when I finally break her spirit! There isn't enough room on this planet for two queens of the beasts!"

"You're enjoying this, aren't you?" Master Shin muttered.

Barbella smirked wickedly. "Maybe a little…"

Back in the ring, Brea-Og was struggling to stand. His arms not being enough, he made use of his six newly grown hydra heads to octopus himself to a shaky upright position.

"That looked painful," observed Videl arrogantly. The girl brought her hands to her hips and gave her downed opponent the ever-obnoxious Satan laugh.

"Shut up!" roared Brea-Og, his mouth oozing dark blood. The weight of his massive body amplified the damage done from his hitting the floor. "I swear to whatever impotent Gods are watching that I will send you back to King Yemma in pieces!"

"If you had fought me two months earlier, it would have been a good fight, but unfortunately for you this is two months later," bragged the petite fighter. "Compared to the people I've been training with, you might as well be standing still."

Bellowing in rage, the now giant Majin took a wide swing at the teenaged girl only to have his sloppy strike meet air. The enraged monster looked about frantically for his wayward target.

"Videl has disappeared again!" blared the announcer.

"WHERE ARE YOU!?" he screamed.

"Yoohoo! Right here!"

Brea-Og spun around only to be met with a hard sweeping kick to his right foot that once again sent him tumbling to the floor. Videl leapt out of the way as his 30 foot tall form face-planted on the hard linoleum with a loud thud.

Blood poured out all over the ring floor from the impact. The six hydra heads independently made rattlesnake-like strikes at Videl as she danced around the Majin's downed body.

"Seriously, you've got eight limbs and you can't touch me with one of them!" the raven-hair girl taunted as she side-stepped another strike. "Your night time rituals must really suck! Maybe you should've actually trained for this fight."

"H-Hate you… s-s-so much…" rasped the grotesque Majin through broken teeth. Using his hydra heads, he came to a shaky stand once more.

"I guess after fighting a magically enhanced Spopovich, I expected far more from someone wearing that symbol," she said gesturing to his belt buckle.

"DAMN YOU!" The twisted Majin once more held his forearms out in front as he again drew
power from the other cult members in the stadium.

Up in the stands, members of the audience gaped in horror as the Majin cultists scattered among them dropped dead from giving up too much of their living essence.

"What's happening?" asked a distressed Erasa as one Majin cultist fell dead right in front of her. "What's with these people?"

"It's Videl's opponent," Goku answered. "He's killing them in one last bid to take Videl down!"

Sharpner looked at the Son Patriarch as if he'd grown two heads. "OK...! How does that work?"

"He's stealing their living ki. They'll be dropping like flies!"

Back in the ring, Brea-Og's body blazed like a magenta-hued sun. Muscles bulged and veins pulsed as ever more power crashed down onto his injured, grotesque form. Crimson and lime bolts of energy cascaded over him as his body began to emit a smoky, crimson aura that distorted the air around him. His very skin started to roast as the ground itself began to shake under the weight of his last stand.

"Almost all of the cult members in the stands have died," Gohan noted. "The poor fools probably had no idea they were that expendable. At this rate, that pale-skinned cretin is gonna be stronger than a Saibaman."

Videl continued to sit back and stare as Brea-Og continued to billow up on the negative ki of his peers.

"Your strength is a little greater than it was the first time you did this," she observed. Waiting for her opponent to finish powering up, Videl crossed her arms impatiently. "But still, can you make good use of all that ki you've stolen with your body being so injured? I think you might've hurt yourself more with this little stunt. Come on! Just forfeit already!"

Her opponent didn't respond. With the power inside him reaching the highest zenith his untrained, bludgeoned body could withstand, the Majin threw his head back in gut-wrenching scream as a pressure wave blasted out in every direction from his augmented fighting ki.

Shielding her eyes from the light, Videl covered her face. All around her, crimson lightning continued to strike the arena and an even more intense tremor rocked the stadium, causing the light fixtures over the stands to flicker.

When the light faded, the giant homunculus form of Brea-Og surged forward. He wasn't going to give his quarry the chance to prepare. Drawing back, the twisted cultist let into Videl with a frenzied barrage of fierce openhand swipes. Behind every swipe, three hydra heads would trail behind as a follow-up in a bid to keep the pressure on.

'This is new...' thought the petite girl as she dipped, leapt, and ducked the elongated arms/ hydra jaws combo in her bid to find an interval between the attacks. Hundreds of lightning fast strikes came at Videl as the transformed Brea-Og closed in.

Soon, the monster had her cornered. Teetering on the edge of the ring, Videl watched as Brea-Og revved up all six hydra heads for a series of snake-like strikes.

"Contestant Brea-Og has our hero's daughter in a tight spot!" screamed Jody Firecracker. "It seems all hope is lost..."
Videl could only smirk at the words of her father's long-time media cheerleader. "Oh, I've got something for him…"

Thrusting her palm forward, the girl let loose an invisible kaia wave that lifted her grotesque adversary into the air. His eyes bugging out of his skull, the Majin screamed like an eight year old girl as he was launched high above the arena.

"Brea-Og is making use of his Flyer Miles tonight as Videl completely reverses the situation with some strange force push!"

"Yeah! Now put'em away!" cheered Gohan.

Brea-Og continued to rise into the air only to be met with a powerful overhead axe-kick to the forehead that shattered the rhino-like horn protruding from his nose ridge. The power of the kick followed through and set the cultist assassin on a collision course with the ring floor. All that could be heard throughout the arena was a deafening 'Boom!' as Brea-Og's back hit the linoleum. The cultist wailed in pain as his hydra heads were crushed under his weight.

Floating high above the ring, Videl again taunted her downed opponent.

"Ya know… this can all end! All you have to do is forfeit. It's not rocket science. I highly doubt whoever sent you is offering a good health plan…"

Squinting his eyes, the prostrate assassin glared up at his target. Working his blood-filled mouth, he struggled to speak "N-Not until you're dead at my feet…"

Bringing his hands together, the twisted man put everything he had into one last attack, so much so that his body reverted back to its' normal withered form. Smoky, crimson lightning licked at his fingers as a ball of charged black flame formed between them. With this last attack formed, he thrust hands into the sky and took aim.

High above the ring, Videl stretched out her left palm and brought it level with her opponent. With a loud shout, a ball of white ki quickly took form before being fired at the broken cultist below.

"DIE!" Brea-Og's final attack took flight with enough force that the recoil slammed the back of his head into the floor. An enormous cyclone of black lightning-imbued blue fire spun upwards to meet Videl's attack.

The two attacks came together in a brilliant explosion that lit up the arena. Many in the audience had to brace themselves against the ensuing percussion blast.

"Ladies and Gentlemen! It's absolutely incredible! It's like the Cell Games all over again!" blared the announcer.

"Sweet mother of Christ!" screamed Sharpner. His hair whipping in the wind, the blond gripped the edge of his seat. Next to him, Erasa screamed as she covered her head frantically.

"I'm gonna have to get my hair redone, again!" Chi Chi complained.

When the smoke cleared, Brea-Og lay unconscious on the ring floor. Videl landed softly beside her broken and beaten opponent. The girl sported a triumphant look on her face that Gohan hadn't seen since before her defeat at the hands of Spopovich seven months ago.

"Gohan, look! I did it!" beamed the petite fighter.
Giving his spouse a warm smile, the half-Saiyan threw her a thumbs-up. "You did really great, honey! I'm proud of you!"

Climbing into the ring, Mr. Firecracker nudged the downed cultist with the tip of his penny loafer before addressing the audience.

"It seems Brea-Og is down and out! That leaves Videl Sa-err..Son the winner!"

Laughing, Gohan climbed into the ring and picked Videl up by the waist before twirling her around in the air. The girl giggled happily at her spouse's celebratory antics.

Due to the presence of dead cult members among their ranks, the audience was having a hard time mustering the enthusiasm to cheer. This wasn't lost on tournament officials.

"Hey Jody!" screamed one stadium worker.

"Huh?"

"We're gonna have to pencil in a brief intermission until we can get all these dead bodies out of the stadium!"

"Well how long is that gonna take?" asked the announcer, clearly annoyed. "This entire program is live! I don't care what it takes, just keep the fights going!"

"No can do!" the man replied, shaking his head. "The best we can do is get this thing going in an hour, and that's assuming we just carry the bodies out into the halls!"

"We already know where we're going after we die anyway, so just move them out to the parking lot and let them be the city coroner's problem! We've got a program to broadcast!"

Hand in hand, the young unionized couple walked back to the fighter's lounge. Before reaching the entrance however, they were stopped by a 30-something, green-haired man wearing a trench coat. Beside him was a shorter, somewhat thicker man who wearing suspenders over a white business causal shirt who looked to be in his early forties.

"Mr. Son Gohan…, Mrs. Son Videl. I'm Agent Roger Millhouse of the Ministry of Interior," greeted the man, flashing his ID, "And this here is Royal Bureau of Investigation Special Task Force Agent Biff Wingle. We'd like you to come with us."

"Uh…, what about the competition?" asked Gohan.

"This won't take long," assured the man. "Either way, you don't really have a choice in the matter. King's orders and all that…"

"Would you at least tell us what this is about?" Videl requested.

"I can tell you that it concerns both you, your father, and your common law husband here," the agent supplied. "More specifically, it concerns what you and your husband will have to do if you wanna keep your father from facing jail time without parole."

"JAIL TIME!?" screamed the two teens.

"We've set up a room where we can discuss matters in private," said the man. "This way…"

Well shit! Can we really call this a beautiful day?
I get so tired of folks telling me that I “Just don’t understand his character” when the actual creator of the franchise Akira Toriyama couldn't even decide what to do with Gohan after the Cell Saga. I’ve been getting into arguments on both Youtube and many other websites over this issue, and I’m sick it! If Akira Toriyama, the franchise creator, can get away with not really understanding what he intended this character to be like, even going so far as nerfing him in Dragonball Super to the point of Yamcha level sadness before bowing to pressure from the fans, changing his mind again, and having Gohan train again after he'd already bowed to them once in gutting Gohan's character in favor of having Goku beat Buu in the first place just for plot convenience, than I can understand Gohan for whoever the hell I want him to be, and who I understand his character as is the person Akira originally intended for him to eventually become before he started falling back in the early 1990s on the issue. I’m speaking of course of the way Gohan’s character is presented in the future Trunks timeline. Gohan already went through the whole socially awkward, shy, timid sheltered kid stage of his character development before the Cell Saga. He got that crap beat outta him by the time the Freiza Saga was over. Akira’s decision to move him in the opposite direction after the Cell Arc seemed inauthentic and dare I say, forced. For this reason alone, I refuse to take any comments claiming my depiction of Gohan is OOC seriously. I mean, for cryin out loud! Toriyama can’t even decide how he wants Gohan depicted, so what place does anyone else have in judging my depiction as OOC? Logic folks! Just Saiyan…
Both Gohan and Videl found themselves shepherded into a cramped, cubic room on the opposite end of the stadium with only one exit and no windows. In the center, there was a fold-out table with three chairs, two on one side facing the door they’d just entered and the other facing away. There were no windows and only one ceiling ventilation grate situated between two florescent light fixtures. They could vaguely hear the muffled murmurs of the crowds above.

“Have a seat Mr. and Mrs. Son,” offered Agent Millhouse, his voice carrying a slight German accent.

“I take it you had this room prepared ahead of time?” Videl guessed.

The unionized teens sat side by side opposite the door they’d entered. Interior Ministry Agent Millhouse took the remaining seat facing them. RBI Task Force Agent Wingle waited outside, presumably standing guard.

Clearing his throat, the Interior agent started things off. “First off, let’s get all the bullshit out of the way just so there’s no misunderstanding between us. What is said in this room stays in this room!”

Dumbfounded, Gohan eyed the agent curiously. “OK…” Next to him, Videl tried her best to look impassive.

“Mr. and Mrs. Son, let me start by saying that the higher ups among King Furry’s administration know almost everything. In the interest of national security, we’ve been monitoring Bulma Briefs and the activities of both your father and his circle of friends since the Saiyan invasion that happened 13 years prior. More importantly Mr. Son, we’ve watched your life unfold with great interest.”

Upon hearing this bombshell, Gohan’s eyes widened. “Define almost everything.”

“We know about your little trip to Namek with Bulma Briefs and Krillin Chestnut, though we weren’t able to get many details beyond a few dropped names. We know about the time traveler Trunks, Dr. Gero, and the details surrounding his attack on South City along with the devastation of Nicky Town and Gingertown by Cell. More importantly, we know your big secret.”

The man finished this last part while giving Videl a lingering stare out of his peripheral vision.

“My big secret?” asked Gohan innocently.

Chuckling, the agent shook his head at what he presumed was an act. “Listen, Dick-weed! I’m not your woman, so don’t try jerkin me around like you her! Lying to her is one thing, doing it to the government comes with legal consequences, and considering the state that the world is in right now, you two are gonna need all the help you can get! We know that you are in fact the one who beat Cell.”

Gohan’s eyes widened in shock. “You do?!”

“Don’t look so shocked,” chided the man. “We’re the world government. We have an entire planet’s tax revenue and most of its’ resources at our disposal. I’m surprised your little group hasn’t figured out that you’ve been under surveillance what with the late Dr. Gero’s activities and all. It’ll probably
come as a shock to you that Dr. Gero was a double-agent who for a time worked for us in keeping your group under observation. Of course, the good doctor sold us relatively useless information while conveniently keeping the good stuff for his own purposes.”

The half-Saiyan fell back into his chair. Beside him, Videl eyed the man with distrust.

“So you’re telling me that you guys knew about Dr. Gero and did nothing?!” asked Gohan incredulously.

“Like I said before…” said the man. “The self-serving bastard kept the good stuff for himself. Even though Dr. Gero was a former leader of the Red Ribbon Army, his skills were too valuable for us to simply kill him out-right for treason. If we had known then what we know now, we’d have done things differently.”

His mind still reeling from the information, Gohan slumped back into his chair. “I don’t believe it…”

“Now that that’s out of the way, let’s get down to the nitty-gritty,” Agent Millhouse insisted. “The king’s government would like to establish a line of favors with both you and your little kung-fu wife here! We need things, things that you young’uns can provide, and you’re in no position to refuse which makes it all the better! Being an official liaison investigator for the Satan City Police Department means that you, Mrs. Videl Son, are both legally and professionally obligated to provide assistance to our work. I highly doubt you’d want us to cut funding to the Satan City Police Department given the cult problems you’re experiencing.”

Videl let out a long, defeated sigh. “What do you want?”

“Ah, direct and to the point! I like that…” the government agent commented with a wide Cheshire smile. “We have recently come into possession of an alien blood sample belonging to a certain Saiyan you, your husband, his little brother, and the son of Bulma Briefs fought sometime in the past eight months.”

“Broly…” Gohan growled.

“Yes! Exactly!” the man confirmed in a somewhat off-putting, cheery tone. “But our top scientists aren’t satisfied with a genetic pool that small. Knowing what we know, we’ve subpoenaed all medical data compiled by your good friends at Capsule Corp. from every Saiyan in your little circle. Needless to say, we had to threaten Bulma Briefs with both sedition charges and her father losing his government contracts if she failed to comply in a timely manner.”

Anger rushing through him at the last part, Gohan surged to his feet. Agent Millhouse, for whatever reason, didn’t seem the least bit worried.

“Sit down son,” he ordered. “I’m not finished…”

“Gohan, just do as he says,” Videl advised softly.

Glaring daggers at the agent, the miffed half-breed slowly retook his seat.

“You must understand that the Brief’s past actions of actively providing cover for you and your friends made it necessary,” Agent Millhouse explained. “She would have drug her heels, and recent events in the world what with the Majin Buu fiasco and all, have made it where time is a luxury none of us can afford.”

“Get to the point…” Gohan mouthed testily.
“Mr. Son, in exchange for us not outing your father-in-law, we would like for both you and Mr. Satan’s daughter here to submit yourselves to a battery of scientific tests. We will also be assigning a team of anthropologists to study your day-to-day social behavior. Understand that if either of you refuse, Mr. Satan will get the Bernie Madoff treatment, thereby spending the rest of his life behind bars, and little Miss Satan will lose everything she has, and I do mean everything, trust fund and all. You will of course be compensated very handsomely for complying with our demands, so don’t worry your little heads over it! There’s something in it for everybody.”

“I never thought my father could wind up in prison for this…” Videl shuddered softly, shaking her head.

“He actively defrauded millions of consumers by lying about the Cell Games and lining his pockets,” the agent pointed out. “Your naivety is almost touching. Seriously, you must be as self-deluding as your fraud father if you thought he wouldn’t get prison time. Come on! You know the law as well as I do. How do you think it would end if we outed your-”

“Wait a minute! Just wait a minute!” Gohan interrupted, “If the government knew about me beating Cell from the beginning, then why are you guys only doing something with this information now?”

Sighing, Agent Millhouse rubbed his eyes in weary annoyance. “The truth… we were terrified of you.”

Gohan blinked in astonishment at this answer. “What?! Why?”

“What do you mean why?” The agent looked at the Son boy as if the teen were borderline retarded. “Every one of you possess the power to easily destroy the world! We’ve been using both modified scouter tech our double-agents stole from Capsule Corp and the bioenergy detection technology Dr. Gero actually did provide us with to monitor your power increases for years! But that isn’t the only reason. Then there’s the fact that between the Ox King’s tributary nation, the Briefs, Choatzu’s own tributary nation, and your own newfound wealth, your little group has half the privately-held economic power on the planet! Even without your powers, collusion between the lot of you resembles something akin to a cabal.”

“Just for the sake of knowing, are there any other reasons?” Videl inquired.

“For one…” the agent began, “Social cohesion. Successive ki-using fighters were getting stronger and stronger. We needed to somehow push ki use to the margins of society, and both your father and Goku’s circle were doing our job for us. Between your father deriding ki use as a ‘trick’ and Goku’s circle of allies being kept too busy fighting off our world’s greatest threats as opposed to training a larger group of people in the arts of ki use, ki use was for a while safely relegated to the backwater. The Department of the Interior and the military has had an ostrich policy of burying our heads in the sand for years regarding the repeated attacks upon our planet by hostiles. If we hired someone to train our soldiers in your powers, we’d have no reliable way of keeping that knowledge from slipping into the fingers of everyday average citizens. Soldiers become veterans, and veterans tend to share their knowledge. Unlike firearms, there is little the government or local law enforcement could do to stop the spread of that knowledge. That which shouldn’t exist, simply could not be allowed to exist. King Furry’s government would have no reliable means of preventing any of those veterans from becoming a potential Freiza. We already had enough problems keeping Mercenary Toa on his toes, and his abilities pale in comparison to yours. It was for the greater good… or so we thought!”

It was now Videl’s turn to lose her cool.

“So let me get this straight…” she hissed, “Our government deliberately encouraged policies geared towards keeping fighters from aspiring for greatness!?”
“Don’t you realize just how much damage that policy has caused?” asked Gohan disbelievingly.

“We do now,” replied the agent. “The Majin Buu incident changed everything… for everyone. Because of the worldwide activities of the Order of the Malign Spirit, the Ministry of Interior’s unofficial policies regarding ki have done a complete 180. The Military’s… not so much. There hasn’t been a home-grown, widespread, collective crisis this bad since the days of the Red Ribbon Army.”

“So where do we come in?” Videl inquired.

“We’re going to have three volunteers from the Royal Bureau of Investigation train under your father-in-law, Son Goku. These three agents will be the first instructors in ki use and training for what will eventually become standard among all law enforcement.”

“But won’t that eventually cause Mark to lose his credibility to the public?” Gohan asked.

“That won’t happen for many years, and by that time Mr. Satan will likely be dead and gone,” answered Agent Millhouse. “In the meantime, I suggest you and your significant other find a nice offshore tax haven for your assets. In the event things do go south and the public does turn against Mark Satan, we will have him inducted into a witness protection program for his safety, given that you two cooperate with us.”

The man fished through his trench coat before pulling out a couple of cards that he slid across the table to the two teens.

“On those cards, you will find the location and time the research tests will take place,” explained the green-haired agent. “When there, the two of you will have a team of anthropologists assigned to study Gohan’s Saiyan social and reproductive habits. This is the first time we’ve ever had the opportunity to study an alien, even if it is almost human. You, Mr. Son, are a walking treasure trove of knowledge for that very reason.”

“But why study me?” asked Gohan curiously. “And for that matter, why study Videl? You said you subpoenaed Capsule Corp. for medical data compiled on all of us. Why not study Vegeta?”

“Unlike Vegeta, you are far less dangerous so we can at least guarantee the safety of our scientists,” Agent Millhouse answered as if it were too obvious. “I want you both to understand that we don’t have to be adversaries. However, that being said, unlike Mrs. Videl here…”

Giving the petite fighter a conspiratorial look, the man paused for effect. “…we will make good on our threats. When we blackmail, we aren’t playing.”

“But that still doesn’t answer our question of why you’re having me participate in these tests too,” pressed the Satan girl.

“As I’ve stated before, we’ve been using retrofitted ki-detection devices to monitor the progress of your spouses’ group over the years,” the agent reiterated. “A few weeks before Majin Buu killed us all, we discovered that you were being trained by Mr. Son in ki use. Because of this development, the good folks at the Ministry of Interior decided to keep you under observation as well. Due to your status as a full-blooded human, our scientists were astounded by your power growth. We watched as your power level grew from 30 at the start of your ki training to over 80 by the tournament. After our revival following the Majin Buu fiasco, we resumed monitoring your progress, seeing your power level jump to over 150 by the time you fought Barbella, and then it happened!”

Puzzled, Videl raised an eyebrow. “What?”
“About four months ago, our instruments showed both you and your spouse’s power levels skyrocket in unison for about two hours,” he continued. “During that short period, your power level jumped from 150 to over 200,000 before returning to normal. We then went on to track your progress as your power level grew under the Turtle Hermit to an astounding 4700! It was then about two weeks ago that your power levels again skyrocketed very briefly. Then it happened several more times last weekend. Perhaps you could shed some light on why it happens?”

Both Gohan and Videl took on blushes of embarrassment. Suddenly other things in the room became very interesting.

“Well…?” the man coaxed, giving them an eyebrow.

“That’s… something that happens between me and Videl…” Pausing, the Son boy began to twiddle his thumbs sheepishly before quietly adding, “…in the bedroom.”

Hearing this, Agent Millhouse’s face fell. “How?”

“Sometimes, Gohan transforms into a Super Saiyan when he beds me,” Videl admitted, her face swooning with a deep blush. “For some reason, it causes my own body to go super when Gohan really gets into things.”

“Are there any other effects?” asked the man.

“I-It increases the pleasure we feel when we make love many times over…” she moaned breathlessly. The girl grabbed her cheeks as memories of all the carnal delights she shared with Gohan came flooding back to her. “It’s like having a continuous orgasm that lasts through the entire session…”

“Wow…” The agent’s jaw went slack at the petite girl’s admission. Shaking his head, the man came back to the real world. “OK, that’s something I didn’t need to know but alright…”

Next to Videl, Gohan looked like he wanted to melt through the floor right there.

“Any who… as a good faith payment, my department will be feeding the two of you information on the activities of the cult members in the West Metro Area, particularly Satan City. We have a common interest in controlling and containing their threat. Special Taskforce Agent Wingle will be your go-to man from this point forward. With that, I bid the two of you good day…”

Just as the two teens were about to leave, the Agent of the Interior spoke again.

“Oh and by the way…”

“What now?” Gohan groaned.

“Thanks for bringing us back to life.”

Walking back to the fighter’s lounge, the teen couple mulled over their new predicament.

“Sweetheart?” Videl said.

“Yeah, Hun!”

“I promise I’ll never use blackmail again,” she told him in a low guilt-ridden voice.

“Sucks, doesn’t it?” he quipped. She in turn gave him a knowing look.
“When we return to Roshi’s training island Friday evening, I’m gonna apologize to Daddy. I told myself that I would never live in denial, and I wound up doing it! I’ll get on my hands and knees and beg for his forgiveness! I should’ve handled the issues we’ve been having like an adult, but what did I do? I ruined what we had between us!”

“Mark already forgives you,” Gohan smiled.

Videl looked up at her common law spouse with eyes brimming with tears. “He might Gohan, but I need to be able to forgive myself. I lambasted my father for doing the very thing I’ve been doing ever since we spent that night together in the desert. I keep trying to find myself, and every time I think I’m getting close, I take the cowards’ way out! I just keep making things worse than they have to be…”

“It’s because you’re impulsive,” commented her spouse. “It’s a major character flaw that’s led to a lot of blowback. You’re your own worst enemy. Having a fighter’s spirit is one thing, but being overly contentious is another. You need to think about the long-term ramifications of your actions. Then there’s the issue of your impulsive nature undermining your more positive character traits.”

“Whadda ya mean?”

“Your impulsiveness and your naivety feed into each other,” explained the Son boy. “Jumping into things without thinking is causing you to do things that are anything but ethical. I know you care about ethics, but your impulsiveness causes you to lose sight of the very principles you champion. Though it’s not intended, you sometimes come off as hypocritical. On the issue of naivety, you act as if one set of principles can offer answers to every problem. This is a very flawed outlook. Many value systems are subjective, so taking a set of principles derived from any given set of values and expecting them to fit every moral dilemma is naïve in the extreme.”

“Why didn’t you say anything about this before?” the brunette croaked, her lip quivering. The petite girl sounded very hurt by her husband’s critique.

“Because of the way you’re acting now.” Gohan cast his common law wife a warm smile of reassurance. “You don’t handle constructive criticism very well. You get too angry and defensive. It’s too easy to upset you. Videl, you need to understand that I’m telling you this because I love you. We’re all social animals. No person is an island.”

“I can’t believe how childish I’ve been…” the Satan girl whimpered.

“Can I tell you a secret?” her spouse whispered in her ear.

“I thought we agreed no more secrets?” the Satan girl retorted coyly. She lifted his tail in her left hand and used it as a tissue to wipe her eyes.

Gohan chuckled at the sight. “A master doesn’t give away all his secrets, babe.”

“Then tell me… what is it?” she pried.

“Master Roshi trained me in mind-reading,” he answered. “I’m not very good at it yet, but I can tell you that Mark doesn’t bear any hard feelings against you for what you did. Disappointment? Yes. But resentment? Not a chance! Your father is a good guy at heart, and he means well. He’s so afraid of losing you because you’re all he has of your mother. You’re the only person he thought he could trust. He now understands how you felt when you learned the truth about the Cell Games. He wants to start over. And that’s not all…”

Videl didn’t think she could feel any worse than she already did. “What?”
“I didn’t find out until recently, but Mark did help me in saving the world from Cell. From what I found in his memories, he and a dead acquaintance of mine did something very brave that allowed me to turn the tide during my battle against Cell.”

Though Gohan meant these revelations to be comforting, it had the exact opposite effect on his spouse.

“I’ve been such a fool…” she shuddered. “Me and Daddy had something special, and I trampled all over it. We could have had what we do now without having to blackmail Dad! I’m happy we got unionized, but we could have gotten unionized months ago under better circumstances and it still would have been better than the way we did things! My mother must be turning in her grave…”

“You were feeling paranoid,” Gohan explained. “These are uncertain times we’re living in, and it’ll probably be a few decades before things return to some semblance of normalcy. Everyone was affected adversely by what happened with Buu. Many of the people we know aren’t really the same people they were before. Every other person is struggling to find themselves again. It’s like Krillin said: Enjoying our second chance at life is important, but everyone needs to learn to reel themselves in. The only reason I’m handling it as well as I have is because I’ve been dealing with this kind of craziness since I was three. When I see everyone losing their minds, my only thought is ‘Welcome to my world!’ It has something to do with what our psychiatrist said. You were hit with it all at once, and every existing schema forming the base of your mental constructs were eviscerated. It wasn’t just your identity that took a hit. It was everything you ever believed in! Even the strongest willed person will succumb to the shock doctrine condition.”

Videl raised a puzzled eyebrow. “Shock Doctrine?”

“It has something to do with shock therapy and its’ application to war and economics,” her spouse supplied. “Our struggle against Majin Buu and the things you had dropped on you surrounding that struggle destroyed everything you ever believed in. Fighting Spopovich destroyed your self-confidence and for a time caused you to be more submissive, learning about the existence of the Supreme Kai and Dende destroyed your atheism, learning about your father’s opportunism in the wake of the Cell Games ripped your identity out from under you, realizing just how great the difference in power between us is has caused you to question tenets of your feminism, and your death and resurrection made you question your overall place in the grand scheme of things. Every part of your being, both superficial and integral were turned upside-down. In the face of overwhelming stimuli on a scope and scale never before encountered, those on the receiving end are for a time rendered impotent. Eventually however, people do come out of shock, and they start to piece themselves back together.”

“That was very profound, sweetheart,” remarked the brunette, her voice carrying a measure of awe. “It’s easy to see why Master Roshi tasked you with the role of teacher.”

Gohan smiled proudly. “Sometimes I get lucky. The point is, we all get lost in the wilderness, but most of us will inevitably find our way home. This is how it was for me when Piccolo dropped me off in the wilderness at the age of four. Sometimes, it’s as simple as getting out of the woods by walking in a straight line. Other times, the journey is long and treacherous. Your father is trying to find the man he once was as well. He’s been lost in the wilderness for several years. He’s trying to meet us half way. Rest assured, your father’s approval of our being together is legit. A sincere apology from your end would be a step in the right direction.”

“What about you?” she asked.

“Along with my own training, I’ll continue to preside over yours,” he answered warmly. “I promised you that I’d make you as equal as you wanted to be. I’ll never leave you directionless again. You’re
my wife, the most equal partner I could ever ask for both in love and war. You’re the only one among our group that has any law enforcement training, and you’ve probably got more potential than any other full-blooded human. You’re probably the only person who is tailor made for the task ahead of us.”

Up in the stands, Goku and the others were starting to feel restless.

“How much longer is this gonna take?” Sharpner whined impatiently.

“Tell me about it…” remarked Erasa. “This wouldn’t be so bad if my phone hadn’t died.”

“Mom, I have to go to the bathroom,” said Goten.

“I wish those girls hadn’t died,” Bob expressed ruefully. “They kept things fun up here.”

“Speak for yourself,” grumbled ChiChi. “I don’t want my little boy around that filth!”

Bob turned around and regarded the wife of Goku with drunken eyes. “Lady, I’m more country than you are and I still ain’t got no problem with hanging fancy free. Loosen up ole’ gal!”

“Who are you callin old?!?” screeched the Son matriarch.

“I’m just sayin girl…” the man placated, holding up his hands defensively. “God… chill out!”

“Maybe I should have entered…” muttered Goku with an agitated sigh.

Back in the fighter’s lounge, things were getting rather testy between some of the contestants. More specifically, things were getting nasty between Master Shin, Barbella, and Giran.

“You should’ve stayed retired, ya suitcase!” spat the Crane Hermit. “My younger brother is gonna turn you into a pair of matching snake-skin boots!”

“Grr…. You two put that pony-tailed, limp-wristed, bastard in the ring and I’ll show you what I can do!” Giran snarled.

“Argh! Leave me outta this immature crap!” snapped Toa. “I don’t want anything to do with your petty squabbles!”

Feeling a deep sense of betrayal, the Crane Hermit shot an angry glare at his younger brother.

“What’s going here?!”

The four bickering parties turned to see Gohan step into the fighters lounge, followed closely by his spouse. On the way in, Videl threw a heated glare Barbella’s way. The muscled redhead in turn gave her a coy wink that grated the brunette girl’s nerves. The wily ginger’s attention soon fell on Gohan’s tail.

“If this some kind of fashion statement?” the former street thug inquired as she walked behind the Son Boy and made a grab for the furry appendage.

Videl caught sight of what her greatest adversary was about to do, but before she could intervene, the well-built female latched onto the mark of her common law husband’s Saiyan heritage.

Immediately, Gohan’s strength left him and the boy was left prostrate face-down on the floor.

“GOHAN!” Videl screamed with concern. The girl shoved her greatest adversary to the side before
crouching down beside her significant other.

“Grr… son of a…!” the half-Saiyan hissed as he reached back to massage his lower back.

Weirded out, Barbella regarded the Son boy with wide eyes. “Holy Shit! It’s real!”

“His father had one too,” Toa put in.

“Okay… this is some weird shit!” she remarked.

Giran, feeling that he somehow knew the half-Saiyan opened his muzzle to say something but was interrupted by Videl.

“You bitch…!” Videl seethed. The raven-haired girl was prepared to jump her old rival right there and then only to be stopped by the voice of her spouse.

“Videl, don’t do it!” he ordered sternly. “Fight her in the ring where everyone will see you do it.”

Almost immediately, Barbella regained her composure. An arrogant smirk worked its’ way onto her face.

“I can only imagine what your kids are gonna look like,” she snidely remarked. “I can see it now, a monkey in a crib! Might wanna stock up on bananas.”

Gohan had had enough. Rising to his feet, the Saiyan got in the redhead females face. He glowered angrily down at the redhead. She was taller than Videl by a good five inches, but she still had to crane her neck just to make eye contact.

“You listen here, girl…” he growled. “I promised Videl that I wouldn’t muscle in on her fights, but that doesn’t apply when you start going after both of us. Tone it down, or I’ll feed you some humble pie!”

“What? You think you’re a big man now!?” Barbie jeered.

“Barbella, I’d do as he says if I were you,” warned Toa from across the room. “You’ll just get hurt.”

“Oh, really?” she asked teasingly. “Let’s find out.”

Drawing back, the red-haired grappler let loose with a right hook. A loud ‘smack!’ could be heard throughout the room as the seemingly powerful punch collided with Gohan’s left cheek. The wild-eyed smile on Barbella’s face soon shifted to one of bewilderment before contorting to one of shock when she realized the half-Saiyan wasn’t affected in the least.

“What was that?” asked Gohan, sounding unimpressed.

“T-There’s no way…” the red-haired woman stammered, pulling back her hand. “What are you?!”

“I suggest you cool your jets and behave,” the Saiyan advised. “Like I said before, Videl might get pissed at me for interfering in her fights, but I doubt she’d have an issue if I slapped you around for starting something with me. I don’t like hitting women, but you’re really starting to test my patience! Be grateful I didn’t enter the competition…”

Suddenly, Gohan felt Videl’s hand on his back.

“Come on, Gohan,” his spouse beckoned. “Let’s go get a snack before the intermission ends.”
Leaning forward, Videl pressed her firm, ample bosom into her husband’s back as she whispered something in his ear.

His eyes widening, the now blushing Saiyan nodded once before turning to follow his spouse, presumably to the concession stand. Just as he turned his back, Barbella rushed behind him and made another go for his tail.

This time however, Son Gohan was on guard. Just as Barbie was about to grab the alien appendage, the prehensile limb swung downwards and wrapped itself around the muscled woman’s leg before unceremoniously flopping her onto her back.

Gohan shot a menacing glare over his shoulder at the downed ginger. “Don’t try that again.” Beside him, Videl wore a shit-eating grin as she threw her worst nemesis the finger.

Looking up from her spot on the floor, Barbella shot dirty looks at the departing couple.

Out in the arena, Jody Firecracker was still waiting for word from the stadium grounds staff on the state of the dead body problem in the stands. As if on que, the head tournament official tromped out onto the field.

“It wasn’t easy,” he told the announcer. “We had to get assistance from the police, but we’ve managed to move all the bodies out into the parking lot.”

“Finally…” breathed the bi-speckled pundit.

“For our next match, we have returning Former World Champion, Mercenary Toa versus returning long-time Martial Arts Society alumni Giran the Destroyer! Will Toa and Giran please enter the ring?”

Side by side, Giran and Toa made their way to the ring. Giran’s hunched, winged form looked almost comical next to the tall, lanky former assassin’s.

Upon entering the ring, Giran leered at the man across from him like a piece of meat. Drool ran down the creatures muzzle at the very thought of tearing into his opponent. It really had been too long since he’d had a good fight.

Toa, however, wore a look of disinterest. His thoughts were outside the ring, on a first life wasted. More importantly, he racked his mind over all he’d have to do to find absolution for all his sins. The path his brother had laid out for him since the day of Moutaito’s death had led him to disfigurement, ruin, and damnation. He would find a way to make the good he did in this life as potent and far-reaching as possible.

“Let the match begin!!!”

The moment he had the go ahead, Giran took to the air. His blue wings fanned out as he glided through the skies above the arena. Showing off, the creature did wide circles over the crowd.

“Giran soars through the air like a buzzard! What could he be planning?”

Smiling with self-assurance, Toa observed his opponent’s antics.
'This won’t even count for a decent warm-up…’ thought the former hitman.

Returning to the ring, the blue-crème reptilian came to a landing just in front of the ex-assassin.

“Are you done acting out?” asked the former killer in a bored tone.

“Err…WHY YOU?!” The reptilian beast made a grab for the assassin only have his face meet the bottom of Toa’s shoe.

The cobalt creature rolled backwards unceremoniously till coming to a stop face-down on the floor.

“Mercenary Toa just delivered a pulverizing kick to the snout that’s left Giran reeling!”

Toa stepped up to the downed creature. “You still awake?”

“You bastard…” the monster growled with unbridled rage. The creature pushed itself to a shaky stand.

“For your sake, I’ll refrain from using my real techniques,” remarked the Crane School cofounder.

“Oh, yeah! Let’s see how you do against my trump card!”

Opening his maul, the bluish reptilian vomited up a strange glowing matter. It wrapped around its’ intended target in gooey ropes before hardening into a pink elastic, taffy-like substance.

Toa tried to raise his arms only to discover that whatever the pink substance was, it was unimaginably tough.

“How do you like my merry-go-round gum?” jeered Giran haughtily. “Can’t move, can ya?!?”

Toa seemingly struggled against the strange rubbery bindings as his winged reptilian opponent threw his head back in mirth at the man’s efforts.

“It seems Giran has played his trump card,” observed Mr. Firecracker. “According to what information we have, Giran has used this technique a grand total of three times in his competitive career. How will Toa deal with this new development?”

“I guess it’s time I put an end to this…” hissed the reptile with disdain. The creature drew back a fist. “Nighty-night…”

Suddenly, Toa’s eyes sprung open with a glare that could chill the dead. Flinching, Giran stopped dead in his tracks as his merry-go-round gum began to buckle and strain under the pressure of holding his opponent.

“No…no, no, NO!! Not again!!”

With one final surge of strength, the former assassin burst forth, sending chunks of the pink, taffy-like magical substance flying to and fro.

That was it! In his past fights, every person who broke out of his body’s natural secretion went on to beat him senseless. Giran knew when he was whipped.

“I FORFEIT!!! I GIVE UP!!!” he screamed in fear.

“Well folks, it seems our returning alumni has thrown in the towel. Let’s give him a big round of applause for his showmanship! This makes Mercenary Toa the winner of round#2!”
Toa simply shrugged as he turned to leave the ring. If Videl’s showing in the first match was anything to go by, he had bigger fish to worry about.

Chapter End Notes

I think one other reason I can’t stand the way Videl is portrayed in Dragonball Super is the same reason why I can’t stand Gohan’s portrayal. It isn’t just about her character being completely butchered. There’s also the issue of wasted potential. Both Gohan and Videl have this trait in common. Think about it for a moment: In DragonBall Z, Videl learned to fly in less than a week without the prior years of ki-related training Krillin or Yamacha had before they finally learned how to barely levitate. She was the strongest human character outside of Goku’s group aside from Mercenary Toa, and Mercenary Toa had over 150 years of experience. For all we know, Toa couldn’t even fly without using a tree or pillar as a conduit. This tells me that Videl had a very fundamental, intrinsic relationship with her inner ki that other humans, even those who were much stronger than her, didn’t have. Her character really was wasted in every sense of the word. Even if she mellowed out considerably following the Majin Buu Saga, given her acquiring nature, curiosity alone would have had her doing a follow-up with Gohan or one of the other Z-Warriors. She even claimed that she wanted to learn more about it. In Dragonball Super, she doesn’t even fly anymore from what we can tell.

As someone who used to train several hours a day six days a week, I can tell you from experience that no one goes downhill that much in two years, especially someone who has been training their whole life as Videl has been doing. I trained for almost a decade as a boxer and weightlifter, and I still have a good deal of my strength, though my muscle tone has gone down some. That kind of fire, that kind of drive, doesn’t just go away. You don’t turn it off and on like a light switch. If you’re someone who trains constantly, your body feels miserable if you don’t train enough to get the acetocolyne out of your muscles. That, and your body is more susceptible to long-term health problems if you used to train all the time and then just stopped altogether. Logic Toriyama, logic!
"Now let's get the 3rd round underway!" blared the announcer. "In our next match, we have Mr. Satan's #1 student, after his daughter of course, Caroni versus the Backstreet Queen and bane of the Satan Dojo herself, Barbella!"

Hearing the ginger's name, the stands erupted into hisses and boos as the spectators pelted trash and other projectiles onto the field.

Sauntering out to the ring, a very nervous Caroni grimaced at what he would have taken as a compliment less than two weeks ago. He knew he was walking to his defeat, perhaps even worse if Videl and Brea-Og's fight were anything to go by, and still, he couldn't back out. Both Videl and her common law spouse had warned him of what would happen, but he was stuck between a rock and a hard place. It wasn't just Videl who had been defeated by Barbella four months ago. He, Parowski, and half the dojo got flattened, and the whole world knew it. He was now trapped into choosing between two evils: Fight Barbella and lose, or forfeit and destroy his career.

The blonde grappler looked over at his red-haired opponent, the very woman who sent him to the hospital last spring. If her punching machine score was any indication, he was as good as done.

For her part, Barbella was seething underneath. The embarrassment she suffered at the hands of her hated rival's spouse would not go unpunished. She'd make Caroni pay for what that monkey-tailed freak did to her. In the face of something like Gohan, she'd have to take a page out of the devil's playbook to get any satisfaction. When you can't hurt your neighbor, hurt his dog. Isn't that what the devil did?

Just outside the ring, Gohan, Videl, and Pizza chomped down on junk food as they watched the spectacle. Videl tore into rice ball after rice ball as she glared daggers at her hated enemy.

"Woah! Careful there, Tiger!" chided Miss Pizza, snatching away Videl's snack. "If you eat too much, you'll be too sluggish to fight!"

"Sorry…" the Satan girl grit between clenched teeth, "I just can't stand that bitch! I don't think I've ever wanted to hurt someone as much as I do her!"

"Why did the announcer call Barbella the Backstreet Queen?" asked Gohan.

"It's her old nickname," answered Videl. "She was a shoplifter and home invader before I finally took her into custody. Our street fights were the stuff of schoolyard legends. I still have scars on my body from my earliest fights with her. Hellcat Vidy versus The Backstreet Queen, that's what they called us! She'd commit a crime, I'd pursue, she'd lure me into a back alley, and we'd fight until she ran away. This went on for about two years until her luck ran out. You know the rest…"

"I take it even then she was a real handful?" Gohan quipped.

"The worst," was Videl's curt reply. Videl's eyes narrowed dangerously as memories of her past dealings with Barbie came flooding back to her. "She wasn't just a vicious street fighter. She was a notorious arsonist! She had this chilling fascination with fire and gasoline. Once, she burned down an old couple's shop just because I thwarted her attempt at a break-in. She's living proof that even young people like us can be as nasty as the worst adults."
"I can only imagine what someone like her has been doing with Crane's teachings," her spouse remarked.

"Whatever it is, it's a sure bet that the police would never be able to handle her," said the petite fighter. "How much do you think she's changed since the first time we fought?"

"Hard to say," Gohan answered. "You and her are around the same level, but I won't be able to get a real estimate until she actually gets going. Fighting ki can fluctuate wildly in the heat of battle."

In the ring, Caroni eyed his opponent warily. Judging from the calculating gaze Barbella was giving him, he knew it was gonna be hell. This was a suicide errand and he knew it.

"As most of you are aware, Barbella has gained notoriety as the only fighter to publicly challenge and defeat the Satan Dojo's best!" the announcer informed the crowds. "Among them were both the Champ's daughter Videl and Caroni! How will the #1 student of the People's Champ fare in the upcoming match? Can he redeem himself?"

"I hope you're ready," Barbella remarked with a cold edge. "I'm going to make this nice and painful."

Caroni swallowed hard before shooting back, "I'm not gonna give you the satisfaction of seeing me forfeit!"

"Oh, Blondie…" she tsked, "Who said I wanted you to forfeit? If you quit, there's no fun in it for me."

"Let the match begin!"

As soon as the match started, Caroni turtled up. Bringing his forearms up in a tight guard, he steeled himself for a massacre.

Uncrossing her arms, Barbella paused one last time to shoot a malicious smile towards Videl and Gohan. It had the intended affect. If Videl still had short hair, it would've stood on end at the sadistic look her hated rival had just given her.

"Something tells me she intends to take her time with Caroni," Gohan remarked. "She's gonna make him pay for what I did."

Videl's eyes widened in panic. "Caroni! Don't play her game! Forfeit the match!"

It was too late. The next thing anyone knew, Barbella had seemingly phased out of existence only to reappear right behind Mr. Satan's former top student.

"W-What?!!" was all the blonde show fighter could stammer before a sharp, deep pain stabbed into his right shoulder. Behind him, Barbella held up an outstretched finger.

"CARONI!!" Videl screamed. She and Miss Pizza looked on in horror as their long-time dojo alumni fell forward in agonizing pain.

"Uh-Oh! Somehow Barbella disappeared into thin air before delivering a debilitating strike to Caroni from behind! How will the Satan Dojo's top disciple come back from this?"

Now on his hands and knees, Caroni rasped painfully on choked breath. "I-I can't breathe…!"

"That's the idea," Barbella stated smugly. The muscled female bent over to whisper chillingly in her
opponent's ear. "It should be harder for you to speak now. Wouldn't want you ending our fun too soon, eh?"

Caroni's eyes widened in abstract horror. He was both there but not there simultaneously. His mind wandered back to the Cell Games. It was then that he understood just how easy he got off that day…, how badly it could have ended had Cell decided to toy with him the way Barbella was now. The veil was lifted, and it was time to pay the piper.

Drawing back, the red-haired female let loose with a gut-wrenching hook kick to Caroni's kidney that folded Caroni like a dirty dishrag. Blood sprayed all across the ring floor as the blonde man's body bounced like a cushy meat sack to the edge of the ring. Just as he was about to go over the edge however, he felt himself sling-shotted by a powerful blow back towards the center. The man rolled onto his face as a puddle of blood stained the linoleum.

"Oops! Sorry about that," smirked Barbie in mock apology. "Got a little carried away. Don't worry though, I'll make it up to you."

"No! Caroni!" screamed Miss Pizza.

"That bitch…" seethed Gohan. Golden lightning began to course over the half-Saiyan's body as he fought to keep from going super right then. A great tremor rose through the earth as his power began to pulse uncontrollably. Beside him, Videl shook with barely bridled rage at the barbarism of her long-time enemy.

Stepping up to her downed opponent, Barbella reached down and yanked Caroni to his feet by the hair. His nose crushed, his now toothless mouth gaped fruitlessly as he struggled to breathe.

"This is a good look for you!" the former street thug remarked as she brought him around to face her. Suddenly, she shoved him back, causing him to stumble to the floor. Then out of the corner of her vision, she caught the enraged looks Videl and Gohan were shooting her. Smiling to herself, she turned to regard her onlookers.

"Enjoying the show?!" she hollered coyly. She then locked eyes with Gohan. "I may not be strong enough to make you pay for my humiliation, but I can always make someone else pay! Watch closely…"

"STOP IT, PLEASE!" sobbed Miss Pizza as she attempted to rush the ring. Before she could get anywhere, she felt the strong arms of Gohan wrap around her from behind.

"LET ME GO! LET ME GO!" screamed Mr. Satan's long-time agent.

Satisfied with herself, Barbella returned to the task at hand. Leveling an index finger at her downed opponent, Barbella began to gather ki onto a fine point at its tip before letting fly with the Crane School's signature assassination move.

"Now suffer!" she cackled. "Dodonpa!"

Gohan and Videl watched with horror as Barbella fired a thin, golden beam into Caroni's prostrate form. The beam connected with the man's right knee in a bright flash before blasting out the other end. The smell of charred flesh wafted through the air as the heat of the attack cauterized the wound.

Caroni had no way to prepare himself for what he was experiencing. The blonde man's back arched clear off the ring floor as pain exploded through his right leg. It agonized him to do so, but somehow through all the broken bones, blood, and phlegm, he managed to scream.
"Oh..! Barbella just fired some kind of finger laser into Caroni's leg! However she did it, it sure looks painful!"

"What's your problem?!" Gohan roared at the announcer. "Call the fight!"

"Uh… right!" nodded Mr. Firecracker. Before he could make the call however, Barbella launched a second ki blast into the man, this time aimed at something a little more sensitive.

All across the arena, a blood-chilling scream pierced the frothing background noise of the audience as Barbella's final ki strike collided with Caroni's crotch. Blood and chunks of scorched meat puddled at the linoleum below his roasted scrotum. The pain was so severe, the man passed out from the shock.

"Caroni is out! Caroni is out cold!" yelled the announcer. "Quick! Someone grab a stretcher!"

Up in the audience, Goku and the others looked on with morbid shock at Barbella's ruthlessness.

"Who blows a dude's balls off during a match?!!" demanded Sharner incredulously. The young man crossed his legs as the mere thought of having such a thing happen to him.

His resolve hardened, Goku rose from his seat.

"Where are you going, Dad?" asked Goten curiously.

"I'm going to take Caroni to see Dende." Bringing two fingers to his forehead, the Saiyan warrior disappeared.

"Where did he go?!" queried Erasa.

"He does that sometimes," was Chi Chi's curt response.

Her lips quirking in a sadistic smile, Barbella turned to leave the ring. On her way back to the fighter's lounge, she took a moment to regard Gohan and Videl. It took everything the two teens had to keep from jumping the red-haired Amazon right there.

"With any luck, your friend will experience phantom pains for the rest of his life," Barbella commented mockingly. "Next time, know your place and stay broken, little Miss Satan…"

"What's your deal?!!" growled a seething Gohan. "Why take things this far?!!"

"Your little slut ruined my life, Monkey Man," she stated. "I don't care how many people I have to destroy or how many saps get caught in the crossfire! I'm not quitting until I get back what's mine!"

Her eyes narrowing dangerously, Videl fired back, "You bitch…!"

Closing in on one another, Videl and Barbella circled each other like a couple of embattled lionesses from opposing prides. The two locked eyes in mutual disgust that ran deeper than any other grudge in the industry as they tested for weakness.

"Don't blame me for this little Miss Satan," Barbie chided mockingly. "You created me! You ruined my life and so many others because you, like your fraud father, were too busy living on your high-horse, secure in your cradle of power! You always set yourself up on the high road in being the law's lapdog when your own father was little better than us! You lived for years assuming no one could challenge you, believing that you were better than every other fighter your age just because you had a silver spoon shoved up your ass! You touted your abilities over your peers, never once appreciating
the fact that you had a head start on all of us just because your daddy made a killing off someone else's efforts! You had opportunities to grow and become strong that the rest of us poor people could only dream of having, opportunities you never deserved, and you still act like you're entitled to success. You really are just some spoiled little girl!"

"Unlike you, I learned from my moral failings!" Videl spat. "You have no place judging me!"

"I could say the same thing," Barbie returned in a heated tone. "Do you really think the police would've allowed you to be their little attack dog if it weren't for your fraud father? Unlike you, the gains I made as a fighter were those I earned without daddy's pocket book! After I was thrown out onto the streets, I had to survive in a world that never wanted me! I suffered in life only to suffer again in death! You murdered me, but I crawled back from Hell itself and left you and your father's best broken at my feet! Seeing someone like you have pride of any kind is an insult! Even if it takes the rest of my life, I will destroy everything you have!"

With that, the muscled redhead returned to the Crane Hermit's side, leaving an enraged Gohan and Videl in her wake.

"I hate her…" seethed the raven-haired girl through gnashing teeth. "I fuckin hate that pompous, back alley, STD-ridden shit-whore! She's gonna pay for what she did to both Caroni and me!"

"I'm still wrapping my head around the fact that that girl suffered as much as she did and still learned nothing," her husband remarked. "For the first time in eight years, I think I've found someone I pity more than Cell. At least Cell was programed to be a monster…"

Just then, the announcer's voice cut through the underlying tension like a knife.

"We will now start the last match of the quarterfinals and boy is it a doozey?! In this match we have the returning Champion of the 20th World Tournament King Choppa versus mysterious newcomer Unbridled Fury! Will King Choppa and Unbridled Fury please enter the ring?"

On cue, the two combatants walked side by side as they made their way onto the field. His face bearing the look of a man who'd seen too many winters, King Choppa lacked the visible zest of his earlier years.

"King Choppa, huh?" Gohan mused, stroking his chin, "There's an old name…"

His opponent by contrast carried himself with an air of confidence. As Unbridled Fury walked, his heavy armor and shackles rattled like tank treads. Because his features were covered by a face guard of sorts, his appearance had been a mystery since the start of the tournament. Just as he was about to enter the ring, he was stopped by Mr. Firecracker.

"You can't wear that in the ring," the bi-speckled announcer informed him. "You're gonna have to take it off if you want to compete."

Pausing, the armored fighter looked between Mr. Satan's longtime cheerleader and his opponent a few times before reaching up and undoing the latches on his helmet. Long blond hair cascaded down the man's back as the helmet and face guard were lifted from his head, revealing a young, twenty-something white male bearing green eyes and somewhat sharp features.

"I hope you're happy," said the man. "You just put a former Champ's life in danger."

"What do you…?" Mr. Firecracker was soon cut off as Unbridled Fury chucked the headpiece over his shoulder. A loud 'Thunk!' could be heard as the offending helmet struck the grass.
Both Videl and Barbella watched with interest from their prospective spots on the field.

"Woah…" mouthed Videl in amazement.

"Looks like he trains with weighted clothing too," Gohan observed. "His fighting ki just went through the roof!"

"Did you see how heavy that thing was?!" she asked with an exasperated voice. "He must be using three times as much weight as me!"

"Not like it means anything," her Saiyan spouse replied. "He won't get the full benefits from such training without knowing the inner philosophy behind it. He's clearly not used to using that much weight. Heck, he probably can't even fight with full dexterity using the amount you normally wear. He's got the right idea though…"

"His power level just jumped to 200."

Upon hearing this, the two teens spun around to find Royal Bureau of Investigation agent Wingle fingering a visor-like device covering one eye. Gohan's eyes widened in recognition.

"A scouter!?!" declared the half-breed incredulously. "How did you get your hands on something like that?"

Grabbing his suspenders, the short, middle-aged man smirked. "Stolen Capsule Corp tech. Enough said…"

"What's a scouter?" Videl questioned.

"It's a device that allows one to locate sources of energy," Gohan informed her. "It's been years since I've seen one though."

"And you'll be seeing a lot more of them real soon, kid," Wingle remarked with a wink.

On Dende's lookout, the current guardian of Earth knelt down to examine the blonde man Goku had brought to him.

"You're saying that this fella is your student?" queried the younger Namekian.

"Sort of," confirmed Goku. "I don't really see much potential in him though. Still, Gohan and Videl needed me to train whoever they could get."

"Hard to believe you wound up training Mr. Satan's clown car," Piccolo said somewhat jokingly.

"He did volunteer," Goku remarked with a sigh. "So Dende…, can you heal his damaged goodies?"

"I'll try, but you'll probably have to get Buu to do it if this doesn't work," Earth's guardian explained. "I've seen cooked hamburger meat that looked more salvageable."

Crouching down beside Mr. Satan's one-time disciple, Dende reluctantly placed his hands over the unconscious blonde's eviscerated package. Waved of soothing energy pulsed and thrummed as Earth's god set to work etching the broken man's crispy burnt genitals back to health.

Soon enough, Caroni began to stir. Looking down, the man squinted through blurry eyes to see a little green man fondling his junk.

"Ya know…" Dende started, "If I wasn't asexual, we'd be totally gay right now."
The next thing anyone knew, Caroni fainted.

"That went better than expected," Piccolo remarked.

"Sure did..." Dende quipped.

Back at the Satan City Staduim, Unbridled Fury continued to remove one piece of weighted armor after another. Heavy pauldrons, a breastplate, steel tassets, armbands, gauntlets, and leggings formed a pile behind the tall contestant, slowly revealing an intricate suit of cables, springs, and pulleys underneath.

"What is this...?" asked Mr. Firecracker in bewilderment. The longtime ZTV pundit ran a finger over some of the interlocking coils and mechanisms feeding out from the chest area into the arms and lower body.

"My power regulating suit," Fury answered bluntly. "It forces my core body to adapt to various levels of training by halving my strength."

"H-Half?!" stammered Jody. "Are you really gonna fight in that thing?! Wouldn't it be better if you took it off?"

"No," was the man's reply. "Half is all I require."

The announcer readjusted his glasses. "I see... wow... OK... hmm..."

Fury gave the announcer a telling smirk before joining his opponent in the ring. His arms crossed, King Choppa eyed the young man expectantly.

"I was wondering when we were gonna start, boy," the old former Champ remarked. "I thought I was gonna die a third time before we got this party started."

At this, the young man calling himself Unbridled Fury quirked a puzzled eyebrow. "Third time?"

"What does he mean by third time, Gohan?" Videl asked curiously.

"I guess King Choppa must have died by one of father's enemies once before," Gohan told his spouse. "My father used to fight this guy in the prelims back in the day so it wouldn't surprise me if that were the case."

"The man's fighting power rose to over 500 when he removed all his armor," Agent Wingle observed, fiddling with his scouter's scanners. "He's presumably far stronger than King Piccolo or your father were when they fought at the 23rd World Tournament. King Choppa's paltry 190 is tensile by comparison."

"How high is my power level?" Videl asked.

"Give me a moment..." Looking in the direction of Gohan's young spouse, the RBI agent held his finger on the scanner switch until the scouter visor's cursor locked onto her energy signature. When the reading finally registered on the machine, a whistle was the man's only outward reaction.

"It's reading 4850," the agent told them. "It's grown a tad since the last time the eggheads at the Interior Ministry measured it. Just for reference, the average power reading for an adult human is about 5."

"Holy Shit...!" breathed an exasperated Videl. The girl didn't have long to dwell on this info before
"As the older diehards among you probably know, King Choppa once held the very title worn by my good friend Mr. Satan today! Due to his age however, it's understandable that many experts are skeptical of his attempts at a career comeback."

"You keep saying that," rumbled the one-time Champ in a gruff voice. "I do this not for myself but for my newborn grandson, Uub."

"His opponent on the other hand is a veritable neophyte! An amateur in every sense of the word! How will Unbridled Fury stack up against a man who is said to have defeated all of his opponents in the 20th World Martial Arts Tournament without being touched?"

"This is where the rubber meets the road…" Fury remarked, fingering his coveted suit."Let's find out if my invention is all it's cracked up to be."

"Let the match begin!"

Right from the get-go, King Choppa leapt clear across the ring, his yellow sheik robes fluttering around him as he tried to connect with a flying jump kick. Much to his dismay, his attack met nothing but air.

"Where did he go?" From his past experience in fighting Goku, the dark skinned man knew he was in a world of trouble. Trying to locate his opponent, he flitted around frantically. "Come out and fight me!"

Choppa nearly jumped out of his cloths as his opponent seemingly materialized into existence right in front of him. "Is that really your wish?"

Roaring in anger, King Choppa threw a spinning heel kick at his young adversary. A resounding slap of flesh on flesh could be heard throughout the ring as Unbridled Fury blocked the blow with a simple forearm!

"You're going to have to kick it up a notch if you wanna get through me," said the suited newcomer with self-assurance.

Darting back, King Choppa fell into his traditional yoga-based fighting stance, the same one he had honed in the wake of his first death at the hands of Tambourine so long ago.

"Twice I've faced the Valley of the Shadow of Death!" the one-time champion declared. "These are the words I've spoken to King Yemma when last I saw him. Those who have died cannot fear loss for they have already lost!"

"Well said…" his opponent smirked coyly.

With that, both combatants phased out of sight with Unbridled Fury leading the way and King Choppa in hot pursuit. Moving faster than any normal human could follow, the two men passed in and out of hyper speed. The clapping sounds of strikes and blocks resonated throughout the field as the two contestants, at least to the average man, seemingly battled on equal terms.

"That Unbridled Fury guy is leading Choppa around by the nose," Videl noted, her eyes flitting about at high speed as she watched the fight. "This fight's almost as one-sided as Caroni's fight with Barbella."

"Only without the malicious intent," added Gohan. "I don't sense any bloodlust in their ki, so the
match will end on a high note. That being said, Unbridled Fury will at least give Barbella a warm-up when they fight."

Unbeknownst to the two teens, Jody Firecracker overheard them.

"Wait a second?! You two can actually see them?!

"Remarkable, isn't it?" was Videl's blunt answer.

"I'll say…" breathed the bi-speckled man. "How're they able to move so fast? And for that matter, how were you?"

"It's the product of an ancient training regimen going back many millennia," Gohan answered. "I can tell you though that neither of them hold a candle to some of the monsters I've seen…"

"Videl, tell me…" the man urged, "The kind of fighting those two are doing now… It's just like the Cell Games. It's just like the battle between that one fella and Majin Buu over West Metro. I had my suspicions at first but I need to know, did your father really beat Cell?"

Casting a look of shame towards the ground, the daughter of the Champ uttered a quiet, "No…" Off to the side, Gohan let out a cough.

"Have you known all along?"

"I had my suspicions, but I didn't really find out until after my fight with Spopovich at the previous tournament."

"I want to know the full story," said the man as he turned back to the match at hand. "We'll talk about this later…"

Videl cringed upon hearing this. Jody Firecracker was a well-respected ZTV legend. If she was gonna tell him anything, it would have to be off the record.

Back in the ring, King Choppa had taken to fighting after images of his opponent. The dark-skinned warrior darted two and fro, delivering knife hands that cleaved through visual doppelgangers in a veritable fool's errand. To him, it seemed as if there were dozens of Unbridled Furys starring, mocking him as he continued to reach for something that simply wasn't there.

"You're running out of steam old man," the blonde fighter remarked dismissively. "Surely, a former champion of the world can do better than this!"

Gripping his knees shakily, King Choppa took a moment to catch his breath. Smiling to himself, the older fighter figured that if he were gonna use it, now was the time. His self-assured smile did not go amiss.

Bridled Fury quirked an eyebrow. "What are you so happy about?"

"I've got one last trump card," replied the one-time Champ. "After that, I'll let you have this match."

"Let's see it then!" his suited opponent coaxed.

"Have a taste of my Hasshu-ken!" roared the former champion. Faster than the human eye could follow, the man surged forward, and threw out an intricate set of super-fast fists, knife-hands, and palm strikes that created an optical illusion for anyone not fast enough to follow that gave him the appearance of having eight arms.
Easily finding the intervals between the man's ancient hand techniques, Unbridled Fury side-stepped, weaved, parried, and ducked shot after shot. Finally, the young man reached up and casually caught the one-time champion's wrists in mid-strike.

"My word…" Choppa uttered breathlessly, his face one of morbid shock.

Still holding Choppa's wrists, Unbridled Fury brought him closer. "You lost this fight before you were ever born. You represent the best of the old and only the old. I represent the best of two worlds."

The fire died in Choppa's eyes upon hearing this. Yanking his wrists free from the grip of his far younger opponent, the man turned to announcer.

"I forfeit!" hollered the one-time champion.

"And there have it folks!" blared Mr. Firecracker. "King Choppa has thrown in the towel, making Unbridled Fury the winner!"

"Why am I not surprised?" Choppa groaned with a huff. "Ever since I lost to Son Goku, my life has been one long string of tragedies and setbacks."

"You're too old for this kind of thing anyway," Fury remarked matter-of-factly. "You had a good dream, but we all wake up eventually. Go live in peace. Enjoy your retirement."

The one-time Champ glowered at the suited youth. "One day, you'll get where I am. It might happen sooner rather than later."

With that, the two men left the ring.

Off to the side, Videl did a few pre-fight warm-ups.

"It looks like you're fighting Tao next," Gohan commented.

"I've heard a lot about this guy," the petite fighter said, touching her toes. "Both from you and from Master Roshi."

Gohan grimaced. "Hopefully, he was being honest about wanting to go legal."

Videl's eyes narrowed somewhat. "He probably had a hand in training Barbella. We'll know soon enough…"

Chapter End Notes

In this story, I've already done several things or made serious attempts at things that are either completely original or have been done half-heartedly in the past by other authors. I had Gohan move in with his girlfriend and her father whereas all the other authors I've known have Videl moving in with Gohan. Second, I've only read one other fanfiction where the idea of Mr. Satan training like Goku and Krillin is taken seriously and it was a one-shot. Actually making a serious attempt at this was fun. Third, I've only read one other fanfiction where the psychological effects of Majin Buu's massacre on the everyday people of Earth following their resurrection are even taken into account, and those effects weren't even expanded on. A calamity like that would cause society to
change and not necessarily for the better. I mean… look at human history in the real world.

I've yet to see a fanfiction on this site where Videl is actually in character on the issue of Gohan's decision to stop training. Yes, Videl would want to be a supportive girlfriend, but Videl, having died at the hands of Super Buu herself, would not have allowed Gohan to put everyone in danger by quitting again. His quitting the first time contributed to them all getting killed by Buu, and Videl has a history of getting Gohan off his ass and into the game. Someone who died once because of Gohan's decision to slack off would not take kindly to Gohan repeating the same mistake when by the end of the series he's easily the most powerful non-fused thing in the universe. She would have expected better from him, especially regarding the safety of the people she's sworn to protect ever since she started fighting crime.

I also haven't seen a post-Buu AU where the memory erasure wish wasn't made where Gohan wasn't a Gary Stu. Everyone discovering the truth about Mr. Satan isn't something that would end well for Gohan or Videl much less the rest of the Z-gang. Let's be real here! Videl loves her father (She calls him 'Daddy.' What does that tell you about how close they are?), so him getting caught in his lies and getting into real legal trouble would cause more than their fair share of problems for her. Her last name would likely become an albatross around her neck for the rest of her days.

Lastly, I think I'm the first fan fiction author to actually have Gohan and Videl form a civil union before they formally get married. I think it puts a fresh spin on their relationship.
“Those were some high-intensity fights, eh folks!?” cried Jodi Firecracker. “With the victory of newcomer Unbridled Fury over one-time Champ King Choppa, we will now move on to the semifinals!”

“Yeah, they were high-intensity!” hollered one particularly overzealous spectator. “Too bad your play-by-play isn’t!”

“WHO THE FUCK SAID THAT?!” demanded Mr. Satan’s long-time media cheerleader, forgetting the mic was still on.

“I did asshole!”

Ripping his tie off and throwing it to the ground, Mr. Firecracker threw all professionalism out the window. He was clearly playing off the energy of the crowd.

“You want play-by-play?!?” the man screamed, not so much at the rude spectator but to work the audience. This had the added effect of whipping the crowds into a chaotic frenzy, their cries and cheers of approval reaching a deafening crescendo that shook the very foundations of the stadium as much as any ki blast.

“Fine! I’ll give you FUCKIN PLAY-BY-PLAY!!! It’s the semifinals of the 8th Annual Satan City Tournament!!! Its Lollapalooza baby, so grab a bag of popcorn, open a brewski, kick back, pop that fat bitch sittin next to ya on the ass, and prepare to have YOUR BALLS KNOCKED OFF!!!”

Off to the side, Gohan watched the ZTV pundit’s whacky antics with a deadpanned expression. Shaking her head, Videl pinched the bridge of her nose at the sheer level of hucksterism her father’s favorite cheerleader could bring to the table.

“Well, at least he isn’t drunk…” muttered the Satan girl. “From what I’ve heard, the guy’s been hitting the sauce pretty hard since Majin Buu.”

“One could hardly tell…” was Gohan’s wry response.

“In our first of two semifinal matches, we have Satan City’s resident crime fighter and daughter of current Champion, Mark Satan, versus the world’s most notorious assassin, Mercenary Toa!!! It’s the law vs. an outlaw! Would Videl Son and Tao Pai-Pai please enter the ring?”

Side by side, the two combatants waltzed into the ring. Standing only as high as Tao’s chest, Videl’s petite form looked almost like a child next to that of the tall former assassin and six-time World Martial Arts Champion.

“Go Videl!!!” cheered Miss Pizza. “Show’em some girl power!!”

“Show’em whatcha got, honey!” Gohan called out.

“Understand this,” spoke Tao, his voice betraying no emotion. “Even though I’ll soon be working for both you and the son of Goku, I intend to use this match to showcase everything I can bring to the table. From what I observed in your earlier battle with that cultist, I know full well that I have no
chance of winning our fight. That being said, I want you to see this fight as my job application.”

The two contestants assumed their positions on either side of the ring. Videl for her part could tell that the younger brother of her master’s long-time rival was being up-front about the vast disparity in overall power between them. Anyone with decent ki-sensing abilities would be able to tell. The pony-tailed man was strong by human standards sure, but his strength was still barely greater than that of Master Roshi’s or the Crane Hermit’s.

“You trained Barbella, right?” she asked.

“I’ve trained several prominent assassins in my time, chief among them former Champion Tien Shenhan,” answered the brother of Crane. “As one of only three living former students of Mutaito, I have lived for over 250 years, and in that time I have developed a grasp on esoteric martial arts rivaled only by that of my older brother and Muten Roshi. Be warned however, that I did not completely waste my last life as a cyborg.”

Videl smirked. “I’m sure.”

“Like my one-time student, I have developed a new variation of the Crane style, one I have not had time to pass on to Barbella. It was a contribution to the ancient martial arts I developed as my answer to Goku. Sadly, the disparity between Goku’s abilities and mine became so great that I had no hope of beating him with it. My fight with you will offer me a rare practical application for my secret ability.”

Upon hearing this, the petite girl’s interest perked. “Now you’ve got me curious! Not sold mind you, but definitely curious!”

“Let the match begin!”

The two fighters fell into their respective stances. Videl assuming the stance of Piccolo she’d learned from Gohan, spread her feet wide and stretched her hands out in front with one clawed atop the back of the other. Bringing his left fist to his side and holding his right guard towards his opponent, Tao dropped into a wide horse stance that was the standard of the Crane style. With that, the two martial artists were off!

Since this match was more of a job interview than anything, Videl decided to pull her punches from the get-go. Pushing her ki levels down to that of her opponent, she dashed forward.

Tao on the other hand decided to take a more conservative and uncharacteristically defensive approach. In a fight between the three jins, the defensive and the neutral could be a seasoned fighter’s greatest combative starting point. Six World Tournament Championships and 150 years of experience in the killing field taught him this.

Videl’s nerve strikes came like a torrential downpour on the former assassin. Combative insight cued Tao to the subtle tension the raven-haired girl still showed in her shoulders and elbows with every strike. That, and the man noted the girl was still a neophyte at controlling her own strength.

“It looks as if Satan City’s resident crime-stopper is intent on finishing this quick!”

“She’s not used to this style…” thought the younger brother of Crane as he parried and redirected many hundreds of shots in the space of a minute. ‘Could she be using our match for practice? This isn’t the style of any Turtle School alumni I’ve faced before…”

“Time out!” Tao called, making the universally accepted gesture.
Videl quirked an eyebrow in surprise. “Huh?!”

“Well folks…, this is unexpected!” began Mr. Firecracker. “Contestant Tao is calling for a time out!”

Outside the ring, Tao’s brother, the Crane Hermit, gaped in shocked disbelief at his younger brother’s lack of aggressiveness.

“Tao! What’s your deal?!” demanded the long-time rival of Roshi. “This isn’t a damned slumber party!”

Ignoring his older brother’s typical crassness, the more reserved former hitman walked up and grabbed Videl’s left elbow and shoulder. This got a few raised eyebrows not just from Videl but from Gohan, Miss Pizza, and the Crane Hermit as well.

“What’s he doing?” asked Mr. Satan’s long-time agent.

“He must be conducting some kind of appraisal,” Gohan guessed.

“I’ve noticed from watching you fight that you still haven’t completely mastered nerve strikes,” he noted, examining Videl’s upper arm.

“It’s that obvious, eh?” Her tone carried a hint of disappointment.

“Not overtly, no. The number of people who would have noticed could probably be counted on one hand. Insight makes a teacher, but experience makes a master. My first guess is that you’re new to the style you’re using.”

“You can tell all that just from fighting me?” Videl queried curiously.

“Only because you’re holding back,” was Tao’s answer. “If you weren’t holding back your power for the sake of our match, you would’ve ended this right out the gate. If you don’t mind my asking, who taught you that style?”

“My husband,” she answered. “He learned it from his first teacher and thought it would suit me better for the kind of fighting we’ll be doing.”

“So this is the style of Goku’s son?”

Videl crossed her arms as she regarded the tall man. “His favorite.”

Tao nodded thoughtfully. “Barbella’s only been training under us for a few months so I haven’t really had time to teach her the finer art of exploiting acupressure points. I also noticed earlier that you can use bakujutsu. That’s my school’s signature move. You must have trained for years to master it.”

Videl chuckled. “It might surprise you to know that I didn’t even know what ki was little more than eight months ago. As for learning how to fly, it only took me about a week.”

“O-One week?!” stammered the former assassin. “Who the hell was your teacher?!”

“My husband,” she answered again with a shrug. “He taught me most of what I know about ki, though Master Roshi and Krillin Chestnut gave me my more fundamental training in the ancient arts.”

“I did notice that you’re wearing the kanji of the Turtle School,” Tao pointed out. “Would you
consider Muten Roshi your actual master?”

“Yes,” Videl answered. “My common law husband is acting as his surrogate while we’re attending school. He’s really modest about it, but he’s almost as good as Roshi when it comes to teaching.”

“One week…” muttered Tao with a shake of his head. “It took Tien over a year to master levitation.”

“Excuse me?”

The two combatants turned to see Mr. Firecracker standing there.

“Are you two gonna fight any time soon?” he asked in a mildly impatient tone. “These people look like they’re ready to start a riot.”

“Oh my gosh! Sorry about that…!” Videl stammered sheepishly.

“It looks like we’ll have to belay with the banter,” said the former mercenary.

Once again, the match resumed with Videl retaking the offensive. Pulling back, the brunette launched a devastating hook kick to Tao’s midsection. In turn, Tao brought up a knee to intercept. The two combatants threw a cross-punch counter exchange of hard rights/hard lefts that forced them apart only to have Videl jump right back in like a bull terrier in pit fight.

Rushing at the old Crane assassin, the Satan girl drew back to deliver a hard left. Just as she was about to connect however, Mercenary Tao fell backwards, allowing her follow-through to carry harmlessly overhead. Using his remaining momentum, the former killer flopped onto his upper back and neck before spinning in place with his legs splayed out akin to a break-dancer.

Bracing herself, Videl brought up a hasty cross-guard as one, two, three powerful kicks connected. Finally with the fourth, her guard was blown away leaving her face wide open for the fifth and last spinning kick. The force behind the kick spun the girl around, sending her face-first to the floor.

The clash over, the two fighters jumped to their feet and began to slowly circle each other as they eyed for weaknesses.

“Again everyone, it seems neither fighter is giving an inch, though I’d have to say that Tao won that last heated exchange!”

“I can definitely see why you were regarded as the world’s greatest killer,” the petite brunette commented in vague praise.

“A title I now wish I’d never earned,” the man returned ruefully. “Those who live by the sword are destined to die by it.”

Suddenly, as if responding to some unseen cue, the two vastly mismatched opponents leaped high into the air where they began to exchange hundreds of toe-kicks, knees, elbow strikes, finger jabs, palm strikes, knife hands, knuckle punches, and hard straights.

Finally, the two combatants revved up a spinning heel kick that hurled the Turtle and Crane alumni apart. Videl and Tao fell a full seventy feet before landing lightly on either side of the ring. The two didn’t have long to rest before again, Videl sped forward in a burst of hyper speed.

Meanwhile, outside the ring Barbella was again antagonizing Gohan.

“It must really blow chunks having such a parasite for a wife…” the red-haired female remarked
dismissively. The muscled woman sashayed around Gohan in sensuous circles like a shark closing in for the kill. “For you to wake up every morning with that thing in your arms, you’d have to have about as much self-worth as she does.”

“I take it Crane taught you how to read minds or something?” the half-Saiyan guessed. “It would explain how you know so much about Videl and her father.”

“No, but the Crane Hermit told me enough.” Barbella smiled in a self-assured manner. “When I beat *little* Miss Satan, when I tortured her within an inch of retirement, I felt such elation from living out my wildest fantasies. It wasn’t till after I’d trained under Master Shen did I really see how big a favor I did the world. I’m feeling pretty damned good about myself…”

“You’re sick in the head!” Gohan spat.

“Perhaps…” said Barbie, “But it doesn’t change what your little cock-sock is. Unlike her, I don’t wear a mask. I don’t delude myself into believing I’m anything more than a common street thug. I’m a monster and I know it! I don’t barricade myself in an ivory tower while talking down to everyone else, and I certainly don’t pretend to be a warrior for justice when her father is little better than some of the crooks she’s brought in! The apple never falls far from the tree.”

“You have no place judging anyone! Videl’s father has done some real good in the world, and Videl has always used her abilities to help others! Don’t pretend like you don’t know it!”

“All the while, her father was busy lining his pockets,” countered the muscled woman. “There’s no way someone as close to Mark Satan as she is could deny knowing about that fraud’s true colors! After all I’ve learned from Master Shen, I realize there’s no way Mr. Satan could have beaten Cell or Majin Buu. I took great pleasure in breaking her spirit the last time we fought, and I’ll enjoy doing it again…”

“You will try…” Gohan sneered. The half-breed glared at the woman as she turned to walk away.

Back in the ring, things were not going so well for Tao. He was beginning to tire, and the Satan girl wasn’t even breathing heavy. Between Videl being a southpaw and her female anatomy, Tao quickly found himself facing the stark realization that fighting Videl would have proven to be an uphill affair even if the power disparity didn’t exist. In all his thousands of fights, only a small portion of those were against left-handed opponents. Establishing a good rhythm against the short girl was a veritable nightmare, and all he could do was use his superior reach to keep her at a distance. It was a common problem met by standard-handed boxers and other hand-to-hand specialists. Most went their entire careers without having to fight a southpaw. Videl’s female anatomy, below the average height of a teenaged girl, threw off his acupressure point sense. He’d never had to use it against a female opponent due to the rarity of female fighters much less those who had surpassed the wall of humanity.

“I gotta know,” mouthed Videl between strikes, “Am I gonna see this new style of yours during our match or what?”

“Observe,” spoke the cofounder of the Crane School. The man held out his palms to demonstrate something, a something that went completely over Videl’s head.

“What am I looking for here?” she asked, clearly bewildered.

“Allow me to show you…” Suddenly, the former mercenary surged forward and clamped down on both of Videl’s wrists in a powerful lock.
"What the-?!" The petite fighter’s mind went blank as she felt an excruciating pain shoot through her lower arms. A slight popping sound could be heard accompanied by the adolescent girl’s shrill, agonized scream.

Holding his opponent fast, the former killer delivered a powerful drop-kick to Videl’s chest that put the raven-haired girl on her backside.

“VIDEL!!” screamed a clearly distressed Gohan.

Sitting up, Videl examined her wrists. Much to her horror, the top layer of skin had been torn clean off the back of her hands and forearms.

“Don’t worry,” assured the brother of Crane. “Your strength allowed you to get out of that relatively unscathed. You’re not seriously injured.”

“What did you do?!” Videl demanded hotly. Turning her forearms, the girl continued to look upon the ghastly disturbing handiwork of the former killer.

“It’s a damage modifier,” Tao explained. “It relies on a reconfiguring of the histo-compatability process that takes place between the cells in the human skin and muscle fibers. It eliminates drag so that your hands, elbows, and feet can pass through any substance. It in part removes the edge that ki users acquire from the natural expansion of ki inside their bodies as a passive defensive condition. The increase in damage from a rigid strike can be increased by as much as half against an opponent of equal standing through the application of this principle. I call it the ‘dolphin variation’ of the Crane style or ‘Flood Rush’ ability. It was my answer to Goku!”

Coming to a stand, Videl reassumed her starting stance. “OK… That’s a new one on me!”

Sporting a shit-eating grin, Mercenary Tao mirrored her action with his own battle stance. “That’s the difference between a hard style and a soft style. The soft styles typically cause more bodily destruction, but they’re so mundane in showmanship that hardly anyone takes them seriously anymore.”

“A lot like Master Roshi’s training,” Videl added with a sly smile. “The training may seem mundane, but it’s the underlying philosophy that ultimately wins out over all the showy stuff.”

“Moutaito’s words,” Tao grinned. “I guess this means I get the job…"

“Oh, you are definitely hired!” she beamed.

Unbeknownst to either of them, Tao’s older brother the Crane Hermit heard everything that was said.

“Hired!?” screamed the old rival of Roshi, “What the hell is she talking about, Tao?!”

Gohan stepped forward. “Yea…, we’re sort of undermanned so we hired your brother to help us train some new students.”

“IS THIS TRUE BROTHER?!” demanded Crane.

“Weren’t you the one who said money is money regardless of who’s paying it?” Tao defended.

“YOU TRAITOR!!”

In a fit of grieved betrayal, the Crane Hermit pointed a finger at his younger brother’s back before letting lose with the signature move of his invention.
“DODONPA!!” The thin golden beam of ki shot forward, set on a collision course with the back of Tao’s head.

Feeling the approaching blast’s subtle effect on the surrounding air, the younger Crane brother swayed his head to the side, allowing the cutting blast to soar past him. The beam continued to carry forward on a trajectory for its’ new and completely off-guard target.

Videl had no time to prepare herself as the ki-beam shot past her chin and cut her right pig-tail clean off. The scent of burned hair wafted to her nose as the now severed pigtail fell to the ring floor in a singed tassel.

Gohan covered his mouth in shock. “Uh Oooooh…” His reaction mirrored that of the audience at large as boos and jeers rang out from the stands.

“Folks, this has never happened before…” the announcer commented. “It looks as if Mercenary Tao’s handler has attacked his opponent with a beam attack of some sort! Due to Tao’s history of foul play in a previous world tournament, we may have to disqualify the man for nefarious misconduct!”

The old Crane Hermit trembled with impotent rage at his inability to bean his younger sibling from behind.

Looking down at what remained of her long-time iconic hairstyle, Videl Son shook with barely restrained rage. Her fists were clenched so tightly, her knuckles turned white, and her face began to twitch irritably. She was soon brought out of this state by the unexpected words of her opponent.

“There’s no need to disqualify me,” Tao groaned. “I forfeit…”

“Oh-ho! Contestant Tao has forfeited the match!” blared Mr. Firecracker. “This makes Videl Son the winner by default!”

“W-What?!” screamed the furious Satan girl disbelievingly.

“Why so surprised, Mrs. Son?” asked the pony-tailed man. “My brother has already decided that he has no intention of honoring our fight. Consider it a good faith payment.”

The former killer then reached down and, lifting his tunic, drew a field knife from it’s sheath that he promptly tossed handle-first to the young wife of Gohan. Videl fumbled with the edged weapon briefly before securing a hold on the handle. She looked at the old mercenary with a puzzled expression.

“Use it to sever your other pig-tail,” he told her as he turned to leave the ring. “You wouldn’t imagine how many times I’ve had my pony-tail torn off in the heat of battle. Keep it as a souvenir of our match.”

Wide-eyed, Videl nodded a quick “Right!” before with a grimace, reaching up to slice off her remaining pig-tail. She now once again sported the same shoulder-length hair she had a month before.

“That was unexpected,” Gohan commented.

“What was?” she asked.

“The Tao I met would’ve never shown courtesy of any sorts,” the teen Saiyan pointed out. “I guess death really did change him. Leave it to the despair caused by someone far worse to change one of
the most heartless men in existence.

“A rare bright spot in an increasingly hopeless world…” his wife noted.

A distance away, the two Crane brothers began to bicker heatedly. Barbella sat by and watched with mild amusement as her two teachers went at it.

“What part of ‘This is our last chance!’ do you not get, Shen?!” Tao demanded. “We’re not gonna get a second chance at putting our lives in order!”

“At the expense of what?!” the Crane Hermit pressed hotly, “Our pride?! I’d rather die than side with the students of the man who ruined my life!”

“Your last life!” corrected his younger brother. “It’s sad really… Even in death you refused to learn!”

“There’s a big difference between learning and selling out!” the rival of Roshi screamed.

“Since when did you ever care about selling out?” asked Tao sarcastically.

“Since Roshi became part of the equation!” Crane fired back.

“No wonder Tien left,” Tao remarked. “You’ll destroy us both just to accomplish something that’ll never help us! After Moutaito died, I stayed with you because you are the elder brother! I followed you into Hell once, but I refuse to let you drag me through the mud anymore! As the co-founder of the Crane School, I’ll continue our teachings through a surrogate and accomplish more towards making a name for our school than you ever did!”

Anger and betrayal rushed through the aged master. “Your leaving me?! After all we’ve been through together?!”

“Why not?” countered his younger brother. “You’ve already decided that your revenge on Roshi is more important than our second chance at life! You’re on your own!”

The pony-tailed man took a moment to briefly regard his charge. “Barbella!”

“What?” she ground out.

“If you wish to continue your studies under me, you’ll know where to find me.”

With that, the former Crane assassin turned to exit the stadium entirely, leaving his older brother screaming his name. Just as he was leaving the field however, a freshly healed Caroni ran out into the arena.

Upon seeing the man she’d castrated in her last match walking around as if nothing had happened, Barbella did a double-take.

“WHAT THE HELL IS THIS SHIT?!” screamed the muscled redhead. Her mind was left reeling. Guys didn’t just walk around as if it were Tuesday after getting their nads blown off. It just didn’t make sense…

“Caroni! You’re Ok!” Miss Pizza beamed happily.

“Somehow…” he muttered.

“It’s good to have you back in the saddle, Caroni!” smiled Videl.
“I don’t really know what happened,” said the blond grappler. “All I remember is some little green man touching my junk. It was really weird!”

Giggling, Videl and Gohan flashed knowing looks at one another. Caroni couldn’t shake the feeling he was being left out of some inside joke. Before he could delve any further however, the voice of the announcer filled the air.

“For the last semifinal match, we have Barbella versus Unbridled Fury! It’s the Backstreet Queen vs. newcomer as these two titans mix it up to decide who will fight Videl Son in the final round of the Satan City Tournament! Will Barbella and Unbridled Fury please enter the ring?”

Side by side, the two fighters swaggered up onto the platform. Next to the towering form of Unbridled Fury, even a comparatively tall female like Barbie seemed like a small child.

“I guess we’ll finally get to see what Barbella’s really capable of,” Gohan said. “Watch this fight carefully, hun.”

Fixing her gaze on the object of her hate, Videl only acknowledged her spouse’s words with a curt nod.

Barbella wore a blissfully aloof smile that spoke volumes about her confidence going into her next match. Her only reason for participating in this tournament was so she could humiliate the Satan Dojo, so she could destroy her long-time nemesis’ credibility and by extension her second life after Buu. In the face of this, nothing else mattered. The prize money, though great, was only an afterthought.

By contrast, Unbridled Fury wasn’t so unconcerned. He’d seen the attrition the red-haired Amazon had brought against her opponent in the quarterfinals, and he had no intention of going easy on her.

The two fighters assumed their positions on either side of the ring. Finally, Barbella acknowledged her opponent.

“Listen bub!” she spoke with an air of arrogance, “You and I both know how this is gonna go. I’m only interested in the little Satan bitch, so why don’t you just save us both some trouble by forfeiting. This is your last chance to walk away in one piece so I suggest you take it!”

“Quit?!” Fury scoffed. “Not before I get to showcase what I can really do!”

Barbella shook her head in mock pity. “Don’t say I didn’t warn ya…”

“Let the match begin!”

Lacking formal training, Unbridled Fury took no stance. Seeing no need for one, Barbella mirrored his actions. All her opponent had to do was blink, and she’d have this.

Then it happened! The two vanished. All anyone could hear throughout the field were the thunderous sounds of blows beyond count and the whooshing sound of air as their movements, faster than the human eye could follow, stirred the atmosphere.

To anyone who could see, it was clear that Barbella was in control from the start. The precision of her finger jabs, the power behind her blows, and the sheer amount of kinetic energy she was able to bring to bear upon her opponent’s medial line was nothing short of staggering.

For Unbridled Fury, this fight was the complete opposite of his last fight. In the realm of the superhuman, he was only beginning to understand just how much ground existed that he had yet to
unlock. His lack of formal training coupled with the massive distance between himself and the red-haired woman left him being strung about like a small child. For the life of him, he could not understand how an opponent so much smaller than him could out-leverage him so easily.

“If I don’t take things up a notch, it’ll be my balls getting blown off!” grimaced the tall contestant.

“Hold it!” he choked out.

“It seems that Unbridled Fury has also called for a time out!” screamed Jody Firecracker. “Really though?! Is this gonna be a thing from now on?!”

Smirking wildly, Barbella stopped in her tracks. “Ready to run off with your tail between your legs?”

“No,” Fury answered. “I just wanna drop a little more deadweight is all.”

“Go ahead,” she implored in a mocking tone. “Be my guest! It won’t change the outcome.”

Smiling, the tall, lanky man bent down and unlocked the clasps holding the oversized leg irons in place. The offending restraints fell back onto the linoleum floor with a resounding ‘Clang!’ Bringing a key out of some hidden compartment, he then started on his spring-loaded cable suit. With a quick ‘Snap-Hiss!’ the mesh of wires, coils, and pulleys tumbled from his body.

Outside the ring, Gohan and Videl continued to watch intently as events unfolded.

“Did you feel that?” asked the Saiyan.

Videl gave a curt nod. “That Bridled Fury guy just got a big power boost. The pressure behind his ki just doubled.”

Quirking a puzzled eyebrow, Caroni looked at the two unionized teens curiously. “What are you two talking about?”

“That fella’s fighting power just jumped from little over 500 to over 1100!” Agent Wingle noted.

“It won’t help him though,” Gohan commented. “He came into this fight thinking raw strength alone would win the day. Without proper insight, he’ll just be a more resilient punching bag.”

Videl let out a deep sigh. “Yeah… He’s done for. What is Barbella’s reading, Wingle?”

Pushing the toggle switch, the RBI special agent locked onto the red-haired woman’s energy signature. “It keeps fluctuating between 4850 and 5200.”

“She’s toying with him,” Gohan growled.

“That little woman of yours will never beat Barbella!” came a shrill voice. The whole group whipped around to see the Crane Hermit shuffling in their direction.

The side of Videl’s face twitched in agitation. “Look asshole! I’m this close to taking this knife Tao gave me and returning the favor for what you did to my hair. Now scram!”

The long-time rival of Roshi, reached up and held his iconic Crane-wing hairstyle protectively. “Y-You wouldn’t dare!”

“Try me!” she ground out angrily. The raven-haired teen skulked threateningly towards the old man. “Better yet, maybe I’ll have my husband here hold your raggedy ass down while I use you as a practice dummy for hair-care!”
Screaming like an eight-year old girl, Crane made a break for the fighter’s lounge.

“Pfft, coward…”

Back in the ring, Barbella and Unbridled Fury once again resumed their fight, or at least it would be a fight if the tall young man could catch her.

“ARRGH!!! STAND STILL!!” Fury bellowed as he threw wide hay-makers. Each blow passed through one after image after another, leaving the man to stumble fruitlessly.

“As you wish…” sneered the muscled female. Just as Unbridled Fury took one more powerful swing, the redhead held up her right hand and caught the seemingly powerful blow as if it were child’s play.

Unbridled Fury gaped in morbid shock at his opponent’s strength. Not only had this red-haired young woman caught his strike without effort, but she’d also canceled out any of the carry-through that would have rattled any normal man. The power of his blows could level a forest and yet this woman nullified that power with nary a grunt.

“Sad…” Barbie remarked, shoving his arm away. “You thought just because you beat someone as strong as my own master that you were gonna up-stage me? Laughable! Little Miss Satan is mine…”

Jumping back, Unbridled Fury brought his fists to his sides. Throwing his head back, the man screamed to the heavens with truly unbridled fury. His body shook with rage as a bright green battle aura began to manifest itself.

A blissfully unconcerned smirk graced Barbie’s features. “That got him going… Give me my entertainment.”

Unbridled Fury blazed forward in a burst of super speed, letting into his sadistic opposition’s face with one wide swing after another, the force of which shook the very ring down to the arena’s foundation. Much to his horror, Barbella continued to smile as if she felt none of it.

“Nice…” she chuckled. “I should let you fist-fuck me.”

The female’s disdainful attitude caused something to snap inside her opponent. His battle aura blazing ever more brightly, the man let out a feral scream as he leapt up and came down on the woman with a show-stopping axe-handle.

Her derisive smile never wavering, Barbella stood fast as the blow connected with the power of a mortar round. At her feet, a wide pressure crater formed from the sheer tectonic forces Unbridled Fury brought to bear.

Unbridled Fury wasn’t finished though. Like a man possessed, he used the momentum of the axe-handle to spring-board his violence-drunk form into the air high above his opponent. From there, the man raised his right fist above his head before swinging it downward towards Barbie. What came out of this, surprised everyone.

“A kihoha wave!” exclaimed Gohan with wide eyes. Sure enough, a bright green blast sailed down onto Barbella’s waiting form.

“He can use ki?!” asked Videl aloud.

“His power just spiked to over 1800!” screamed Agent Wingle.
Casting one last chilling look in Videl’s direction, Barbie smiled as she allowed the supposedly powerful blast to engulf her. A loud thundering explosion rang throughout the arena as the percussive wave rocked both the field and the audience.

“Ladies and gentlemen! It looks as if contestant Barbella was blown sky-high by Unbridled Fury’s strange, green glowy attack! Brace yourselves!”

A mushroom cloud billowed high into the air over the ring, raining grit and pieces of charred linoleum onto onlookers.

“She’s done for!” screamed Caroni.

“Don’t be so sure,” spoke Gohan.

“Huh?!”

“Look there,” commanded the half-breed pointing into the ring.

Following the Saiyan’s finger, Caroni was shocked to see a shadowed form standing amidst the smoke. As the air cleared, Barbella was revealed to be very much alive and completely unharmed. A light crimson aura manifested itself around her as she levitated mere inches off the shattered ring floor. Her opponent could only stare down in horror at the utter futility of his final efforts.

“She can levitate now?!” asked Videl disbelievingly.

“I’m not surprised,” said Gohan. “It makes sense, considering who taught her.”

“Let’s put an end to this…” Aiming a finger at her still sky-bound adversary, Barbella began to gather ki onto a fine point in preparation for the Crane School’s signature technique.

“That guy’s screwed…” muttered Gohan matter-of-factly.

“Oh no…” Videl breathed, a sense of dread coming over here.

“DODONPA!!!”

The blast shot forward straight and true. Unbridled Fury didn’t have time to react as the attack tore through his gut before carrying through and sailing right into a distant skylight over the audience. A massive explosion sent broken glass and shredded, heated steel down onto the stands.

Spectators screamed in terror as debris rained down upon them. Many, when faced with the prospect of being caught in the crossfire, rushed for the exits. It was utter pandemonium.

Blood trailed from Unbridled Fury’s mouth as he plummeted to the field below. Barbella however, wasn’t about to let him off so easy. Taking aim a second time, the sadistic young vagabond let loose with a second energy blast.

Gohan and Videl gaped in horror as the energy beam tore through the man’s shoulder. The force of the blast sent him into a death spiral, carrying him further out of the ring. When Unbridled Fury did finally come crashing to the ground, blood was sent flying everywhere.

“Unbridled Fury is out!” the announcer screamed. “Unbridled Fury is down and out! The winner is Barbella, the Backstreet Queen! Somebody get the paramedics out here! We’re gonna need a stretcher!”

“Even in victory, she refuses to leave well enough alone!” Videl seethed dangerously. “There’s no
Looking into the ring, Gohan couldn’t help but feel a rush of deja’vu. Barbella’s choice of attack, the way she carried herself, and the cruel leer she sported brought him to place and time in his youth he’d sooner forget. Visions of Namek, the disdainful acts of barbarism Frieza, and the death of Krillin danced across his mind. After all he’d seen fighting crime with Videl in the three months after the battle with Majin Buu, the idea that a human, a woman no less, could behave so cravenly still shocked him to no end.

Their glares of anger only intensified as the sadistic female floated down from the ring, coming to land right in front of them. The mad look she gave Videl was somewhere between that of a rapist having a lucky day and a kid in a candy store.

Under such a look, chills ran up and down the petite fighter’s spine. She wanted nothing more than to kick this smug bitch’s face in with all the power granted her under Roshi and Gohan’s training.

“Oh, you little Satan slut! Just thinking about all the fun we’re about to have together… Why, it just sets my black little Hell-bound heart atwitter thinking about it! It’ll be just like old times… Only it isn’t like old times, is it?”

Losing her cool, Videl thrust an open palm menacingly in the redhead’s direction. A sphere of bluish-white ki thrummed into existence, whipping up a forlorn wind that whipped the ginger’s spiky hair. Barbella however, seemed unaffected.

“Ya know bitch…” began Videl, seething, “If we sent a stray ki blast your way, the world wouldn’t miss you!”

“You could,” she countered chidingly, “But it would never change the fact that I won. Regardless of the outcome of our fight, your life was changed forever by me! You created me only for me to crawl back from the depths of Hell and return the favor! You need me…”

“Don’t project your character crutch onto me!” snapped the brunette fighter. “We’re nothing alike! You’re garbage!”

“Don’t talk like you’re one of those normal people, those fools that live in denial,” Barbie moaned sensuously, throwing her hand out for added effect. “You and I mascaraed among those weaklings like serial killers. Inside every man, woman, and child lies the heart of a predator. We are jungle beasts! I don’t lie to myself. I embrace my inner id. If you did the same, you’d feel so warm and free…”

“You speak of humanity as if we’re all just animals!” Gohan snapped.

“Aren’t we?” she quipped. “It doesn’t matter if the jungle is in the rain forest or whether it’s the concrete jungle outside, it’s all the same. Eat or be eaten! The world has taught me that the weak die and strong survive! We’re apes, apes with baseball hats and automatic weapons! Earth is just another level of Hell and we humans are its’ demons!”

Hearing the sadistic woman’s words, Gohan found himself thinking back to the words of his onetime mentor Piccolo, specifically those spoken to him on the Lookout three months before:

“Within the chest of every one of those so-called normal people, those humans, beats the heart of an aggressive jungle beast. They are a wonderful, friendly people as long as their bellies are full and their television sets are working. But take away their creature comforts… deprive them of food, sleep, hygiene…put their lives in jeopardy over an extended period of time, and those same friendly,
“intelligent, wonderful humans will become as nasty and as violent as the most bloodthirsty Saiyan.”

“Hmph! I should probably introduce you to my friend Vegeta,” Gohan offered jokingly. “You and him would get along great!”

Videl continued to glower at her long-time enemy. “What you’ve done here is disgraceful in every sense of the word! There’s no insult in any language that meets the task of describing an animal like you!”

Hearing this, Barbella visibly swooned. “It just warms my heart to know that I’m in your thoughts every bit as much as you’re in mine! Oh, the fun you and me are gonna have…”

“Believe me…” seethed the wife of Gohan, “The feeling is not mutual!”

Chapter End Notes

In this chapter, I’m trying to showcase Mercenary Tao the teacher. This is the man who trained Tien in the fundamentals of the ancient martial arts, but Mercenary Tao the teacher is a part of his personality that’s never explored. It’s often lost on people that the Crane Hermit is just as old as Master Roshi and that his brother is a couple of centuries old as well. Someone with a couple of centuries of combative insight would have a lot to bring to the table as a teacher even if he is a bloodthirsty mercenary. It’s also often lost on people that two of the only three humans to ever defeat Goku in a direct fight were from the Crane School. One could assume that there was something about the Crane style that made it the very antithesis of Goku’s skill set.
"ARRRGH!"

Screaming, the man known only by the moniker Unbridled Fury shot up from his gurney in the stadium medical ward.

"Hey! Hey! Hey! Calm down!" implored a chipper voice. "You're gonna be OK!"

The young man's head jerked to the side to find a strange man standing at his bedside. Sporting an orange gi, the man looked to be a bit above average height. That however wasn't what made the man odd. His black hair was styled in a palm tree fashion in long spikes that went in every direction.

"You were in a very bad way when they brought you in," explained the man. "You're lucky I got to you in time…"

Suddenly, it all came back to him. The Satan City Tournament, King Choppa, Barbella... Panicked, Unbridled Fury reached down to discover that his wounds were now fully healed. There was no blood, no discernable scarring, nothing…

"I should be dead…again," rasped Fury. Curious, he looked the strange man square in the eyes. "Thanks, but I really have to know…. who are you?"

"My name's Goku," answered the man, extending a hand his way. "Nice to meet you!"

Unbridled Fury warily shook the Saiyan's offered hand. "What happened? Why are my wounds gone? How's this possible?"

"Magic," was Saiyan warrior's simple answer.

The young man gave Goku a look that said 'Really, dude?!' before saying, "You've gotta be kiddin me…"

"Nope! It's all true!" the Saiyan beamed. "That Barb-What's her name? woman really did a number on ya."

"Why did you help me?" Fury asked, clearly puzzled. "Don't get me wrong! I'm grateful for your help, but I still can't help but wonder why?"

"For one…," began the Saiyan, "I couldn't just leave you to die like that. These doctors wouldn't have been able to save you in time. I do feel guilty though…"

"Why would you feel guilty about saving someone's life?"

"Because of my second reason for helping you." Sheepishly, Goku scratched the back of his head in the typical Son fashion. "I wanted to know if you were interested in training under me."

This answer intrigued the young man. "How come?"

"Because this will be a great thing for all of us."
"Who exactly is us?" Fury inquired, narrowing his eyes in scrutiny. "And for that matter, why is it a great thing?"

"Umm… let's see here…" Scratching his chin, the Son Patriarch pondered his answer for a brief moment. "My son, Gohan, and my daughter-in-law Videl-

"Wait! Wait! You mean the daughter of Mr. Satan?!" the young man interrupted, his tone one of disbelief.

"Yeah, that's her!" Goku answered cheerily. "Anyway, they're trying to find the best recruits they can for a training thing they've put together to stop some evil bad guys, and they've got me training the recruits. From what I've seen, you've already got a massive head start on just about anyone I've seen so far. I'd be honored if you would join our efforts by training under me."

Unbridled Fury quirked an eyebrow. "Evil bad guys…?"

"I don't really know all the details, but you'll have to ask Gohan and Videl when you see them. Right now though, Videl's about to have her fight and I really need to be going. Bye!"

"Hey, wait!" the young man called out. His cry went unheeded as the Saiyan warrior bolted from the room, leaving its' remaining occupant with more questions than answers. One thing was certain though. For him, the tournament was over, but his business in Satan City had barely begun.

Back in the arena, orange-garbed tournament officials were presiding over some last minute repairs to the ring floor. Unbridled Fury's failed assault on Barbella had left a car-sized crater in the middle of the linoleum-covered ring. Because of this, the stadium personnel who were under the employ of Mr. Satan's franchise were hurriedly pouring buckets of sand and gravel into the hole.

Being Mark Satan's agent, Miss Pizza contented herself with standing around and barking orders while the heir to her boss's fortune, Videl, and Gohan stood next to her.

"Well, at least Dad managed to get to that armored guy in time," Gohan said with a relieved sigh.

"Couldn't you have taken him to Dende?" asked Videl. "Your dad did teach you that instant transmission thing."

Gohan shook his head. "Unfortunately hun, I'm still pretty new with it. I need more practice before I'll be able to teleport on short notice like Pops."

The petite fighter nodded. "Do you think you'll be able to use it to take us back to Roshi's tomorrow? It would certainly make getting there and back easier."

"That I can do," he answered with confidence. "We could even use Buu's ki signature as our beacon for the return trip on Sunday. Perhaps I could even get your Dad so he could watch your match."

"No," Videl replied with a shake of her head. "Daddy's probably fast asleep right now due to the difference in time zones. Besides, he's probably recording this on DVR anyway. That, and Caroni still isn't over my father lying to him. I think it's best if we prevent those two from being together until after Caroni has had more time to cool off."

Just then, one of the stadium utility workers charged with ring repairs came forward.

"That should do the trick boss!" he told Miss Pizza. "We're ready to get this thing started when you are."
Nodding in affirmation, the voluptuous ginger turned to the announcer. "Alright, Jody! You hear that? It's ready!"

"Finally…" huffed the sports pundit. "OK folks, it is now time for the final round of the Satan City Tournament!"

Hearing this, the audience, or at least those who hadn't died or ran from the stadium in terror, came alive. Refocusing their cameras, nearby TV crews ended commercials.

"Bout fuckin time…" muttered Barbella.

"Barbella, you know what to do," spoke the Crane Hermit in a low, even tone. "If you win this match, it'll regain the honor for our sch… ACK!"

The next thing Master Shen knew, he found his feet dangling in the air as a powerful hand snatched him off the ground by the throat. His sunglasses falling to the grass with a dull clatter, he peered up to find the eyes of his deranged student boring dangerously into his own. The tall, muscled female leered at him with a debauched smile that would've put Ted Bundy's to shame.

"Let me make this clear Master…" she seethed with deadly intent, "This is my fight. I'm not your brother. If you interfere in any way, I'll drag you to the nearest wood chipper, turn the settings on low, and shove you feet-first into it! Do we have an understanding?"

Against her vice-like grip, the seemingly frail old man managed to nod once before being unceremoniously dropped on his ass.

"Good…" breathed the muscled ginger. "Your second chance at life depends on you staying out of this. This is between me and the little Satan bitch! Your little turf war with Roshi-what's-his-face is your problem!"

With that, the woman made her way to the ring, leaving a rasping, cussing Crane Hermit rubbing his neck. Clearly, the red-haired woman showed no regard for her second mentor's health as it was obvious the old man would need medical attention. The long-time rival of Master Roshi glared at his psychotic charge's retreating back through squinted, pained eyes.

"That woman won't stop," he gasped with labored breath. "Not until she's dead…"

With that, Master Shin staggered off the field. When he had first taken on Barbella as a student, he'd fervently believed that she was his tool. How did he ever believe he could control someone that bat-shit crazy? In the end, he was the fool just as he'd been since the day Moutaito died.

"This is the moment you've all been waiting for!" blared the announcer. "It's the rematch of the ages! Videl Son vs. Barbella Finkly! Hellcat Vidy vs. the Backstreet Queen! Like the battle between Videl and Crane alumni and former world martial arts champion Tao Pai-Pai, this too is a battle of the law versus an unabashed outlaw, but unlike the fight between Videl and Miss Finkly's fellow Crane alumni, this battle carries with it the stuff of urban legends. Weather you were the Satan City postmaster, a cop on the beat, or a student at Orange Star Middle School five years ago, you've no doubt given thought to the prospect of a televised match between Satan City's two battling beauties. It's the Year of the Woman here at the Satan City Tournament, so get ready to wear your ovaries on the outside, tighten your tampon, and let's GET THIS THING GOIN!"

"Let's do this!" Her game face in place, the Satan girl did a few obligatory stretches. Just as Videl was getting ready to step into the ring however, she was stopped by an expectant look from her husband.
"Don't hold back, love," Gohan said in stern encouragement. "I want to see you crush that animal with overwhelming force the likes of which these people have never seen! This is your hour! Don't let her take this from you!"

A confident grin tugging at the corner of her mouth, Videl gave her spouse one last reassuring nod before joining her longtime nemesis in the ring.

"For a moment there, I thought you were pussin out," Barbella gibed smugly.

"You'd like that, wouldn't you?" the petite girl shot back derisively.

"Oh, quite the contrary!" replied the redhead. A smile of unfettered sadomasochistic hunger stretched across the former street thug's face. "You see… I have a special appetite that will only be satisfied by seeing you broken at my feet! In a twisted sort of way, I need you more than your monkey man ever did…"

At this twisted admission, Videl felt her stomach lurch. Sure, both she and her spouse needed therapy after the whole Buu thing, but Barbella was in a league of her own.

"Forget prison! You belong on a funny farm!"

"Perhaps we can go there together," the former street criminal suggested mockingly. "I'd sell you for a cigarette! I can just picture it now…"

The larger woman's eyes rolled back as memories of their last fight played across her mind. She released a deep, audible moan at the thought of once again living out her deepest psychosexual fantasies. To feel the blood of her most hated enemy flowing through her fingers… the very idea of it titillated her most visceral, predatory desires.

"Let the match BEGIN!"

Upon receiving the go ahead, the two hated enemies dropped into matching horse stances. For them, this was the battle. All of their training, their hatred, everything they knew, it all came down to this one fight! There they stood facing one another, each looking out over the precipice of tomorrow. There could only be one recourse…

Videl was the first to lead off. Bringing her fists to her sides, she threw her head back in a shrill, pained scream that reverberated throughout the stadium. The smaller young woman's body began to glow with a bright, whitish-azure outline as she called all of her latent strength to the forefront. Muscles tightened and veins bulged from the internal pressure of her fighting power. Finally, bluish-white flames erupted from her enthralled form as she clad herself in a battle aura. When she did open her eyes, their cerulean irises glowed an eerie blue from her excess ki. Below her, the ring floor was again torn asunder by the pressure of her manifested battle aura.

Seeing the blazing inferno of bluish-white ki around the Satan girl sent a thrill through Barbella that harkened her back to her youthful days of pyromania. Oh, how she enjoyed the times in which she found escape from her shitty life in the exquisite fires she'd set around the town. The pleasure she'd derive from erasing the physical evidence of other people's memories by sweeping their worlds away in a cleansing fire. To her, it didn't matter whether it was by burning down someone's home thereby destroying all the pictures and good times her victims associated with it or by torching some poor sap's car. It was the rush associated with taking something, burning it, and rendering its' owner a blank canvas upon which the marks of new experiences could be painted. It was her work, her masterpiece, as was little Miss Satan that day she left her broken, bloodied body hanging from a hook for all to see…
The larger woman threw her head back, not with a scream, but with the slow building sound of maniacal laughter as she began to bring her own power to bear. The redhead's emerald eyes glowed an incandescent green as a crimson-golden fighting aura flared out from her center. Tendons pulled taut as a bowstring's pull as her large feminine muscles filled with ki.

The effects of the two combatant's power-up could be seen and felt all over the arena, perhaps even the city at large. Cracks in the stadium superstructure worked their way up support columns, down walls, and deep into the stadium's foundation. Rocks and other loose objects were lifted into the air by the rising pressure waves of ki wafting off the two females.

"Ladies and gentlemen! Both Videl and Barbella are glowing with an otherworldly power!" screamed Mr. Firecracker. "I only wish you were all at ringside! It's as if two weather fronts are coming together in the middle of the platform!"

"It looks like those two are gonna go all out from the beginning!" Goku commented, raising his voice so that he could be heard over the surrounding background noise of both the screaming, panicked audience and the rushing winds whipping about the field.

"Their power levels keep rising!" Agent Wingle observed, holding the prime switch on his scouter. "Both have exceeded 6300!"

Ignoring the RBI agent, Gohan glanced around at both the denaturing effect Videl and Barbie's flaring kis had on the stadium and the thousands of screaming spectators. "Dad, when those two start fighting, we're gonna have to protect the audience from getting caught in the crossfire!"

"Right!" nodded the Son patriarch. "We'll each take a side of the field! Let's go!"

Agent Wingle, Miss Pizza, and Caroni watched as the two Saiyans bolted to opposite sides of the arena.

"Shouldn't we take cover somewhere?!" Miss Pizza screamed, hoping to be heard over the rising gales.

"It wouldn't help us!" Wingle stated. "Believe me! Against that crazy lady, holding back isn't gonna be an option for Mrs. Videl! Those two Sons will have to protect everyone!"

Back in the ring, the power of Videl and Barbella continued to build. As their ki continued to expand and their battle auras flared ever more erratically, the pressure of the two opposing forces pushed against each other. A point of magenta-colored energy shined at the nexus between them where their pressures met, and pieces of the ring floor were wrenched into the air as a wide, shallow crater was pressed into the linoleum-covered concrete. A single, robust azure bolt of bioelectric power arced between their respective auras and crimson discharges licked against the ring floor.

Up in the stands, Erasa and Sharpner braced themselves against the hurricane winds generated by Videl and Barbella's rising power. Next to them, little Goten and old Bob cheered Videl on while Chi Chi casually flagged down a vendor for more Coke.

"This is insane!" Sharpner hollered. The blond tried his best to shield his face from the trash and flying debris kicked up in the maelstrom.

"Woohoo! Get'er Sis!" Goten screamed.

"The topless skanks might be gone, but the good times keep on rolling!" Bob guffawed. The man was waving a trucker's hat in one hand and a beer in the other. "YEE-HAW!"
Finally, the two female fighters exploded forward in a violent burst of ki that sent shockwaves through the whole stadium. The two hated enemies came together in the middle of the ring where they locked horns, their forearms clashing together in an earth-shattering cross strike that carried into the foundation of the ring. At the outskirts of their colliding battle essence, a trench was dug into the concrete.

There the two women stood locked, their power sealed by the near perfect parity of their counterpart. Videl's rage-filled blue eyes glared momentarily into the crazed depths of Barbella's pale green before drawing back to deliver a hard left that was answered in turn by her opponent. The percussion wave of their two fists colliding hurled the two Amazons apart like two stellar black holes repelling each other by the power of their sheer gravitational waves only to hurl themselves back at one another when the energy dissipated.

The two females seemingly phased in and out of existence as they whirled around the ring in a dance of destiny where tens of thousands of strikes were exchanged. To any normal person, the two combatants would seem evenly matched, but to those scant few that could see, there was a real difference in the two female's fighting methodology.

"It's as if Videl is landing three shots for every blow Barbella connects with," Gohan commented as he floated through the air around the ring. "That and her shots are much more precise. I guess it makes sense though considering how much faster Krillin is than Barbella. By this point, Videl's so used to fighting faster sparring partners that Barbella must come across as sluggish."

"Maybe so Son, but every blow Barbella does land has more leverage and follow through than Videl's," Goku added. "Her size and height advantages are coming into play every bit as much as Videl's speed and reduced pullback time."

Gohan quirked an eyebrow at his father's remark. "Pullback time?"

Goku nodded. "When one throws any sort of punch or kick, you have to consider the impact the amount of time it takes to pull back for a follow-up strike and the pile-on effect it has as the fight drags on. Still, that Barbella is far thicker than Videl. Videl's put on a lot of natural muscle in her training under Master Roshi, but Barbella's training under Master Shen allowed her to retain her home edge."

"But won't those larger muscles also cause Barbella to lose energy faster?" Gohan asked.

"Probably not," was Goku's reply. "If she's more used to having a larger build, she might carry herself without those problems impacting her long-term game."

"One thing's for certain…" Gohan said, "This fight isn't nearly as one-sided as their last one."

Clad in their battle auras, the two women were locked in a vicious melee. Barbella threw wide, powerful haymakers, most of them not connecting, but those that did shook Videl down to her core. Videl in turn, dived and ducked in and out of the wide swings as she laid into her opponent's midsection with knuckle punches and knife hands. In response, Barbella brought her guard together and turtled up in an effort to draw the brunette in.

Videl being Videl, took the bait and started to wail on the redhead's guard only to be met with a series of finger jabs to her medial line. Videl was left stunned by the assault and stumbled back under their fury. Due to her running so many barefooted laps on the beach under Roshi's tutelage, the brunette maintained her balance and recovered quickly. Deftly, she took a page out of Tao's playbook and stepped to the side, allowing Barbella to overextend right into a powerful right hook kick to the midsection that had the larger female doubled over.
"It's like watching two glowing tornados ram into each other!" remarked the announcer. "They're moving so fast I can't even see what's happening!"

Closing in on one another, Videl and Barbella machine-gunned side-kicks at a blistering rate. In the tumult of their two energies, their blueish-white and crimson battle kis melded together in the violent clash to produce a cacophony of purple-hued flashes. Here again, it was Videl's higher speed and precision versus Barbella's reach, leverage, and resistance to damage. In the area of power to power however, the two ladies were almost matched to a Tee.

In a flash of intuition, Videl thrust her hand forward and released a low-level ki blast aimed right at the face of her hated adversary. Much to her dismay however, the redhead brought her forearms up at the last minute. The percussion of the blast stunned Barbella just long enough for Videl to follow up with a well-aimed kaia wave to Barbella's feet that sent the wily street thug into the air. In that split second, Videl rushed forward and performed a flying-back kick to the ribs that knocked Barbella clear across the ring!

Barbella landed in an unceremonious rolling heap at the edge of the platform. This seemed to cause more damage to the ring than Barbella herself. Uncharacteristically, Videl failed to follow up on her last strike, allowing the redhead the brief respite she needed to spring to her feet.

"Very good…" the former street criminal chuckled darkly. "You've become remarkably fleet-footed, I'll give you that! Still, you have no hope of beating me if I can out-tank you."

Videl smirked arrogantly. "I just might surprise you…"

"I'm gonna beat your ass so bad that your monkey boy-toy is gonna be screamin my name next time he fucks you!"

"Put up or shut up!" Videl yelled.

With barely a stirring of dust, the two women again vanished seemingly into midair. All around the ring, the two side-swiped, skirmished, dodged, parried, and evaded. In all of this chaos, something suddenly occurred to Videl when she managed to slip up behind her enemy…

'She can't sense energy…' thought the petite fighter in wide-eyed realization as she again managed to out-flank the larger woman. It was one of the many benefits of training under Roshi, Krillin, and Gohan. There were many techniques that Krillin, Gohan, and their group picked up over the years that the Crane Hermit and Tao Pai-Pai missed out on due to their being so far removed from the struggles of Goku and the others, and Videl was indeed the benefactor of that collective knowledge. Barbella only knew as much as the Crane Hermit and Tao knew 30 years ago.

Videl continued to zip in and out with hit and run tactics wherever possible in an effort to frustrate and wear her hated enemy down. To compensate, Barbella began to throw elbows, backhands, and back kicks into her blind spots at random in a haphazard attempt to adapt. Needless to say, the redhead's sadist was getting peeved.

After being on the other end of a few more solid strikes from her blind spot, Barbella had had enough.

"Arrgh! It's time to put an end to this!" seethed the woman. Breaking off another exchange, the larger woman leaped high into the air with Videl in hot pursuit.

"I thought you were a badass!" Videl taunted. "Come back here and take your medicine!"

"That's right bitch!" Barbie growled under her breath. "Keep on following…"
Barbella continued to fly with Videl just behind her until she was situated between Videl and a massive light fixture. Coming to a sudden stop, the ginger rounded on the petite fighter.

Videl was visibly stumped. "What are you…?"

"One word…" said the redhead menacingly. "SOLARFLARE!"

Videl, and for that matter the entire stadium, had no time to prepare as Barbella threw up her hands and channeled the fixture's photons into an explosive burst of bright light that seared every retina in the arena, including Videl's.

When the light faded, Videl was left floating in a disoriented, flailing state akin to the one Barbella had been moments earlier. Her vision completely shoehorned, the petite teen wailed in agonized frustration as she batted about uselessly with one arm while shielding her eyes with the other.

"Now that's what I like to see…" Barbella growled. She took a moment to relish her enemy's pain before blasting forward and delivering a flying heel kick to Videl's face.

The follow-through from the strike sent the shorter teen careening head-first down onto the arena. The kinetic energy generated from the displacement effect of Videl's body tunneling through the ring floor produced a percussion wave that split the platform in two.

High in the air, Barbella prepared to capitalize on her successful ruse. Thrusting a finger forward, she gathered ki onto a fine point before releasing the signature attack of the Crane School.

"DODONPA!"

Plumes of pulverized, heated dust and debris were thrown high in the air as Barbella's attack connected. The heat from the ensuing blast was so intense that the remaining linoleum covering the ring's surface burst into flames.

"VIDEL!" screamed Sharpner and Erasa in unison.

"Oh my God, Videl!" hollered Miss Pizza. The long-time agent of the Satan family attempted to rush the ring only to find herself held back by Caroni and Agent Wingle.

"Don't do it, Pizza!"

"NO! LET ME GO!" she screamed, struggling against the two men. "That's my boss's daughter in there!"

"It's too dangerous!" Agent Wingle warned, "Besides… she's fine."

"Huh?!"

Suddenly, a bright flash of light erupted from the impact crater, whereupon rubble and powdered concrete were flung about the arena. Much to most everybody's shock and amazement, a haggard looking Videl Son came to stand among the flames. Her shoulder-length raven hair was a mess and her grey spandex two piece was scuffed, burnt, and torn, giving her the appearance of wearing rags. Her entire body was again clad in a white battle aura, and her cerulean eyes glowed blue with ki. The destruction of so many light placements around the stadium gave her a shadowed, haunting look that sent chills through those at ringside.

Barbella's eyes widened in vivid surprise. "She's not even injured…"
"That's a girl!" Gohan cheered.

The petite fighter locked her sights on her greatest bane as the larger woman came to land on the opposite side of the ring. The blue glow in Videl's eyes intensified until her inner will began to project invisible kiai waves in her opponent's direction.

Looking into her smaller opponent's wild eyes, Barbella began tremble. Every nerve in her body was telling her to run. Perhaps this is what an animal felt just before an earthquake? Whether it was due to her insanity or her tenacity, much to the woman's credit, Barbella stood firm. All about her a horrible, burning-cold pressure began to pound against both her inner will and her physical body.

A black dragon of rage coiled inside Videl as vivid memories of her torture at the hands of the psychopath once again played across her mind… memories of being pummeled, broken, stripped, and finally marked. With a scream of visceral fury, the raven-haired girl's blue eyes flashed like a supernova, unconsciously projecting the first eye-blast kiai wave she'd ever conjured straight into her rival.

Barbella had no time to prepare herself as the invisible wave wrenched her from the ring floor, through the air, and out into the stands with an explosive force that jarred her senses.

'No…No! I won't let it end like this!' the woman screamed to herself.

Digging deep, the former street thug brought the full force of her ki to bear in a bid to stop her trajectory. Her eyes flashed an eerie white as she fell into a battle meditation, one that allowed a fighter to center his/herself against unimaginable external forces. With a loud, hoarse cry, the redhead just managed to stop herself right over the audience with a counter-kiai. Below her, dozens of spectators were hurled through the stands in hazardous directions by a powerful shockwave.

Barbella had little time to situate herself though. Turning around, she found Videl speeding towards her. Her own crimson aura blazing around her, the redhead met the brunette at the halfway point. There, the two extended mutual flying kicks before passing each other in a brief bout of air-jousting. And so, their auras melding together in a cacophony of magenta-hued energy, the two females battled it out high above the field. Between Videl's enthralled state and Barbella's battle meditation, the two female combatants were locked in a dance of feral violence as thousands of strikes and low-level ki attacks were exchanged, but unlike their clashes on the ground, their airborne duel was far more lopsided.

Here too, Videl benefited from her sparring sessions with Krillin and her energy-sensing lessons from her husband. The raven-haired teen zipped in and out with the finesse of a hummingbird as she landed hit after hit. Barbella's inability to make full use of her leverage advantage also played heavily into Videl's favor. Being trained under Crane, Barbie was only able to make use of a rudimentary application of bakujitsu. Conversely, Videl was the benefactor of Krillin and Gohan's past experience from midair battles with the likes of Nappa, the Ginyu Force, and Freiza. Because of this and her already having months more experience with flying, Videl had become very adept at midair combat. Barbella's laser beam-like attacks may have reached their target faster and caused more damage through sheer concentrated thermal/kinetic energy, but Videl's ability to sense her opponent's ki made her air-to-air accuracy comparable to that of a satellite-based guided weapons system. It was like she was an F-35 with the dogfighting capabilities of a SU-42 and Barbella was a Mig 21 Fish Head operating on the air battle principles of World War 2. Bluish-white ki spheres detonated with the effect of cluster bombs as Videl landed one blast after another.

The two female fighters continued to dart about in the air at mid-range quarters, letting loose with strafing fire as they rose higher and higher over the arena. Meanwhile, Gohan and Goku maintained their distance while continuing to intercept any stray blasts.
"Ladies and gentlemen! Our two finalists have taken to duking it out in mid-air!" the announcer observed. "They're moving so fast I can only imagine what kind of carnage these two overpowered ladies are dishing out! It's just not fair… We wanna watch too!"

"That's it honey!" Gohan hollered ecstatically. "Keep it up! Let it loose! LET IT LOOSE!"

"It's clear as day this Barbell girl missed out on some very important training," Goku commented to himself. "She has no aerial fighting sense."

With the damage pilling on, Barbella felt trapped. Her battle meditation could only help her if Videl engaged her head-on, and the Satan girl showed no signs of giving her the kind of fight she was used to. She had to take this fight back to the ring! Biting the bullet, the muscled redhead tapped into an ancient chakra she'd learned under Tao's tutelage. The temperature in the surrounding air rose rapidly and an eerie white aura radiated around her as her skin flushed as red as her hair.

In her enthralled PTSD-induced state, Videl didn't register the change in her opponent's physiology, much less her demeanor. Without her faculties, she was fighting on pure practiced routine. For whatever reason, soon enough her strikes became more and more ineffective against the wily redhead's hide.

For Barbella, this was it! She was no good at holding the iron body technique, fighting, and flying at the same time. Three months of training under Tao just wasn't enough to prepare her for this kind of sustained planning in the heat of battle. Conventional tactics couldn't help her much in this kind of fight! She had to capitalize on whatever breathing room the iron body ability afforded her.

Ignoring her long-time rival's seemingly vicious assault, the woman spun around and made a beeline for the ring, all the while being closely tailed by Videl.

"Videl has her on the run!" cheered Gohan excitedly.

"Yes and no," was Goku's reply. "It's obvious Videl has a huge advantage in the air, but on the ground…"

Back in the ring, Barbella landed with the weight of a truck. The iron body technique may give one's body near-diamond level hardness, but it had the major drawback of making someone as dense and heavy as degenerative matter. She had no time to situate herself however, as a screaming, violence-drunk Videl came flying in from behind and delivered a powerful hook kick to the side of her face. The concrete gave way as Barbie staggered under both the strength of Videl's strike and her own vastly increased weight. She had to let go of the technique now or face the very real possibility of a ring-out! It hurt her pride to know that the object of her fanatical hatred soundly beat her in the air, but at least now she could fight the battle she needed. With a long exhale, her diamond-hard physiology returned to its 'normal' biological state, and the two females were once again at it.

Being stuck in her current state, Videl fought with a mad ferocity. She was simply too far gone to feel the pain of Barbella's counterstrike. Pushing inside her enemy's superior reach, she launched concentrated volleys of close range nerve strikes, kicks, knife hands, and punches.

Under such a sustained assault, Barbella too had thrown strategy out the window. Their skirmish soon devolved into a gutter war that bore little resemblance to any of the tactics they'd trained in. In their shared madness, they'd become like two snarling wild beasts. They engaged and broke off skirmishes repeatedly all about the ring as they phased in and out of hyper speed. Above the deafening, thundering sounds of shockwaves and the shouts and cheers of the audience, the guttural howling screams of both women filled the air.
Finally, the two females collided over the center of the ring before landing in a tangled heap on the concrete. In stark contrast to their last fight however, the two did not go to the ground. The second Barbella attempted to jump on top of Videl, the raven-haired teen released a kiai wave that sent the former felon skyward.

As Barbella was being carried upwards by Videl's flaring energy, the redhead twisted around, and on the spur of the moment, fired a powerful beam of golden energy downwards at her long-time adversary. Upon reaching the ring, the Dondonpa struck Videl in the face with the force of a bunker-buster bomb that decimated the platform and pushed the Satan girl deep into the ring's foundation. A mushroom cloud billowed high into the sky above the arena and powdered concrete chocked the air as bits of cement and gravel rained down like hail on spectators.

"Ugh…! This is crazy!" Sharpner commented, trying to shield his face from the flying debris.

"Videl!" Erasa squealed. The sight of her long-time friend seemingly being blown up had the typically bubbly girl on the verge of tears.

High above the arena, Gohan felt a distinct change in his spouse's ki signature. The Son boy peered anxiously through the plume of smoke and ash as he searched for his woman.

"VIDEL! Where are you?!!" the concerned half-breed called out.

"That last attack hit head-on…” Goku stated. "Whether she's injured or not, the change in her energy is gonna turn the fight from here on out!"

Goku's words however fell on deaf ears as his eldest continued to fly about searching for the love of his life.

"VIDEL! Can you hear me?!!" Gohan screamed.

Down in the arena the dust began to settle. Atop the rubble that was once the ring stood a panting, heaving Barbella. For all the damage her best attacks scored against her opponent, the redhead too was looking worse for wear. Her whole body was covered with blackish-blue bruises, and in some places, her face had swollen up. Through the obvious pain, the muscled redhead looked with a self-satisfied smirk upon the deep chasm in which she'd buried Videl.

"Contestant Videl is down and by the looks of this hole I'd say she's down for good!" remarked the announcer. "I'll start the count!"

"Videl!" yelled Gohan frantically. "VIDEL!"

Chapter End Notes

In a recent interview, a high profile executive at Toei Animation was asked why he chose to go with the Resurrection of F arc instead of doing another villain. His answer cuts to the core of why I and legions of other Dragonball Z fans deride Dragonball Super as a shitty series. When asked why they went with Freiza instead of some other classic baddie like Cell, the man answered "Cell is too hard to draw because of all the black dots on his body. Freiza by contrast had a smoother body design that required less ink." Reading into this answer, one can also discern that the designs of the other characters were also influenced by this. Think about it for a moment. Almost all of the
characters other than Goku and Vegeta are now wearing longer cloths, and Gohan is a stick figure compared to what he used to be. Toei nerfed all of the character's visual appearances to save money on ink work by reducing the need for drawing tone lines. If Gohan were muscled and toned after not training for three to five years just like he was in the Great Saiyaman Arc after not training for seven years, the animators would have to use more ink. It was a money decision, pure and simple, and over half the Nerd-Han crowd bought it for the same reason they accepted Akira Toriyama's decision to have Gohan not go Super in his fight against Super Buu even though Gohan was later revealed to still be able to transform in the Battle of the Gods and the Resurrection of F arc. Toriyama kept Gohan from winning against Super Buu so he could create Vegeto and Kid Buu for the sake of making more toys. Money is the reason why the physical character and personality of the greatest backseat protagonist in the history of anime got nerfed. That sound you're hearing is the sound of the Nerd-Han crowd applying some ointment to their butt-hurt. God, I love being right… ;)

I've noticed another glaring inconsistency in Toriyama's writing pertaining to Saiyan strength retention. How is it that Akira Toriyama expects us to simultaneously accept that Gohan can go to shit completely in both the seven year period after the Cell Games and the two to four year period between the Buu Saga and the start of Dragonball Super while at the same time expecting us to believe that Vegeta, Nappa, Broly, and other Saiyans didn't get weaker from being in suspended animation for months and sometimes even years inside their Saiyan space pods while working under Frieza's Planet Trade Organization? If half-Saiyans are typically stronger than full-blooded Saiyans, wouldn't Gohan have lost strength even less quickly during those time periods given his biology? I can accept that after the Cell Games Gohan would lose his fighting sense and get rusty, but the very idea that he could get weaker from not training when the full-blooded Saiyans clearly do not is just downright laughable, especially when half-Saiyans are typically stronger! Again, I rest my case that Akira Toriyama had no business nerfing Gohan's abilities by causing his power to atrophy. Those of us who watched the Saiyan Saga both in the English and the Japanese format know better.
Standing atop the smoldering ruins of the now pulverized ring, the former riffraff Barbella looked upon her ghastly handiwork with a self-satisfied grin. Throughout the stadium, the cries of distressed fans rang out. The sound of everyone’s world being torn asunder just as her own was not too long ago had the woman cackling in sardonic, wheezing fits.

In the aftermath of Barbella’s spur of the moment counterattack and the denaturing effect of both her and Videl Son’s raging battle kis, throngs of spectators bolted for the doors. The stadium bore the brunt of the two female’s ki pressures and Barbella’s last successful turnabout choked the field with pyroclastic clouds of heated, powdered concrete, burnt Bermuda grass turf, and the noxious fumes of incinerated linoleum. With the fire sprinkler system having long given out, the stifling smells of charred materials assaulted the senses. On-sight TV crews covering the competition were left torn between fleeing for their safety or covering the fight of the century.

“We need to go!” hollered one frazzled live-feed specialist. “I’ve seen disaster sites safer than this!”

“Keep that transmission going!” his supervisor barked. “No matter what happens, just keep it running! This is the event of the ages!”

“Contestant Videl is down and by the looks of this hole I’d say she’s down for good!” remarked the announcer. “I’ll start the count!”

“Videl! Can you hear me!?” yelled Gohan frantically. “VIDEL!!!”

Buried deep under heavy layers of steel rebar, dirt, and powdered cement, Videl stirred. Her spandex two-piece was in tatters. Her forehead sported a deep gash and her shoulder-length hair was caked with blood-moistened powdered concrete. The first thing she noticed was the great weight pressing down on her. The second was the lack of air.

“Where am I…?” groaned the teenaged girl. “What’s goin on?”

“One!”

“Come on VIDEL!!!”

“Two…!”

“Give it a rest…” remarked Barbella derisively. “She’s paying King Yemma his dues. There’s no way she could’ve survived that!”

“Three!”

“VIDEL!!!”

‘Gohan…?’ Videl cracked an eye. ‘For a moment there, I thought I heard Gohan…”

“Four…!”

“Videl! Please get up!” begged her common law husband. “Don’t let it end like this!”
The petite girl’s eyes widened as realization dawned on her. “Wait! That is Gohan! The fight…!”

“Five! Wait…, what?!”

A deep rumble went through the arena as the air over the chasm Videl was presently buried in churned with a heated ripple effect.

“What?! No way…” Barbella snarled in disbelief. Her eyes widening in abstract shock, the former criminal backed away slowly. It didn’t take ki-sensing abilities for her to know it wasn’t over.

The area lit up with a bright flash as rubble was blasted high into the air. With a resounding shrill scream, the contrails of an intense battle aura shot out over the arena as Videl once again rose from the remnants of the ring like Lazarith before landing in front of her long-time enemy.

“Yeah!” Gohan cheered, “You’ve got this, Sweetheart!”

“I wouldn’t be so sure about that, Son,” said Goku.

Quirking an eyebrow, the half-breed regarded his father curiously. “Whaddaya mean, Dad?”

“It’s the girl she’s fighting,” answered the Son patriarch. “Her ki hasn’t dropped much either. This fight is far from over…”

Barbella’s mind was completely blown. She’d completely underestimated her adversary’s ability to rise to the challenge, and everything she’d used up till now had either been countered or weathered by the Satan girl. It was embarrassing to admit, but at the rate things were going, she’d have to use it…

“Bravo…” the redhead applauded in a jeering tone. “It seems you’ve managed to fight me to a standstill. Appearances however, can be deceiving…”

Closing her eyes, Videl gave her age-old adversary an arrogant smirk that would’ve made Vegeta green with envy. “You know what they say… You can’t keep a good girl down.”

“Maybe not, but I can at least take pride in the fact that this is gonna be the second time I strip you topless in front of an audience…. a much bigger live audience.”

Her eyes flying open, Videl looked down at her chest to discover two things: 1) Her spandex top was barely holding together, and 2) the twins were practically straining to sing “I’m comin out, and I wanna let it show!”

“Wow…, she really has grown…”

“It’s OK girl!” Miss Pizza hollered. “We’ve all been there! Just have faith in the unstoppable power of your sports bra!”

Eyeing her opponent, Videl started to chuckle.

“What’s so God-dammed funny?!” Barbie growled.

Smirking coyly, Videl brought a hand to her hip and gestured to her rival’s chest with a finger.

Following the shorter girl’s finger, Barbella looked down to discover her own wardrobe malfunction. Much to her utter shock, the right side of her own spandex top sported a large gaping hole, but that wasn’t what had her flustered. Out of the tear, her large right breast jutted proudly in the cool air, its’ nipple showcasing a dark, vivid tattoo from her time behind bars.
“Oh!!! Folks, it seems one of our finalists is letting it hang out!”

With a loud snarl, the ginger reached up and tore what was left of her top clean off her body, revealing that the nipple tat was in fact part of a larger detail of dark prison tattoos that covered her whole upper torso. She now stood bare-chested for the entire world to see.

“Upon further review, I think I’ll reconsider that tramp stamp,” the teen coyly remarked.

“Oh, I insist!” seethed the former street thug. “HERE!!! THIS SEASON’S COLORS ARE BLACK AND BLUE!!!”

With a rage-filled snarl, the red-haired female thrust her right hand forward and launched a hastily made golden ki blast at Satan City’s resident heroine. Swaying her head to the side, Videl allowed the sloppy attack to harmlessly sail past her before being deflected into the sky by either Gohan or Goku out in the field.

“Hmph!” snorted the brunette in derision, “I can’t tell which is worse! Your speed or your accuracy!”

Reeling herself in, Barbella threw the shorter teen a truly sickening Cheshire grin, one that gave Videl pause. She couldn’t allow the raven-haired girl to play her game.

‘Why is she still smiling?’ wondered the Satan girl. Sure Barbella was bat-shit insane, but something was definitely off…

“I’ll admit you’re fast, but let’s see how you’ll fare against one of the Crane style’s forbidden techniques…”

Clasping her hands together out in front of her, the redhead interlocked her fingers into another of several key combative chakras. Like a spark lighting in a barrel of jet fuel, the Crane alumni’s crimson battle aura flared up about her before taking on an ethereal white hue. Muscles bulged, veins popped, and eyes flashed with an eerie, otherworldly ether as Barbella’s body once more fell into a transformative metamorphosis.

A feeling of foreboding washed over Videl as she attuned herself to the abrupt change in Barbella’s fighting ki. To her, it felt like something was billowing up in the other woman, like contents under pressure. She steadied herself amidst flying rocks and other debris as the Earth was hit with a slow-building tremor. All about the field, deep fissures opened in the turf under the power of her opponent’s radically pulsing, burning aura.

‘I don’t get it…’ the girl thought to herself. ‘She’s not getting any stronger, but the feel of her ki is changing so much!’

“What’s she doing?” asked Gohan, clearly bewildered.

“Considering who she was trained by, I can only make one guess,” Goku supplied.

“Contestant Barbella has begun to glow again!” screamed Jody. “Just what could she be planning now?”

Suddenly, with a loud, agonized scream, the former street criminal threw her head back under the intense strain of her crimson battle aura. From her back, two lumps of flesh began to pulse and bulge outwards before elongating into the shape of a set of featherless chicken wings. In no time, a pair of hands started to take shape atop the two new masses.
Videl looked on with apprehension as the two new appendages continued to spasm and contort into a second set of muscular arms. The girl’s stomach turned at the sickening sound of bones popping and bodily fluids sloshing about as her sadistic opponent completed her grotesque anatomical metamorphosis.

“Sorry that took so long…” the ginger rasped. She took a moment to inspect her newly sprouted arms before returning her attention to her quarry. “I only picked up on this one recently. It’s called the Four Witches technique. Waddaya think?”

“F-Freaky…” stammered a wide-eyed Videl.

“Ladies and gentlemen! Contestant Barbella Finkly has sprouted a second pair of arms!” screamed Mr. Firecracker. “This marks the second time in this tournament in which one of the competitors has grown additional body parts! This goes beyond any logical explanation, but after being killed by a pink, candy-eating alien, I’m ready to give up on logic altogether!”

“Woah, woah, wait! She can grow an extra set of arms?!” Gohan asked in disbelief.

“This doesn’t surprise me,” Goku remarked in a somewhat indifferent tone. “Tien trained under both Toa and Shin, and he was able to do it.”

“Oh, and before we continue, hear this…” Bearing a menacing look, the muscled redhead saddled up to her now clearly unnerved rival. “Unlike the other combative chakras in the Crane style’s repertoire, this particular one doesn’t require an active effort on my part in maintaining it. Because of this, I can pair up my battle meditation with this without having to consciously hold onto both. Whatever edge in speed you got in the last few months won’t mean diddly! This is where we decide who the world’s strongest woman truly is!”

Despite her faltering composure, Videl couldn’t help but shake her head with laughter at the woman’s outsized ego.

“You’re just all shits and giggles today, aren’t you?!” Barbella remarked derisively. “What the hell’s got you so tickled?!”

“Hmph! Strongest woman in the world…” scoffed the petite fighter. “I think Eighteen would have something to say to that!”

The next thing anyone knew, Barbella surged forward in a burst of hyper speed and attempted to take Videl with a heel kick to the gut. Instinctively, Videl brought up her dominant arm to intercept the laughably transparent frontal strike. The resounding shockwave blasted through the arena and carried into the stadium’s foundation. Still, it was a lazy attack compared to those Videl had blocked in their skirmishes moments before, something that went amiss to the raven-haired girl.

“Pfft! That’s it?!” Videl scoffed through grit teeth. “Don’t insult-”

Videl had no time to finish her remark as Barbella’s newly-sprouted anterior right arm swung around and planted a well-placed fist into her temple. This had Videl seeing stars as she was left staggering before the might of the Crane School’s most forbidden battle chakra. Videl had no time to shake it off however, as her now augmented opponent followed up with a powerful, concentrated barrage of finger jabs to her medial line.

Trying desperately to fend off the compact stream of punches, the Satan girl found herself being forced back. She used every generic block, parry, or redirection at her disposal, but nothing compensated for every follow-up her old-time adversaries second set of arms would deliver behind
the opening shots.

“You’ll never survive the ultimate techniques I’ve learned!” Barbella taunted between shots in a shrill, crazed spiel.

For Videl, it wasn’t that she couldn’t see the punches being thrown. Again, months of fast-paced sparring sessions with Krillin made Barbella seem as if she were moving in slow motion. However, fighting a comparable opponent with four arms changed the very dimensions of the match. All fighting theory, both ancient and modern, were geared towards fighting human martial artists possessing a typical anatomy, and there was only so much Videl could do to mitigate damage. For every three punches she threw, it was like only one would make it through Barbella’s four arm blocking dragnet.

On the other end, Barbella was having her own problems with the coveted Four Witches ability. She was still fairly new at employing the technique, and as such, she was unable to take full advantage of it’s benefits. To her, it was a double-edged sword. Though it allowed her to compensate for Videl’s higher speed, the fact that she didn’t have time to develop a comprehensive four-armed based fighting style hampered it’s real world combative applications. She simply did not have enough time in the last three months to reinvent herself.

Going in and out of hyper-speed, Videl gave ever more ground to her hated nemesis as she did what she could to keep Barbella from being able to make full use of her leverage and reach. There were now six arms between them, and the concentration of volleys thrown made it look as if fists were flying around the ring like hail stones.

Suddenly, a flash of inspiration hit Videl. There were times when ancient fighting theory held the answer to contemporary problems, and there were other times when modern fighting theory won the day. Every once in a while however, one had to use the best of the old with the new.

Her resolve hardened, the spouse of Gohan smiled as she parried another hard right before ducking another come-from-behind shot from Barbie’s anterior arms. “Perhaps it’s time I took a page out of both my father’s playbook and Master Roshi’s?”

“What’re you rambling about?!” snapped the former street thug.

Breaking off, Videl stepped away from her opponent. She smirked in a Vegeta-like manner that had Babella taken back. “Nothin… Just fantasizing about all the heavy feels you’re gonna get from losing this fight!”

“Stop bullshittin!” Barbie spat, “YOUR ASS IS MINE!!!”

Holding her hands up, Videl parried the hard straights, jabs, and haymakers thrown by the larger woman, and whatever she didn’t parry, she snuffed out by pulling her hand back just as the punches connected. Just as the case was before, Barbella would predictably follow up each hit with a hook or hard straight from her anterior arms. This time however, Videl was ready with a little trick she’d learned under her father’s tutelage. Just as the second fist on either side would come in behind the first, the Satan girl would wait until the last minute before twisting her head to the side to redirect the force of impact.

Once again, with her Four Witches technique, Barbella sped forward to deliver another compact volley of shots straight down the center, and once more, she did so following a pre-established formula. This time however, there was a marked difference in the return she garnered from her assault, one that didn’t bode well for her. Before, she’d throw the hard straight/finger-jab/anterior follow-up combo and the follow-up from her second set of fists would deal some damage. Now, it
was like the little Satan bitch had become the ultimate punch sponge.

On Videl’s end, it seemed her intuition was correct. As the old adage clearly stated, “Work smarter, not harder.” All she had to do now was wait until an opening presented itself for a cross-strike. Kicks wouldn’t help because Barbie could very well attempt an ankle lock, which considering the larger woman’s leverage, would end very badly for Videl. No, it would have to be a hard left straight out of the professional boxer’s out-fighting textbook.

With every squandered punch, Barbella’s frustration mounted. Compact shots started to loosen up and haymakers lost their hard edge. Finally, with a feral snarl, the woman overextended a hard right, essentially making the same mistake she had at the start of the fight.

For Videl, this was it! Stepping inside the overextended shot, the petite fighter delivered a left cross-strike to Barbie’s chin that turned the larger woman’s legs into rubber. This was where Videl’s earlier work in having Barbie waste her punches came into play. That and Barbella’s own inexperience with the Four Witches technique had begun to show. The woman just didn’t have enough time under Tao to develop a blocking technique with her secondary arm set that had parity with her natural arms. Videl quickly followed up with a right hook that caught her staggered opponent across the temple, spinning the redhead around before sending her face-first through the reinforced ring floor.

Crowds went wild as the face of Videl’s longtime nemesis dug a trench right through solid concrete before coming to a taxiing stop at ring’s edge.

“DOWN! Contestant Barbella is down!” the announcer screamed. “I’ll start the count…”

“Stay on her Videl! You’ve got this!” Gohan cheered.

Smiling to himself, Goku crossed his arms in midflight. “I’ll say this much, Videl can pull a strategy out her hat like a magician!”

When Barbie finally did stand up, the damage of Videl’s right hook was on full display for all to see. Her face was scuffed and skinned up and her boobs sported skids from sliding along the hard floor.

“Woah…! Miss Finkly certainly didn’t stay down long!” Jody commented. “This woman is so tough, Ford trucks wish they were made like her!”

Turning to once again face her opponent, Barbella bore down on the Satan girl with an enraged, chilling sneer that would’ve been more at home on the face of Freiza than on a human female. With a loud roar, the redhead threw her head back as her body began to manifest her crimson battle aura anew.

“Barbella’s entering the same state she was in during their midair skirmish,” commented Gohan.

“It’s gonna be interesting to see how Videl adapts,” Goku remarked, smiling.

“Dad, that woman is out to destroy my spouse!” fumed the half-breed testily.

Holding his hands up in defense, the Son patriarch anxiously backed away from his seething eldest born. “Calm down Gohan! I just meant that this fight is offering Videl a great chance to learn. Having a rival always helped me improve so I figure this Barbella lady is doing the same thing for Videl.”

Back on the ground, Agent Biff Wingle continued to monitor the two female’s fluctuating battle powers.
“Their maximum battle powers seem to have leveled off since this whole thing started,” observed the RBI agent. “One still has to wonder how the Satan City Police Department is gonna deal with someone like Barbella if or when she goes back to being a street crook.”

“How come?” asked Caroni.

The government agent let out a long sigh. “Isn’t it obvious? Local law enforcement aren’t equipped to handle people with her abilities. Something tells me this isn’t going to be the last time Videl has to deal with that psycho.”

Back in the ring, Videl and Barbella were gearing up for a major final offensive. White and crimson battle auras flared violently around the two women, and bolts of magenta-colored electrical discharge danced between them, frying the pulverized concrete and filling the arena air with the putrid smell of ozone. In the field surrounding what was left of the ring, whole chunks of turf were ripped from the earth and the ground was racked with tremors from the build-up of their two dueling kis. Over the ring, a dome of energy began to form from the countervailing forces that had tendrils of azure lightning grounding onto any exposed metal from the stadium’s superstructure.

Just as the case was at the start of the fight, Videl’s eyes glowed blue with excess ki and her inner will continuously bombarded her opponent with a subconscious kiai pressure like a neutron star bombarding an unfortunate world with bursts of radiation. Barring some impromptu turnabout like what happened earlier with the Dodonpa, there was no way Barbella could get the drop on her from a distance. Her ki-sensing lessons with her spouse made that a certainty. She would take whatever blind spots she could exploit.

Tapping into the Crane style’s coveted battle meditation for the second time since the fight began, Barbella ignored the cold-burning pressure pounding against her inner will. The ginger’s eyes blazed with a white light that surged through the ring like two polar jets from some stellar body. The whole time, her two extra arms granted her by the Four Witches chakra stood ready for whatever Videl might throw her way.

Then it happened! Being the more vicious of the two, Barbella charged forward.

Ready for anything, Videl pivoted on her front heel and turned her body to the side to reduce the area open to her opponent’s attack.

As Barbie surged forward, the muscled redhead kicked off on the balls of her feet and transferred all the kinetic energy from her running charge into a retrograde spin as her body closed the distance between her and Videl. All four of her arms splayed out like helicopter blades as the ginger’s body tilted on its’ side before bringing each one down on the Satan girl in a series of compact ridge hands.

Videl wasn’t prepared for this. Normally, the human body couldn’t deliver ridge hand strikes in a volley, but Barbella’s Four Witches ability changed everything. The blows battered her hastily put up overhead cross-guard like sledgehammers, forcing the raven-haired teen onto one knee.

Seeing this as her chance, Barbella wrapped her arms around Videl’s midsection in a bone-crushing bear hug. There, the redhead took a moment to savor the panicked look in the teen’s eyes as she wrapped her other set of hands around the girl’s throat.

“This is where it all ends you self-important little bitch!” Barbella seethed. In her arms, Videl struggled futilely against the brawny woman’s ironclad hold.

“It looks like Barbella has Videl in a four-armed chokehold!” the announcer commented. “Can our
“Come on Videl…” Gohan urged through gritted teeth.

“Hang in there girl!” hollered Erasa.

“Fight it, big Sis!” Goten shouted.

Back in the ring, Videl continued to struggle in the crushing grip of her nemesis. She used axe handles, hooks, finger jabs to Barbie’s throat, anything that came to mind, but all her efforts were futile. Her opponent’s crazed mindset and high resistance to physical trauma allowed the woman to wither everything she threw at her. Her spine would either break, or she’d pass out from suffocation, whichever came first.

Tightening her grip on the younger girl’s neck, Barbella chortled in peels of sadistic laughter. This was it! This was where she finally destroyed the object of her obsession! This was where she acted out her most morbid fantasies of revenge for all the world to see! This was the end of little Miss Satan and everything she stood for!

With only one option remaining, Videl decided to go for broke. Due to the adrenaline coursing through her veins, the girl felt a jarring thrill travel through her. This was no longer a match! This was life and death! Looking into her opponent’s crazed eyes, the petite fighter couldn’t keep a predatory smirk from making its’ way onto her continence as she brought her hands together in Barbella’s face.

By the time Barbie knew what was happening, it was too late. Barbella’s eyes widened in horror as the heat of a mighty kihoha wave licked at her now cooking flesh. Releasing her hated enemy, she had just enough time to bring all four of her arms together before being consumed by a flash of bluish-white ki.

A loud, agonized scream reverberated through the arena as Videl’s well-placed blast turned the ring into a sea of fire. Above the ring, fire and lighting illuminated a mushroom-shaped cloud as it rose high into the air, creating a seizure-inducing photo strobe effect that cast shadows across the arena.

Amidst the chaos provided, Videl used the advantage afforded her through her ki-sensing abilities to slip up on her now doubled over opponent. There the two of them engaged in a brief, one-sided skirmish where, using the illuminated smoke to her advantage, Videl pummeled the muscled woman unhindered. Videl was no longer standing in a ring. It was an operating table, and she was the surgeon!

Lacking the ability to sense ki, Barbella could only cross her arms over her face and torso as toe-kicks, heel kicks, hard straights, and uppercuts chopped into her well-built frame. Eventually, through the numerous blows and the heat of the fire, the ginger’s massive natural resilience to pain reached its’ limit and she was left screaming in agony.

In the face of all this painful trauma, the redhead failed to notice Videl latching onto her burnt forearms. With a twist, she pried them apart before delivering an eye-based kiai wave to the former street criminal’s face at point blank range!

Amidst the scraps and painful burns gouged into her flesh from the lava-hot ring floor, Barbella was sent tumbling. Her head tucked, the young woman rolled like a dead leaf in the wind as gusts of blue fire burned at her thick hide before finally coming to a stop at the edge of the ring. When the smoke finally did clear, it showed just how precariously close she’d come to a loss by ring-out.
“Get up!” Videl growled between ragged breaths as she stepped forward. “We’re not done yet!”

Cracking an eye, the shaken ginger looked up from her prostrate fetal position on the floor. Above her, the Satan girl stood bearing down like an ominous dark cloud.

Her face twisted with rage, Barbella came to a slow stand. Her hair was now just as disheveled as her opponent’s, and the smell of burnt flesh wafted off her flambéed upper torso. In the ensuing craziness of Videl’s last assault, the wily woman lost her Four Witches technique, causing her body to revert back to its’ normal state. Still locked in her battle meditation, the ginger’s eyes glowed with an incandescent white.

Bringing a hand to her hip, Videl regarded her opponent with a humored expression. “Third degree burns are a good look for you.”

Clenching her fists to her sides, Barbie looked as if she were ready to bust a vein. “Conceited little slut!”

“Pfft! Excuse me, but aren’t you the one who started this whole mess?” the Satan girl mouthed back. “I mean, what?! Did you expect me to just walk off into the sunset after what you did to me?”

“I should’ve killed you when I had the chance!” Barbella seethed between clinched teeth.

Videl rolled her eyes at the woman’s remark. “Oh please…! If you had killed me, Gohan would’ve taken his sweet time with you just like he did with Cell.”

“W-WHAT?!” Upon hearing this confession from her worst enemy, Barbella’s eyes became as big as saucers. The muscled woman twirled around to spy Gohan hovering outside the ring a fair distance away.

‘That monkey-tailed aberration...? He’s the one who beat Cell?!’ The vile woman just couldn’t believe it. Suddenly, the pieces fell into place, and everything her teachers Tao and Master Shen told her started to make sense. It was there she realized something even more galling. Even if she ever completely discredited the little Satan bitch and her father, Videl’s status as the spouse of the real savior of the world ensured that she would never completely fall!

As the full weight of this realization hit her, Barbella flat-out lost it! Screaming in unfettered wild rage, the former street thug brought her foot down on the concrete platform in a show-stopping stomp whose percussive force shook the whole city block! Raging, there she stood in a horse stance, her body locked in the Crane style’s battle meditation chakra. Her eyes flashed in sporadic pulses of white photons as veins and muscles thrummed and pulsed with the power of her fighting ki. For the umpteenth time that evening, her golden-crimson battle aura exploded to life around her, rending debris from the ring floor.

“Mmm…” Videl moaned, fanning the surrounding air to her nose. “Just smell that butt-hurt… Smells like win.”

“I-I may not have the pleasure of breaking your spirit…,” snarled the larger woman, “… but I’ll at least have the satisfaction of seeing you dead at my feet!”

Barbella’s rage continued to build, and with it, a focal point formed in the forefront of her mind. It was on this focal point that the deranged female poured a vast pool of her inner id. In her immediate local, molecular and covalent bonds in both the ring floor and the surrounding air were ripped asunder as O2 became ozone before breaking apart yet again in erratic discharges of plasmatic power. With another violent burst of white light, Barbella unconsciously projected a gut-wrenching
wave of mental energy that took Videl completely by surprise. Under the pressure from the telekinetic burst, the petite fighter was sent skidding back to the opposite side of the ring. Against the unexpected strike, Videl had just enough time to bring up an impromptu ki shield to absorb some of the energy. Still, her body began to smoke from the heat and pressure generated by the sheer magnitude of her opponent’s focused mental energy. Grounding herself, the girl brought her own fighting ki to bear and again manifested her bluish-white battle aura. It would all come down to a battle of fighting spirit, and she had it in spades.

Across the ring, the air began to swirl in cutting, heated gales around Barbie. With the release of a second anger-driven blast of mental power, the remnants of the ring platform were once again split in two as the energized wave was sent hurdling at the object of her loathing. This time however, her rage-driven telekinetic burst was met in the center of the ring with the pressure of Videl’s hastily thrown kiai wave. The two pressures came together in the center of the shattered platform in a great tumult that wrung the sweltering concrete with a tornado of fire and magenta-hued lightning.

“I WILL KILL YOU!!!” cried the redhead. Pointing a finger at the petite fighter, Barbella let fly with the Crane School’s signature assassination move. The golden beam burst through the storm before carrying onto its’ target.

Videl had just enough time to throw up her hands and deflect the lethal beam attack. Regardless, the force of the concentrated strike knocked the teen fighter off balance, and she was left stumbling back. At the rate things were going, she would surely be overwhelmed. In her overconfidence, she’d underestimated her long-time rival just as Barbie had underestimated her.

Looking out across the ring, Videl attuned her ki-sensing abilities, and what she sensed brought her a sense of dread. Crouched in a horse stance on the opposite side of the platform, Barbella was aiming her right index finger in preparation for a strike, a big strike…

Gritting her teeth, Barbella poured a massive amount of her remaining ki onto her fingertip in preparation for the mother of all Dodonpas! Around her, the atmosphere was shadowed by the light of the sum total of her fighting ki.

“Shit…” Videl hissed. There was no way in hell her ki shields could block what she was feeling, and the percussive force behind the attack would make it impossible to completely escape the blast radius. And that didn’t even take into account the audience getting caught in the shockwave. This left only one option…

“Is that bitch daft?!” Gohan exclaimed, his eyes the size of saucers.

“This is getting out of hand…” said Goku. “If that blast hits, it could easily demolish the whole town! There’s only one thing Videl can do to win this fight without us having to intervene.”

The half-Saiyan raised an eyebrow at what his father was hinting. “A Kamehameha?”

The Son patriarch nodded. “She has to seal that red-haired girl’s next attack with one just as strong, and force her out of the ring.”

Her hands cupped at her side, Videl dropped into a horse stance mirroring that of her opponent. She had to put an end to this, and in the face of what she was sensing, nothing short of her full power would meet the task.

“KA…ME…!”

Between her hands, the familiar retrograde, spinning focal point of whitish-blue ki was drawn
together from her living essence. Upon that fine point, she poured a river of power that made the Kamehameha wave used by Master Roshi at the start of her training look like a candlelight by comparison. She hadn’t done many Kamehameha waves since the start of the Turtle program, but this was the only thing in her arsenal that could get the job done.

The two opposing focal points of concentrated power lit up the entire stadium like binary azure and golden stars. Between them, free traveling arcs of photons collided in brilliant bursts of depolarizing energy that wrung both the ring and the surrounding field, and tendrils of magenta and white lightning coursed across the platform, permeating the air with the stifling odor of carbon monoxide and ozone. Under the weight of their power, a great tremor shook the Earth with such force that heavy slabs of concrete and steel began to crumble and fall from the already heavily damaged stadium superstructure.

“OK! I’ve seen about all I wanna see!” screamed Caroni. “Whaddaya say we get out of here?”

“Go then!” Miss Pizza hollered back, trying to be heard over the surrounding chaos. “I wanna see how this ends!”

Behind the two former Satan acolytes, RBI Special Field Agent Biff Wingle continued to watch with wide eyes as the numbers on his scouter skyrocketed!

“THERE power levels…” shuddered the squat man. “THEY’RE OVER 9000!!!”

“HAAAMEEE!!!”

“I’ll send you back to King Yemma in PIECES!!!” Barbella cackled madly.

As the two attacks continued to charge up, the surrounding field started to buckle and cave in. Under the stress of such a power-up, the stadium’s underground infrastructure finally gave out, and a great deal of the remaining audience also bolted for the exits. The remaining news crews continued to air this battle of the fates for all the world to see.

“EAT THIS!!!” bellowed the former street thug. “SUPER…..DODON…..PAAAA!!!”

“HAA!!!”

The two blasts came together in the center of the ring in a brilliant, eye seizure-inducing quasar of opposing ki that pressed a wide pressure crater straight through what was left of the reinforced concrete floor. The resulting percussion wave sent any nearby observers flying to and fro away from ringside, and hurricane winds ripped into the stands, bowling over whatever brave souls were left to watch the two clashing forces.

“MOMMY!!!” Caroni screeched as he felt himself being swept away by percussive force of the blast. The blond show fighter flailed uselessly as he was blown comically into a far wall at the edge of the field.

Catching a flying slab of cement flying right towards them, Agent Wingle tackled a screaming Miss Pizza to the ground in the just the nick of time.

“If this keeps up, we’re gonna have to declare a state of emergency!”

“Is this an everyday thing with you people?!” Sharpner called out, trying to be heard over the screams of terrified spectators and the sounds of crumbling metal and concrete. Beside him, Erasa had curled into a fetal position under her seat.
“You have no idea…!?” Chi Chi answered.

“You’re all insane!” replied the blond jock.

Back in the ring, the nexus where Videl and Barbie’s powerful ki attacks met continued to build in the center of the platform’s pitiful remnants. Fed on a steady stream of fighting ki from the two females, the mass of energy produced a blowback effect that pushed their balance and concentration to its’ limits. There the two women stood locked in near perfect parity, Videl grounding herself with her naturally intrinsic connection to her living ki against Barbella whose battle meditation and great leverage allowed her to lynchpin herself in the eye of the storm.

“Can you feel it?!” seethed the former criminal through her pained exertion. “Can you feel your second death closing in around you…?”

“Can you feel a good dose of ‘Shut the fuck up!’?” growled the Satan girl.

“That’s right, Videl! Don’t listen to’er!” shouted Gohan, “Trust your inner flame, hammer down, and stay focused!”

Overhearing the half-Saiyan’s words, Barbella cackled shrilly. “In your dreams Monkey Man! I can feel your little slut slipping…!”

With those words, Barbella, with the augmentation provided her by the Crane style’s battle meditation, poured on the steam. This was where the Dodonpa’s ability to concentrate a larger amount of ki on a finer point than the Kamehameha wave came into play. The attacks sheer density gave it massive penetrative power, allowing it to plow deep into the point of contact against Videl’s Kamehameha.

Conversely, the Turtle School’s Kamehameha operated on a different principle. It was an all-around versatile attack that occupied a special niche somewhere between a beam and a wave. Essentially, it was a river of living ki that allowed some of the benefits of both, but the full benefits of neither. One thing it did have over Crane School’s Dodonpa was its’ ability to allow the user to pile on as much ki as one could. Coupled with Videl’s ability to manifest kiai projections from her inner will, it was more than enough to wall out her opponent’s beam attack.

“Well I have bad news for you!” she spat between grit teeth. “Dreams do come true!”

“And I’m livin mine!” Barbella roared back. “Prepare to pay King Yemma his dues! Who knows?! I might send a few of your friends to keep you company!”

Hearing this, the familiar black dragon of rage rose up inside the petite fighter. No one threatened the well-being of her loved ones and walked away unscathed, not if she had anything to say about it! This was gonna be Barbella’s day of reckoning…

Her battle aura flaring with renewed strength, Videl girded her Kamehameha wave with another surge of super-charged energy that slammed into her first salvo from behind. Against this fresh infusion of fighting ki, something had to give. The amorphous mass of energy formed between the two combatants from the collision of their school’s signature techniques began to buckle and move, slowly gaining speed as it crept towards Barbella.

It was like a frog being brought to a slow boil in a saucepan. By the time Barbella realized what was happening, it was too late to dodge. Against such an onslaught, Barbella could only watch with horror as the combined masses of both Videl’s attack and her own barreled back on her in an unstoppable steamroller of ki.
Over the thunderous, noise of gales and raging rapids of azure energy, a long, shrill pained scream of anguish, that of a woman, could just barely be heard. Tournament officials, grounds workers, TV crews, and emergency response teams jumped out of the way as Barbella’s charred body, carried by Videl’s Kamehameha, was plowed straight through the edge of the ring and head-first through the entire breadth of the dusty field before being blasted right through the far wall at the edge of the field. Still, the attack did not stop there. Astride the whitish-blue comet of fighting ki, the former criminal was wrent through one, two, three, four, five walls before exploding out into the parking lot.

There, with the last of its’ inertia, the attack detonated with a brilliant white supernova of azure fire. Whole chunks of asphalt were torn of the ground and whatever vehicles weren’t capsulized were flattened along with all standing structures as a massive fireball rose high above the town. Whatever wasn’t totaled in the initial blast was wrought with heavy hurricane winds, fire, and lightning, and the contrails of residual ki traveled through the air like rain before peppering the ground with a punishing barrage.

“She did it!” cheered Gohan giddily. Beside him, Goku crossed his arms and beamed a big smile.

“Is she dead?!” asked Caroni, his voice filled with anxiety.

“No,” Agent Wingle answered, fingering the trigger on his scouter. “Somehow, that freak survived, but just barely!”

Off in the distance, Police Chief Wilkerson, the city coroner, and his fellow officers rushed around frantically as they tried to get a handle on just what was happening. The whole security detail along with about half the city, looked on as a massive bluish-white fireball turned night into day as it climbed high into the sky above the stadium. While this was going on, they tripped and fell among the pile of dead cultists that had given their lives to aid Brea-og earlier in their assassination attempt on Videl.

“We need to get someone down there, now!” the grizzled chief barked. “I want that parking lot cordoned off!”

“Sir!” saluted his subordinates before turning to make their preparations.

When the dust settled, the results of Videl’s final attack were clear. The whole area was defaced with a massive, shallow crater that smoldered with charred, blackened rock and soil. Noxious fumes choked the air from toxic materials and incinerated road tar. In the center of the crater lay the broken, unconscious body of one Barbella Finkly.

“I found her!” a voice called out.

A small crowd of shocked onlookers began to congregate around the crater. In no time, they were joined by members of the Satan City Police Dept. and members of the press.

“There she is Jody!” hollered Pizza, gesturing to the bottom of the offending crater.

“Let me through! Outta the way!” The announcer fought to the front of the crowd, followed closely by Goku, Caroni, Agent Wingle, and Gohan who carried a now haggard and exhausted Videl in his arms.

Upon catching sight of her handiwork through the throng of officers and other sorts, a wry smile worked it’s way onto Videl’s tired, scratched up face.

“Is she alive?” asked one man.
Bending down, Jody put a small mirror under the downed ginger’s nose. After a moment, the tell-tale signs of condensation covered the glass with a blood-tinged residue. Nodding to himself, Mr. Satan’s long-time pundit cheerleader turned to those gathered.

“She’s alive!” he shouted. “Videl Son is the winner!”

Upon hearing this, a wave of cheers went through the remaining crowds. The stadium would have to be condemned, but at least they got the pleasure of seeing the fight of the century first-hand. Some paparazzi still present even tried to make a go at Videl, only to find their way blocked by the police.

“YEAH!!!” cheered the Satan girl. Her cheers however, were soon cut short by a sharp pain in her chest that left her in coughing ragged fits.

“Woah! I guess I better take these two to see Dende too, huh?” offered Goku, rubbing the back of his head sheepishly. Leaping down into the crater, the Saiyan warrior lifted the muscled woman into his arms before rejoining Gohan and the others.

With a curt nod, Gohan turned to Miss Pizza. “Could you wrap up affairs here while my dad, Videl, and I take care of some things?”

Smirking proudly, the voluptuous redhead crossed her arms. “I’m Videl’s manager. It’s what I do.”

“Perfect!”

Videl in tow, Gohan placed a hand on his father’s shoulder.

“Do you think it’s a good idea to bring that thing with us?” asked Gohan, obviously referring to Barbella.

“I’m not too keen on it myself,” Videl remarked through pained spasms.

Goku simply laughed off their concerns. “No worries! I’ll bring her back before she even wakes up! She won’t know anything.”

And with that, the three of them were off.

*It was the best of times and the best of times…*

Chapter End Notes

I’ve always been a big fan of the beam struggle between Gohan and Cell in the last part of their battle. For nostalgia reasons, I wrote Videl’s beam struggle with Barbella in this chapter in a way that harkens back to that iconic dual of the fates. I just hope I created the right set-up for this down-the-wire moment between the one female character in Dragonball who has more in common with the traditional Z warriors than all the other DBZ women and the greatest secondary antagonist in this story. And yes, you’ll be pleased to know that we haven’t seen the last of Barbella’s sadistic ass.

On the issue of Barbella’s character, I thought long and hard about Videl’s personality as her character was introduced in the Great Saiyaman Saga, and how I could create the perfect minor villain with a believable backstory that could serve in part as a plot device to motivate Videl and get Gohan off the couch and back into the game. I thought long
and hard about what kind of architype female antagonist would have an emotional and mental investment in Videl’s destruction, and immediately, my mind went back to her time as a crime fighter before she met Gohan. She has to have a very oily, slimy charisma that practically screams sadomasochist sicko. In conceptualizing her character, I took a lot of inspiration from movies such as Clockwork Orange, Batman: The Dark Knight, and even a little inspiration from Azula’s character from Avatar: The Last Airbender. She’s driven by one singular goal: Dominance! She has a similar kind of animosity towards Videl that Vegeta had towards Goku; she holds Videl responsible for all her problems in life, and believes that all the fame and glory that Videl has received should be hers’ by right. Upon learning from the Crane Hermit that Mr. Satan couldn’t have defeated Cell, one could see how someone like her would walk away feeling pretty proud of humiliating Videl. To Barbie, learning that Videl’s boasting about her father’s greatness was largely based on a lie would have been akin to say Kenshiro from Fist of the North Star learning that Jagi was the one who turned his best friend Shin against him, thus causing Shin and Yuria’s death.

As for the primary antagonistic entity, I want everyone to know that I haven’t forgotten about the Majin cult. The scene with the village being slaughtered and the young people being kidnapped by them in chapter 16 is only a taste of what they’ve really been up to. Shit is gonna get real nasty in future chapters between our heroes, their allies, and this mysterious, ruthless organization.
“So…, we’re really doing this?” asked a young voice.

“I don’t like it either Dende, but we can’t just leave her like this,” Goku answered, his tone betraying a hint of misgivings. Next to him stood Gohan, Piccolo, and a freshly healed Videl. The four of them now formed a semicircle around the badly charred but still living Barbella as they debated what to do with her. Following the vicious beam struggle between Videl and the former street thug, Goku brought both females to the lookout for medical attention. For Earth’s god, healing Videl wasn’t an issue. As for her long-time adversary…

“I still don’t like it,” Videl stated, shaking her head. “After all the horrible things this disease has done, it would be better for the world if we just let her croak. If she’s healed, I know I’ll be stuck beating her off with a stick for the rest of my days. This bitch came back from Hell just to ruin me!”

“That and knowing what she knows now, there’s no telling how far she’ll go to get revenge,” Gohan added. “She knows the truth about me and Mark! We don’t need someone like this in our life. We’re already gonna have our hands full dealing with that cult.”

The Son Patriarch turned to his eldest born. “Listen Gohan, I get where you’re coming from, but I still believe that Videl will benefit from having a decent rival. My past fights with Vegeta and Piccolo have done wonders for me, and in the long run, it could help Videl improve. There isn’t anyone else out there that can do it as well as this lady can, and training by itself isn’t gonna help her past any of the plateaus she might reach.”

The Son boy gaped at his father in appalled astonishment. Even after a lifetime of seeing Goku employ this contrived approach to things, the teen still couldn’t believe what his father was suggesting.

“You’re joking, right?! Please tell me you’re joshin me!” the teen practically begged. “You’re really gonna have us relive this old song and dance?!”

“I don’t know what joshin is, but I’m serious!” replied the Saiyan warrior. “She’s no threat to you, and from what we’ve seen, Videl can handle her well enough. I had faith in you against Cell. Why can’t you have faith in Videl against this lady?”

“Faith isn’t the issue, Dad!” Gohan replied testily. “Collateral damage is! People will get caught in the cross-fire, and this bitch isn’t exactly the type to let bygones be bygones, let alone stick to any ground rules! It’d be like letting a BTK killer with our abilities run loose in the streets!”

“Whatever the case may be, the longer we stand around debating this, the harder it’s gonna be to save her,” Piccolo pointed out with a grimace. “If we’re gonna do this, Goku will have to get her back to Satan City before she wakes up. This place is sacred, and I don’t like the idea of someone like her knowing about the upper realm.”

“Since Videl’s the one who’ll be affected the most by this, I say we let her decide,” Dende offered. Gohan let out an annoyed sigh before asking his spouse, “So how about it, hun? The choice is yours.”
Looking down at the unconscious body of her hated enemy, a myriad of scenarios played out in Videl’s mind. Former felon or not, if they didn’t heal Barbella and bring her back, there was the very real possibility she, Gohan, and Goku could face criminal charges for 2nd degree manslaughter. The Interior Ministry and Agent Millhouse might have been willing to work with them on keeping her Dad’s lies from coming to light, in exchange for some favors, but this would be entirely on her and her spouse. Though she had the same reservations as Gohan, her father-in-law’s words also held a grain of truth. With the prospect of fading into irrelevancy looming over her, she couldn’t afford to look at this issue with an ‘eye for an eye’ mindset. How long would it be, if ever, until someone else like Barbella emerged to put her to the test? Having a viable contemporary to compete with could keep her on her toes and help her remain in the forefront for years to come, at least so far as her standing within the Martial Arts Society went.

“Do it, Dende!” she commanded.

At this, Gohan did a double-take. “Oh my God, it’s spreading…” Burying his face in his hands, the half-breed silently cursed the fates for saddling his life with so much insanity.

“You said the choice was mine, and this is my choice,” Videl argued. “We’re gonna have a hard time explaining what happened to everyone if Barbella dies, and I sure as hell don’t want a criminal record! I don’t think even my Dad’s influence could get us out of a messed up situation like that.”

Gohan let out a defeated sigh. “Point taken. It looks like I’ll never win any of our spats.”

With a self-assured smile, the petite fighter crossed her arms and remarked, “You won’t!”

Chuckling, Goku placed a firm hand on the shoulder of his eldest. “Get used to it, Son.”

Bending down, the Earth’s guardian placed his hands upon Barbella’s still twitching body. Within moments, waves of soothing, healing energy blanketed the sadistic redhead in their warm, dim glow as wounds closed and broken bones knitted themselves together. Soon enough, the former criminal began to stir.

“OK, Dad! Now’s the time!”

“Right!” Goku nodded. The spiky-haired Saiyan reached down and grabbed Barbella’s shoulder before bringing two fingers to his forehead, and with that, he was off.

With Goku gone, Piccolo turned to Gohan and Videl. “Now that that’s been taken care of, there are a few things we need to discuss.”

“Too many,” remarked his former pupil ruefully. “Where should we begin?”

“A good place to start would be your tail,” said the Namek. “Do you plan to keep it?”

“Oh course!” the half-breed answered without hesitation.

“In spite of the risks?”

“I’m stronger with my tail than without it,” Gohan reasoned. “I’m also kinda partial to it. It may get me a few laughs at school, but it’s part of my identity. It makes me feel special. And besides, Videl likes the added benefits it gives us, don’cha honey?”

“Oh yeah…” nodded the now swooning girl. A pink tint made its’ way across her face at all the naughty things the two of them had tried since the furry appendage regrew.
Seeing how nonchalant his former pupil was being about the whole thing, Piccolo shook his head and mumbled a few not-so-pleasant comments under his breath.

“Look, Piccolo!” Gohan started, “I’m not the type to stay up past a certain hour anyway so the chances of me being up to see a full moon are fairly nil.”

“What happens during a full moon?” Videl inquired. “I mean… what’s the big deal?”

Piccolo let out an annoyed sigh before answering, “A Saiyan who has his tail during a full moon transforms into a violent, giant ape.”

“You mean like a werewolf!?” she gaped, wide-eyed.

“Only about two thousand times bigger,” the Namek added.

At this last part, Videl’s jaw hit the proverbial floor. “Woah…!”

“Look, guys! Listen!” Gohan implored. “I wanna train my tail so I can turn it into an asset. Besides, being a third stronger is one hell of a benefit!”

“Fine…,” Piccolo sighed. “But if anything happens, I’ll make doubly sure that you never regrow that thing again!”

“I’ve got this,” assured Gohan. “Besides, it’s like Videl here has always told me. I make too many sacrifices at the expense of my own happiness. Can I just have this one thing, please?”

“I said fine!” Piccolo growled. It was then that the older warrior decided to switch gears. “On another note, you’ve done a really fine job of training Videl.”

“Wow, thanks!” smiled the boy. “She still has four months left, but I was wondering if she could use the hyperbolic time chamber once she’s finished with Roshi’s Kame School program?”

“Of course!” said Dende.

“On one condition…” Piccolo added.

“Of course there is…” Videl moaned sourly, her shoulders slumping.

“She has to complete Korrin’s challenge. All humans who have ever come to the lookout seeking training, have had to both climb Korrin’s Tower and retrieve his Divine Holy Water. It’s a formality of sorts. We do it to all natural born Earthlings.”

“How long will that take?” she asked.

“That depends entirely on how strong you get in the next four months,” Piccolo answered. “If you are diligent in your training, Korrin’s holy water test won’t count as a speed bump, but if not, you could be at it for a few months…”

Upon hearing this, the petite girl’s eyes grew as big as saucers. “A few months!”

“Like I said,” he reiterated, “It all depends on how motivated you are.”

“While we’re up here, perhaps you could share some information you might have on the great evil that’s been rising up on Earth,” Gohan suggested.

“I take it the two of you bore witness to the sorcery of this strange cult when you returned to Satan
City?"

The unionized teens nodded. "They tried to assassinate Videl at the tournament."

Piccolo snorted. "The rudimentary acts of violence and occultism you’ve seen them commit in the city don’t hold a candle to what they’ve been doing out in the backwaters of the world."

“What do you mean?” asked Videl.

“For whatever reason, these people have been relegating their true acts of debauchery to rural areas in the plains surrounding the Northern Wastelands. In these far-removed places, whole villages are being depopulated, their women and children being hauled off to a life of servitude, whereas the men, the elderly, and infants are being slaughtered on the spot!"

Reeling from the shock of this revelation, Videl covered her mouth with both hands. Next to her, Gohan’s face contorted in a mix of horror and disgust as the full weight of what their new enemy was capable of hit home. How…? Just how could people who’d been killed little more than eight months before deny their fellow human beings the very right they themselves were denied by Majin Buu?! Did they learn nothing?

“Why?! Why are they doing this?!” Videl demanded in righteous indignation.

“What can you tell us about these people, Piccolo?” Gohan asked. “What are their motives? Or better yet, where did they come from? How did they get their knowledge in sorcery and ki?”

His cape billowing behind him, the Namekian warrior walked over to the edge of the lookout and peered down at the lower realm. Moments passed before he gave one answer.

“Babadi’s spaceship.”

“What?! How is that possible?” Gohan asked in a tone of disbelief. “Vegeta destroyed Babidi’s ship!”

“Apparently Vegeta’s lost his touch when it comes to destruction,” Piccolo remarked. “When it became clear that these cultists were using powers they had no business having, my first gut instinct was to follow the only lead we had.”

“I have a hunch…” Dende put in. “My guess is that the ship was restored with Earth when the Supreme Kai and myself used the Namekian dragonballs to revive the planet and its’ inhabitants. It makes sense that everything destroyed on Earth during Buu’s rampage would also be restored.”

“That’s one heck of a legacy to leave behind,” Gohan commented. “Damned that little imp bastard! Even in death he haunts us!”

From there, Piccolo continued. “When I investigated the remnants of the burned out ship, I discovered two things. The first was that the bottom two layers were largely undamaged. It makes sense that Babadi’s craft would be that durable given how much fighting his own warriors engaged in on board. The second discovery I made is more troubling. The living quarters, those presumably belonging to Babidi himself, had been ransacked! Someone helped themselves to whatever possessions the wizard brought with him. Considering this is Babidi we’re talking about, one could only imagine what trinkets whoever did this may have picked up.”

For a brief moment, Gohan stood there in stunned silence. He remembered all too well the archaic powers the ancient mage could bring to bear. The very thought of an entire army of potential adversaries having access to even a modicum of what Babidi did was nothing short of terrifying!
“Can you give us any clues as to the full extent of their abilities?” Gohan inquired. “So far, we’ve only dealt with an assassin, an angry mob, and a few thugs. That’s not a lot to go on.”

Furrowing his brow as he turned to his former student, Piccolo answered, “They haven’t really played their hand yet, but I can tell you that their abilities and numbers have grown steadily in recent months. What the two of you saw from that twisted assassin at the tournament is only the beginning. Something’s brewing down on Earth, something big. The last time I felt this much negative energy permeating the world, the Makyo Star came within close proximity of our planet.”

Hearing this set off alarm bells for the half-breed. “Do you think he’s returned?”

“No,” was Piccolo’s curt answer. “And even if he did, there’s nothing in this world that could help him close the gap that’s emerged in the past decade between him and us. Garlic Jr. may be immortal, but we now have immortal beings in our own camp who are far stronger than he could ever be. He is effectively cut off from any realistic avenue to a global conquest.”

“That’s a relief,” sighed Gohan.

“Besides…,” said Piccolo turning to look out over the lower realm once more, “Garlic Jr. isn’t the kind to ally himself with anyone. His ego would never allow it.”

“Excuse me, but who’s Garlic Jr.?” Videl questioned, turning to her spouse. “Another old enemy you haven’t told me about?”

“Garlic Jr. is some demonic dwarf Piccolo, Krillin, and I beat a long time ago. A real annoying little bastard who used the dragonballs to give himself eternal life. That and like us, he has the ability to hide his ki presence by suppressing it.”

Nodding, Videl’s mouth made an ‘o’ in understanding.

“Ahem!”

At the sound of Piccolo clearing his throat, the two teens were brought back to the matter at hand.

“If the two of you are done, are there any other questions?”

“What about their base of operations?” asked Videl.

“Again, these Majin cultists seem to have a fixation on the Northern Wastelands. Every day, tens of thousands march out across that desert. From what Dende and I have observed, it’s become a holy site for them.”

“Then we should look there first,” suggested the Satan girl.

“I’m not sure that’s wise,” warned the Namek. “We don’t really know what else is hiding in the shadows. One distinct advantage we have is that they don’t know we’re working against them. Considering that these people are effectively everywhere, the last thing you and Gohan need to do is put yourselves on their radar. Let me and Dende handle the observation aspect of this effort. In the meantime, I want the two of you and Goku to continue recruiting and training your own force in Satan City. Something tells me that their recent efforts there are a prelude to something much bigger.”

“So we’re just gonna let them keep butchering anyone near the desert?!” Videl asked indignantly.

“Like I said before…,” Piccolo reiterated, “For the time being, the two of you need to stay in the
vicinity of West District. They’re up to something…”

“Are there any others working against them, aside from us I mean…?” Gohan inquired.

“Besides you and Videl, there’s Tien and Choatzu. Choatzu’s tributary kingdom in the Far East is waging an anti-insurgency war against rural paramilitary units fighting under the banner of this Majin cult. They too are training a small militia of fighters to augment their nation’s existing army. Then there’s your grandfather’s kingdom…”

“The Ox Kingdom?!” To the two teens, this news came as quite a surprise.

“Yes,” nodded Dende. “For whatever reason, these people won’t tread into your grandfather’s domain.”

“That might have to do with Grandpa’s old reputation,” Gohan said with some measure of shame. “From what I’ve heard, Grandpa did a lot of horrible things in his younger years.”

Videl was the next to follow up. “What’s their fixation with our home town? From what the Satan City Chief of Police has told us, there’s an army of them infesting the West Metro Area. Other than targeting me and my dad, why would they maintain such a large presence there?”

“As I’m sure you know, the West District is the economic and political center of King Furry’s power base,” Piccolo said. “One of the main long-term goals uniting all of these cultists is the overthrow of what they see as hold-over institutions from the ‘first life.’ They regard this as the ‘new world,’ and wish to see a new order established to replace ‘first life’ institutions they believe failed them both before their death at the hands of Majin Buu and after their resurrections. The cult’s membership is comprised primarily of society’s disaffected and downtrodden, people who either had nothing to come back to in their second chance at life or lost everything they had in their search for answers. They’re driven by a desire to see change or die trying, and Satan City will soon be a front in this war.”

Just then, Son Goku returned.

“Hey guys! What’d I miss?” asked the Saiyan.

“Plenty…,” Gohan stated. “We’ll fill you in when we get back to the others. Caroni, Pirowski, Chief Wilkerson, Bob, and Agent Wingle need to hear this too.”

“Right! Let’s go!” Videl urged.

Just as they were about to depart, they were stopped one last time by Piccolo.

“Wait!”

Halting just short of teleporting, the three of them turned to the Namek. “What is it, Piccolo?”

“While you’re both here, I’d like to give you some new training gear,” the Namek offered. “It’s about time Gohan had an upgrade, and if Videl’s to get the most out of her own training, she’s gonna have to start working with higher quality gear than what Roshi can provide. Besides, her cloths have seen better days.”

“That’s an understatement…” the petite fighter remarked. The battle with her long-time rival had left her spandex two-piece in tatters. What’s more, it had been the spandex shorts and top set Master Roshi had given her before returning to Satan City! They would be sorely missed…
“Hold still,” instructed the former guardian. “This’ll only take a moment.”

Holding out his hand, the green-skinned warrior screamed as he warped the physical matter in the surrounding air. Due to the air being so thin at this altitude, it took a bit more effort to bring together enough disparate molecules to meet the task. A bright flash illuminated the area as his materialization technique worked its magic. When the smoke cleared, both Gohan and Videl stood clad in their bright new weighted clothing.

Already, Videl could feel the added weight pressing down on her from all sides. Catching herself just short of falling over, the girl took a few steps as she tried out her new duds. It was then that she noticed something…

“What’s this?”

Unlike the weighted cloths worn by her spouse, Videl’s white outfit showcased three different logos. The left and right side of the chest area sported the demon symbol of her father’s dojo and the Turtle kanji respectfully. In the tummy area below them however, rested the kanji of the Masaka, Gohan’s first school.

“While I was looking upon the lower realm, I saw you using my hand-to-hand style in your fight with that ginger-haired woman, so I figured I’d complete your look,” Piccolo explained. “It suits you.”

“At the rate things are going, I’m gonna be a walking billboard,” the girl remarked ruefully. Behind her, Gohan stifled a chuckle at his wife’s poutiness. Piccolo however, wasn’t through.

“Oh! And Videl…”

“Yes, Piccolo?”

The Namek’s eyes narrowed as he bore into her with menacing intent. His next words carried a bone-chilling edge that would’ve put any threat Freiza could’ve made to shame. “If you ever pull another stunt like the one you pulled with Buu, I’ll take you on as a pupil and make you wish Roshi was the one still training you!”

“R-Right! Heh,he,heh…” the girl stammered nervously. The thought of being on the Namekian’s bad side caused Videl to pale a few shades.

Shortly after returning to the crumbling remnants of the Satan City Stadium, Gohan, Videl, and Goku rejoined with the rest of Gohan’s family and Mr. Satan’s former acolytes. Almost immediately, the lot of them were set upon by an army of journalists hungry for post-tournament commentary. The gaggle of papparazi formed a pow-wow around the group as they entered the now dilapidated lobby.

“Videl! How do you and your husband explain the strange powers you and the other contestants exhibited earlier?” inquired one reporter. “What would your father say regarding the use of such ‘tricks’?”

“Miss Barbella Finkly made some pretty telling comments on her way out,” stated another. “Care to respond?”

“Is this how it is everywhere you go?” asked Chi Chi, warily eyeing the incorrigible crowd of bottom-feeders.

“Usually they’re too busy chasing after my father,” Videl answered off-handedly.
Jody Firecracker ‘harrumphed!’ in response. “Don’t forget, Videl! You still owe me an explanation.”

“I promise I’ll tell you everything Jody, though I still think my dad should be the one doing it.”

Caroni chuckled at this. “You better bring a snack Jody! It’s a long story.”

“So what did King Piccolo have to say?” Agent Wingle queried.

Upon hearing his mentor’s name, Gohan’s eyes became like saucers. “How did you-“

“King Piccolo?!” exclaimed Jody. The TV personality turned a questioning look in Gohan’s direction. “As in ‘Demon King’ Piccolo?! As in King Furry’s Bane?!”

“We’re the government, kid!” the man answered curtly. “We know about the lookout and Dende. Now, as to my question…”

“Oh, yes…, of course!” Not used to having complete strangers knowing so much about his real life, the Son boy shook himself before continuing. “Piccolo and Dende believe they have found the key to the Majin cult’s abilities. You remember that Babidi was an alien, right?”

“Well he wasn’t a mutated sea otter, that’s for sure…” the agent sarcastically remarked. Gohan however took it in stride.

“Anyway, they discovered that the remnants of Babidi’s spaceship were restored along with the Earth,” the half-breed explained. “When they investigated the ship, they found that the living compartments, which were relatively intact, had been stripped bare!”

“So… you think they might’ve gotten their mitts on whatever magic do-dads the wizard left behind?”

“Most certainly!” the teen confirmed. “Whoever did this knew what they were looking for.”

Suddenly, the RBI field agent stopped, prompting the rest of the group to do the same. Tilting his head up, the short, squat man’s features hardened as he looked Gohan square in the eyes.

“Listen, kid! Just between you and me, I’d rather not be doing this. This whole set-up that the Interior Ministry has goin with you and your little wife there stinks to high heaven! Holding something over the head of the one fella who’s done more to give us all a future than anyone is the last thing my superiors should be doing!”

“Had you guys asked, we would’ve helped anyway,” Gohan said earnestly. “Me and Videl need all the help we can get!”

“Then can we try to think of this as a mutual endeavor?” the agent offered, holding out his hand. “Regardless of what my top brass might think, I believe we stand to gain more from working together in good faith.”

“Sure!” nodded the teen, accepting the handshake. “I’d be honored.”

“Fantastic…!” the man drawled. “Now, what intel can you provide?”

“Well, for starters, Piccolo told us that these cultists have turned the Northern Wastelands and the surrounding plains into their stomping grounds. There, roaming bands are conducting every atrocity you can imagine! Whole populations are being uprooted from the rural backwaters of the continent!”

It was then that Videl cut in. “I suggested that we do something more proactive, but for whatever reason, Piccolo just wants us to continue doing what we’ve been doing since we got back to town.
Forgive me for being a curmudgeon, I’m not one to just sit idly by while people are being massacred!”

“From the reports we’ve received from our agents in the field, you may not have to wait too long,” warned Agent Wingle. “From the looks of things, they’re gearing up to find you! There are stirrings afoot in the underbelly of this city, signs of a coming storm. The local cultists are becoming increasingly militant in their character, and weapons caches are turning up in around their sites of ritual, some of them military grade. There’s also been a massive uptick in the production of narcotics, presumably to fund their weapon’s trade. If that wasn’t bad enough, supplies of Krokodil, a cheap heroine substitute synthesized from kerosene, have been found in the warehouse district.”

Upon hearing this, Videl let out a long-suffering sigh. “That’s all we need. With all the meth labs popping up in low income areas, the market of that illicit substance will have a production base already in place. Considering just how stupid people are getting since their resurrection, I can’t help but think we’re gonna be seeing a lot of dumbasses in crutches soon.”

“Why crutches?” asked her husband in morbid curiosity.

“Krokodil causes the body to rot from the inside out,” explained the man. “Because of this, it has a nasty side effect of turning its’ users into amputees.”

“Aside from raids by local law enforcement, what else has the government been doing to head off a probable armed insurrection?” asked the raven-haired girl.

Taking in a sharp breath, Wingle made a hissing noise before answering, “Top brass at the Interior Ministry are putting together a game plan. The military however, still have their heads up their asses. They refuse to see what’s in front of them! They’re the only department of his majesty’s government that can realistically confront the issue with sufficient force, and they still won’t do anything. They’re hopeless! That’s the only way I can describe them. If King Piccolo, the Saiyans, Dr. Gero, and Majin Buu weren’t enough to wake them up, nothing will!”

“But why is that?” Gohan pressed.

“Complacency,” was the field agent’s answer. “Having 200 years of peace following the first defeat of King Piccolo has made the armed forces soft. They’ve gotten used to having a hero fly in and save them. That’s the way it’s been since Moutaito defeated King Piccolo in the old days. Seriously, though! Have you seen some of the guys they allow to serve in uniform?! There’s no way those fat-bodies passed the military fitness test! The peacekeeping forces are now just a bunch of upper middle class and upper crust yuppies who’re looking to use the military as an easy path to get pensions and benefits on their way up the socioeconomic rung. The whole system is rotten to the core, and his Majesty and his predecessors are partly to blame!”

“But King Furry is a good, benevolent ruler!” Gohan argued.

“He’s a good peacetime ruler!” Agent Wingle countered. “We need an honest-to-goodness military ruler, and if King Furry’s administration isn’t going to provide the type of leadership we need, that leadership will have to come from some other quarter.”

“Switching subjects…” said Videl turning to Goku, “What did you do with Barbella?”

“Oh! As soon as she woke up, she tried to lash out at some people, so I had to knock’er out again,” explained the Saiyan. “I didn’t wanna hurt her, but she was being a real grumpy-pants! I think those nice police officers took her back home or something. She did say something about it not being over.”
Gohan sighed. “I guess it can’t be helped. Now she’s gonna be out for blood. Knowing that Barbella bitch, Videl’ll have to train a lot more if she wants to retain her edge.”

“Bring her on!” shouted his wife enthusiastically. “I’m game! If she thinks she can win a rematch, I say we schedule another bout!”

“Preferably somewhere out in the boonies,” grumbled Miss Pizza. The Satan Family’s long-time agent took a long weary look at the massive levels of damage Videl’s final match had wrought upon the Stan City Stadium. The cost of the damage would easily run into the hundreds of millions. Silently, the woman wondered if there was a way to get the government to foot the bill?

Elsewhere in the city, a lonely police cruiser rolled through a rundown neighborhood. The locale in question was located on the wrong side of town, reviled as a place where the near-do-wells of society came to engage in questionable enterprises. Inside were two fairly overweight members of Satan City’s finest, one of which was busy scarfing down a box of Dunkin’ Donuts Supremers.

‘Unit 114, please be on the lookout for anything strange in the Bessemer Area. Reports have been coming in detailing Can opener activities involving ‘spell circles.’

“This is Unit 114,” announced the driver. “Still no signs of organized animal torture, but we will keep you posted. Out!”

“Pfft! Can you believe this shit?” the second officer asked dismissively as he licked icing off his fingers. “We should’a been over at the stadium watchin the fireworks with the rest of the guys! Why the hell did the Serge stiff us with this boring gig?”

“I don’t like it any more than you do, Murph,” admitted the other. “Something doesn’t feel right.”

“Your wife didn’t feel right, but that didn’t stop me from finishin,” jeered the second.

“Look! That was a one-time th-“

“Look out!” screamed the second one, pointing out at the road ahead of them. Standing in the middle of the street was a mysterious dark figure.

“HOLY SHIT!!!” His partner hit the brakes so hard that drinks, junk food, etc., went into the passenger side floorboard. Luckily, they were able to bring their squad car to a screeching halt just short of whoever was in front of them.

“Crazy fucker!” cursed one of the officers as he nursed his fresh coffee burns. “Get out and see what this guy’s issue is!”

“What?! Hell no! This fella gives me the creeps! You do it!”

“Pfft! Rookies…” he remarked off-handedly. Leaning forward, the officer upholstered his sidearm before stepping out of the vehicle. “Just man the radio then!”

Gun in hand, the senior officer in question stepped around the front of the squad car and got right up in the cowl-hidden face of the mysterious cloaked figure. In spite of the circumstances and for whatever reason, the cloaked figure remained eerily silent. The policeman however, thought nothing of it. Peering closer, he tried to make out the cloaked person’s facial features amid the flickering of a nearby streetlight. The one discernable feature that did stick out was a belt buckle showcasing a calligraphic ‘M.’

“I wanna see some ID!” demanded the officer.
“Why should you see my ID when my face will one day be known by this whole city?” the figure retorted in an aged, withered voice.

Lowering his sidearm, the officer reached into his belt for some handcuffs. “Listen fruitcake, I’m not gonna tell ya again! You can either show me your license or some form of ID, or things are gonna get rough!”

A low chuckle came from the figure as he reached up and pulled back his cowl, revealing a decrepit, elderly man. His balding head was framed with thinning wisps of white hair and his face showcased a long, pointed nose. His eyes however, seemed as though they were spawned from the depths of Hell itself. They glowed with an otherworldly incandescent magenta that gave the old man’s gaunt face the look of a skull lantern.

Upon seeing the man’s face, a cold chill ran up the seasoned policeman’s spine. In that moment, the officer did what no law enforcement official should do in such a situation: He froze.

Suddenly, a loud ‘Thunk!’ resounded through the otherwise quiet street, causing the petrified lawman to jump with fright.

“What the fuck?!” shouted his partner.

Looking to his side, the officer briefly caught the source of the noise. Standing on the roof of he and his partner’s patrol car was a tall, bald, burly man. The man in question held aloft a massive pickaxe-like club. Upon his head was the mark of **Majin**.

Before the officer could do anything, the large, club-wielding behemoth swung down with all his might and impaled his partner right through the windshield.

The horrifying sound and sight of his fellow officer squelching out his last pained cry finally spurred the man into action. Taking aim with his sidearm, the senior officer was just about to put a slug right between the eyes of his partner’s killer. Before he could even pull the trigger however, powerful arms shot out of the darkness and wrapped his upper torso in a vice-like full nelson.

“This one will do nicely for sending a message,” spoke the elderly chap from before. The old man bent down and gingerly pinched the subdued officers’ cheeks the way a mother would her child. “Won’t you?”

“P-Please don’t hurt me…” begged the downed officer, finding it difficult to breath with several attackers atop him. “I’ve already died once! Please…”

“A coward I see…” remarked the aged man with a bit of mirth. “Even better!”

The figure then turned to another, this one dressed from head to toe in black robes, and snapped, “Get me a rope and some gasoline!”

“Yes, Acolyte Cumber!”

The next evening on Pepper Island, Gohan, Videl, Mark, and the others sat around a camp fire they’d set up between Kame House and Mark and Videl’s capsule house and celebrated Videl’s victory at the Satan City Tournament. Fun and merriment were made, stories were exchanged, and bombshells were dropped as clam and dino-cabobs roasted over a slow-burning charcoal pit. Sitting at a picnic table, Goku, Goten, Trunks, and Buu inhaled food by the plate-full while Eighteen, Bulma, and Chi Chi whipped up enough fried potatoes and corn on the cob to feed a platoon.

Off in the distance, the darker skinned island natives along with the local anthropomorphic goat and
rabbit people were holding their own festival in celebration of their autumn banana harvest. Their gleaming machetes raised high, it seemed as if every native farmer on the island was dancing in a circle around a great bon fire. Their folk songs rang throughout the meadow and provided a rustic background tune that set the evening mood.

“Man… this is the life!” Leaning back in his lawn chair, the pig Oolong, let out a loud belch as he patted his now bloated stomach with contentment.

“You said it, cuz!” old Bob drawled in his heavy redneck twang. Whether the man noticed Buu’s presence or whether he was too drunk to care, one could hardly tell. Reaching into his cooler, the chunky retiree fished around for another six-pack of Satan City beer. “Almost makes me wish I brought my second wife with me….almost!”

“That it is fellas…” Krillin concurred, snatching a can from Bob.

“Mmm…Yummy! More corn please!” cheered Goten between mouthfuls.

“And make it snappy!” Trunks remarked with arrogance.

“Mind your manners young man!” Bulma scolded. Her son flinched when the woman jabbed a spatula in his direction.

Near the fire pit, Gohan and Videl took turns basting the simmering meat as they told Mark and Master Roshi everything from their last two weeks’ exploits.

“I can’t believe it…” said Mark in disbelief, slumping back into his chair.

“I’m just glad you’ve been here with Master Roshi,” Gohan stated as he turned three spicks of roasting meat, one with each hand and a third with his tail. “From what we can tell, these people have it out for both you and Videl! They actually tried to have her assassinated at the competition! Thankfully, Videl made short work of their lapdog.”

“I would tell you both to stay here where it’s safe, but I know neither of you would listen,” the Champ commented with resignation.

“It wouldn’t be an option anyway, Dad,” Videl told him with a hint of frustration. “I really wish I could, if only to keep my training more consistent, but from what we’ve been told, they’re engaged in a major build-up in Satan City. Which brings us to another subject…”

The afroed man quirked a curious eyebrow at both his daughter and son-in-law. “What is it?”

“At the tournament, we were confronted by agents from King Furry’s Ministry of the Interior,” Gohan related. “It seems King Furry’s government has been monitoring me and my father’s circle for years. They’ve known about me beating Cell since the very beginning.”

Mark’s eyes widened at this revelation. “WHAT?! T-T-That would mean that…that…”

“Yes Daddy,” Videl nodded. “They know everything. It gets worse though…”

“How could it get any worse?” asked the large man, his voice cracking with a whimper.

“They have me and Videl right where they want us,” Gohan said ruefully. “If we don’t do whatever they say, they’re prepared to throw you in prison and confiscate everything you and Videl have.”

“Oh no…” whimpered the large man. Burying his face in his hands, the afroed Champ began to
weep.

Coming to either side of Mark, the teens placed a hand on each of his shoulders. “Daddy, we’re not gonna let that happen!”

“We’ll do whatever we have to if it’ll keep you out of prison!” Gohan sternly vowed. “If I have to, I’ll overthrow King Furry’s government myself and pardon you before I allow that!”

“You’d really go that far for me?!” asked the Champ, his voice filled with emotion. The idea that this boy would give everything just to protect both him and his daughter had the afroed fighter on the verge of another set of tears.

Fixing his father-in-law’s gaze with his own, Gohan nodded. “We might need the government’s help in the coming days, but if push comes to shove, I’ll die before I let anything happen to you or Videl!”

“T-Thank you…” the Champ sniffled in gratitude. “You really are the best thing to ever happen to us, Gohan! I don’t deserve any of your help, but you keep on looking out for me.”

Seeing how far her father and Gohan had come since this whole adventure began, a warm smile curved at the corners of Videl’s mouth. Not too long ago, her father didn’t trust Gohan any more than he did any other boy. Now however, the two of them were like two peas in a pod. She didn’t have too long to dwell on it as she was soon brought out of her reverie by the voice of her master.

“Are you sure this place is any safer?” Roshi quizzed. “Mark and Videl’s training here has become common knowledge by this point. It’ll only be a matter of time before this mysterious group sends someone to attack Mark. I think it would be wise if you had Dende and Piccolo keep a closer eye on this island just to be sure.”

“That’s a good idea,” Gohan concurred. “Thankfully, in our absence there’s not much that’ll get past Eighteen’s cybernetic enhanced senses. Between her, you, and Krillin, Mark should be able to continue his training here in relative safety.”

“I’m still not convinced,” the aged master doubted with a shake of his head. “If these people are able to use Babadi’s archaic powers to any extent, there’s no telling what they might pull.”

Suddenly, a rough, edgy voice cut into their discussion.

“What are you lot yammering about?”

Stepping out of the shadows, the owner of the voice revealed himself to be none other than Vegeta, the Prince of all Saiyans.

“Hey, Vegeta! You made it!” beamed Gohan enthusiastically.

“Hmph! I see the two of you finally took a break from screwing like rabbits…” If anyone paid close enough attention, they’d have noticed Vegeta’s eyes widening slightly upon seeing Videl.

Suddenly, the Saiyan warrior whirled on Gohan and yanked the teen forward by the shirt collar.

“What the fuck is this?!” he demanded, pointing at Videl. “Mind telling me how your little concubine went from being weaker than your mother to being in the same class as a PTO elite?”

“Didn’t you hear?” Gohan quipped with some sass, “We’ve been training.”

It was then that the Saiyan Prince felt the difference in the elder Son boy’s ki presence. During the
battle with Buu, the teen was far stronger than Super Buu’s initial form. The zenkai boost Gohan had received both from Dende’s healing during that battle and from being revived from death with the rest of the world’s population had augmented the boy’s power even further to the point where it made Vegeta’s seem like that of an insect. In the past four months however, the adolescent had grown far stronger still. His base form alone was now easily as powerful as the base of Vegeta and Goku’s fusion.

“Vegeta, behave yourself!” came Bulma’s admonishing call.

The Prince of all Saiyans peered into the Son boy’s eyes a bit more, but after a moment, the Prince shoved the young man away. “I thought you said your warrior days were over, not that you were much of one anyway.”

Smirking, Gohan took the man’s barb in stride before replying, “The situation’s changed Vegeta. A new threat has risen in recent months, one that I, Videl, Piccolo, and from what I’ve heard, Tien and Choatzu, have been busy preparing ourselves for.”

The shorter man took on a shit-eating grin before boastfully remarking, “Oh, I see! Someone’s having a party and I wasn’t invited…”

“No Vegeta…” groaned the half-breed. “We just didn’t think you’d be interested. This next fight isn’t really your thing.”

“If that’s the case, then why did you start training again?”

Stepping forward, Videl proudly boasted, “That would be my doing!”

“Yours?!” asked the Saiyan, his voice ripe with incredulity.

“That’s right!” the petite girl shot back. She sashayed slowly up to Gohan and pulled his head down for a heated kiss before tossing the Saiyan Prince his own patented smirk. “Someone has to keep you guys on your toes!”

Vegeta threw his head back in peels of haughty laughter. “Wow! So you’re saying that after all the shit both I and the Namek have given this disappointment over the years about his complacency, it took a piece of pussy to get his sorry ass off the couch! That’s just freakin hilarious!”

“Grr… Vegeta!” growled Bulma between clinched teeth. “Seriously! Even with all that’s happened, you still have to make an ass out of yourself at least once a day?!”

“Just havin fun with ‘Private Pile’ over here…” laughed the Saiyan, gesturing over his shoulder at Gohan. He continued chuckling under his breath as he walked his way back to the food table.

“Oh, that man!” seethed the Capsule Corp heiress, turning back to the unionized teens. “I swear, I can’t take him anywhere! I’m really sorry you guys!”

“Don’t sweat it, Bulma,” Gohan insisted. “He’s just being Vegeta.”

“Um… Bulma?”

“Yes, Videl?”

Uncharacteristically, the raven-haired teen began to twiddle her thumbs sheepishly. “I’m not sure if this is a good time, but Gohan and I have been meaning to ask you a couple of favors.”
“Sure, cutie! Just name em!”

Videl gave both her father and common law husband a wayward glance before leading the bluenette out of earshot. “It’s about me and Gohan.”

“OK…” Leaning forward, the richest woman on the planet listened intently.

“Can you make a sturdier bedframe for us?” the girl requested. “Preferably one that’s king-sized to accommodate Gohan’s height. We’ve sorta hit a glass ceiling with our nighttime activities, and it’s reduced us to using a mattress and box spring on the floor.”

Hearing this, Bulma grinned wickedly. “So I’ve heard… You should’ve come to me sooner! I know what it’s like to have a Saiyan man better than anyone! It’d be my pleasure to help!”

The brunette heaved a sigh of relief. “Thank you. Given the issue, I didn’t know if you’d very supportive.”

“Videl! It’s OK… really!” the older woman assured her. “Gohan is like a son to me, and I know what it’s like to have a common law marital status. Seriously, I couldn’t get Vegeta to dress up for a formal wedding to save my life. In fact, you should’ve come to me for more than just a bedframe. I know Gohan’s mother can be a little too traditional in her outlook, and there are certain things that only an experienced woman can offer advice on.”

Without another word, Videl wrapped the bluenette in a warm embrace. “I’m glad you’re so open-minded about all this. It means a lot…”

“Don’t mention it, kid!” Bulma smiled. “I provide this kind of service to Goku and ChiChi more often than you think. Now, what was the other favor you wanted to ask me?”

“We were wondering if you could provide me and Gohan with a gravity chamber?” the teen inquired upon pulling away. “I, Gohan, and several associates of ours need a broader venue of training methods, and Krillin suggested that we ask you about having one installed under Satan House.”

Bringing her hands to her hips, Bulma gave the raven-haired girl a skeptical gaze. “At first, I didn’t know what to think when Goku and ChiChi told me about Gohan training with you, your father, and Roshi. The real question is, why? It’s not like Roshi to take on new students out of the blue like that. In fact, there’s a lot happening these days with members of the old group. Perhaps you could fill in the holes that Goku couldn’t?”

“I don’t even know where to begin Bulma,” Videl answered truthfully. “Ever since that crazy cult moved into town-”

“Woah! Woah! Stop right there!” the blue-haired female interrupted. “Did you say ‘cult’? If it’s the same group of bald, tattooed whackos as the ones running around in West City, then I’ve got a story for you! A group of guys from the Interior Ministry recently subpoenaed every bit of data I had on Goku, Gohan, and my husband.”

“Preach’n to the choir,” Videl replied with a heavy sigh. “The guys from Capital Central officially have me and Gohan by the balls. They’ve known the truth about the Cell Games since day one! Not only are they threatening to throw my father in prison if we don’t work with them, they’re also having me and Gohan take part in some state-run anthropology experiments. To top it all off, I’m legally obligated as a liaison investigator for the Satan City Police to work with the Royal Bureau of Investigation in taking on this strange cult as part of the World Government’s efforts at combating Right-Wing domestic terrorism so we really can’t do anything but play ball.”
Furrowing her brow, the bluenette shook her head in frustration. “Videl, I’m so sorry you got drug into this…”

“Hey, it’s not your fault,” said Videl in a placating voice. “My father was unwittily being used as a patsy by these assholes. We were in their crosshairs for years. They were just waiting for the perfect conditions to apply whatever leverage they had over us. As much as I don’t want to lay this one on my Dad’s shoulders, his lying to the world sort of opened up the whole group to this state intrusion.”

“So, what are you two gonna do?” asked the vivacious woman. “What course of action are you and Gohan planning?”

“Gohan wants to at least work with Agent Wingle and the RBI. The two of them believe there’s more to be had through collaboration than having us stop at the bare minimal. I’m partially inclined to agree.”

“Partially?” Bulma pressed.

Videl nodded. “From what Piccolo and Master Roshi are telling us, we’re gonna need all the help we can get. Whoever these people are, they’re everywhere. I can sense their ki all over the place. From what Agent Wingle tells us, they’re planning something major in Satan City, something the police won’t be able to handle by themselves.”

“Hey, Videl!” came a call, this one belonging to ChiChi. “The dino-kebobs are ready! Come and get some before our men eat it all! You too Bulma!”

“Coming!” she cried back.

Trekking back to Kame House, the girl couldn’t help but wonder how long it would be before this evil force came knocking at their doors. If that Brea-Og fella from the tournament was anything to go by, could their concerns have been misplaced? Or was he just the opening salvo? Whatever the case, both she and Gohan would know soon.

Chapter End Notes

It took a while to get this chapter finished, but here it is! Given how much time it took me to write this update, I really didn’t want it to come off too weak, especially given the amount of build-up the previous few chapters had going into them. Working seven nights a week isn’t just taking up all my time but my enthusiasm as well. Still, as long as I can keep up the momentum enough to get a new chapter out every two to three weeks, we should be golden.
It was after hours in Satan City's industrial district. Factories, shipping depots, and foundries from both heavy and light industries churned out manufactured products for an ever growing postmodern economy. Blue collar workers went to and from work, signaling the change from the day shift to night shift hours.

Against this backdrop of smokestacks, waste disposal plants, trailer yards, and steel press machines, a seminar was being held that would change the course of world history forever. A stage had been erected amidst the ruins of an abandoned warehouse. Before it, decked out in smoky black robes reminiscent those worn at a black mass, hundreds of men and women stood in attendance as they paid homage to their regional leadership. On stage stood Acolyte Cumber, the man tasked with organizing all of their order's activities in West District.

"Ye souls who languish in spiritual hunger…" he preached. "Ye whose mouths have yet to be filled! Ye middle children of the Earth. Long has the world passed you buy, awarding purpose and meaning to those who came before or after! His Holiness, Babidi's anointed prophet, has called upon you to bring freedom and justice to a forsaken world that knows neither! For this imperative to come to pass, hope as it now stands must be destroyed so that a new hope can rise from its' ruin, a hope made in our image!"

As the robed priest droned on, those in attendance eyed the charred human remains that hung from the ceiling. Strung up by the neck, their faces were forever molded in depictions of horror and agony. These swinging, burnt cadavers were all that remained of any officer of the Satan City police force cursed with the unfortunate accident of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"HAIL HIS HOLINESS!" screamed Cumber.

"HAIL OUR SAVIOR!" the crowd roared back.

As if on cue, a middle-aged man of below average height stepped up to the podium. A balding white male in his early fifties, he wore a pair of visor-like sunglasses. Draped over his shoulders was a crimson ceremonial tippet displaying a host of finely etched arcane symbols. He wore a waist-length, sleeveless black tunic of rich fabrics with smoky black military-styled pants that tucked into shiny knee-high combat boots. Around his waist, he donned a silver-buckled belt showcasing the calligraphic 'M' of the order of Majin.

"It's him…" whispered one man towards the front.

"His Holiness is actually here!" exclaimed another in shocked reverence.

"Your Holiness! Bless my baby!" screamed a woman.

"Inquisitor Gerkin…!"

"Brothers and Sisters!" the man cried out in a cultured, British accent. He waited a moment for silence to fall over the crowd before continuing. "The world will soon know our power! In three days, we will launch a military incursion, the first seen in West District since the House of Furry rose to power! It shall be the first major step in our holy crusade to reclaim mankind's rightful destiny!"
"DEATH TO THE WORLD OF OLD!" the crowd rang out.

"Using a combination of both our black arts and our other weapons, we will slaughter all in our path! For this operation which I have dubbed Operation Bait and Switch, we shall employ a two-pronged approach! The first group will attack by air utilizing an explosive-laden transport. Their target will be the old downtown district, most importantly the police station. Before disembarking, Team A will set the transport's autopilot for ramming speed. By our estimates, this should deliver the body count we'll need to incur to pacify the city proper. Once on the ground, Team A will begin sterilizing the city's population."

"As for Team B, they will make up the bulk of our ground forces. They shall strike from the sewers. Upon reaching the surface, their singular goal is to enact as much attrition against the civilian population as inhumanly possible until they rendezvous with Team A in the commercial district. By this point, most of the downtown area will be in ruins. Without access to water, sewage, medical attention, or electricity, remaining resistance from residual law enforcement personnel will collapse. I'm sure you've all been briefed on your part in this affair. Are there any questions?"

A moment passed and no one asked or added anything.

"Good! Then come Tuesday, this city shall be baptized by a cleansing fire!"

Jumping to his feet, a young man in his early twenties screamed, "DEATH! DEATH! DEATH TO ALL WHO OPPOSE US!" This call to arms in turn led to a frenzy of chants from the rest of the primed crowd. Weapons were brandished and shouts of "Death!" and "DEATH TO HOPE!" rang out around the room.

With his part of this little function over, the man known only as Inquisitor Gerkin slipped off stage and behind the curtains where his subordinate Acolyte Cumber, was waiting.

"That should get them going," remarked the high priest. "You can always depend on the young and uneducated for an endless supply of useful idiots."

"Indeed your grace," Cumber nodded. "To make an omelet, sometimes you have to break a few eggs."

"This little operation will provide the perfect ruse for drawing out Mark Satan and his daughter," Gerkin commented smugly.

"It's still a shame that we have to waste so many resources on such meager returns," said Cumber, voicing his misgivings.

"Meager, my friend?" Inquisitor Gerkin laughed heartily. "Wars operate on intelligence. If we're to find out how Videl Son bested our greatest assassin, we must study her. The only way to get sufficient knowledge on both her and Saiyaman is to draw either one into a confrontation with me. I highly doubt they would harm a frail, old man."

"And what if we fail?"

"We still get something," the head of their order assured. "An attack of this magnitude will further destabilize an already decadent regime. Trust me, Cumber. The king hasn't put nearly as many resources into halting us as he should have. He has gravely underestimated his opposition, as have Mr. and Mrs. Son."

"I just think we're proceeding a little too quickly," Cumber put in. "We still need more time before we can fully transcribe the contents of Babidi's spell book to our written language. To top it off, the
ranks of our local chapter were thinned considerably by Brae-Og's little stunt at the tournament."

Gerkin cackled heartily. "Your concerns are duly noted. Converts aren't going to be a problem, so I wouldn't worry much about numbers! People are terrified, and fear breeds extremism. Those paltry few won't be missed. By this time next week, we'll have everything we need to defeat Satan City's resident heroes."

The next morning on Pepper Island, Videl and Gohan were drudged from their deep slumber courtesy of Videl's ringtone. It had been two weeks since they did any direct training under Master Roshi, and they'd barely an hour until the aged martial arts teacher came knocking.

"Mmm… Last night was wonderful…" Videl moaned. Leaning over, she gave her spouse a tender, good morning smooch.

Breaking away, albeit with some hesitation, Gohan stared into her eyes intently. "Yes it was. For a moment though, I thought my folks would never leave."

"Your mom tried her best," his wife commented. "They practically had to drag away your little brother. He's a sweet kid. You're lucky to have a brother like him."

"He can be a handful," Gohan remarked with a bit of humor. "Come on, hun. We better get ready before Master Roshi makes his morning reverie."

Following the victory bash of the previous evening, the Briefs and Sons gave their heartfelt goodbyes before returning home via Goku's instant transmission. There had been a touching moment where little Goten had asked to spend the night, but ChiChi had sternly forbid it, saying something to the child about disturbing his big brother's 'baby-making' and whatnot, which in turn led to a lot of laughs at Gohan and Videl's expense.

Sure enough, as soon as the Sons were gone, Mark trudged off to bed for some much-troubled sleep, leaving Gohan and Videl to spend some quality alone time for their own celebration. Let's just say that the fire-heated tub behind Mr. Satan's capsule house got a lot more heated. After which, the satisfied couple turned in for the evening.

Videl groaned as Gohan pulled her in all her naked glory out of bed and into the shower. Last night's extracurricular activities may have been worth it, but that didn't make getting out of bed any less a chore. As the warm water cascaded down their bodies, Videl silently wondered if she'd ever get used to early risings.

Later on, Master Roshi led his charges on a little detour from their usual late morning training regimen. Their journey brought them back to the very field of monoliths the ancient master led them to on their first day of training. The field in question still bore the reminders of the Turtle Hermit's demonstration and those of Videl's first attempt at the Kamehameha wave. On this day however, one massive boulder was of particular importance.

"Here we are!" declared the old sage.

Behind him stood the mother of all monoliths. It stood as tall as a four story house and was every bit as wide. At the base of the great basalt rock was a wide, shallow indentation in the soil that led right into its base. Judging by how much growth and sediment blanketed its' deepest point, it looked as though it hosted a small pond during the rainy season.

"Today, we're going to see just how far the two of you have come since your training began."

"Man, this sure takes me back!" Krillin beamed cheerily. "It feels like it was only yesterday when me
and Goku did this!"

"I take it you want us to move it?" Videl guessed. Hearing what she'd said, her father's jaw slackened with disbelief. Surely he couldn’t…

"Way to spoil the surprise," replied the Turtle Hermit, earning a laugh from Gohan.

"Y-Y-You've gotta be kiddin me?!" stammered the Champ, suddenly overwhelmed by the whole thing. "All we've done is deliver milk and dig up limestone! How're we supposed to be able to move a rock that big with that kind of training?!"

The aged martial artist approached the Champ and calmly laid a hand on his shoulder. "It'll happen. You just have to give it all you've got and believe in your training! You don't realize it yet Mark, but you're not the same person you were when you came here. It's as true for you as it is for your daughter here."

"Do you really think I can do it?" Mr. Satan asked expectantly.

"Mark, this is the same rock that Krillin and Goku moved when they first trained under me," Roshi informed the man. "It is the same rock Yamucha, Son Gohan Sr., and the Ox King moved in their time, and it is the same rock you and Videl will move today! Trust me, student! It has been done before many a time. Even in my youth, both I, Shen, and his brother Mercenary Tao moved a similar boulder when we trained under our own master."

The reaction this revelation got from all three of Roshi's charges was somewhat comical.

"Tao and Shen?!!" Videl exclaimed in shock.

"My grandpa and great grandpa did this too?" Gohan queried in a tone that was a little less overwhelmed than that of his spouse.

"Yes and yes," answered Roshi. "Everyone who trained both at Moutaito's Martial Arts Academy and later under me, took this test. It has served as a vetting exercise for many generations of aspiring martial artists, many of them former Champions of the World Martial Arts Tournament."

"Uh, which of us do you think should go first?" asked Mark. Despite Master Roshi's stirring speech, the man still felt pretty unsure of himself. Videl was about to open her mouth when Gohan spoke up.

"I think Mark should have the honors," the Son boy put forward.

"Why me?"

"Come on, Mark! You've trained just as hard as anyone!" he coaxed. "You sell yourself short too often. We really wanna see how far you've come! Besides, me and Videl have a running bet with Krillin here that we're keen to win."

"A bet…?" Thinking back, the former monk stroked his chin thoughtfully. Then, his eyes widened as it all came back to him.

A self-assured smile plastered on her face, Videl nodded conceitedly. "Yeah…Now you remember."

"Ah man!" Krillin groaned. "You guys are worse than a credit lender, ya know that?"

"In fact…" Gohan began in a somewhat coy tone as he came up beside his old comrade, "…if I remember correctly, the bet was that you owed me and Videl 200 zennie a piece if Mark made it past
"Wait a bloomin minute!" shouted Mark. "You three had a running bet over me?!"

"Yeah…" Gohan admitted guiltily, "The two of us didn't like how dismissive Krillin was being, so we made a little wager."

Crossing his arms, the former monk put on a pouty face. "Yeah, yeah, yeah… I was wrong, I get it! I'll pay up as soon as we get back to Kami House."

Gohan and Videl broke into a fit of giggles at the older fighter's sore loser act. In truth, Krillin was glad Mr. Satan had proven him wrong. The afroed fighter didn't just make it through the first half of Roshi's program. The fact is, the man had considerably less trouble with certain parts of Roshi's training as an older, over-the-hill show fighter than Krillin did when he first trained here.

'Never judge a book by its' cover,' thought the former monk with a wry smile.

"Ahem!"

The three fighters redirected their attention back to Master Roshi. Staring at them expectantly, the ancient sensei had his arms crossed.

"If you're ready Mark, we'd like see what you can do."

"Uh… sure."

Stepping up to the giant monolith, Mr. Satan suddenly found himself feeling very small as he evaluated the massive rock. Behind him, his daughter and son-in-law shouted words of encouragement.

"Come on, Mark! You've got this!" Gohan cheered.

"Do it, Daddy!" Videl rooted.

No matter how he thought about it, Mark couldn't help viewing himself as an ant trying to move a mountain. He wasn't like these other people! They were the ones who did things like throwing cars into orbit and chopping down ancient trees with one hand. Exhaling, the afroed man braced his hands against the basalt colossus.

"Let's get this over with…" he muttered with a heaving breath.

Gritting his teeth, the Champ dug his feet in, bit his lip, and gave it hell. At first, nothing seemed to happen. But then, something shifted. A loud 'Thunk!' reverberated through the rock as stones and dirt beneath it were displaced by the now moving mass' mindboggling weight. With one final shout, Mark's arms locked out, and it was over.

Off to the side, Roshi and Videl looked on with shock and awe, their jaws hitting the ground, at what the current Champ had accomplished.

"M-My word…" sputtered the Turtle Hermit.

"He did it…" Videl muttered. "He actually did it."

"YEAH!" Mark cried in ecstasy. "I did it… I-I REALLY DID IT! FUCK YEAH!"

"That's amazing, Dad!" Videl praised. Running up to her father, the petite girl wrapped him in a big
bear hug.

"Congratulations, Mark! I knew you could do it!" lauded Gohan, giving the man a friendly slap on the shoulder.

"Watch out world!" screamed the man. "Mr. Satan is on his way up!"

"You did good, Mark," Roshi commended. "I'm proud of ya."

"Thanks, old-timer!"

Roshi then turned to Videl. "It looks like you're up, young lady!"

"Right!" nodded the teen.

Roshi and the others gave the girl a wide breath as she stepped up to the boulder.

Giving the rock a brief once over, Videl couldn't help but turn and smile wickedly at the others.

"Uh-oh! Videl's got that look in her eye..." Gohan remarked.

Placing her hands on the monolith, the petite fighter began to push the basalt mass as casually as one would a shopping cart. Unlike Mark, there was no visible strain or gnashing of teeth. Videl just owned it!

Though Master Roshi suspected Videl would make a show of it, seeing her in action was still enough to leave the old teacher gapping like a beached catfish. Mr. Satan however, was left falling on his ass in utter astonishment as his daughter continued to pick up steam until the massive boulder finally crashed into a second monolith on the far end of the grassy field.

"Uh… W-W-What did I just see?" whimpered the afroed man.

"Um… I keep having to remind myself that she's still human," Roshi spoke numbly.

"Yeah..." said Mark in a high pitched voice.

"WOOHOO!" Videl cheered loudly as she came skipping back. "Nothin can stop me! Korrin's Tower is as good as climbed!"

"Great job, sweetheart!" Gohan congratulated. Jogging forward, the Son boy scooped her up into his arms bridal style before leaning in to gift her with a celebratory kiss.

Shaking himself from his zoned-out stupor, Roshi fixed his gaze on his youngest student. "What's this about Korrin's Tower again?"

"Piccolo told us Videl could only use the hyperbolic time chamber if she successfully completed Korrin's challenge." Gohan answered. "Something about it being a formality for humans or some such thing..."

"Seems a little racist to me," Videl remarked with some slight annoyance.

"Oh, quite the contrary," said Roshi. "Climbing Korrin's Tower was no small matter when I completed the task in my youth. It is the test! Nowhere else on Earth will you find a more daunting undertaking for an aspiring fighter! And here's the kicker..."

"What?"
"Completing that challenge will not be half as torturous as lasting a few days in the chamber," answered the Turtle Hermit. "Piccolo isn't making you do this because of discrimination. He's making you do this to toughen you up! Inside the HTC, awaits a veritable nether-hell of fire, ice, and pressure that will kill you if you aren't up to the task!"

Videl's eyes widened in palpable shock. "So you're telling me that Trunks and Goten managed to survive and train in a place like that!?"

"Amazing, isn't it? Understand however, that climbing Korrin's Tower will only be half the battle. Getting the divine holy water will take every bit of patience, ingenuity, and persistence you can muster!"

"How hard could it be?" asked Videl dismissively.

A broad smile creased the ancient master's face. "It took me three years."

"You're pullin my leg!" Videl chuckled dryly, shaking her head in desperate disbelief. "Please tell me you're jokin!"

"I'd be lyin if I told you otherwise," said Roshi, his smile widening even further.

The fire dying inside her, the girl fell to her knees. It was all so overwhelming. She knew it wasn't gonna be easy, nothing worth doing ever was, but three years…

"Don't lose heart, honey," Gohan consoled. "It's not as hard as Master Roshi makes it out to be. Some of my older friends completed Korrin's challenge in just a few weeks. Keep your chin up! Things'll work out!"

"I know... I just can't get over how much ground I still have yet to make up."

Sighing in resignation, Gohan draped a sympathetic arm over her shoulders.

After a hearty breakfast, Videl, Gohan, and the others marched out onto the beach for their first joint training session in two weeks. Today was special, for it would be the first day in which Mr. Satan received direct training in ki manipulation.

"As you probably know by now Mark, ki is the inner metaphysical essence of all living things, the inner flame if you will," explained Master Roshi. "It is the most integral aspect of most ancient martial arts. Once you master your ki, a whole new horizon will be opened to you."

"Like sensing other people and stuff?"

"Right!" the elderly sage nodded. "Normally, I just build up my students and allow them to delve into its' use on their own. One principle I try to adhere to is that you mustn't show your students everything. Otherwise, how're they gonna learn?"

"Wouldn't that approach hamper them?" Videl asked. "I mean... I didn't have to take that route when Gohan taught me."

"I have my reasons," stated Roshi. "For one, I've always found it important for prospective students to develop a deep appreciation for whatever knowledge they gain through training. You Videl, developed your understanding of ki from an opposing training philosophy rooted in Piccolo's approach which makes sense due to Gohan being trained by him. Now, don't get me wrong! Both approaches have their merit, but learning to appreciate that which one builds for himself is an integral part of the Kame School's training philosophy. Secondly, there's the matter of the student's safety to
Upon hearing this, Mr. Satan gulped nervously. "Safety...?"

"Yes," the old man conferred. "If one's \textit{ki} stores are not sufficient, there's always the risk that a student could kill himself from drawing on his \textit{ki} too much! One of the reasons behind the gradual build-up of the body in the Kame School's training regimen is about putting as much distance as possible between a student and that hazardous point."

Rounding on Gohan, Videl leveled a death glare at the boy. "You bum! You didn't mention anything about an accidental death when you taught me!"

"I-I'm sorry, Videl... really!" the half-breed nervously sputtered, holding his hands up defensively. "I've never had a reason to think about it!"

"And why is that?!" she fumed, glaring up at her spouse.

"It's not a problem me or anyone I knew had to deal with!" Gohan explained, withering under his common law wife's heated look. "The only other \textit{ki} users I've dealt with were people who used \textit{ki} as if it were already second nature! I didn't have a reference point to go by when I trained you!"

"Now, now... pipe down little lady," Roshi admonished. "Your hubby's mistake was somewhat understandable. After all... you were the first he taught."

This seemed to placate the Satan girl, much to Gohan's relief.

"Again, I didn't think about it, hun," the boy reiterated once more.

Smiling at her spouse's sheepish antics, the brunette crossed her arms. "I know! I just had to mess with ya!"

"Anyway..." said Roshi, turning back to Mark, "Since Gohan was the one who taught your daughter, we're gonna have him use this as a chance to train someone else."

"Huh?" Upon hearing this, Gohan's face deadpanned.

"You heard me right!" the old man confirmed. "Today, you will teach your father-in-law! Use it as a bonding moment."

"Uh... OK," Gohan agreed.

"In the meantime, Videl's gonna run laps on the sand..." Turning away, Roshi paused a moment before adding, "...barefooted."

"Yes, sir!" the girl saluted before reaching down to remove her training boots.

Hobbling over to a fallen log, Roshi plopped down and lit up a smoke. "If anyone needs me, I'll be right over here."

"So this is finally happenin?!" Mark asked, sounding every bit like a kid in a candy store. "I'm really gonna learn how to fly!"

Scratching the back of his head, Gohan gave his in-law a typical Son grin. "Yeah, I guess the first place to start would be in teaching you how to find your \textit{ki}."

"So, how does this work?" urged the large grappler.
Gohan plopped down on the sand. "First, take a seat and hold your hands out like this."

The Champ complied.

"Now, relax and listen to the inside of your body," he instructed. "You're trying to feel out a tug of sorts. It's a warm feeling that billows up inside you."

"Like a fart?" joked the older man.

"What?! No!" admonished his son-in-law.

"Just kiddin!"

Gohan let out a sigh. "It's OK, Mark. Videl made a few crass puns too. Just try to relax and stay focused."

"Uh, OK…" Taking a deep breath, Mr. Satan laid his hands together in his lap and settled in. Patiently, the two men waited for something to happen. About ten minutes in, Gohan noticed that whether it was from agitation or strain, his father-in-law was starting to twitch.

"You're making the same mistake Videl did on her first try," he commented. "You can't force it, at least not initially."

"Maybe I'm not as far along as you guys think," the man spoke in a depressed tone.

"Nonsense," Gohan remarked. "The trigger for bringing out one's living *ki* can be anything. Some people are born with an intrinsic connection to their inner flame. This was the case with Videl. According to Roshi though, for most people it's a matter of getting strong enough that it manifests itself. You should already be well past that point. You're now much stronger than Videl was when she first learned, so it's gotta happen sooner or later. Take a deep breath and try again."

"I'm just not feeling it," said the Champ. "How can I touch something if I don't know what I'm looking for?"

"*Ki* and everything stemming from it can fool the senses," Gohan replied. "Feeling is the only way to perceive it. It's in all living things. It's generated where the spiritual and corporal presence of oneself overlap."

"You're not making this easy," Mr. Satan groaned.

"It seldom is," Gohan replied in turn. "I know this is gonna be cheating, but I wanna try something."

Reaching forward, the teen rested his hands in those of his father-in-law.

"What're you…" Mark had no time to finish before a sudden feeling spread deep within him. It was as if an invisible hand was moving something inside him yet not moving anything. One thing was for sure, it wasn't pleasant. This intrusive force was then met with an equally jarring countervailing backlash, like something was sling-shot in an opposing, violent reaction.

With a pained wheeze, the afroed man just barely caught himself as he fell forward in a dizzy state.

"W-What did you do to me…?" he rasped.

"I was trying to create a shortcut for your inner power," the Saiyan answered. "A person's living *ki* has a built-in metaphysical failsafe to prevent another lifeform from drawing on it without some kind of consenting channel. Did you feel the inner recoil?"
"Yeah..., I think so!" Mark nodded. "It was like that feeling you get during an elevator ride, but this pull felt like something was tethered."

"That was it!" Gohan confirmed excitedly. "That was your living ki! Focus on where that feeling came from, and you should be good to go. Now, try once more."

"OK…"

Settling in once again, Mr. Satan repeated his earlier actions, though this time he had a better idea of what to search for. Looking within, the afroed show fighter felt out the strange presence Gohan had brushed upon. Before long, he touched something.

"You're almost there…" Gohan whispered.

Soon enough, something happened. A warmth flowed out from Mark Satan's core. It traveled up from his center before moving through his arms and into his hands.

"That's it Mark! Just keep doing what you're doing…"

At this point, Mark was in his own little world. The man watched with astonishment as a rippling effect began to distort the air around his hands. Finally, it all came together in a pulsing, semi-tangible bubble of ki.

Gohan released a breath he didn't know he was holding. "And there it is… That's your living ki. Congratulations, Mark!"

His strength giving out, the Champ relinquished his hold and fell forward. This time however, Gohan had to prop up his now thoroughly exhausted father-in-law.

"Are you OK?!" the half-breed asked worryingly.

"Sure…" huffed Mark.

Gohan could tell otherwise. The current world champion trembled against him and his breathing was labored. Videl never showcased this kind of advanced fatigue. Sure, there had been exhaustion, but nothing like this. Briefly, Gohan wondered if this was his doing. Had he pulled a Goku and toyed with fate by trying to force things? Admittedly, it was the first time he had attempted such a thing so reckless inexperience was a likely culprit. Could it have had something to do with Roshi's earlier lecture? Had his little stunt pushed Mark to that internal breaking point? Or perhaps Mark's age came into play? Suddenly, the Saiyan youth was brought out of his musings by a stern voice.

"And that Gohan is why I allow my students to stumble upon ki use largely by themselves," Master Roshi commented as he hobbled forward. "There are some things you just can't force."

"Master Roshi! What do we do?!" begged the teen, his voice filled with panic.

"Master Roshi! What do we do?!" begged the teen, his voice filled with panic.

"Don't lose your cool, Son," Roshi admonished. "Just get him back to Kami House and get some fluids in him! He'll be out for a few hours."

"R-Right!" Bending down, Gohan scooped the large man into his arms. Just as he was about to take to the air, Videl came running.

"Daddy!" the girl screamed. Momentarily, she cupped her father's grizzled face before looking pleadingly to her spouse. "What happened?!"
"We had an accident and he fell out!" Gohan answered. "We've gotta get him back to the house! Come on!"

The following evening, Mr. Satan crouched alone in front of a well-made campfire. Uncharacteristically, the kids had turned in earlier, leaving the man to brainstorm in relative peace. Troubled by so many recent developments, with the business involving the government and Mercenary Tao being at the top of that list, sleep proved elusive to the afroed man.

'How? How could I have been so stupid?!' the Champ pondered. It was as if the gods allowed him to survive everything the universe could throw at him only to smack him in the face with a curveball. Of course the government knew everything! They were likely the reason why he got soft-balled on so much by the media. He only retained his reputation and his freedom because the king's administration had a vested interest in protecting him, but now, his usefulness was past its' expiration date.

He was suddenly pulled from his reverie by the sound of a broken branch. Suspecting a surprise ambush by predatory dinosaurs or some other local meat eater, the large grappler armed himself with the nearest thing he could grab.

"Relax Mark," came an aged voice, "It's only me."

Stepping out of the brush, Master Roshi cursed silently when some bramble weed got wrapped around his foot.

Upon seeing the old man, Mark visibly lightened up and retook his seat next to the fire.

"Couldn't sleep?"

"I've got a lot on my mind," was Mark's response.

Favoring his now sore foot, the Turtle Hermit stumbled over to his troubled student and crouched down opposite the afroed man. "You gave us quite a scare earlier."

Scoffing at the old master's remark, the current Champ continued to stare into the flames. "Out of all the guys those two could've allied themselves with, why did it have to be Mercenary Tao?"

"Crazier things have happened," Roshi stated. "It wouldn't be the first time we've allied with former enemies for a common good."

"How did it all begin?" Mark curiously asked.

"How did what begin?" replied the Turtle Hermit.

The Champ spread his arms wide for emphasis. "You guys! This whole group of super-powered people! Where did you all come from? How did you all come together? I've been training under you for four months. I've known Gohan for while now, and I still don't know everything."

Roshi shook his head with mirth. "Questions, questions, questions! The 'group' as you call it never really had what one could call a definitive starting point. Some of us have known each other for decades, centuries even, but if I had to name a specific event that got the ball rolling, it would be when Bulma first met Goku."

"Why then?" questioned the Champ.

"The dragon balls," answered Roshi. "For some superficial reason, Bulma was trying to find them
and Goku just happened to have one. They teamed up, and along the way they met Turtle, myself, another of my former students named Yamacha, Puar, my oldest former student the Ox King, Chi Chi and Oolong. In the coming years thereafter, the world was faced with many existential threats, threats that everyday people weren't equipped to combat. With each new challenge, ever stronger allies joined us in our valiant struggles. Some of those allies started out as our greatest enemies, but with time, all of them became cherished friends.

"This brings up another question," said Mark. "Why did you train so few people in these martial arts? If the fate of the world depends on you guys, why did you put all your eggs in one basket? Wouldn't it make more sense to train as many people as you could?"

"Yes and no," was Roshi's short answer. "On the one hand Mark, you are correct. Long-term, such an approach would've allotted the Earth a far greater pool of prospective protectors, thereby making humankind less dependent on Gohan and the others. Today, I wish I would've chosen this route."

"Then, why didn't you?"

Roshi swallowed hard before continuing. "Such an approach came with its' own risks. Not all students keep to the straight and narrow path. Some lose their perspective and begin to see their martial arts as a means to a terrible end. Gohan's grandfather, the Ox King, and my old friend Shen, the Crane Hermit, are two notable examples."

"What did they do?" the Champ inquired intently. "The one time I met the Ox King, he seemed like a good-natured fella."

Looking to the stars above, Roshi took in a deep breath before continuing. "As ruler of the Ox Kingdom, Gohan's grandfather ruthlessly beheaded thousands of people over his fortune. Greed drove him to commit homicide against all those who came to Frying Pan Mountain. As in most cases, his greedy barbarism caught up with him, and both he and Gohan's mother were left homeless when the fires of Frying Pan Mountain consumed his castle. Eventually, he looked to me for help in saving his fortune, but fate chose to rob him of his castle with a little unintentional help from my good ole Kamehameha. Because of that incident, it took years for his tributary kingdom to regain its' former splendor."

"Isn't Gohan supposed to be the Ox Kingdom's crown prince?" Mark asked.

"Yes," came Roshi's curt answer.

"Then wouldn't Videl one day wind up being his queen?"

"I don't think the Ox Kingdom's laws allow for female monarchs," Roshi replied. "The culture is very patriarchal. It's one of the main reasons why Chi Chi was encouraged to marry so young. Gyumoa needed a male heir, and he preferred leaving the tributary state to his beloved grandson than one of his far removed great nephews."

"You mentioned something about a Crane Hermit," said Mark. "You didn't say anything about there being more of you. How many hermits are there?"

"Hmm… Let's see…" Sitting back in his lawn chair, the old man stroked his beard in thought. "Other than me, there's Korrin, the Cat Hermit. I trained under him about three centuries ago."

Upon hearing this, the Champ's eyes grew as wide as saucers. "WHAT?! Just how old is this guy?"

"Uh… about 850 years, give or take."
Mark let out a whistle. "Jesus…"

"As for the Crane Hermit… he and his brother Tao were my fellow students under Moutaito. After seeing our master bested in combat by King Piccolo's original incarnation, Shen lost faith in our master's teachings and left, taking his younger brother with him. I lost my best friend that day…"

For a moment, the elderly martial artist paused to recollect himself. "The two of them went on to kill and extort untold thousands in the coming generations. After Ox found himself again, I held out hope that one day my old friend would too. Crane and I grew up together! When I met Shen at the 22nd World Tournament, I fervently wanted to let bygones be bygones, but he just wouldn't have it! He always had to prove that he was the alpha dog. There was always a rivalry of sorts between us, even when we were kids, but after our master's death, it became an obsession to him. After his younger brother surpassed him however, he grew self-righteous and bitter. He was blinded by his own ambition!"

Mr. Satan could tell Gohan's grandfather and the Crane Hermit were touchy subjects for the old man. One didn't deal with hundreds of thousands of people throughout his career without learning how to read people. Before he could dwell on it any further though, Master Roshi went on…

"Our martial arts aren't like those of the street corner schools you've trained in," he stated.

"Pfft! No kiddin…" remarked the Champ. "I think Mr. Buu's worldwide murder spree was proof enough."

"I don't just mean the odd alien or two that occasionally come around," replied the aged master. "Tao and Shen were bad enough, but Tien almost went down the same path."

"The 22nd Champ?"

"Yes," he answered. "Tien was a close call. He was already very skilled, even more so than Tao when we first met, but his talents were wasted under Crane. Getting him back on the right path was paramount. Had I not intervened, he would've become a living nightmare."

"I met this Tien guy at our victory bash after the whole Buu incident," Mark ruefully recounted. "He was pretty dickish!"

"It's gonna take some time before everyone warms up to you," Roshi said. "In truth, I'm surprised Tien didn't do something brash right there given all the times we had to talk him out of challenging you publicly."

"So you're saying this guy could've jumped me any time?!" Mark gaped.

"Not just him," the Turtle Hermit warned. "Granted Tien was the most zealous, there were several in our group who wanted to break rank and pay you a visit after the Cell Games. Krillin was one of them, but Eighteen coming into his life soon after Cell's defeat provided a key distraction. Getting back to the issue of Tien however, disagreements between us over how to address your public defamation of our friends ultimately led Tien and Choatzu to leave the group."

"Wow… So I caused all that," muttered the afroed man with a shake of his head.

"You have no idea just how lucky you've been up to this point," Roshi lectured. "Millions of people died by Cell's hands, some of them in defense of others just as we did, however futile it was. Tien is a former assassin, and had he gone through with what he was planning, no one would've found your body. I hadn't seen Tien that blinded by rage since he trained under Shen! Whether it was in the dead of night or in public, he was prepared to kill you for Goku and Gohan's honor!"
"Jesus…” The Champ shook his head in shocked disbelief as he processed everything he'd just heard. "And you people keep telling me to relax…”

"I could only imagine what Tien would do if he knew about certain dynamics behind Gohan and Videl's relationship."

At the mention of his daughter, Mr. Satan's eyebrows shot to his hairline. "Why?"

"At the onset of their dealings with one another, Videl wasn't exactly behaving like a good Samaritan," Roshi explained. "Granted of course, Gohan wasn't being honest with her either, Videl put Gohan in a tight spot by blackmailing him both into teaching her how to fly and to entering in the last World Tournament. With Gohan entering, Vegeta entered prompting Goku to return from the afterlife for a chance to compete."

"W-Wait a minute!" Mark interrupted. "If Gohan got his father back because of my daughter's actions, how was this a bad thing?"

"Two reasons," Roshi answered plainly. "Had Gohan said no, Videl was intent on going to the press about his superhero business. If she had followed through on that threat, her actions would have backfired spectacularly! You would've wound up in prison for fraud and she likely would've wound up on the streets."

Mark suddenly felt ill. How many other close calls had he not known about?

"Secondly, her blackmail started a chain of events that ultimately led to the world being destroyed. Had she not hog-tied Gohan into entering that tournament, Babidi's chances to resurrect Majin Buu would have been far more remote. Gohan blames his lack of training after Cell for everyone's death, as does Videl to a certain extent. What Gohan fails to see is that his wife had as much to do with Buu's revival as Vegeta did. Babidi might have held the gun, Vegeta might've pulled the trigger, and Gohan set the stage, but Videl provided the atmosphere."

"She's a teenager!" Mark protested hotly. "There's no way she could've known!"

"That's true but she has a nasty habit of not taking responsibility for her actions!" Master Roshi returned. "Karma catches up with us all. The more powerful one becomes, the more responsibility he/she shares for the overall existential condition. Videl is too brash and unconcerned! She truly is the Vegeta for Gohan's Goku."

"Can we please get back on topic?" Mark all but begged. "I'm not too comfortable talking about my baby girl like this!"

"Fine…” Roshi huffed. "Now where were we?"

"Something about that Tien fella."

"Oh, yeah, yeah!," Master Roshi replied, suddenly remembering. "If anyone in our group ever went rogue, it would be catastrophic! In the past 200 years since my master's death, I could've had thousands of students trained by now, and those students could have trained still many more, but it was my personal fear that I would inadvertently train the next Mercenary Tao or Ox King that kept me from doing so. On top of that, there's another major factor that went into my decision to limit the number of students trained."

"And that would be?"

"Because of circumstances largely beyond our control, today there exists a great deal more
knowledge available to any students we take on than Moutaito or myself ever possessed," he answered. "Whether it be from their continuous battles, their training, or from everyday insight, Gohan, Goku, and the others have amassed a vast pool of expertise both on fighting and on training methodology that would have any run-of-the-mill violent sociopath drooling with envy. Twenty years ago, the number of people who were able to sense ki could be counted on one hand. Today, a least two dozen people possess that previously super-obscure sixth sense. Likewise, the number of people who could utilize bakujitsu with enough proficiency for casual flight was about the same. Now, over a dozen people can do it as if it were second nature. My master had over fifty students in his time, and out of all of those young men, two chose to walk a dark path. Out of my six living students, one used my training to hurt others, and now we've learned that Shen and Tao have trained a total psycho in our arts, one with almost as much drive and potential as Videl."

"You're talking about that Barbie broad, right?" the Champ asked.

Roshi nodded. "The same. The point Mark is this: As the number of fighters well-versed in our ways increases, so too will the number of monsters like her. Heaven forbid she acquires any of the knowledge Goku and the others have attained over the years! A person with proper training of the mind can crush every bone in another's body without the need to make physical contact. The inner will and that persons' ki by themselves would suffice! This is why I've only trained one or two students at a time. On top of this, I've purposely restricted my students from learning the forbidden techniques Moutaito taught me. Limiting the spread of knowledge in turn limited its' potential abuse. Now however, mankind is faced with a situation where that collective pool of knowledge must become free whether man is morally ready or not!"

Mr. Satan nodded gravely as the full implications of the Turtle Hermit's words became all too clear. Before the rise of the House of Furry, human history was plagued with destructive warfare coupled with the pursuit of knowledge whose express purpose was augmenting mankind's capacity for violence. If he was to carry the mantle of teacher, he too would have to exhibit as much prudence in choosing new students. Every new student would be a risk that could potentially have dire consequences for everyone. Tasked with this responsibility, the stress of keeping people from learning about his lies seemed like a minor issue indeed.

Looking up at the stars, Mr. Satan silently wondered what tomorrow would bring.

Chapter End Notes

I recently learned that Toriyama's wife came up with many of the ideas he used in writing the Dragonball Manga, and yet nowhere does he give her any credit for her contributions. On top of that, has anyone noticed that within the Dragonball franchise, all, and I do mean all, of the governments depicted just happen to be monarchies? There are absolutely no democratic systems or values depicted within the Dragonball Universe. Then there's the fact that the Earth just happens to be ruled by a king who's dressed oddly similar to the Japanese Emperors under the Meiji Government of Japan from the pre-WW2 Era. What these two things seem to say about Akira Toriyama is that he isn't just a traditional Japanese conservative like those found in the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party, but that he may also be a Far Right sympathizer of both imperialism and the idea that kings rule by divine right.
"Step lively men!" commanded a gruff, booming voice.

"Put your backs into it!" came a second, this one somewhat shrill and nasally.

"Watch that cable!"

The setting was a rundown, abandoned airfield situated in the outskirts of Satan City. Parked within one of its’ seemingly dilapidated hangers was a hulking transport proudly bearing the hastily painted insignia of the Order of the Malign Spirit. Throughout the facility, men and women dressed in either black robes or smoky, grey military fatigues hurried and toiled, as if guided by some grand imperative. Cranes lifted, forklifts wheeled about, and angry shouts and curses filled the place as unmarked canisters were hoisted or carried onto the colossal transport.

Just then a loud ‘Snap!’ resounded through the hangar, accompanied by a shrill cry of terror.

"LOOK OUT!"

Men and women bolted in every which direction as one of the said canisters came crashing to the floor. Upon striking the asphalt, its' contents spilled every which way in a layer of what looked to be tar sand. Beside the spill, a large, bald male lay on the floor, protectively covering his head and neck.

"You worthless clods!"

Pushing his way through the gathered crowd of shaken workers, Acolyte Cumber began barking orders to anyone close by. Flanking the elderly cultist were three strange men whose bodies thrummed with a mysterious power that churned the air around them like a viscous soup.

The first man was a pallor-skinned, messy-haired brunette of average height. He wore what looked like black windsock-like pajamas sporting symbols of the occult. The symbols themselves were patterned in runes intersecting among a hodgepodge of talismans that gave the entire ensemble a dim crimson glow.

The second male was a tall, balding, muscular brute with shoulders that could easily fill a fighter cockpit. In contrast to his smaller cohort, he stood shirtless, clad in a pair of tight, spandex wrestlers' panties that showed a little too much. His forehead sported the Order's calligraphic 'M' as part of a fire-styled tattoo. Behind him he drug a massive crimson-stained pickaxe, leaving a morbid trail of blood in his wake.

The last of the three males was a slightly shorter though still relatively tall figure whose features were hidden behind a suit of mummy-like wrappings held in place with thin chains. Tied around his chest and arms were spell scrolls that tied in a mishmash among the jumble of chains. From beneath burka-like facial wrappings, the man's eyes glowed with a deep, haunting magenta.

Acolyte Cumber and his guard detail marched up to the spill. "One spark and you fools could've killed us all!"

"Excuse me sir, but what is this stuff?" inquired one female cultist who came forward and poked at the tar sand-like material.
The high priest turned to the woman in question. "Child, a better question to ask is how does one acquire WMDs when access to biological weapons or the proper materials for uranium enrichment centrifuge is highly restricted? The answer is that you make due with what's available, and what we have will more than meet the task!"

"Still, what is it?"

"It's an aluminum-based solid rocket fuel laced with petrochemicals," he answered in an even tone. "When it comes in contact with an electric current, it reacts far more explosively than either C4 or TNT."

"But why would we need to use something this volatile?" asked another. "And why so much of it?"

"It's our trump card," Cumber supplied. Monologuing, the elderly member of the Order's inner circle began to pace back and forth. "It is said that Saiyaman, this… Son Gohan, is nigh indestructible. Such invulnerability will blind him to the true nature of our battle strategy. Even if he or the daughter of Mr. Satan interfere, the blast radius of the kamikaze strike will level everything underneath the initial explosion."

"And if this little ruse fails, Chimcheru, Cat-Flap, and myself will be on standby to finish what's left of them!" added the tallest of Cumber's private guard.

"Surely, after so much blunt force trauma, Saiyaman will meet his match in you, Jack-saw," Cumber praised faintly. "Your strength has been augmented far beyond Brea-Og's! Between the three of you, both Videl Son and Son Gohan will meet their match."

Sidling up to his strongest men, the Order's second in command added in a silent whisper, "And that's assuming they survive the little party I sent them…"

"Sir," hissed Chimcheru, his voice muffled by the wrappings that covered his face, "His Holiness Gerkin will not take kindly to you deviating from the strategy!"

"And I still don't like putting all our local manpower into one offensive!" Cumber countered venomously. "His Holiness is not infallible! We need to dispatch at least one of them."

Spreading his arms wide, the mummy doppelganger gestured to the entire hanger. "It's hard enough keeping all of this under wraps! The whole point of limiting incursions to luring cops out into the rougher parts of town was to help us maintain a low profile until the night of the attack. Brea-og-

"Brea-og is a failure!" snapped the old priest. "The only thing he accomplished was killing off valuable manpower that we could've used in this assault! He lost sight of the bigger picture and in doing so, sabotaged our organizations' greater imperative. Trust me! The Circle of Heaven and Earth will succeed in their mission!"

"For your sake they'd better, Sir," Chimcheru warned. "We can't afford a leak getting out to the RBI about an operation this big!"

"You worry too much," Cumber arrogantly admonished. "Operation Bait and Switch is a strategic initiative. It's geared towards fooling both the Feds and Satan City's resident crime fighters. The whole point of having these useful idiots stockpile weapons and ammo practically in plain sight of law enforcement was to lead all of our enemies on a wild goose chase, to keep their eyes blind to that which we don't want them to see. The cops in this town, true to form, have taken the bait, hook, line, and sinker. They're so busy looking in the wrong places that a kamikaze bombing on this scale is the last thing they'd expect."
His arms folded behind his back, the elder cultist turned to gaze upon the massive, airliner-like transport. "And once Team A get this bad boy into the air, proximity alone will ensure massive collateral damage to any standing structures in the downtown area. The city will effectively be ours…"

Elsewhere in the city, Gohan and Videl were engaged in another bout of after school training with Goku and the other Satan Dojo volunteers. Par Agent Wingle's suggestion, the venue of choice for this round was the boneyard of the Satan City Correctional Facility courtesy of the RBI and the Interior Ministry. Save for a few dozen inmates, they had the run of the place. Today however, they were joined by several new faces.

The first of these newcomers were the three volunteer trainees sent by the Royal Bureau of Investigation. All three were relatively young, fit, clean-cut model recruits fresh out of the agency's academy, and tasked with learning the inner secrets of ki, all three would go on to found the core of King Furry's new vanguard against domestic uprisings. In spite of efforts by Goku and the others to develop a comradery, for the most part these three recruits maintained a certain level of detachment from the private volunteers in the Son/Satan training program.

Most surprisingly, Unbridled Fury, had joined their efforts. Personally recruited to the cause by Goku himself after his showing at the Satan City Tournament, this twenty-something, super-strong, armor-wearing behemoth was a cut above the rest. Having discovered both the benefits of weighted training outfits and ki manipulation on his own without outside help or influence from the old Z-senshi gang, he held a great deal of promise as a potential ally.

Finally, there was Goku's former adversary, Mercenary Tao. His offer of help at the tournament was an unexpected, albeit much-needed, bonus. As one of only three living men to have trained under Mautaito, his experience in building up fighters from scratch could potentially prove invaluable to the defense of Satan City.

Together, Goku and Tao had the entire lot divided into two groups headed by either one of them. Goku led the sessions of the three RBI volunteers, Bob, and Unbridled Fury, whereas Tao aided Gohan, Videl, Brinner, Pirowski, and Caroni through theirs. The former career soldier currently had the five of them doing finger push-ups over upturned sharpened sticks.

Having an already massive lead over the others, Gohan, and to a lesser extent Videl, took the Crane School cofounder's grueling regime in stride. Beside them, Brinner and Caroni kept a decent pace, all things considered. Pirowski however, was having the worst of it due to his massive size. The upturned spikes beneath him had long been pressed into the ground by his tremendous weight.

Feeling her lower back fall asleep, Videl cursed under her breath. This should've been a breeze for her. Heck, she would've handled things better had it not been for one minor little thing…

"I feel like a park bench," the brunette fumed. Somewhere along the way, Tao decided to perch himself cross-legged on her back.

"Do you have to sit on my back?" Videl groaned through clinched teeth. "Master Roshi never had us doing this…"

"I'm not Roshi..." the pony-tailed man retorted plainly. "The Turtle Hermit works you hard so the world won't work you harder. That is not the aim of my personal philosophy."

Taking a moment to study her surroundings, Videl silently wondered how she ended up spending her afternoon in a prison yard. Seeing as it was government property, Agent Wingle figured it would've made the perfect venue for their training. The inmates in the weights zone however were
less than thrilled to see her. This of course was expected, for many of them had her and Gohan to thank for their incarceration.

Looking over his shoulder in mid-pushup, Gohan took this time to strike up a conversation. "OK, I'll bite! What philosophy does the Crane School espouse?"

Blowing out a long puff of smoke, the former killer pondered it a moment before answering, "As the two of you probably know, in both life and literature there exist three great struggles that are at the center of every man's story."

"Man vs. man,… man vs. nature, and… man vs. himself," Gohan supplied between pushups.

"Yes!" nodded the Crane School's cofounder. "Muten Roshi's Turtle School is built around the second and third struggles. As I said before, he works you hard so that the world won't work you harder. In the aftermath of Master Moutaito's death, Roshi, Shen, and I were left without a guiding light. Each of us had to struggle for every scrap of additional knowledge we attained. As such, our respective philosophies are products of our individual experiences. Unlike Roshi and my brother, I did not remove myself from the world by becoming a hermit. Instead, I kept one foot firmly planted in the world of men, never really separating myself from its' drama but at the same time, never fully immersing myself in it. As such, my Crane School teaching philosophy is centered on the first great struggle. It's been my experience that a fighter need not worry so much about the world as he should the people living in it. The world does not test you the way individuals will."

"Seems a bit insular," the Son boy commented.

"Perhaps it is, but I want you to keep in mind that my training philosophy is a product of my experience. After Moutai's death, I was far younger and less experienced than either my brother or Roshi. Seeing how my brother was still finding his own way, he could only teach me so much. The rest of what I know was cobbled together from a lifetime of mercenary work, subterfuge, and field operations. Now that I think about it, perhaps it is incorrect on my part to pass off the first great struggle as if it were the whole story…"

Pausing, the two teens gave each other a puzzled look. Catching their shared, clueless expression, Tao elaborated.

"Though the Turtle and Crane Schools draw largely from the same source material and the same martial arts tradition, they are as different as two sectarian theologies within the same overarching religion. Keep in mind that just as a common religion can house dozens or hundreds of competing denominations under its' banner, so too can a common martial arts tradition give rise to just as many philosophical approaches."

"That makes sense, I guess," said Gohan.

"There are even different training philosophies between me and my brother. The Turtle style was developed and founded by only one man, and as such, it has only one way. The Crane School however, has three separate sub-styles centered around its' three major adherents so there really isn't a common philosophy. Roshi is correct in believing that slow and steady wins the race, but slow and steady can also lead to stagnation if one is not mindful. The Turtle Hermit addresses this problem by allowing his students to come to many conclusions on their own in lieu of their initial build-up. This has merit in that it allows diversity among his students. My training philosophy is based around a core value system that embraces the idea that a teacher must oftentimes force change."

"That sounds a little dangerous for my tastes," remarked Gohan.
"It is, but until recently, I always viewed it as essential for whoever survived," the hitman countered with a tinge of regret.

Gohan couldn't believe what he was hearing. "What?! Don't get me wrong, we're grateful for your help, but you make it sound as if you've killed your own students!"

"Who says I haven't?"

Upon hearing this, Caroni and Brinner deadpanned in a mix of shock and exhaustion.

"Why am I not surprised?" Videl quipped dryly.

"And what happened to your brother?" Gohan asked. "From what I've heard, you and the Crane Hermit were inseparable."

"We were." Extinguishing his pipe, the former assassin leapt off Videl's back before turning to regard his five charges. "There's an old adage that says 'Expand or die.' My brother isn't thinking about the past or the future. He's learned nothing from the short time we spent in Hell. If there's one thing a career soldier has taught me, it's that you have to look at what options you have and what opportunities you've been given. I devoted my life to Shin's well-being. In our culture, a bond between brothers trumps all others. The elder brother gets the glory and the younger, the honor. This is the way of things. I did what was expected of a younger brother, and in doing so, I lost my honor. I followed him to oblivion and back, and I have nothing to show for it. His path led me to being a cripple, a has-been, and ultimately, eternal damnation."

Pulling himself to a stand, Gohan smiled at the old assassin. "I wouldn't let it worry me as much."

Looking back at the Son boy, Tao arched an eyebrow. "My soul was damned to Hell! How could you have faith in someone like me?"

"Believe me, you're not the first person with a life of gratuitous violence behind him who has sought redemption," the half breed replied. "If my mentor Piccolo could do it, you are not beyond help."

Suddenly, a sense of foreboding washed over everyone with a smidgen of ki sensing proficiency. Seeing as they were in a penitentiary, the close proximity of so many violent convicts muddied the waters for Gohan's mind's eye. Jumping to her feet, Videl looked left and right to locate the source of the dreadful feeling but had no luck.

"You felt it too?" Goku asked, stepping up beside his eldest.

Gohan gave a curt nod. "Yeah…"

"Is it me, or did this penitentiary get a lot more hostile?" Videl wondered aloud. Sure there were some pretty vengeful glares being thrown her way, but the hatred roiling off the prison population had nothing on what she was sensing now.

"What is it? Something amiss?" Tao queried, looking every which way.

Gohan didn't know what it was, but someone malevolent was in the prison yard, and from the feeling he was getting, he/they/it were out for blood. Not only that, but by the standards of a normal person, they were comparatively strong! Whipping around, his father issued a warning to Caroni and the others.

"Guys! Heads up! We've got company!" barked Goku.
Then, seemingly out of nowhere, a group of strangers, a dozen or more, appeared. Each one was draped from head to toe in smoky black or grey robes, all except one bald, aging male who stood in the middle. His robe was adorned with a tunic bearing a red flame in its' center. Nestled in the middle of this flame design was white calligraphic 'M'.

"W-Who are these guys?" stammered Caroni. The blond show fighter's gaze was drawn to what one of the strange newcomers held at his side. His blood ran cold in his veins at the sight of a severed human head.

Upon seeing the severed head, Pirowski and Brinner screamed like a couple of terrified school girls. Ready to shit themselves, the two Satan Dojo alumni ducked behind Gohan and Videl, earning a shared look from Goku and Bob.

"Pfft! They said they wanted the training, but they sure as hell don't want the other stuff that comes with it..." muttered the retired soldier.

"No kiddin," remarked Goku before turning back to their guests. "Who are you guys, and why are you here?"

The balding man with the Majin symbol adorning his robes stepped forward. "We are the Circle of Heaven and Earth!"

"Never heard of ya!" Gohan remarked with a hint of macho bravado.

"It matters not," the man replied coldly. "Our lord Cumber sent us to kill both you and your little bitch!"

"Finally... some action!" Videl stated. The petite fighter popped her knuckles in giddy anticipation for the coming throw down.

His tail twitching excitedly, a tiny smirk made its' way onto Gohan's face. "Pfft! This should be rich..."

As a group, Gohan, Videl, Goku, and Tao stepped up to the plate.

"Ya know..." Goku began, "These guys aren't all that strong. Maybe the four of us is a little overkill."

"It is kinda unfair for them," said Videl. "If they weren't out to kill us, I'd almost feel like a bully."

Gohan and Videl gave each other an amused look before jokingly crowing "Almost!" in unison. The assassins however, were having teamwork problems, very amateurish teamwork problems.

"Now remember," their aging leader began in a somewhat condescending tone, "First we soften them up from a distance using sorcery, then we move in for the kill!"

"I'm takin em now!" barked one of his less experienced underlings. Breaking ranks, the robed figure drew a Kokari knife and bolted straight for Gohan. He was joined by two of his comrades.

"NO YOU IDIOTS! GET BACK HERE!" their leader screamed angrily. "Shit..."

The group of black robed Majin cultists quickly closed the distance between themselves and their chosen target. Brandishing weapons of serrated steel, the three masked assailants leapt high into the air, prepared to bring the full force of their weapons down on Gohan's exposed head and neck.
Only, they seemed exposed… Upon contact with Gohan's tempered body, the mundane weapons blunted and bent as if they were mere toys.

"Holy Shit!" shrieked one of the robed figures, looking upon his now useless weapon. "What the fuck is this guy?!" Behind him, his two cohorts were already tucking tail and bookin it back to their group.

Gohan snorted a chuckle. "I guess your bosses sent their B-Team, because if that's your best work, this'll be like shooting fish in a barrel."

Behind him, Caroni, and the others gaped at the Son boy's apparent invulnerability.

"Insane…" Pirowski rasped, his eyes as big as saucers.

"Y-Yeah…" stammered Brinner, equally stunned.

The leader of the robed group was less than thrilled. He sneered at the half-breed's derisive remarks. "Little smartass…"

"I take it these are the cultists Agent Wingle mentioned?" inquired one of the RBI trainees, stepping up behind Goku.

"Yeah… funny lot, that bunch," the Saiyan warrior commented.

"Watch closely and you'll see the true power at our command!" declared the leader.

"Oh, please…" remarked an unimpressed Videl. Yawning, the brunette crossed her arms and settled in for a good show.

Casually, Gohan brought his monkey-like tail around and ensnared his remaining assailant's ankle before flinging the hapless man across the boneyard like a paperweight. This wasn't missed by the other cultists.

"IS THAT A TAIL!?!" screeched one. "What is this freaky shit?!!"

"He's some kinda mutant…" gasped another shakily.

"Just like Majin Buu!" yet another cried in distress. "We're boned!"

"Stand firm!" the leader commanded. "If we draw from the malign spirit, we can kill them! Let's see how they deal with the Formless!"

Heeding the order of their commander, the remaining near-do-wells formed a wide circle. Reaching up, each one laid a hand upon a specialized broch, whereupon an eerie glowing fog began to rise from their feet. Within the area they'd encircled, this fog began to churn and roil as magenta lighting grounded itself from a series of dimly illuminated runes.

All around the recess yard, grass browned and flowers wilted as a strange, chilling pressure wave passed over the landscape. In moments, the area darkened and shadows began to creep over the ground as if drawn by some mysterious force to the assembled circle of cultists.

"What is this?" Gohan asked, his voice carrying a hint of foreboding. To him, it felt as if all the life were being sucked from the ground.

"I don't know Gohan, but I'm curious to see how this turns out!" his father commented.
"Why'd it get so cold all of a sudden?!" Videl wondered, wrapping her arms around herself against the now frigid air.

The four fighters continued to watch as the shadows began to coalesce and twist into a series of congealed, translucent masses, one for each of the fourteen remaining cultists. As if signaling their births, each one cried out with loud ghastly shrieks and blood-curdling moans, cries that gained intensity with each passing moment as the blobbish, translucent masses attained a vaguely bipedal stature. Soon enough, the chants of their creators were drowned out entirely by the otherworldly screams of the now fully erect monstrosities.

"OK… this is some weird shit!" remarked Tao nervously, taking a few steps back.

"Weird I can deal with," said Gohan. "The improbable is what concerns me. You can't just have a living ki existing in the absence of a corporal body!"

In typical Son fashion, his father scratched the back of his head. "Yeah, but somehow they managed it, Gohan."

"Whaddya think it means, Dad?"

"I'm not sure, but judging by the look of the surrounding area, it can't be good," answered the Son Patriarch. "I can see how a large number of these guys could be problematic."

"If it's such a big deal, than why are we just standing here?" asked Tao in a somewhat peeved tone.

"Yeah! Wouldn't it make more sense to jump these assholes before they finish whatever they're planning?" Videl added sarcastically.

"Come to think of it, we do have a long-standing tendency of letting our enemies finish before we do anything…" Gohan commented. "Why do we let them get away with it?"

"Then let's do it!" Videl goaded. "Let's jump em!"

"You guys can't be serious!? We have to give them a fair chance!" her father-in-law whined childishly.

"Uh…, no we don't, Goku!" Videl countered. "I don't know if you haven't noticed, but one of them is carrying a severed human head. They're intent on killing us. We don't owe them squat!"

Goku couldn't believe what he was hearing from his daughter-in-law. He figured that if they were gonna kick around a bunch of no accounts, the least they could do is give their opposition a chance to bring their best.

"Dad, next you'll wanna make things interesting by having Caroni and the others handle this," Gohan jokingly remarked.

It was only for a brief moment, but the Son boy could've sworn he caught a vaguely familiar, unsettling glint in his father's eyes. Immediately, warning signals flashed in the teen's mind as Goku's face lit up with child-like wonder.

"No Dad!" he scolded. "I already know what you're thinking, and you can forget it!"

"Aww… Come on Gohan!" pleaded the Saiyan warrior. "What's the point of training Bob and the others if they never get a chance to do anything?"
At this, Caroni and Pirowski paled in fright. "W-What?!

"Mistro Son Goku can't be serious!" exclaimed Pirowski in his typical Russian accent. "They are demons from Hell!"

"What's with you?!" Gohan fumed disbelievingly, "These guys might be ants compared to us, but our volunteers aren't ready for this!"

"I'd just like to say that I'm not comfortable with any of this!" Brinner cut in from his crouched hiding spot behind Videl's knees.

"It doesn't matter if you're comfortable!" Videl nagged back. "You're being paid to do this, ya leech!"

"A job isn't worth my life!" he sneered.

"You're both a waste of money and hopeless..." Tao commented derisively. "What soldier of fortune chickens out of a job after he's already been paid?!"

"One that lives," the blond teen argued back.

"Well..., the RBI volunteers are about as green as greenhorns can get, so I guess that rules them out..." Videl mused.

Face-palming, Gohan huffed a frustrated sigh. It seemed like his spouse and father were both determined to get someone killed for the sake of entertainment. It was then that he saw the same dawning look in his spouse's eyes that his father had moments before. "What...?"

"I say we just let the middle tier folks handle it," she suggested. "Either way, these guys are royally screwed."

"I wonder if this is how things played out with Vegeta and Nappa when they were toying with me and Piccolo?" Gohan wondered aloud.

"So it's settled then?" she pressed.

"Well, at least it'll give Fury a chance to get some combat experience," Goku reasoned. "Sure!"

"OK-OK, we can do it that way," Gohan conceded in a defeated tone.

"I hope you're all prepared to die!"

Gohan and the others turned to find that the peculiar group of robed newcomers had completed their strange ritual. Where fourteen amorphous masses once were now stood fourteen demonic looking, anatomically off, shadowy creatures. Each was possessed of glowing ochre eyes reminiscent those of a reptilian. Their goblin-like faces were framed by a set of elfish ears that led into whisker-toped, ridged eyebrow frills. Upon opening their mouths, the creatures showcased a set of ghoulish, razor-sharp teeth comparable to a wild boar. These hodgepodge heads rested on equally hodgepodge bodies that seemed to bow from the weight of their own muscle mass. Each one had ridiculous Popeye-large forearms and massive, barrel chests that saddled the miserable beasts with a permanent slouch. All of this was supported by a pair of short, squat legs that seemed as if they'd been tacked on as an afterthought. To round out their grotesque ensemble, the otherworldly monstrosities sported curved, claw-like talons on each hand.

The leader of the cult band guffawed at his quarry menacingly. "Now that we outnumber you six to
one, this shouldn't even be a challenge! Say your prayers…"

The cult leader continued to carry on until strangely enough, his targets began to laugh with him.

"Oh man…, this shit's hilarious!" Videl giggled mockingly. Next to her, Gohan and Goku were shaking their heads in mirth.

"It is pretty funny, isn't it?" laughed the elderly Majin.

"I just can't believe we gave you assholes all this time to get ready, and this is what you have to show for it!"

Needless to say, this wasn't what the cultists expected to hear. "Uh… W-what?"

Without warning, Videl leveled an outstretched hand at one of the spawned creatures and let fly with a white ki blast that vaporized the unfortunate hell spawn where it stood.

The gaggle of would-be assassins and their freshly spawned monsters gaped in stupefied, morbid shock at the ease at which one of their own was dispersed. Where once stood an abomination from the darkest recesses of the human mind was now a smoldering vapor. It was as if the monster had never existed.

"Fuck this shit! I'M OUT!" screamed one of the robed assailants.

Doing an about face, the man bolted for the prison yard fence. However, he didn't get too far before running smack-dab into a face-kick from Mercenary Tao.

The former killer leered down at his catch. "We didn't say you could leave."

"I almost feel bad for em…" Gohan commented guiltily.

"I know what ya mean," agreed Goku. "If these guys had come along when I was a kid, this might've been fun."

It was then that Videl stepped up to the now mortified group of Majins.

"Look fellas…" she entreated, holding her arms up in a bid for peace. "The situation is hopeless for you! You know you're outmatched and we know you're outmatched. We're not just gonna let you walk out of here, so why don't you just give up, drop your weapons, and turn yourselves in? As an official liaison investigator for the Satan City police, I'm sorta obligated to give you this chance, so how about it?"

Gritting his teeth in impotent rage, the Majin leader leveled a hate-filled glare at the Satan girl's guile.

"Grr… Don't you dare look down on us!" Seeing the fire in their leader, the other men and their monsters rallied to his side.

Bringing her hands to her hips, Videl gave their attackers a good ole hardy Satan laugh. "I guess I'll be the first to throw my hat in the ring!"

"And me!" Dragging the body of the cultist who'd tried to escape earlier behind him, Mercenary Tao chunked the unconscious man to the feet of his cohorts. "And don't worry. I let him live."

Chuckling, Goku turned back to where his new star pupil was standing amongst his other students. "Hey Fury! I got something for ya."

The hulking, armor-wearing young man strutted forward. "Yeah, what is it?"
"You're gonna help Videl and Tao fight these guys," Goku instructed him. "I want you to use it as a chance to test your skills when fighting groups."

The tall steel-covered fighter in training eyed the group presented before him with some measure of curiosity. "Interesting…"

"Alright! Let's show these guys what-for!" cheered Videl.

"I'm game! Let's put their asses in the wind!"

"We should take their leader in for questioning," Tao advised. The former killer settled into the horse stance favored by the Crane School.

"Duly noted," Videl said as she took her own battle stance.

With all the trash talk and posturing out of the way, the two sides launched themselves at each other in a free-for-all of close combat. Like foxes jumping into a chicken pen, Videl, Tao, and Unbridled Fury scattered the whole group of some 25 opponents, sending them scurrying every which way. After a few moments of weaving between and smacking around individual adversaries, the three fighters broke off into separate melees with each of them taking on between six and nine opponents a piece.

"You guys should've looked into other career choices!" Jumping onto the face of one aberration, Videl bent backwards until her hands touched the ground and catapulted the grotesque creature across the prison yard with the force of cannon ball. Her victim continued on its' high-speed trajectory before exploding on impact with a reinforced concrete threshold at the facilities' far end.

Being trained by Roshi, Gohan, and Krillin, Videl was easily the most powerful of the three. With her recently acquired bullet-proofing, both the bladed weapons of her human opponents and the iron-hard claws of their familiars proved useless against her battle-toughened hide. Coupled with her southpaw hand-to-hand orientation and small stature, she dipped and sped around the tumult of attacking cultists and their dark helpers as she batted them around like gnats.

Goku's hand-picked man, Unbridled Fury, also gave his opposition a run for their money. Due to his great height and the sheer weight and protection provided by his training suit, the Majin assassins bounced off the blond behemoth like a bunch of mosquitos hitting a wind shield. He didn't even have to use hyper speed. It was Goliath versus eight Davids as the young man physically stomped, bear-hugged, and man-handled his playthings into submission.

"You boys are a bunch'a rank amateurs!" Tao taunted, catching another cultist coming up from behind him with an elbow to the face. Pivoting around, the hired hand put a full-powered knuckle-punch straight through the torso of one of several goblin-like monstrosities, a whole of gaggle of which darted around him in a circle probing for a weakness. Despite being the weakest of the three, the Crane School cofounders' 200 plus years of fighting experience more than made up for what he comparatively lacked in brute strength. Knife hands, palm-thrusts, and finger jabs found their marks as the pony-tailed man danced between his assailants with the measured grace of a waterfowl.

One man attempted to choke Videl from behind with some phone cord whilst she was busy knocking around some of the monsters they'd spawned, only to be hurled face-first across the prison yard into some razor-wire atop the perimeter chain link fence via kiai wave. It could easily be said that her eight-fronted fight was about as one-sided as it could get.

Meanwhile, Tao was delivering tongue-jabs like a crack-crazed woodpecker. The gimmick move that killed General Blue of the Red Ribbon Army found its' mark in the forehead of an unlucky
young man who had in a panic, run straight into the former hitman's vicious licking.

Bodies were sent to and thro as the 24 on 3 tussle played itself out. Before long however, Videl, Tao, and Fury polished off their would-be adversaries. With their fun over, the trio turned their attention to the assassin corp's would-be leader.

"Well fell, looks like you're the only one left," Videl smugly commented.

"G-Get away from me!" stammered the elderly chap.

With the situation utterly hopeless, the balding man pivoted on a heel and tried to make his getaway. When he tried to run however, he found that he couldn't move. Throwing a look over his shoulder, he found that Videl had grabbed the hood of his occult paltron.

"Now..., what to do with you?" the Satan girl drawled menacingly as she stroked her chin in mock contemplation.

"P-Please! Let me go!" screamed the old man. "They'll kill me!"

"Who? Who'll kill you?!" Gohan demanded.

"I've already said too much! Please, just let me get outta here!"

Glowering at their captive, Videl brought her hands to her hips. "No way! You're either gonna talk or we'll make you sing!"

"I could do the honors, but it won't be pretty," offered Tao.

"Maybe we should take this guy to Agent Wingle," Gohan suggested. "I'm willing to bet he'll wanna hear whatever this clown has to say."

There was a brief flash in the distance as Goku took the initiative in vaporizing the downed goblin-like creatures with a series of well-placed ki blasts.

"As for the bottom feeders..." Videl said, giving the strung-out bodies of their fallen adversaries a quick once-over, "The correctional officers of this facility will drag the others to a holding cell. Seriously, though! Who in their right mind breaks into a prison just to off someone?!"

"Well hun, if they were looking to save the taxpayers a few zennie, they certainly came to the right place," Gohan remarked with a hint of humor.

"True!" she returned, flashing her spouse a thumbs up.

A short while later, Gohan and Videl found themselves at Satan City Police Headquarters watching Agent Wingle and Chief Wilkerson enact the age old good cop-bad cop routine. The Chief would apply his own special touch here, a little arm twisting there, all the while reining himself in just enough to refrain from violating any guidelines that could give the cultists' legal representation any ammunition. Agent Wingle would then follow up with a few superficial attempts at softening the man up, usually by making small talk. Off by the door stood their captive's lawyer.

Much to his credit, the head assassin did what he could to steer the lawmen's inquiries away from anything that might provide his detainers with a definitive trail. At most, the man would allude to how he was supposedly 'already dead,' 'the end was nigh,' or some such nonsense.

"Look fella! All you gotta do is tell us who sent ya, and we'll induct you into witness protection,"
offered Wingle. "It's as simple as that! You can even avoid jail time by testifying against your allies."

"You could never protect me from them!" their aged captive seethed uneasily.

Losing his cool, Chief Wilkerson brought a fist down on the table in front of the nervous suspect, making him jump. "You've said that a dozen times since you've been here! Cut the shit and just tell us why!"

"Seriously though, why would someone like you be this afraid of your own bosses?" Wingle inquired. "You'd think someone your age would be well past the point of giving a shit..."

"If you knew what they were capable of-"

"We already know what they're capable of which is why we need you to tell us who they are!" Gohan cut in.

Turning to the Son boy, the would-be assassin gave the boy a disbelieving, humorless smirk. "You think it's that simple, Saiyaman?"

Suddenly, as if out of the blue, an idea came to Videl. "I've got it!"

"Got what?" asked Agent Wingle, cocking a curious eyebrow.

"It's a stretch but maybe Gohan here could use his mind-reading," offered the brunette.

Upon hearing this little revelation, Chief Wilkerson's jaw dropped in shocked disbelief. "Now it's mindreading?! What's with guys like you?"

Scratching his ear, her spouse considered the idea. "I'm not sure that would work, hun."

Cocking her head to the side, the Satan girl asked, "Why not?"

"I'm not very good yet," he sheepishly admitted. "I really wish we would've brought my dad for this. He could have used that post-cognition (See Ginyu Saga) thing of his to make this easier."

This piqued Videl's interest. "Post-cognition?"

"Dad has the ability to see every experience someone has had just by resting a hand on their head," answered the Saiyan. "He doesn't use it too often though."

"Kid, if you've got some kind of crazy power trick up your sleeve, I say you use it," Wingle put in. "Lives are on the line here."

"Come on Gohan!" urged his common law wife. "It's better than nothing. What've we got to lose?"

Staring intently at their terrified, though still very much defiant prisoner, Gohan considered the idea. If he succeeded in reading the detained cultist's mind, it would give them real insight on their current enemies' next move. However, failure isn't what the teen feared. There was an old adage that those who looked into the abyss must be careful not to become it, and the degree to which this old man's ki had been tainted was on par with anything he'd felt from many of the enemies he'd fought in his youth, albeit much weaker. Given his own mental state, it was a terrible risk he was loath to take.

Short on alternatives and even shorter on time, the Son boy made his decision. Reaching across the table, he took hold of the elderly Majin's head.

Shrieking, the old man tipped his chair out from under him as he struggled against the Saiyan teen's
iron grip, prompting Videl and the Chief to restrain him. The cultists' legal representation, who had remained quiet up to this point, erupted.

"Hey! Get your god-damned hands off my client!" barked the cultist's attorney.

"You sit there and stay quiet!" Agent Wingle commanded hotly. "This is a matter of national security!"

"National security!?? The attorney couldn't believe what he was hearing. "What about his rights?!"

"We're a monarchy, not a democracy, so deal with it!" snapped the RBI agent before turning back to Gohan. "Do your stuff kid!"

"Right!" nodded the teen. He was not yet proficient enough to perform this task on a whim the same way Master Roshi could, but he was certainly skilled enough to pull this off if the subject were held in place. Reaching into himself, Gohan fixed his every thought on the mental constructs of his inner will, the very same constructs that allowed him and his friends to utilize their greatest metaphysical powers, constructs that took shape many years ago in his initial tutelage under his first mentor. Reaching out, he projected the invisible fingers of his will straight into the core of the aged cultist's cognitive presence.

Immediately, Gohan found himself assaulted by a cold-burning sensation, the very same he felt whenever he detected an evil ki. Never before had he actually traveled into the heart of darkness. Briefly, he wondered what it would've been like to perform this act on someone like Freiza or Cell. If it was anything like what he was feeling now, then the additional pressure of their wickedness on top of their far more massive kis would have drug his mind into a world of psychotic fantasies and visceral egotism on par with the very worst serial killer. It was one thing to feel an evil ki from the outside, but to be inside the mind of one's possessor was a whole nother experience in itself.

Under the pressure of having his mind stretched to the breaking point, the elderly Majin let out a silent scream. His body going rigid as a man with tetanus, his eyes slowly rolled into the back of his head from the torturous pain of Gohan's mental invasion.

"STOP IT! YOU'RE KILLING HIM!" screamed the man's lawyer.

"I told you…" Wingle began, only to go silent when he noticed their detainee was showing the signs of shock.

"Holy shit!" he cursed. "Alright kid, THAT'S ENOUGH!"

Breaking off, Gohan and others released their captive. Disoriented, the Son boy stumbled back against the walls of the interrogation room. Suddenly, he felt a pair of hands grab his shoulders.

"Kid! What did ya see?!" demanded Agent Wingle.

"Hey, we need to call an ambulance!" Chief Wilkerson stated as he checked the now jerking body of the elderly assassin. "No, seriously! This guy's goin into cardiac arrest!" Across from him, Videl lifted the old man's legs in an attempt to restart his heart while the cultists' lawyer called the paramedics.

Ignoring the veteran law officer, Agent Wingle waited intently for Gohan to find his bearings.

"I-I saw… a hanger," stammered the Saiyan. "There was a massive aircraft…"

Blind-sighted by this info, the RBI field agent silently wondered why the Order of the Malign Spirit
would use an airport for anything. Given all their weapon and drug smuggling, the potential use of a plane or other aviation transport was a possibility, but then, if most of the contraband the cult needed for weapons trading was already being produced in the more rundown parts of town...

Before he could follow this trail of thought any further however, Gohan added, "A military-grade aircraft! They're planning some kind of attack! He lost conscience before I could see anything else."

"Is it in the city?" Wingle inquired, his tone bearing an edge of desperation.

"I think so," answered the half-breed. "And that's not all! They've killed dozens of officers!"

At this, Agent Wingle's face paled a few shades. "Sweet Jesus…"

"So what's the plan?" asked Videl.

"There are only three airports within Satan City limits. We need to get everyone we can to all of them!"

Gohan shook his head in disagreement. "From what I saw of this hanger, even if you brought every officer in Satan City, you'd be outgunned 3 to 1. You'd be heading into a firefight you couldn't win. Me and Videl will accompany you and the others."

"If we put all our resources into one raid, that still means there's a two in three chance of us raiding the wrong airport," Videl added.

"Fuck…" hissed the squat agent. "Mr. Son, is there anything else you can tell me about this airport? Anything at all?"

"Now that you mention it, it did seem kinda run down…"

"Then that narrows it down to one," the Chief commented from his place on the floor next to their unconscious detainee. "The old Orange Star Airfield at the outskirts of town. We can have everyone over there in less than 40 minutes!"

"Then that's our target," stated Agent Wingle, his voice filled with conviction.

"Let's do this!" cheered Videl, pounding one gloved fist into another.

"I think it's best if me and Videl went ahead without you," Gohan suggested. "If it's as crazy as I think it is, a lot of officers could get killed."

"I'm going with you then," stated the agent, his tone brokering no argument. "Someone's gotta keep the rest of the boys in the loop."

"It's gonna be dangerous," warned Gohan.

"We've already died once. What more could they do to me?"

Gohan sighed in defeat. "Point taken."

A short time later, the three of them touched down in the abandoned airstrip in question. Due to Agent Wingle's inability to fly, Gohan had to taxi the man clear across town.

"That was… scary," he remarked. Bracing himself against his knees, the longtime field agent took a moment to catch his breath.
Videl scanned the area for a moment before realizing something. "Hey, what is this?! There's no one here!"

"Huh??"

Reaching out with his own senses, Gohan found that indeed the place was empty. "That's strange…"

"No shit!" Wingle remarked gruffly. "Are you sure this is the place?"

"I only saw enough to know there was a massive aircraft involved," replied Gohan.

Just then, looking down, Wingle caught sight of a wide set of tire streaks that led right down the runway. Approaching the marks, the agent croached down to find that they were fresh.

"What is it? What did you find?" Videl inquired.

"Something definitely took off here," mused the agent. "We should check-"

Before the man could finish, he was suddenly interrupted by a loud squawk from his portable radio.

Cursing, the rolly-polly agent reached down to his belt and fiddled with its' settings. Seriously though, why do the higher-ups even issues the cludgy things? One would think that in the age of cell phones, portable radios would be rendered redundant.

"Pzzt! This is Chief…"

Though the signal was cutting in and out, everyone recognized the voice on the other end.

"It's the Chief!" exclaimed Videl.

"Rrrrrk! Can you hear me?! COME IN!" came the veteran officers' clearly distressed voice.

"Wingle here! Anything new?"

"There's a big transport flying wide circles over town!" the Chief screamed. "I don't like the looks of this. I need Gohan and Videl over here ASAP! SHIT!"

With that, the signal gave out.

Snatching the radio off Wingle's belt, Videl shook the outdated device.

"CHIEF! COME IN CHIEF!" she screamed into it.

It was then that Gohan felt something, a set of unfamiliar ki signatures. Possessed of wickedness, these new signatures were horribly strong by human standards, and they were accompanied by a sea of malevolent albeit smaller, energy signatures that stood out like a blight against the benign life energy of the rest of the city's residents.

"I'm sensing some terrible energy signatures," rasped the half breed. "Videl, we've got to get over there, now!"

All of a sudden, off in the distance, the skies over the city lit up with the fires of Dente's Inferno. Great visible percussion waves stirred the air over the downtown district as great Fireballs rose high into the either. Against this hellish backdrop, a large arrow-shaped silhouette could be seen floating amidst the flames…
I've had a really difficult time transitioning from the last major arc into this one. For this reason, this chapter took longer to write than any of the others if only because I couldn't decide where I wanted to take things. I restarted this chapter five times, in one case writing a full seven pages of content, before I decided how I was gonna do this. I do believe my writing is starting to go down the same rabbit hole as those traveled in manga titles such as Evangelion, Ghost in the Shell, the second half of the original Tank Police, and Appleseed; That is to say, there are some elements of my fan fiction that are allusions to both mythology and contemporary trends in my own country's political subculture, and these elements are either not well received or just fall flat. What I mean is some of my stuff is a bit pretentious and combined with the massive amount of filler that I wanted to avoid but couldn't because I felt events in the story needed fleshing out or proper context, I feel like the story's narrative is starting to get bogged down. I promised in the last couple of chapters that I would up the ante on the action aspect of my story, and every time I try to steer our favorite teens into the story's other major plot conflict, I keep screwing up on the delivery.

Not to toot my horn but 'Beep! Beep!' the Videl vs Barbella fight met about 85% of my expectations as a writer. In the aftermath of the fight, I really should've wrote some scenes where we see the effect witnessing Videl's fight had on her peers at school. I mean, if you were a teenager and you saw someone in your school doing what Videl did during the final round of the Satan City Tournament, you'd either be weary of her or you'd want to know more about her and Gohan's abilities. Then again, it would lead to a lot of added filler that would detract from the next major conflict, so I guess I could expand on whatever changes the televised showcasing of Videl's new abilities would have on her relationship to her peers in a future chapter.

Spoiler Alert: In spite of all her impressive build-up, Barbella is only supposed to fill the role of a credible secondary antagonist on par with what we saw with Vegeta's character in the first half of the Namek Arc. The primary antagonist in this story is Inquisitor Gerkin, the leader of the Order of the Malign Spirit, A.K.A. the Majin Cult. In the first major arc of this story, which ended with chapter 24, Gerkin and the mysterious cult he leads were alluded to as early as chapter 5 in much the same way Freiza was alluded to repeatedly in the Saiyan Saga up until we were finally introduced to his character on Namek. Understand however, that the slow referencing of Gerkin's character is the only thing he'll have in common with Freiza. He is a different kind of villain. His character is inspired by such villains as Thulsa Doom from Conan the Barbarian, the Major from Hellsing Ultimate, and Darth Sidious from the Star Wars franchise. Like every other human outside of Goku's circle of friends, he operates under the mistaken assumption that Mr. Satan is the world savior, but even as someone who starts out aloof of Gohan and the Z fighter's existence, he acts as a far-sighted, formidable adversary who has his hands in everything. His eventual discovery that he's been chasing the wrong target since day one becomes a real game changer that sets in motion events that will change things for Gohan, Videl, and humanity forever.
Hell… cataclysm… chaos… terror… disbelief… These were the words that came to mind when Videl beheld the state of her hometown. During Buu’s rampage, Videl spent most of her time hiding on the lookout with Bulma, Krillin, and the others. Then, she knew of the horrors Earth had suffered. To actually bear witness to such atrocities however, was a different matter altogether. Sure she’d dealt with her share of humanity’s gutter scum, but that didn’t hold a candle to the travesty she was now seeing. Against her mind’s eye, see felt the anguish of loss as the living energy of thousands of people, people she had spent her adolescence protecting, were swept away in a fiery storm of terror and death.

For Gohan, the shock and revulsion were no less real, but having seen so much carnage in his own life from battling the likes of Frieza and many others had vaguely acclimated him to this sort of situation. Nonetheless, to him there was something about this particular act of terrorism that made it seem even more heinous. Perhaps it was that this attack had been perpetrated on such a massive scale against innocent civilians by other humans as opposed to some alien invader.

Satan City’s commercial district was a raging inferno. The firestorm was so savage that the night sky lit up as if it were midday, and the heat was so intense that even at their current altitude they felt the searing waves of scorching air wash over them as they soared through clouds of thick, choking smoke. All about the city, alarms blared as massive high-rises that had stood since the Cell Games were reduced to burnt-out steel and concrete cinders, their occupants either roasted alive or suffocating in the noxious smoke.

Far below them, city residents who had survived the initial attack fled in abject terror. Amidst this chaotic and hopeless situation, emergency units and police personnel alike scrambled to safeguard the lives of Satan City’s horrified, confused populace. Due to the pervasiveness of the ensuing firestorm however, there wasn’t much they could do for those caught in the thick of things. Many who did not die in the opening strike died from asphyxiation among the flames as the tar in the very asphalt combusted.

“We’re gonna have to dispatch the army…” mused Agent Wingle. “My God…”

“T-this is awful…” stammered Videl in horrified disbelief. “All those people!”

“Videl, look sharp!” her spouse called out. Coming out of her shocked reverie, Videl managed a quick nod.

“I’m gonna take out that airship!” Gohan stated. “While I handle that, I need you to take Agent Wingle and rendezvous with the Chief. Get in contact with Bob and the others, and have them meet up with you downtown ASAP. If the energy I’m sensing is anything to go by, we’re gonna need to fight in more than one place.”

“On it!”

“Just be careful not to drop me,” grumbled Wingle. The short, tubby man squirmed uncomfortably as Gohan passed him over to Videl. “Getting too old for this shit…”

After exchanging a quick kiss for luck, the petite girl sped off with Agent Wingle in tow, leaving
Gohan to deal with the massively armed, flying transport.

Meanwhile in another part of the city, a small gaggle of men took up position on a deck overlooking the now burning commercial district. Of them, all but one, their leader, was decked out in coal-grey military fatigues. He, Inquisitor Gerkin, supreme leader of the Order of the Malign Spirit and head of the Majin’s inner circle, stood at the forefront of the group. A faint, creepy smile gracing his continence, the middle aged man relished the carnage his underlings had wrought on the city.

“You think it’s a good idea being this close to the action?” asked one of the younger men.

“What’s wrong, boy? No sense of adventure?” Gerkin replied in jest. This seemed to shut up his subordinate.

“By now, Team A should have touched down in the historic downtown area,” stated another. “With the police bogged down in the commercial district, busting our followers out of jail shouldn’t be a problem. Once armed, they’ll augment Team A’s numbers considerably!”

“Of course…” agreed their leader in a self-assured tone. “It’s all part of the plan. Having our brothers and sisters stockpile weapons at different points across the city ensures that regardless of the best efforts by law enforcement, at least some of these caches will slip through the cracks.”

Just then, Gerkin’s mobile phone went off, startling everyone but its’ owner.

“Ah…, Cumber! I take it Saiyaman has flown right into our trap?”

“Like a lamb to the slaughter your holiness,” came his subordinate’s gravelly response. “The fool is engaging the transport as we speak!”

“Good…Good!” Gerkin praised, clearly pleased. “And the daughter of Mark Satan?”

“Our spies indicate that she flew off, likely to rendezvous with the police!”

“Hmm… Note to self: Find out how they do that,” Gerkin mused. “No matter! Without back-up from Son Gohan, she will soon fall before the combined might of your three strongest fighters. Between them and the army we have lying in wait, she will be crushed underfoot!”

“Yes, oh immaculate one!” answered his second-in-command. “In the meantime, the skeleton crew we left on the transport should keep that super-powered freak preoccupied. He’ll be so busy dealing with the ankle-biters, he won’t notice our little surprise!”

Hanging up, the Majin high priest stole a moment to revel in his own perception of control before turning his attention to more serious matters. Initially, he intended for the fire-bombing phase of Operation Bait and Switch to last a while before Satan City’s teen heroes intervened, but apparently, something had gone awry. Something or someone…

The man snorted derisively. “Cumber’s getting too big for his breaches.”

“Your Holiness?” one of his nearby retainers pried curiously.

Gerkin elaborated.

“Cumber’s a fool if he thinks I don’t know. The nerve! Sending assassins behind my back! A chain is only as strong as its’ weakest link. I’ll make a mental note to have Sucini promoted to second-in-command when this operation is over!”
This raised a few eyebrows from the cult leader’s company. “Isn’t Sucini busy supervising operations in the east?”

“And beautifully so,” answered Gerkin. “If anything should happen to me, Sucini shall carry on our imperative as the Malign Spirit’s new oracle. His experience in fighting a guerilla war against the forces of Emperor Choatzu will prove invaluable against the armies in this area. Cumber is a self-aggrandizing shyster! His greed and lack of clarity would lead our clan to ruin! Thankfully, I had the transport’s payload wired to my cell phone through a secondary detonator. Even with the fire-bombing halted, the detonation of so much rocket fuel will achieve the body count we need!”

“And what of Cumber?” asked another.

“Have him take part in the main battle with Team B,” ordered their leader. “He’s outlived his usefulness. If he dies in the fighting, it’ll save us the trouble of having him executed. We have any number of mages that could take his place among the other acolytes.”

Elsewhere above the city, Gohan found himself facing unusually stiff resistance. In lieu of Acolyte Cumber’s little deviation, the Majins had secretly retrofitted their massive aerial transport with rows of anti-aircraft batteries, turning it into a flying fortress. Now, they were throwing everything they had short of the kitchen sink at the half-Saiyan teen.

Almost playfully, Gohan bobbed and weaved through the air as he effortlessly evaded an impressive level of air-to-air firepower. All around him, shells detonated, lighting up the night sky. All the while, the transport’s bomb bay doors released one explosive drop after another, ravaging the city’s residents far below.

“I guess that’ll be my point of entry,” he mused aloud.

Just as the boy was about to swerve under the aerial behemoth’s fuselage, a shell whizzed past his right ear. This time however, he just happened to look back in the direction of the round’s trajectory. To his horror, he found that the rounds were wreaking havoc on any standing structures they hit.

‘I can’t draw this out…’ he thought.

With dodging no longer an option, the half-breed took the onslaught of the enemy fire head on. Expanding his energy, he allowed the withering cannon-fire to fizzle itself out against him as he zipped around the underside of the flying fortress before making his dramatic entrance. Surging upwards into the craft, Gohan tore through the bomb bay’s dropping mechanism with such force that the entire vehicle lurched.

“Well that was easy,” he commented, taking a brief moment to admire his handiwork.

“Indeed it was…”

Jerking around, Gohan found a small gaggle of armed men shuffling into the hold. Each one bore a shaved head sporting a calligraphic ‘M,’ and they all possessed the kind of angry, blood-thirsty ki that would make a serial killer wilt.

“You’re gonna pay for what you’ve done!” the half-breed declared angrily.

Suddenly, a loud ‘Snap-Hiss!’ rang through the bomb bay area. Glancing behind him, Gohan discovered that his entrance had sealed itself shut.
“Now, it’s just you and us, you half-alien freak!” sneered one of the cultists.

“We don’t have to do this,” Gohan offered. “Give up and I’ll go easy on you.”

The man sneered. “You don’t get it!” Spreading his arms wide, the cult member motioned to the insides of the craft. “This is where we all die!”

Finally it dawned on Gohan. His eyes widened as the realization hit him. All around the craft, there were hundreds of barrel-like canisters wired to blow.

‘Shit!’

Elsewhere, Videl and Wingle were giving Chief Wilkerson a debriefing on the current situation. All around them, paramedics and law enforcement rushed about cordoning off sections of the ravaged commercial district in an effort to locate and save survivors.

“So you’re tellin me this is only the tip of the iceberg?!” shouted the grizzled officer.

“A very big iceberg,” answered Agent Wingle. “This isn’t just some run-of-the-mill terrorist attack. These guys came ready for war!”

“Jesus…” Overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of all that was happening, the Chief plopped back onto the hood of a nearby patrol car. Finally, he asked, “What about the military?"

“I phoned in a call to the interior ministry for help. Sadly, it’ll be a few hours before we get any back-up.”

“With our ranks so depleted by those damned cult bastards, there’s no way we can secure the entire city,” growled the Chief.

“That’s where me and the rest of the guys come in!” Videl declared. Bending down, the brunette started removing her weighted clothing.

“What’s your plan, kid?” asked Wingle.

“It’s high time Caroni and the others earned their keep. Me and the guys are gonna take the fight to the enemy!” she grit between clinched teeth, tossing her weighted vest to the payment.

Both Agent Wingle and Chief Wilkerson looked at the petite fighter as though she’d lot it. “You’re kidding me! If it’s as bad as you and the G-man here say, you’ll be swamped!”

“He’s right, Toots!” Wingle put in. “What’s more, three of the energy readings on my scouter are freakin huge!”

“Maybe so but lives are on the line, and we need to use everything we’ve got if this city’s gonna make it through the night!” she argued back. “You said it yourself, Chief! There aren’t enough personnel left to do the job. I’m goin, so don’t try to stop me!”

Ignoring any further protests, Videl tossed her wrist weights to the wayside before leaping over the siege barricade and disappearing into the smoky distance.

“Is the situation really as dire as all that?” asked Chief Wilkerson, turning to Wingle.

“I fear it may be far worse,” the agent ominously replied.
Stepping away from the veteran officer, Agent Wingle stroked his chin in contemplation. “Something isn’t adding up. The three strongest power levels on my scanners are registering at roughly 4000, 3500, and 1200! If the Majins had this kind of muscle to throw around, why bother with a military bomber at all?”

“I’m not sure I follow,” responded the now bewildered Chief. “What do those numbers have to do with anything?”

“Everything! You’re not completely in the loop, so I don’t expect you to have all the facts. I can however tell you that those readings are related to the otherworldly powers displayed by Videl and that red-haired woman at last week’s tournament.”

The Chiefs’ eyes widened with shock as it finally hit him. “Are you saying those religious whack-jobs have guys who can do those things?!”

Wingle nodded. “If it weren’t for Son Gohan and Videl being something of an impediment, the people we’re up against could easily have butchered the entire city’s population at will! What I don’t get is why they’re sandbagging. With Mr. Son preoccupied…”

“What? What’s wrong?!” prodded the Chief. “With Mr. Son preoccupied what?”

“I think I just answered my own question…” answered Wingle. The tubby man’s face paled as all the pieces began falling into place.

“Huh?!”

Ignoring the Chief, Agent Wingle genuflected on the ifs, ors, buts, and whys surrounding their enemy’s horrendous attack on Satan City’s civilian population. Strategically speaking, if the Order of the Malign Spirit really wanted to cripple King Furry’s power base, West Metro would have made a far more valuable target. The key difference between West Metro and Satan City however was that Satan City had Son Gohan and Videl Son.

Meanwhile, back aboard the transport, Gohan was busy wrapping up his business with its’ terrorist crew. Among the half dozen men left to pilot the flying behemoth, only one was left standing. Being as outmatched as he was, the fella in question had backed himself into a corner.

“Give it up!” ordered the Saiyan teen, “Just hand over the detonator, and I promise we’ll go easy on you.”

Much to the half breed’s shock and bewilderment, the occult terrorist broke into a fit of crazed laughter. “Stupid kid! Did you really think it’s gonna be that simple?”

Then unexpectantly, the Majin chucked the detonator to Gohan.

The Saiyan teen fixed the religious fanatic with a brief angry glare before flipping the switch.

Nothing… The transport’s deadly payload remained armed and ready to blow.

Losing his patience, Gohan grabbed the still cackling man by the shoulders and roughly shoved him back into a nearby bulkhead. “What’s the meaning of this?!”

“Wow, you really did think it was gonna be that simple…” the Majin lackey jeered. “You poor fool…”
Jerking the man up in a fisticuffs, Gohan brought him so close their noses were just shy of touching. “How do I stop this?!”

“You don’t.”

“What?!” seethed the youth.

“Like I said before, this is our tomb. We’re just the sideshow.”

A trap… That was the last word on Gohan’s mind before a bright light overtook both him and the transport’s cabin. Everything seemed to move in slow motion as the still cackling Majin before him was overtaken by a wall of fire.

“So you’re absolutely sure that Videl and Gohan are the real targets?”

Agent Wingle fixed the veteran officer with a pointed look. “Chief Wilkerson… If you lived in my world, you’d think it a miracle we’ve made it this long! These guys are working at an angle, and it all hinges on separating and drawing Mr. and Mrs. Son into an open battle! The only question is why?!”

“Isn’t the answer obvious?” asked the Chief. “They’re trying to kill them!”

Wingle shook his head. “Numbers don’t lie, and the numbers on my scouter show that none of these Majins stand a China-man’s chance in Hell against Son Gohan. Somehow, I think whoever plotted out this whole shebang knew as much.”

“That’s crazy!” the grizzled officer all but screamed. “The town…., my men! Why would someone go to all this trouble and kill so many people with the aim of losing?!”

“In this case, perhaps losing is winning…” Agent Wingle posited. Pacing back and forth, the RBI field coordinator stroked his chin in contemplation. “But if that’s the case, where does Son Gohan fit into all of this?”

Just then, before the Chief could delve any further, the whole area was seared by a blinding flash. This in turn was quickly accompanied by a deafening “THOOM!” that seemed to travel through the very bedrock of the town. Such was the force of the ensuing tremor that rescue teams and civilians alike were sent reeling for cover.

“What in Sam Hill…?!”

Spinning around, the two men were not prepared for what greeted them. Looming ominously over the city’s commercial district was a column of fire that stretched far into the heavens. At its’ apex, the vast, billowing mass punched through the clouds, sending a terrifying, sky-shattering percussion wave in all directions. Amidst the skyward flames, jagged bolts of magenta-hued lighting sundered the ravaged city far below.

“SWEET JESUS!!!” cried a nearby officer.

“OH MY GOD!!!” screamed a woman, fleeing for her life.

In the face of such cataclysm, Satan City’s Chief of Police couldn’t find his voice. His knees buckling and in a state of numbing shock, the grizzled man fell back against the hood of his patrol car.
“My God…” Wingle rasped, his expression mirroring that of the Chief’s.

“It’s hopeless…” the Chief mouthed almost inaudibly.

And indeed to him, it seemed that way. Too many of his surviving officers had been dispatched into the commercial district to coordinate the evacuation. Beneath the great mushroom cloud that now hovered over the city, so many more of his people had surely perished. If the SCPD wasn’t short-handed before, it certainly was now.

“All we can do now is pit our hopes on those kids,” Wingle remarked ruefully.

“Your hope ends here!”

Twisting around, Chief Wilkerson and Agent Wingle found themselves confronted by a troop of relatively young, well-armed men and women. All were dressed in black and grey camouflage-patterned military fatigues, all with the exception of Cumber who stood at the head of the group. Likewise, with the exception of the Majin cult’s #2 guy, upon the forehead of each rested a calligraphic ‘M.’ Additionally, each one bore a white shoulder sleeve insignia showcasing the same symbol reed in the outline of a red flame.

“Take them…” snapped the elderly man, skulking forward.

Neither the Chief nor the RBI Agent had time to register what was going on when what police did remain in the vicinity began dropping like flies. Flitting about in shock, the Chief gaped in stock horror as black robed figures cleaved and decapitated their way through veteran officers as if it were Tuesday.

“YOU BASTARDS!!! YOU BLOODY BASTARDS!!!” roared Chief Wilkerson as he attempted to bum-rush the murderers of his colleagues. The veteran officer didn’t make it far however, before a trio of similarly robed men tackled him to the pavement, one of them landing on his back. The Chief gave a brief struggle before one of his three assailants yanked his head back and brought a bayonet to his throat.

As this was happening, what few officers of the Satan City Police still remained were disarmed and corralled into a terrified crowd of captured rescue workers and civilians. Among the prisoners were many who had been injured in the initial attack. Those who were unable to move under their own power were either slaughtered outright or physically ripped from life support equipment before being manhandled into a herd with the other captives.

“Lord Cumber!” one of the young men saluted. “Seppi Unit reports that the area has been secured!”

“Hmph!” Stepping forward, the willowy high priest regarded his new prisoners with a pointed look of distain. “Take the Chief of Police. Inquisitor Gerkin’s orders made no mention of any others.”

Puzzled, his closest subordinate cocked an eyebrow. “Sir…?”

His lips contorting into a menacing grin, the Majin’s second in command motioned to the gaggle of injured civilians being manhandled by his underlings. “Kill them… Kill them now!”

And with that order, a grizzly episode ensued. Captured police were yanked forward first, some of them by the hair, before being shoved unceremoniously to the payment. Reaching behind them, each Majin drew a uniform jagged blade before bringing them to the throats of their captives.

“STOP!!!” Chief Wilkerson screamed pleadingly. “STOP IT!!!” But his pleas fell on deaf ears.
Unable to bear the sight, the old head of the SCPD turned away as men and woman he’d worked with for years were decapitated with brutal, surgical precision. Off to the side, surviving townsfolk shrieked in abject horror at the fate awaiting them.

With the deed done, one of the cultists tossed the dismembered head of a murdered cop in amongst the terrified throng of civilians. Immediately, those that could tried to make a break for it.

Smiling sinisterly, Cumber reached for his comm-link. “All rooftop sentries are clear to fire at will.”

What followed was a macabre scene straight out of a war movie. Loud shots rang through the streets as hails of sniper fire rained down from the overhangs and windows of nearby towers. In their last desperate bid to escape, dozens of people were mowed down like grass, their blood and brain matter staining the pavement red. Some poor, terrified souls tripped over the bodies of the slain only to find themselves picked off like flies when they tried to stand.

With the cultists so preoccupied with murdering the townsfolk, people seemed to forget about Agent Wingle. This wasn’t lost on the roly-poly RBI vet. Seeing his chance, the wily agent reached discretely into his pants-leg and drew a hidden sidearm he’d taped to his thigh.

‘This is my only chance!’ he told himself. Hoping his good luck held out, the man slowly sidled up behind Cumber.

The Majins’ second in command didn’t flinch even as the cold metal from Wingle’s pistol touched the back of his balding head, nor did the old man struggle when the much shorter RBI agent’s arm encircled his torso.

“I’ll bet you’re proud of yourself, aren’t you?” taunted the Majin’s high priest.

“Call off your men, or I’ll send you back to Hell where you belong!” Wingle threatened, his voice potent with deadly intent.

Cumber scoffed. “For a moment, I was seriously considering letting you go…”

“What?!”

The next thing Agent Wingle knew, his body began to seemingly move on it’s own as his left arm released Cumber before his legs stepped back of their own accord. Try as might, Wingle couldn’t break free from whatever invisible force was controlling him. Glaring up at Cumber, he soon knew why.

“Amazing, isn’t it?” asked the cult leader. The man pointed an outstretched hand at the government agent that brimmed with a ghostly, crimson energy. “The magic that alien wizard left in this world has given us the keys to everything! Who would’ve thought that the one responsible for our deaths would be the ultimate arbiter of our freedom?”

Wingle almost shat himself when his other arm cocked the gun to his forehead. All the while, Cumber continued to taunt the imperiled lawman.

“What’s wrong, lard-ass!? Did your balls drop off!?”

“You animals…” Wingle seethed through clenched teeth. “What sorta blood runs through your veins?!”

Stepping closer, Acolyte Cumber tapped the pudgy man’s cheeks in mock-gentility, his cruel, nasally voice sending shivers down the seasoned agent’s spine. “Kill everyone else first. Save this one for
last.”

“You’ll never get away with this!” Chief Wilkerson hollered as he was being drug away. “Videl and Gohan’ll make you pay!”

“Oh, we’re counting on it…”

Elsewhere above the besieged historic district, Videl was in route to intercept the other half of the Majins’ attack. Because the effects of the cult’s firebombing were largely confined to the commercial district, the historic districts’ institutions such as the city’s public library, the Satan City Hospital, and city hall were left untouched.

Looks however, were deceiving. With her ki sensing abilities, Satan City’s resident crime fighter could tell this would soon be the epicenter of the fighting. Sadly, that wasn’t all she could sense. In the wake of the massive fireball looming over the town, a profound feeling of dread overtook the raven-haired girl.

‘Something must’ve gone south on Gohan’s end,’ she thought to herself. ‘All those people…’

“Mrs. Son!”

“Videl!!”

Peering behind her, Videl had a difficult time making out the silhouette of Mercenary Toa against the night sky as he pulled up next to her. Like the Silver Surfer, the former killer soared through the air on what looked like a lamp post? Behind him, Caroni, Pirowski, and the others rode with Miss Pizza in the same neon light-covered pink chopper they’d used at the Cell Games years before. For whatever reason, the armored wearing giant, Unbridled Fury, hung one-handed from their tour copter’s landing studs.

“Bout time you guys showed up!” she hollered back to them, trying to be heard over the wind. “I hope you’re ready because it’s about to get dicey!”

“I’ve noticed,” Toa remarked in his characteristically humorless tone. “Half the city looks as if it’s been trampled by a mutant dinosaur.”

“It turns out those robed guys who attacked us before were part of something much bigger,” explained the female fighter. “They’re staging an attack on multiple parts of the city and it’s gonna take all of us to stop them!”

“And what of Son Goku and his friends?” asked the ex-hitman. “Shouldn’t they be here?”

“I tried getting in touch with Goku, but his wife said he was out.”

“Arrgh…, doesn’t he carry a phone?” asked Toa in frustration.

Videl let out a dry laugh. “I don’t even think Goku knows how to use one. As for my husband, he’s tied up with our attackers in another part of town. It doesn’t look good…”

“Perhaps we could enlist the help of my former student,” the old assassin suggested. “She does live in the area-”

The Satan girl couldn’t believe what she was hearing. “You’ve gotta be kidding me! No, no, no,
“Hell no!”

“It’s just a thought,” Toa defended. “I just figured that maybe her power could come in handy for this situation…”

“So it’s all up to us, huh?” Unbridled Fury queried sarcastically.

“It looks that way!” she called back.

“Perfect…” he muttered. “And this was supposed to be my night off.”

From the air, it looked as if the streets were crawling with near-do-wells. All about, roaming bands of ‘M’ tattooed marauders ransacked, molested, and killed with impunity. Cars were over-turned, public venues were fire-bombed, and ritualistic violence was pervasive. Panic was spreading far and wide, but even this wholesale desecration was merely the forward guard of a far greater force that lay in wait.

“We’ll land down here!” yelled Videl, motioning to a relatively empty plaza. The plaza in question was a mini-mall sandwiched at a five point intersection. Adjacent to it were multiple administrative centers and a deli. Situated just a few blocks from the Satan City Police Headquarters, it was as good a place as any to launch an assault.

After going through the nightmare of successfully landing Caroni and Pirowski’s massive tour copter, a nightmare that wasted precious seconds they didn’t have, the whole group took a moment to brainstorm a strategy. All the while, frightened civilians milled about in the outer periphery of their little pow-wow.

“The rats have taken over the city!” screamed one man running past them.

“Guess it’s safe to say we came to the right place,” remarked Brinner.

It was during this time that the competent fighters took stock of what they had to work with. Needless to say, Toa didn’t like what he saw.

Brinner just wasn’t reliable, and Bob looked as if he’d seen too many winters. Why Son Goku ever agreed to train the old hillbilly, Toa couldn’t fathom. Then there was Caroni and Pirowski who despite having a motivation to train, were limited to using brute force. And their red-headed manager was just dead weight.

“I still think we should’ve brought Barbella…” he muttered with a shake of his head. If he’d known he was gonna be babysitting, he’d have made up any excuse he could to just leave the show fighters and the redneck behind.

“No thanks!” Caroni shot back. “I like my nutsack where it is!”

“Look young’ns! While we’re here bitch’n, people’re dyin!” Bob reminded them. “We can argue about chicken shit when this whole thing is over, but right now my AR-15 needs some target practice!”

“Bob’s right!” Videl seconded. “We need to go, now!”

“Well if we’re gonna make this happen, we need to make use of every hand,” Toa said. “We’ll split up into groups of two. That way, we’ll each have a battle buddy who can step in if things get messy.”
“Kinda like Streets of Rage and Double Dragon,” Brinner put in.

“Or Battle Toads,” Caroni added.

Ignoring the Satan gym alumni, Mercenary Toa continued. “We’ll each take a street and work our way to the police station. I’ll team up with Bob, and Unbridled Fury will take Brinner. That leaves Caroni, Pirowski, and Videl forming Team 3.”

“As for you…” The former killer turned to Miss Pizza. “I’d suggest you seek shelter. This is going to get ugly.”

“You don’t have to tell me!” Pizza replied. “Just don’t get my clients killed.”

The voluptuous ginger jumped into the cockpit of her company chopper, but before she hit the ignition, she gave one last look out the pilot-side window. “Best of luck guys!”

“Come on fellas!” Videl coaxed, taking off in the direction of an adjacent street. “The action is this way!”

“Ahheheh… right behind ya, kitten,” Caroni laughed, his voice betraying a tinge of anxiety.

“Way behind you…” Pirowski added shakily, taking up the rear.

Back in the devastated commercial district, the Majin cult’s butchery of civilians continued unabated. With Gohan seemingly ill-disposed, Videl preoccupied in another part of town, and the police all but removed from the equation, the survivors of the initial firebombing were left to fend for themselves. In short, the foxes had the run of the hen house.

Following the wholesale slaughter of the police, the cult made short work of the most vulnerable next. Consequently, the children, the injured, and the elderly were the first to go. Those who were lucky met a quick, painless end by way of beheading or a bullet to the back of the head. It was mechanical, it was detached, and it was methodical.

Those who weren’t so lucky were made sport of by their captors. Gruesome acts of ritualistic violence, the kind one would associate with a seasoned killer, played themselves out across the district. Young girls were raped. Parents were forced to listen to their children’s screams of agony as young boys and girls were taken apart piece by piece. Adults were dragged through the streets until their faces were worn off by the pavement. When given the option, some chose suicide to escape the fate that awaited them.

Admiring his handiwork, Acolyte Cumber nursed a glass of red wine in one hand. A grotesque smile wormed its’ way onto his skeletal-thin features at the screams of the dying. Oh, how much easier this would’ve been had Gerkin allowed him to deploy his personal guard to this part of the city! How much more carnage he could’ve unleashed had they not been tasked to lead Team B.

Behind him, Agent Wingle lay bound, gagged, and thoroughly disarmed. His stolen Capsule Corp tech and other equipment lay in a haphazard pile next to Cumber. Closing his eyes, the portly field specialist tried his hardest to shut out the shrieks of agony and terror haunting the streets of the town. Never in his twenty years of service had he bore witness to such atrocities.

“It’s a pity really…” Cumber remarked in mock melancholy. “I feel so naked without my right hand men. Jack-saw would be having a field day about now…”
‘Damned Gerkin!’ the balding man cursed to himself. ‘Why did he have to assign me to this grunt work? I could be furthering the imperative in far more constructive ways!’

Just then, something among Wingle’s trinkets began to light up in a disco of yellows and greens. Intrigued, Alcolyte Cumber reached into the pile of confiscated do-dads, albeit with some trepidation. For all he knew, the RBI agent may’ve been packing an explosive device among his various goodies.

Reaching into the assorted field gear, Cumber ignored the squawk of an outdated comm-link as he pulled forth a mysterious set of headgear. Consisting of an orange-tinted eyepiece hooked to a strange box-shaped fastener, it was alight with various numbers and readings. On the fastener there was a red button rimmed with a few smaller buttons in a circular lay-out. It must have been a primer of sorts.

‘Couldn’t do any harm...’ he reasoned. Strapping the mysterious eyepiece to his face, the man started to press the small red button repeatedly. To his astonishment, all across the visors’ field of view, arrows highlighted his nearby subordinates. It was homing device of sorts, one that locked onto living targets.

Immediately, the Majin’s second in command began to consider the possibilities. Forget Gerkin’s plan! Such a device could be a game-changer for everyone. He had his own discovery, an unexpected bonus that fell right into his hands! If they co-opted this device, crude bio signature-reading sensors would be obsolete.

With the practical possibilities however, came other realizations. That the government had something like this in its’ arsenal was a clear sign that the king’s administration knew more about the Order of the Malign spirit than they publicly let on. Could the central government have then known about their activities in West District? If so, then why did they only allot this one field agent to Satan City?

Continuing to fiddle with the scouter, Cumber noticed a small unique set of numbers beneath every one of his high-lighted followers. Moreover, the highlight of every captured civilian disappeared the moment they were snuffed out. It was as if this little machine could register the death of specific targets. A typical bio-scanner would continue to pick up readings from organic material long after death.

“Gerkin, eat your heart out…” he remarked gingerly, a grin slowly curling his lips. “I’ve got a golden ticket!”

Laughing heartily, the depraved high priest motioned for one of his security detail, a relatively young woman with blonde hair.

“Sir!”

Cumber handed his discovery to the girl. “Take this back our base of operations. Stop for nothing! Have it sent back to the Northern Wastes for further analysis!”

“Yes sir!” With a curt bow, the young female darted into a nearby manhole.

“Now that that’s been taken care of, it’s time for a little fun…” the old man commented. Turning to another of his subordinates, Cumber ordered “Bring me some children! It’s time to feed…”

He didn’t have to wait long. In no time, a small group of squalling little boys and girls were yanked before him.

Grabbing a small boy by the scruff of the neck, the Majin order’s number 2 guy brought the
distraught minor face to face with him. Suddenly, the old man’s face took on an eerie neon purple
glow. It was a strange light that outlined his jaw, face, and cranium, giving his sallow continence the
appearance of a skull lantern.

As this was happening, the small youth in his clutches continued to stare into the depraved cultist’s
hollow, glowing eyes. When the young boy tried to jerk away however, he discovered that he
couldn’t. Like Wingle before him, the child was locked in place by some otherworldly force.

What was taking place soon became clear. From his bound and gagged spot on the pavement, Agent
Wingle watched in silent horror as the child in Cumber’s grip began to take on a withered, aged
appearance mirroring that of his captor. Spider veins etched their way up the small boy’s limbs, and
his youthful features became loose and pruneish. Before long, the little kid’s eyes sunk into the now
sallow depths of his eye sockets, and his fingers and nose began to crumble into dust.

When it was over, Cumber released his hold over what now resembled a mummy. The life gone
from his being, the dried, stiff remains of the boy were allowed to fall back onto the pavement. Upon
striking the unyielding asphalt, the youth’s petrified cadaver shattered like glass.

With the deed done, Cumber stood to his full height, which seemed to increase a bit, and stretched
languorously. “That was invigorating…”

And lo and behold, when the debauched cult priest faced his company, there was an impeccable
change in his appearance. Gone were most of the wrinkles that previously adorned his face. In their
place rested smoother, tighter skin. Altogether, he looked twenty years younger.

“Oh… poor, sweet babe…” Reaching down, the sinister man rested a hand on his victim’s dusty
remains. “Youth is always wasted on the young.”

The remaining children were mortified into silence. At the feet of one young girl, a puddle formed,
her mouth moving up and down in silent terror.

Cumber sighed in twisted contentment. “Let’s have another, shall we?”

Nodding once, his closest subordinate tugged a second youth forward. However, before Cumber
could repeat his grizzly act of consumption…

“SIR!!!”

Sighing, Cumber looked up from his ‘meal’ to find one of his marauders running towards him. The
man in question seemed terrified of something or someone.

“What is it?!” he snapped.

“We’re under attack!!” screamed the man.

“What…”

Just then, a loud, shrill scream resounded through the streets. Looking up, every Majin within
hearing range caught sight of a tumbling man soaring through the air. The hapless man impacted the
wall of a skyscraper, his body cratering in a spray of bloody chunks.

“What THE FUCK!?” exclaimed Cumber.

“You seem to enjoy suffering,” came an even voice. “That’s good…”
Pivoting around, the Majin’s second in command found himself in the shadow of an enraged Son Gohan. The half breed stepped forward till he was staring Cumber down.

Chapter End Notes

I’ve noticed that there are very few Gohan/Videl fanfics in which Mr. Satan’s closest associates Miss Pizza, Caroni, and Pirowski are featured. I always found this odd in that I assumed because Gohan dated and married Videl he would at some point interact with these side characters. Apparently, Toei Animation remembered these characters well enough to have them make cameos in the Buu Saga and later in DBS. Just a thought…
"It's you..." Cumber uttered, his voice quivering just above a whisper.

Judging by his appearance, Gohan had seen better days. Being buried under a mountain of heated steel, powdered concrete, and the bodies of those he'd sworn to protect would do that to a fella. Both his gi top and weighted undershirt had been scorched away and his pants were in tatters, leaving the remnants flapping like a windsock in the fiery breeze. On top of this, his body was riddled in a mishmash of cuts and blemishes, his lower lip was busted, and his forehead sported a nasty gash from which blood trickled into his left eye. A crust of blood-caked dust wilted his spikes of black hair.

"You...! You and your friends are gonna pay for this!" the half-breed seethed, his voice ripe with indignant rage.

Cumber's shocked reaction at the Son boy's sudden appearance quickly morphed into one of coy amusement. "You interrupted my meal over salty tears...? Posh, posh, you poor simpleton!"

The Saiyan youth raised a puzzled eyebrow. "Meal?!"

That's when he saw them. Children! Four of them sandwiched among a small contingent of Cumber's guards. All of them were unimaginably terrified. Who wouldn't be, given everything they'd been through? Not too far away, Agent Wingle lay bound and gagged.

One of the youths, she couldn't have been no older than seven, crumpled to her knees in a sobbing, wailing heap.

"MOMMYYYYY!" she screamed in hysterical tears. "DADDYYYY!"

Gingerly, Cumber stepped over to the crying minor. In doing so, he tromped on the now mummified skull of the boy he'd killed mere moments before, eliciting an audible, sickening 'Crunch!'

"That's right little one..." he whispered in a mock soothing tone, "Let it all out! As soon as I'm through with our guest, you'll all be laid to rest with your parents. Just like that boy..."

"Boy...?" Gohan's eyes widened in revulsion. "You subhuman bastard!"

At this, Cumber's eyes widened too, albeit with a coy glint. "I'm sorry, but did you just call me subhuman?"

Both Cumber and his men broke into hysterical fits of laughter. "That's rich! A half-alien freak like you calling me subhuman!? I must say, I'm genuinely surprised that you survived, Saiyaman."

"I may be half human but that still makes me more human than you'll ever be!" the half-breed shot back.

By this time, the rest of Cumber's division started to pour in from other parts of the beleaguered district. They moved in swift coordinated waves, quickly forming a semicircle around the Son boy and their commander. All of them, young men and women alike, were armed to the teeth, and all were prepared to lay down their lives for their order's master imperative.
Even as his enemies surrounded him on all sides, Gohan couldn't help reflecting on his own failure. Now was not the time, but the fact that these goons, average people, had almost accomplished what only Majin Buu could attest to, chaffed his sense of dignity. As much as he'd been warned by Piccolo against discounting the very real threat these cretins posed, he still fell victim to the pride of hubris. He dropped his guard, never once considering the possibility that these cultists would have the guile to sacrifice themselves just to lure him into a trap. All it took was one ridiculously easy victory against these poor saps to blind him to hidden dangers. The only thing that saved him from dying a second time was his incomprehensible durability. In that respect, perhaps he wasn't so different from his father or Vegeta. Silently, he wondered if this was how Frieza felt after being blind-sighted by his father's spirit bomb…

'No…' he said to himself with a shake of the head. This was far worse! He'd been brought low by people he had no business losing to. Self-doubt was quickly replaced by a need for revenge, and not just for those who'd been killed.

Gohan gazed around at the new arrivals. There must had to be hundreds of them. They all looked ready to pounce.

'Well, this saves me the trouble of having to hunt them down.' The idea of so many young people, many of them teens no older than himself, tossing their lot in with the very people he and Videl were committed to defeating…, it took whatever faith he had in humanity, bent it over a chair, and did it Colby style! These people had killed so many, and so willingly at that!

"Just so you guys know, it's gonna be hard for me not to enjoy this!" he remarked, his voice carrying a profoundly threatening tone.

"Oh, we'll fix that soon enough!" one of them, a bald-headed young man, shot back.

"KILL HIM!" barked Cumber.

Instantly, a hail of automatic fire rained down on the Saiyan teen. All around, intense flashes of gunfire lit up the night. It was a compact, withering assault reminiscent of any military siege. They let loose from behind choke points, in mass lines harkening back to the days of musket columns, and from supposedly concealed positions in adjacent buildings. Those cultists who had them, lobbed antipersonnel grenades into the fray, choking the area with the smell of gunpowder and dust. RPGs were fired. The noise was deafening.

"HOLD YOUR FIRE!" ordered one of Cumber's sub-commanders, trying to be heard over the maelstrom. "GODDAMN IT! I SAID HOLD YOUR FIRE!"

"Did we get him?!" shouted another. "I can't see!"

"Wait!" Peering into the asphyxiating dark clouds of smoke and dust, Cumber scanned for any sign of movement. Given the information they had, he wasn't foolish enough to believe their target had been done in on the first engagement. No one survived being caught in a five kiloton blast at point blank range only to go down under something as comparatively mundane as this!

Suddenly, there was flash. The next thing anyone knew, the head of one of Cumber's private detail, those guarding the surviving children, exploded like a melon with a firecracker, showering the hostages, Agent Wingle, and Cumber's other disciples in bloody chunks of bone, meat, and brain matter.

"HOLY SHIT!" screeched one female cultist who had the unfortunate circumstance of being caught in the macabre shower. Her moment of shock was short-lived however before a bright, burning flash
of energy tore through her chest. The woman slumped forward in a convulsing fit of spasms before going limp at the feet of her brothers in arms.

"I would tell you to say your prayers…," Gohan began, emerging from the ash cloud, "But I don't think the Kais are in a giving mood." As he came forward, flattened rounds fell from him like lead rain. To the horror of his adversaries, the older son of Goku was completely unscathed.

"FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!"

And with that, the cultist contingent let loose with another heated volley. What ensued could be summed up as the mother of all bullet storms. Short of the kitchen sink, they threw everything they had at the teen hybrid. Clip after clip was spent in a fruitless effort to kill their #2 target.

Raising his left hand, Gohan made a show of catching every round fired. He made it look laughably easy. All the while, he walked nonchalantly towards his attackers.

Their weapons having no effect, several men charged forward with their rifles raised, poised to gore their target with fixed bayonets. Of those who led the charge, several found themselves lifted off the ground by some unseen force before being turned inside out in a shower of gruesome blood and gore, misting the air with taste of copper.

"Bring it!" growled the Saiyan teen. Knives dented and bent against his nigh-indestructible body. One fella even tried stabbing him in the groin only to quickly discover that his unmentionables were every bit as tough as the rest of his hardened body. The young man in question didn't have long to regret his mistake before having his skull crushed like an eggshell in Gohan's iron grip.

Switching tactics, another young man tried to flank Gohan from behind with a field knife. He received a skull-shattering elbow to the face for his trouble. And still another was grabbed by the neck before having his spinal cord crushed. A third was met with a fist through his torso.

"This is hopeless!" screamed one female before being swatted away like a piss-ant. Her body cratered a concrete divider some 50 yards away.

"What is this thing?!"

"HE'S A MONSTER!"

"RUN!" hollered one terrorized Majin.

"None of you are going anywhere!" Gohan spat. Exerting his will just the slightest bit, the son of Goku released a kiai wave that sped out in all directions. Asphalt, concrete and steel rebar were pulverized to atoms, as were dozens of cultists. Those who weren't caught in the Son boy's manifested power were hurled away like dust bunnies in a vacuum cleaner before careening at supersonic speeds into distant standing structures.

Upon seeing their brothers and sisters in arms dispatched so easily, the remaining cultists under Cumber's command broke rank and fled.

Unfortunately for them, Gohan was far from finished. Levitating high above the battlefield, the half-breed aimed a single finger at his fleeing adversaries. He'd make them pay! He wouldn't make his father's mistakes… No one would be spared!

It was over before any of them knew what was happening. No suffering… Just clean, methodical killing. Far more than any of them deserved.
Growing frustrated with his divisions' ineffectiveness, Cumber rounded on his sub-commander. "This can't go on!"

"You're only now figuring this out?!!"

The order's #2 man ignored his underlings' insubordinate jibe. "GET THE HOSTAGES!"

"Err…, what hostages?" asked the man, looking about dumbly.

Cumber yanked his hapless sub-commander forward by his uniform collar. "WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'WHAT HOSTAGES'?!?" Then it dawned on him that both Agent Wingle and the children were missing.

"Discretion is the better part of valor!" muttered the dastardly man, who was quick to make a break for it.

"Sir! What are your orders?!!" yelled his panicked subordinate.

"FIGHT TO THE LAST MAN!" came Cumber's reply. "FOR THE PROPHET!"

"You've gotta be shittin me…"

Unbeknownst to the city's attackers, Gohan had used the ensuing chaos to spirit both Wingle and the remaining hostages onto the remnants of a nearby skyscraper.

"You have no idea how good it is to see you…" Wingle remarked with a sigh of relief. The short, portly man rubbed his sore wrists in an attempt to get back some of the blood flow.

"I want you to stay here and look after these kids," the half-breed instructed.

"You gonna finish em off?"

Gohan nodded. "I'm not letting these guys get away with what they've done!"

"Alright, but don't let their leader get away!" the roly-poly agent instructed. "If you can take him alive, do it!"

With a quick nod, the demiSaiyan leapt over the rooftop and into a freefall. Flipping over in midair, he came down hard in amongst the remnants of Cumber's detachment, landing in a crouch. The force of his landing was such that a deep pressure crater radiated outwards into the surrounding asphalt.

There, surrounded on three sides by the murderers of his city's civilians, Gohan rose to his feet. Being faster than either his father or any of his friends, time itself became dilated for the adolescent warrior. Every plank second seemed to stretch on forever, such was the beauty of his advanced hyper speed.

In this heightened state, he took stock of his surroundings. What he found appalled him on a far more visceral level than any atrocity perpetrated by Frieza or Cell.

Stacked in two alley ways were the heads of the slain. Elderly, mothers, fathers, children… all of them arranged among dismembered limbs in macabre walls reminiscent of some medieval catacomb. From the grizzly ensemble, blood flowed in rivulets onto the main avenue.

Reeling from his gruesome findings, the Son boy took little notice of the ruckus he'd stirred among the guilty party.
"Shit! He's back!"

"Everyone regroup!" barked a remaining sub-commander.

"Animals…!" Gohan seethed quietly to himself. Lifting his gaze, the hybrid bore into the ranks of his enemies with a sneer that rivaled anything from Vegeta. "Me and my friends gave everything… Everything!… just so you savages could have a second chance…"

Fixing his adversaries with an icy leer, Gohan advanced slowly. His eyes flickered with a brilliant turquoise hue, giving them the appearance of two glowing emeralds against the burning backdrop of night. Behind him, his tail slashed with violent excitement, as if he were a cat cornering an unfortunate vermin. Around him, the air stirred with a neon green battle aura.

Much to their credit, the surviving cultists came together for one last desperate hurrah against their 'target.' Forming themselves into tightly packed lines, the remaining men and women under acolyte Cumber ditched their automatic weapons in favor of riot control shields and a mix of mounted bayonets and machetes. The breath of their lines stretched from sidewalk to sidewalk, and the entire arrangement stood eight lines deep with their sub-commander taking up the rear. From a distance, their new formation vaguely resembled something out of some sword and sandals flick.

The last remaining CO muttered a litany of curses. With the appearance of Satan City's other teen crime fighter, the fortunes of his entire regimen were thrown straight into a wood chipper! Half his men were dead or scattered, they were too far away from either Gerkin's main force or Team A to expect any rescue attempt, and none of their weapons seemed to work. To top it all off, his superior ran off like a whipped dog! As much as he hated it, they'd have to use their last resort…

"Let's see how he deals with our forlorn phalanx!"

Reaching into his ballistics vest, the Majin fished out a small coin-like object. The item in question thrummed with an otherworldly, crimson ether that seemed to permeate the surrounding air.

"PAPARAPAHHH!" With this incantation, fiery tendrils of eerie light slithered out from the talisman. The otherworldly whips of malignant energy spread out amongst his warriors where they wrapped themselves in and around arms, legs, and torsos.

This didn't go amiss to Gohan who stopped just short of their pointed bayonets.

'What's this…?'

The demisaiyan watched intently as the coils of dark energy seemingly flowed into the calligraphic 'M's adorning the foreheads of his adversaries which in turn caused them to glow with a sinister crimson hue. All about the area, garbage and other debris were lifted from the ground as the life energy of every Majin follower swelled far beyond that of an average human. Soon enough, this surge of power began to physically augment Cumber's men. Veins bulged and their eyes took on a florescent, violet luminosity that looked absolutely haunting against the nighttime backdrop of the street they were fighting on.

Gohan visibly scoffed. 'These fools couldn't kill me if I were a toddler!"

He didn't raise a hand. Focusing a sliver of his ki through one of the many metaphysical constructs he'd developed in his childhood tutelage under Piccolo, the Saiyan youth manifested a rippling, almost transparent energy shield between himself and his hapless opposition.

When the oncoming wave of twisted humans closed the distance between themselves and their soon-to-be destroyer, they suddenly found themselves stopped dead in their tracks by some invisible
threshold. Riot shields from the first line slammed into what seemed like nothing, leading those men and women in the lines behind to trample and fall over those out front in a clumsy heap of bayonets, machetes, and shields.

The Son boy smiled to himself. For the first time since his fight with Buu, Gohan reveled in the crushing of his enemies. Pfft! Enemies… More like prey! That's what they were, weren't they? And what's more, he knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that these animals had no surprises left. There would be no world-threatening attempts at self-destruction like there had been with Cell, nor would there be any absorption surprises as the case had been with Buu. No, all that awaited the unrighteous was complete and utter destruction. This was his! Revenge was his! After all his failures, the world owed him as much…

Gazing menacingly upon his now cowering quarry, a sadistic, blood-chilling chuckle rose from the half-breed. The remaining men under Cumber didn't even have time to scream as the invisible wall of energy was hurled outward with devastating explosive force, sending possessed men and women flying hither and yonder. Depending on their proximity to Gohan, many were atomized or crushed like cockroaches under the invisible wave whereas others were sent careening far off into the distance. When the dust cleared, all but three of Cumber's detachment survived.

In a dazed state, the three remaining terrorists came to a slow, shaky stand. How fortuitous it seemed, for Gohan at least, that Cumber's last sub-commander was one of them.

In his vengeful state, Gohan stepped forward, a twisted, cruel sneer curving it's way onto his face. It just kept getting better and better. He would make them all pay dearly for their cowardly, murderous acts.

"P-P-PLEASE!" sobbed a terrified lone female survivor. "Don't hurt me…"

Ignoring her cries for amnesty, the half-Saiyan surged forward and snatched the woman up by the throat. She gagged pitifully against the enraged teen's iron grip. Behind her, her brothers-in-arms sat helplessly, the fight having gone out of them.

Just as Gohan prepared to deliver the final crushing squeeze, he faltered. Under the light of his manifested aura, he could clearly see the faces of his quarry, and what he found floored as anything else he'd seen that evening.

"Y-You're in my school!" the half-breed rasped in utter shock.

It wasn't just the girl though. Peering more closely at his other two prisoners, the teen found to his stock horror that Cumber's sub-commander and the other young man were his mail and garbage man.

'No…' Reeling from shock, the Son boy unceremoniously dropped the girl in his grasp before stumbling backwards.

They were people he and his spouse knew. They were the people he and Videl had protected!

"Why? Why…?" he asked in disbelief. "WHY!? WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!!"

"What does it matter?" came the sub-commander's reply, his voice carrying a tone of hopelessness. "We never asked to live again! We never wanted this…"

His fists clenched to his sides, Gohan bore down on his captured adversaries with a look that could burn through lead. He could kill them! He could end their suffering… send them back to the hereafter! Let King Yemma sort out their lot!
"No…!" seethed the teen, shaking his head. "That would be too good for you! You live…!"

"Huh!?!" The three surviving Majins looked to one another in stunned bewilderment.

Reaching down, the Son boy sifted through the now powdered concrete and asphalt at his feet. After some searching, he fished out a jagged piece of blackened, twisted rebar which he promptly bent into a straightened spear.

"Here!" he barked, tossing the rod of steel into the puzzled sub-commander's lap. "I want you to take that and deface your foreheads!"

"W-What?!"

"In for a penny, in for a pound," Gohan growled. "You will wear a different mark. I want everyone to know what you did. This is the price you'll pay for my mercy!"

'It's just as well…' thought the half-breed silently. At least this way he'd be able to keep track of those he spared. There wouldn't be any two time offenders! Not after this…

"Please…" the girl begged, tears streaming down her face. "Don't do this!"

His eyes glowing in a brilliant turquoise, Gohan fixed his schoolmate with a cold sneer that was completely out of character. "How many mothers… fathers…? How many children begged for mercy?!"

Lost in his terrifying fury, Gohan could no longer rein in the breathtaking pressure of his own fighting ki. Still standing structures in the surrounding city began to shake as a low rumble churned it's way through the earth and heavens. Under the pressure of such a massive battle power, the planet's polarity was thrown violently out of whack, wrenching slabs of concrete, steel girders, and other debris into the air.

"HOW MANY!?!" he roared "HOW MANY DID YOU KILL!?!"

Seeing the jaw-dropping effects of the Saiyan's manifested power, the three survivors wilted in mind-numbing fear. For all the remaining sub-commanders' previously brave talk, he soon found his devil-may-care façade crumbling against the utter reality that was Gohan.

Accepting his fate, the other young man was ready to get the painful experience over with. Taking hold of the rebar, the former mailman leveled it at his forehead. His hands were shaking, but there was no backing out. It was do or die!

His comrades tried to look away, but Gohan would have none of it.

"Keep watching!" he growled. "You're gonna remember everything that happened here! And when I catch your leader, he'll wish I was this lenient!"

His father would spare these animals without a single thought as to the consequences. No! From this point forward, he would forge his own mantle, one that didn't lead to a blowback that would haunt him or his loved ones. There would be no Geros… no more Freizas… no more cost to himself or his loved ones.

"Beautiful, isn't it?"

"Sir?"
Twirling around for dramatic effect, Inquisitor Gerkin gestured to the now imperiled Satan City with a wide, exaggerated wave of his arm. "Or at least it would have been had Cumber not broken rank!"

"It won’t matter," one of his attendants commented in an uncaring tone. "All that’s left is for you to meet this Son Gohan, and we'll have the intel we need to carry out our grand imperative."

Stepping up to a guard rail overlooking the burning ruins of what was once the commercial district, the supreme head of the Order of the Malign Spirit braced himself as he gazed out with steely, calculating eyes at the carnage unleashed by his clan…, carnage he had to settle for. What was the old saying? When life gives you lemons, you make lemonade.

"A high casualty rate is important, but only if it serves all of it's intended purposes," came his exasperated answer. Reaching into his robes, the middle-aged man fished out his mobile phone. "Ideally, I would’ve preferred it had Great Saiyaman not intervened so soon. The original plan was to suicide bomb the transport into the historic district. This would’ve compromised key parts of the city's infrastructure, most importantly the power grid."

"I take it you've planned ahead?"

"Indeed…" answered their leader. The older man thumbed at the alarm button on his phone. "It's always important to have a few Plan Bs laying in the wings. For example, take the bridges leading in and out of the city. Long before I or the inner circle spear-headed Operation Bait and Switch, I took the liberty of having my men rig them with explosives."

Upon hearing this, several of his men exhibited signs of shock and discomfort. "Anyone left in the city would be trapped!"

"Yes!" Gerkin nodded. "Caught between our forces, the city's resident defenders, and the incoming drone strikes Capital Central is sure to send, the people of this city will be little more than collateral damage. Just image if you will how such a scene will affect King Furry's approval ratings."

"I see…” said another of Gerkin's security detail, rubbing his chin, "Then we'll be sacrificing our men and women as well?"

"Of course!" came Gerkin's curt reply. The bald, aging man turned back to his entourage. "Rejoice my brethren! One local chapter is a modest price to pay. Their sacrifice will lay the groundwork for everything hereafter. If King Furry's military follows standard procedures, and I know they will, they’ll do the heavy lifting for us."

"We've just lost contact with Cumber's battalion!"

The supreme leader of the Majins snorted derisively. "Then they've made contact with our #2 target?"

"That means the Ox King's heir survived the transport detonation…” a third retainer commented. "What kind of a monster are we dealing with?!"

A broad smile worked it's way onto Gerkin's aged face. "That my friends is the mystery we are here to solve! We shall station ourselves at city hall. There, we will wait! By then, this half-alien superhero will have disposed of Cumber! If not, we will arrange for my former second to have a little accident…"

"Holy One! We've just got word from Team A!" relayed one of his communications personnel. "They report multiple engagements in lieu of police headquarters!"
Gerkin's eyebrows shot up to his non-existent hairline. "That's is unexpected! Mark Satan's daughter was supposed to be fighting alone."

Awaiting their leader's orders, a pregnant silence fell over the central command team. Staring out over the city, the bald stocky mage took a moment to mull over this new development. Finally, he turned back to his field operatives.

"Contact Jack-Saw! Order his Special Forces unit to engage! Dispatch all available personnel! We'll wear down these rabble with numbers!"

The men saluted. "Sir!"

"Come! We make for city hall!" declared the warlock. "May this wretched city be bathed in blood…"

Chapter End Notes

I meant to include scenes detailing Videl and the other's fights against the cult invasion in this chapter, but ultimately, I decided to add them to chapter 30. It's been over four months since my last chapter, and the longer I drag this out, the more my writer's zeal is suffering. As with the last chapter, I had a lot of difficulty deciding how I wanted to write this. In the end, I decided to go with posting a shorter chapter just to get this thing rolling. It's a cheap approach, I know, but including the scenes with Caroni, Pirowski, and Toa's street fights would have made this whole shebang as long as two chapters. I wanted this chapter to be focused more so on Gohan and the effect of seeing so many people massacred by his fellow Earthlings. As for Cumber, his fate will be revealed in the next chapter.

In the last chapter, Gohan learned first-hand the costs of he and his friends' past actions in playing fallen angel to the people of Earth. Throughout his life, he fought so hard against the likes of Freiza, Cell, Garlic Jr., Babidi, and Majin Buu only to be faced with the startling revelation that all of his acts of heroism didn't mean jack-shit if the people saved by him and the other Z-warriors were given no real stake in the peace engendered by those battles. You can't fully appreciate that which you never had an active role in creating. In the absence of any understanding or proper context, humanity will stumble through what has been given to them like an illiterate child attempting to read physics, taking that peace for granted. What's the point of bringing people back from the dead when such an act leaves so many gaps in mankind's greater collective story? In a very real sense, Gohan and his father's old friends are every bit as guilty of setting humanity up to fail as Goku was with Gohan in giving Cell a sensu bean. The sins of the father are the sins of the son. Peace means nothing without a shared sacrifice, and humans living in the DBZ world largely don't have it, for to have a sense of shared sacrifice one must have a proper context on which that sacrifice must rest.

One thing I've noticed is that as the Dragonball series progressed, walking, talking animals like Oolong and Puar became less and less prevalent. I also don't see too many fanfiction authors creating anthropomorphic animal OCs. The possibilities for compelling original fan characters are endless, and yet people don't really create many Earthling fighters of this particular type. This always struck me as a bit peculiar when you think about the fact that these talking animals make up a sizable portion of
Dragonball Earth's population. Who knows? Maybe I'll have one join Gohan and Videl's program in a future chapter.

On the issue of Cumber's character, I drew from several sources in creating a half-way decent second-in-command for Gerkin. He's something of a mix between Snivley Kintobor from Sonic the Hedgehog SatAM, Wilhuf Tarkin from Star Wars, and Mok Swagger from the animated cult classic Rock and Rule. For those who have never heard of Rock and Rule(1982), I suggest checking it out on Youtube. Made as an homage to rock and roll culture here in the West, it was the first feature length, animated production done in Canada. Some of the scenes from this little gem were pretty progressive for their time. Then there's the Cold War Era movie Day After Tomorrow(1983) which in spite of it being so dated is, in my not-so-humble opinion, the most chilling nuclear war themed movie out there. Mix in a little inspiration from the works of legendary animator Ralph Bakshi(Cool World and Fritz the Cat), and you have a masterpiece(maybe) in the making.

While I'm on the subject of villains, I'd like to add that in addition to the German Third Reich, the Sith from Star Wars, and even some elements of J. R. Tolken, I also drew heavy inspiration from Jim Henson and Frank Oz's The Dark Crystal and the Tarna segment of the rock cult classic Heavy Metal when creating the Order of the Malign Spirit, particularly the symbolism found within the occult and the nine acolytes of Gerkin, of which Cumber is one. We often forget that Dragonball is a franchise made in the late 1980s and early 90s. As someone who is a fan of music from that era, I often find myself imagining 80s music being used as a backdrop in my story, particularly that of the legendary band Journey. Don't get me wrong though! Bruce Faulcner's theme music practically made the Funimation English dub, but it never gave the series that 80s feel that could crank things up to 8-11. If I had to give Gohan a suitable theme song from Journey, it could only be Mother, Father with Videl getting Edge of the Blade and Roshi having Trial by Fire.
It seemed simple enough. They’d break into groups, rush in, fight the baddies, make some cheesy one-liners, and be back in time for supper. Just a cakewalk…

Or at least that’s what Videl kept telling herself. So what if Caroni and Pirowski were newbies?! They got the same training from her father as she did. More importantly, they were fellow alumni of the Martial Arts Society. If she could do it, why couldn’t they? And even if they couldn’t cut the mustard, she was strong enough to carry them through…

Reality however, has a nasty habit of taking expectations, bending them over a lawn chair, and giving them the ole in-out. From the outset of their three-pronged assault, Pirowski and Caroni kept bumbling into one tight spot after another, prompting Videl to play *Lassie*. They weren’t bullet proof, they couldn’t use hyper-speed, and Pirowski’s bulk made ducking and dodging through waves of gunfire a no-go. To top it off, their adversaries were damn-nigh determined to kill everyone!

The downtown district was a war zone! Rocket and mortar fire rained down on the streets like hail, sending shrapnel and bodies alike flying to and fro. High up on rooftops, teams of mobile snipers took puck shots at the innocent! These death squads were bolstered by military grade hover bikes, likely reverse engineered from the ruins of Babadi’s ship. These technological terrors made low altitude strafing runs over fleeing pedestrians. At street level, bands of marauders terrorized the already bludgeoned survivors, many of whom had fled the besieged commercial district to seek safety in the downtown area. All around, people were dying in droves. To make matters worse, surviving law enforcement were few and far between, and rescue workers were overwhelmed just staying alive.

Moreover, all of this was transpiring amidst environmental effects from being in such close proximity to the pressure brought to bear by Gohan’s raging *ki* in the commercial district. Tremors shook the land! Fissures zigzagged through the paved streets as rocks, slabs of reinforced concrete, and other debris were upturned before being hoisted into the air. High winds whipping across the cityscape prompted the hasty formation of supercell thunderstorms over West District sending tendrils of azure lightning careening halfway across the world. Off in the distance, a vast mushroom cloud hovered ominously over the aforementioned district, casting a dark, blotchy veil against the night sky.

“VIDEL!!”

“GET THESE PEOPLE OUTTA HERE!!!” she screamed. In a bid to safeguard the lives of a group of imperiled civilians, the ravine-haired girl dove in to intercept a withering hail of gunfire. The physical toughness she’d acquired from her spars with Krillin may’ve allowed her to withstand that kind of percussive force, but she was quickly realizing that even with her powers, the laws of averages were not on her side. For every blood-thirsty fanatic she took out, five more would take their place. There were too many ankle-biters running about, too many innocent bystanders caught in the crossfire, and only one of her. Silently, she prayed that the others were having better luck.

Nearby, Pirowski and Caroni crouched defensively behind a concrete divider.

“Fuck this! We gotta get outta here!” cried Caroni.

“HELP MEEEEE!!!” came an agonized screech.
Jerking around, Videl was horrified to see a middle aged woman crumpled over in a pool of her own blood. All about the hapless lady, terrified throngs of fleeing civilians trampled and tripped over her prostrate form.

Wasting no time, the brunette fighter sprang into action. Jumping in amongst the screaming stampede, she wrapped her arms around the injured woman before raising a translucent ki force field over the embattled street. Explosive rounds detonated and bullets flattened harmlessly against the translucent wall of energy, allowing any beleaguered stragglers a chance to hightail it.

‘This can’t go on…’ she thought to herself. The presence of so many civilians complicated everything. With so many helpless, screaming city-goers caught between herself and their attackers, bringing her full power to bear was out of the question. The collateral damage would be nothing short of horrific! Because of this, the Satan girl was sandwiched between running interference for her cohorts and fighting between throngs of fleeing masses. It was the worst possible situation!

“Pirowski! Anybody…! HELP!!” She couldn’t do diddly like this! She had to cut loose! Gohan was MIA, and there was too much happening at once.

Terrified, her long-time associates scrambled to comply. After some quiet prodding from his long-time compatriot, Pirowski finally found the nerve to come forward and carry the injured woman to safety. Timidly, Caroni took up the rear.

“Subway terminal is this way!” the giant Cossack bellowed, throwing his injured charge over one shoulder. Pausing, the bulky Slav beckoned to a nearby rescue team. “THIS WAY!!! COME!!!”

“This is insane…” sputtered Caroni. The blond show fighter had little time to duck and cover as a nearby air taxi was firebombed into slag by a passing hoverbike.

“The fuck…?!?” the Satan alumni gritted painfully, his mouth full of grit.

“Well, well, well…” came a redneckish sounding voice, “Lookie here, fellas! We done hit pay dirt!”

Coming to a slow crouch amidst the twisted metal and broken glass strewn about, Caroni found himself facing down the lowlifes who’d nearly killed him. Dressed in coal grey robes, the men in question were armed to the teeth with makeshift billy-clubs, machetes, and flails.

“I can handle this!” rasped Mr. Satan’s one-time star pupil.

“What’s that, boy?!” one of the robed men taunted, brandishing a spiked club of a grizzly make. “Speak up!"

“Let’s take em!” chuckled a second.

“Ya got a pretty mouth, boy!” taunted a third.

“Break a broomstick off in dat ass…” growled another. “Here Chickie! Chickie! Chickie!!!”

Slowly, Caroni came to a stand. “Bring it you turds!” The long-haired superstar brought his arms up in a defensive octagon stance he reserved for his fights in the pro circuit.

“Time to die on your feet, pretty boy!” jeered one of the men.

Peering at his new target with a predatory intensity, the death squad’s deranged leader perversely drug his tongue along the edge of his makeshift cleaver.
The sight was enough to turn the blond grappler’s blood to ice. If he wasn’t ready to piss himself before, he sure as hell was now! “Spread em, pretty boy! We’re comin in dry…”

Soon, they were on him. There must have been a dozen of them! Moving in a coordinated wolf gang assault, the nightly garbed band of marauders quickly encircled Mr. Satan’s former top student. Moving in a tightening circle, his opponents whooped and shouted wildly like a pack of rabid hyenas, all the while making obscene cat calls and mock strikes at their cornered prey.

Caroni darted every which way, desperately searching for a chance to bolt.

Finally, the first one dashed forward, swinging a long flail in wide, savage arcs. He was followed closely by two other black-clad toadies.

To his credit, Caroni managed to catch the one out front with a stomp to the gut, putting the man on his rump! Unfortunately, the two thugs following behind came forward and shoulder tackled the hapless Satan alumni to the pavement. The rest wasted no time in dog-piling on the blond celebrity.

Coughing fitfully, the cult member he’d brought down sidled up to where his new quarry lay restrained. He had murder in his eyes. This was it…

‘Shit…!’ Caroni cursed himself for allowing Videl to drag him into this. He could’ve been safe and sound back at his mansion, getting laid, getting drunk, partying, sleeping, but noooo! He was gonna die again! And all because he just had to follow Pirowski’s lead and join Videl’s stupid program!

“You done goofed, tight-pants!” Caroni’s soon-to-be murderer chortled menacingly. The man raised his weapon high over his head, preparing to deliver the fatal blow to his latest victim.

Caroni squeezed his eyes shut. After a moment however, nothing happened!

“W-What?!” Opening his eyes, Caroni was both unprepared and relieved to discover a few of his assailants lying unconscious around him.

“Who… what…?!” he stammered.

Before Caroni could ponder any further, Videl landed between him and his remaining assailants. Pointing an outstretched palm in the direction of Caroni’s remaining attackers, she let fly with a series of kiai waves that hurled her targets clear across the block, likely killing all of them.

“You OK?” asked the female fighter.

“Thanks…,” he breathed in hoarse relief.

“This is getting us nowhere!” the teen commented. “Too many people are getting caught up! We need to get them out of here!”

Seeing this as his chance to get out of danger, Caroni’s eyes lit up with hopeful yearning. “Us too?”

“Yes…” the girl conceded with an irritated sigh. “This is out of your league.”

“And you’re only now figuring this out?!?” remarked the blond in disbelief.

Videl ignored the jab. “Look! We’ve gotta get everyone to safety, and I think I’ve got something the two of you can handle. I want you and Pirowski to lead everyone into the subway tunnels! It’s the only place I can think of where they’ll be safe. I’m count’n on you!”

“And you?”
Turning away, the feisty girl faced the coming storm. “If I don’t get serious, there won’t be a
tomorrow for anyone! These bastards are gonna pay…”

Glad to get out of any actual fighting, Caroni picked up and scurried away from the thick of things as
fast as his legs could carry him. Fighting in the arena was one thing, but getting thrown into a meat
grinder was something else altogether.

“Good luck fellas…” Videl whispered to herself. “You’ll need it.”

With that issue hopefully addressed, the raven-haired teen steeled herself for the battle ahead. If her
ki sensing abilities were anything to go by, the worst was yet to come. There was something
horrifying… something otherworldly lying in wait.

Ending the silent standoff between herself and Caroni’s assailants, the wily girl surged forward and
delivered a bone-shattering roadhouse kick to the sternum of one black-robed killer. She then
followed this with a sloppy nerve strike to the base of another man’s skull before pivoting on a heel
and landing a vicious hook kick to the knee cap of a third.

“HOLY SHIT, DUDE!!” screamed one Majin.

“Where’d she go?!” asked another.

“Right here…”

Doing an about-face, the Majins found… nothing?! With the exception of a fairly large hole in the
pavement, their target had disappeared.

“Fan out and find her!” barked one cultist.

“Yoohoo! Boys…!”

Without warning, a pair of small, dainty hands exploded from the asphalt and latched onto the ankles
of one hapless marauder. The man in question didn’t have time to scream before being yanked under
the road.

Seeing this, the remaining Majin attackers tucked tail and ran. Before they could get too far though,
they found themselves thrown violently into the air as the very street beneath them bulged upwards.
The lot of them landed in an unceremonious heap in every which direction.

“What’s wrong fellas?” Videl asked in a cruel mocking tone. Lifting the prone form of the cultist
she’d drug through the Earth by the scruff of his dark robes, she hurled the unconscious man into a
third story window of a nearby office complex. “You thought you were just gonna come here and
kill my people?!”

The remaining Majins who could, ran for the hills. They’d had enough. All except for one that is…

Coming to a stand, the lone cultist saw his chance and took it. Reaching into his undershirt, the
young man, he couldn’t have been no older than twenty, fished out a revolver, cocked the hammer
back, and took aim.

Videl could only smirk. “Go ahead and shoot! I’ll give you a freebie.”

“DIE YOU BITCH!!” screamed the young fanatic, pulling the trigger.

There was just enough lighting on that street for the religious whacko to see everything. To his stock
horror, the bullet, a high caliber round by sidearm standards, flattened impotently against the brunettes’ forehead before falling to the pavement.

“W-w-what ARE YOU!!!” screeched the young cultist as he unloaded his remaining nuggets at his target. As with the first, each shot impacted harmlessly on Videl’s bulletproof body. Save for the holes in her shirt, none scored pay-dirt.

From their place on the pavement, cultists who were too injured to run looked on in stunned terror at the ongoing spectacle.

“S-she’s a monster…” uttered one.

Just as the girl was about to subdue her assailant, a loud ‘Bang!’ rang out over the street accompanied by the grizzly spectacle of the young fanatic’s head exploding in a shower of blood, cerebrospinal fluid, and head-meat.

“What the…??!”

Looking up, Videl was surprised to find that old Bob had taken up position on a rooftop far above ground level. Armed with a bolt action rifle, the hefty old hillbilly was darting along an overhang, stopping only to get off a few shots before scurrying onto a better position. It wasn’t martial arts, but at least he was doing something.

The large, middle-aged retiree jumped behind a nearby AC unit, barely avoiding a fresh round of enemy sniper fire as he did so. This was where his time in the armed forces came into play. It’d been years since Bob had done anything like this, but unlike most of the city’s assailants, he was at least proficient in the use of firearms.

Crouching behind the air-conditioning block, the balding redneck took a moment to reload his baby. He swore under his breath at the acute pain in his joints. This was no time for old age to catch up with him!

It was then that, just out of the corner of his eye, he caught movement on the roof opposite his own. They were snipers..., three of them, all dressed in black. Against the dark backdrop of night, he was lucky to have seen them at all.

“Where ya think you’re goin?” he asked himself jokingly. Taking aim, he let fly with a well-placed shot that sent one of the three cultists tumbling into the streets below. The other two black garbed men stopped briefly to stare down at their fallen comrade only to be met with a matching set of .45 hollow point sandwiches.

That done, Bob hightailed it to an adjacent overhang. Peering over the side, he spied Mercenary Tao casually fighting off a fresh wave of Majin grunts.

Armed with a Chinese war sword, the younger Crane brother hacked and slashed his way through throngs of robed and uniformed Majin fanatics. As was the case on Videl’s end, there were civilians caught in the action, albeit far fewer. Perhaps the townsfolk got out while the getting was good? In any case, it made things very fortuitous for him as he took the fight to the enemy.

“HYAH!!!” Thrusting forward, the pony-tailed hitman jabbed his sword deep into the crotch of an unlucky opponent before twisting his blade and yanking it upwards along his victims’ medial line. The result left his hapless target with a splitting headache no amount of aspirin could treat.

Pulling away from his handiwork, Tao swung his fist in a back-handed flurry that connected with the temple of a second grunt who had attempted to take him from behind. With a wet ‘Snap!,’ the
attacker, a young woman, had her head spun completely around. He then followed this up with a boomerang throw of his scimitar that tore through a whole host of baddies in a straight line before embedding itself in a telephone pole some distance away.

Much to the former hitman’s surprise, the peons just wouldn’t let up. Determined to butcher the long-time Crane alumni, they surrounded him on all sides.

“So you want some more, huh?” dared the old Crane practitioner, dropping into his style’s favored horse stance. “That’s fine by me! Come get some!”

They didn’t need to be told twice. Like a wave, the twisted thugs closed in on him.

The one-time killer scoffed. ‘Fools…”

Just as they pressured in around him, Tao flopped onto his back and spun in place like a break-dancer just as he had at last weeks’ tournament. Whipping his legs out like a set of lawnmower blades, he bowled over dozens of Majin grunts with powerful spinning kicks. Those behind them were lifted clear into the air from the sheer tera-force stirred up by the attack, sending bodies and dismembered limbs tumbling like dry leaves in a dust devil and caking the walls of the surrounding window shops with a fresh coat of red paint!

Before any of his surviving opposition could do anything, the younger Crane brother was back at it! His speed, strength, and precision, far beyond that of any normal human, allowed the aged assassin to systematically pick off anyone stupid enough to fight back. Most however, were making themselves scarce…

“FALL BACK!!! RUN!!!!” screamed one Majin sub-commander.

“It’S HOPELESS!!!!” came a woman’s baleful cry.

‘Child’s play…” The former World’s Greatest Assassin couldn’t keep himself from smiling as he delivered a well-placed spinning heel kick to one of his few remaining opponents.

Suddenly, a loud hellish howl rose up through the bloodied streets. In its’ wake, street lamps flickered and dimmed in a creepy harrowing of things to come. The air became chilled and oppressive. One didn’t need to sense ki to know something foul was afoot.

“What’s this?!” Tao demanded aloud. Whatever it was, he sure as hell didn’t like it....

It was hard to make out against the darkness, but leering in the direction of said noise, Tao soon found himself confronted with its’ source.

“What in the blazes?!”

Out of the darkness came a scene from the depths of realms unknown. Inky robed figures, perhaps a dozen, came barreling down the road like a bat out of Hell! Decked in broad pauldrons of black steel, their red glowing eyes leered from beneath worn grey cowls. Their feet nary touching the ground, they seemingly rode the wind as they bridged the gap between themselves and the Crane practitioner.

Dropping into his styles’ signature horse stance, the ex-killer prepared to meet this new threat head-on. This was it! This was where the rubber met the road! He would protect the city’s survivors! He would redeem himself and end the generation long cycle of travesties he’d wrought! He would regain his lost honor!
Just as the mob of twisted berserkers came within punching distance however, there was a brief series of bright, disorienting flashes accompanied by a jarring ripple effect. This grand deception however, beheld a sinister purpose. Hiding behind this smoke and mirrors act, each bloodthirsty attacker hastily drew a long, broad cleaver. It was clear that these Majins were bringing their A-game.

It was almost enough to throw off their quarry, but Toa had enough sense to act first. Craning his head back, the old killer allowed the first haphazard strike to sail clear past his chin. Lifting his leg, Tao casually stepped over a second full horizontal strike that would’ve maimed him. Trying to capitalize on the distraction offered by their comrade’s frontal assault, the other nine or so armored marauders surrounded the old assassin before initiating a mixed series of powerful vertical and diagonal hacks.

It was a veritable storm of blades. Tao bobbed, weaved, and rolled to avoid his adversaries’ sustained assault. Even he was taken back by the speed and ferocity of these dark-shrouded berserkers. They were nothing like the throngs of weaklings he’d bested earlier! Perhaps most galling of all was the oppressive pressure he felt from being in such close proximity to these freaks. It was as if the inner essence of the human spirit had been turned in on itself, as if he were being suffocated by the darkness around him. It was like a part of Hell followed him into the land of the living.

Hooping and howling like a pack of savage beasts, the armored lunatics moved around the aged assassin in concentric circles. Against the darkness, their blinding movements, far beyond that of normal men, made their glowing red eyes seem like embers dancing in the wind!

Side-stepping an otherwise well-placed hack, the cofounder of the crane school scored a heel kick that would’ve made Chuck Norris proud to have mainstreamed the thing, sending it’s twisted recipient straight through the passenger-side door of a parked hovercar. Not stopping there, he pivoted on his other foot and delivered an equally powerful back-kick to the gut of another who tried to take him from behind all the while elbow parrying the sling-blade from the hands of a third. It was this last move that would prove costly…

Seeing an opening, one of the remaining berserkers surged forward from one of Toa’s unguarded flanks. Being as augmented as they were by ancient sorcery, there was no way the younger Crane brother could keep the pressure on all of them, especially with them attacking from all sides. Worse still, their constant devilish howling made tracking their movements against the street’s dark profile almost impossible. He had only enough time to bring up a cross guard before being shoulder tackled to the pavement. Several other Majins soon dogpiled on top of him. Seizing the moment, two other cleaver wielding maniacs jumped in for the killing strike. Lifting their weapons high, they were prepared to hack through their own comrades to snuff out the former mercenary.

From under the twisted pile of limbs and torsos, Tao glared up at his soon-to-be killers.

“Shit!” The ex-hitman jerked and turned to break the hold of his suicidal opponents, but to no avail. As beefed up as they were on Babadi’s ancient augmentations, he’d be lucky to fire off a…

Tao’s eyes widened. With all his strength, the former killer wrenched his dominant arm free and leveled a finger square at the face of one of the armored berserkers. Even if this succeeded, he would die, but at least he would take one of them back to hell!

With a loud cry of “DODONPA!!,” the younger Crane brother let fly with the signature move of his school.

Unexpectedly however, the heads of both assailants burst in a shower of roasted head-meat and cerebrospinal fluid. The next thing Tao know, his other detrainers went limp atop him.
Tao’s eyes widened in shocked relief. “What the-?!”

A crazed, feminine cackle echoed over the embattled street. “Someone had a party and I wasn’t invited…”

Standing out on a rooftop overlooking the carnage below, Barbella looked down on her teacher with a chilling twinkle in her eye. Her trademark grey top was caked with blood, likely from whoever was unfortunate enough to stand in her way, and her hands stood clawed at her sides. It was clear she came ready for the kill. Whether it was for Tao’s sake, he couldn’t tell.

“Somehow, I knew you’d come…” remarked the aged assassin as he shrugged himself free from the pile of dead cultists.

“Hmph!” She quirked a feral smirk in his direction. “I see you made friends! Care if I step in?”

Briefly, Tao returned a small smile of his own. “By all means…”

Casually leaping from her perch, the former street thug landed before the remainder of her sifu’s combatants.

Suddenly, there was a shift in the air. It was very subtle, but Tao’s heightened fighting senses could feel that the oppressive pressure of his remaining attackers had somehow been quashed. Now, a new pressure, one dwarfing that of all the remaining cultists, was bearing down in all directions. It was a feeling the lanky assassin couldn’t describe, as though a whole new sixth sense had opened to him. Certainly, he could still feel the pressure before, but amidst this new pressure, it was as if a cooker lid had been clamped in place. Against this new feeling, he could barely maintain his composure.

Cackling with mad laughter, the muscled redhead swaggered up to her soon-to-be victims.

“As much as I’ve enjoying killing my way here…” she chuckled menacingly, “You fellas have no idea how much you fucked up when you destroyed my home!”

With a loud bellowing roar, one of the remaining six or so berserkers surged forward. Massive cleaver in hand, he raised the weapon over his head just as he was on top of his target.

“Damn it Barbella, MOVE!!!” Tao screamed.

Smirking nonchalantly, the fiery-haired young woman allowed the strike to connect with the base of her neck. To both her teacher and the other cultists utter amazement, the massive blade shattered on impact. As for Barbella, the crazy-eyed grappler seemed to just shrug it off as if it were nothing at all.

“R-R-Remarkable…” the younger Crane brother babbled in awe. During her time under his tutelage, both Tao and Shin had seen the girl’s growing power, but to see her sheer physical toughness, her overall resistance to pain in action was something else entirely. He sincerely doubted she would feel it if a whole city were dropped on her. He’d be lying if he said she didn’t scare him.

For a moment, the powerful redhead eyed her assailant with coy amusement. The now disarmed marauder seemed like a deer in the headlights.

“Is that all…?” she taunted. It was enough to snap her opponent out of his shocked reverie.

Drawing back, Barbella let loose with a merciless back-handed fist, cutting through the air just inches from her now disarmed attackers’ face.
Looking on in daft confusion, the transmutated cultist stood frozen in place. His counterparts who’d been quick to join the fray seemed equally flummoxed.

“I-Is something supposed to happen…” growled one of the armored berserkers in a befuddled, guttural voice.

Barbella’s face twisted in a toothy, fiendish smirk. “Wait for it….”

Suddenly, the cultist’s head inexplicably popped like an over-fizzed two liter, covering anyone close to the action in a second coat of blood and brain matter.

In the face of this horrifying, esoteric, killing technique, Tao went full bug-eyed.

“W-w-when did she h-have time to d-do that!?” stammered the slack-jawed former hitman. Had he not seen it with his own eyes, he never would’ve believed it! Not only had his student managed to use his patented teraforce strike on a mere whim, she’d somehow managed to create an explosive superheated air pocket inside her opponent’s brain cavity! But how did she initiate a delayed reaction…?!

With her first victim reduced to dog food, Barbella sped forward in a burst of hyperspeed that no normal human could hope to follow, stopping just short of her remaining opposition. Not missing a beat, she reached forward and placed her palms on the solar plexus of two of the remaining five men.

“Let’s give the old man’s move a test drive…”

Inexplicably, her palms began to vibrate at hypersonic speeds. Like a crocodile’s death roll, muscles twitched and spasmed with the power of a bush hog beneath callused skin and subcutaneous tissue. All that remained was for her to pass her fighting ki into the site of contact.

Abruptly, before either black-armored grunt had time to react, the muscled redhead pulled her hands from the point of attack. The second she did, white lighting visibly passed through the gut area of her new victims.

Frozen in a mix of horror and agonizing pain, the two men stared helplessly as their abdominal cavities seemingly divorced themselves from the rest of their torso. Entrails and bodily fluids spilled out onto the pavement like a chunky salsa. Their agony was such that the two cultists lapsed into shock before their exposed lumbar vertebra, the one thing holding their lower and upper bodies together, snapped, allowing their heads, thoracic cavities, and arms to join their entrails on the ground.

Having had enough, the remaining four or five berserkers took to their heels.

“You fools…!” the former street criminal chuckled sinisterly, “I decide when it’s over!”

Leveling a hand in the direction of the remaining berserkers, the redhead let loose with a devastating kiai wave. The ensuing percussion wave tore through the surrounding street like a tsunami! All around her, the sudden explosive expansion of her ki bowled over power lines, vending machines, magazine stands, and just about any other standing structure. Hovercars, trash cans, and anything else not bolted down were turned into deadly missiles that rained havoc on surrounding store fronts. In all this madness, her one-time teacher Tao had only enough time to kiss the pavement, lest he too became another statistic.

“You’RE INSANE!!!” hollered the former killer from his huddled position on the ground.

The maelstrom ended almost as abruptly as it came. Coming to a stand, Tao shook himself like a
dog, depositing a decent pile of ash and soot at his feet. It took a moment, but when the dust finally settled, he could vaguely make out the darkened outline of his student. Standing amidst the carnage, Barbella took a brief moment to revel in her handiwork. The whole avenue was demolished! Hovercars, vendor carts, and just about everything else in the vicinity had been turned to slagged shrapnel. Bodies of both Majin cultists and pedestrians from the initial fighting had been reduced to pulverized hamburger, their flash-fried blood staining both the road and totaled store fronts with a greasy, sizzling blackish-brown film. A pressure crater spanned out in all directions from the former street thug’s feet.

“Ya think ya got em?!” the younger Crane brother nagged in a berating tone. Cursing profusely, the lanky man tripped over what might’ve been a disembodied leg as he stumbled to his former student’s side.

“These bleach-skinned fucks are gonna pay for wrecking my house!” Barbella seethed.

“Where is my brother?!” Tao all but demanded.

“He could be halfway to Mifan for all I care!” she remarked nonchalantly.

Toa let out a long, ragged breath he didn’t know he was holding. “We cannot linger here! I must rendezvous with Mrs. Son and my other charges.”

With that, the old assassin darted off, leaving his former charge standing dumbfounded.

“Mrs. Son…” Barbella hissed. “SATAN...!”

The name of her most hated adversary lingered on her tongue like a foul taste. She could feel every muscle fiber on her frame bunching together as barely constrained rage twisted within like some snarling black hydra. Blood vessels and veins zigzagged across tanned skin drawn tight over massive, feminine muscles, and her fiery ginger hair stood on end under the winds of her powerful inner flame. Bursts of crimson bioluminescence flashed all around her as forks of red electrical discharge grounded off the ruins of the surrounding avenue. Soon, the ground began to shake and buckle under the strain of her terrifying fighting ki as her battle aura flared out, wrenching rocks, underground cable lines, and reinforced concrete out of the hard packed ground and into the air.

Since her humiliating defeat at Videl’s hands, Barbella recommitted her every waking moment to getting back what was rightfully hers. With help from a somewhat weary Crane Hermit, she spent the last week or so training diligently, fueled by her absolute loathing for Satan City’s longtime heroine. She would never give up! One way or another, she would make a comeback! She’d put little Miss Satan right back where she belonged…, Six feet under!

The next street over, things were going about as well for Bridled Fury and Brinner as they were on Videl’s end. Bolstered by hoverbike air support, the enemy hordes rushed forward in haphazard waves of black iron and other remorseless metal, killing all in their path and generally making a mess of things. Being the heavy hitter on their front, it fell on Goku’s ‘discovery’ Fury, to take it to these vile heathens! Needless to say, his massive size, brute strength, and overall lack of finesse made him far less gentle than he needed to be, and what was supposed to be a rescue operation turned into a bloody battle of attrition.

It was pure pandemonium! As if he were a rampaging elephant, amidst throngs of screaming, fleeing pedestrians, the armored giant stomped, tore, and clobbered his way through dozens of faceless Majins. Being well past the wall of humanity, Goku’s oversized student soldiered through hails of
weapons fire as if it were a mild annoyance. It was all a blur, just background noise for this 7 ½ foot blond-locked berserker.

Amidst all this gory mayhem, there was the last unified front of law enforcement in the downtown area. They were the wild cards in this whole fiasco! Firmly dug in behind a makeshift barricade on the opposite end of the avenue, these police officers had been rallied from other precincts across the city to stage one last go at retaking the historic downtown district from the Majin hordes. From behind their hastily erected wall of capsule cars, fire trucks, and freightliners, Satan City’s finest fired volleys of automatic weapons fire, tear gas, and whatever other weapons they had at the armies of darkness. They were outgunned, outmanned, and out-manuevered, but what they lacked in resources and manpower, they made up for with experience and proficiency.

“EAT SHIT AND DIE YOU FUCKERS!!” screamed one policeman as he unloaded a pump shotgun into the face of one oncoming cultist.

“I NEED AMMO!!” cried another.

“We need to provide cover fire for that big fella!” an older officer instructed.

“I don’t think he needs it…” remarked the one next to him.

Between the two opposing sides, Fury brought his slow, heaving might to bear. The ground shook under his foot falls. Cars and other free standing objects were thrown like missiles into the onrushing melee of dull-robed fanatics, killing dozens by way of sheer physical trauma. Those that lived, found themselves scattered like dust bunnies in an attic.

“FALL BACK!!!” wailed one unlucky cultist just before he was knocked to pieces with an uprooted telephone pole. “SHOOT HIM!!! GOD DAMN IT, SHOOT THAT BIG FUCKER!!” barked a sub-commander.

Like biplanes circling King Kong in the old movies, the Majin cult’s assortment of light hovercraft made low altitude strafing runs around the hulking behemoth. With every pass, these techno-terrors would unleash holy hell on the streets below, catching both their own and civilians in the crossfire in their haphazard attempts at scoring pay dirt on the Ox King-sized brute.

Fury wasn’t taking this lying down! Brandishing a powerline like a giant club, the armored Goliath took wide swings at the enemy’s air support, forcing the makeshift air force to weave and dive around his vicious horizontal strikes. One hover bike came at it a little too low, and was promptly batted like a softball, sending the twisted, burning remains of both it and the unlucky pilot careening down the opposing street in a blazing crash of jet fuel and roasted flesh.

While Fury and the police took care of business, Brinner did what he did best. He hid…

“This is insane…” rasped the terrified Satan alumni. When the shit hit the fan, the young man jumped down the nearest manhole he could find. There’s no way he was putting his safety on the line, rent money or no rent money. Now if only he could keep all these survivors from crowding him...

“What’s goin on up there?!” asked one pedestrian who had managed to slip into the sewers with him. Behind him, a fairly large crowd of survivors hunkered down out of sight.

“Oh… I hope they don’t come down here!” another fretted aloud.

“Hey shut-up! They’ll hear us…!” shushed yet another.
Back on the surface, Bridled Fury’s improvised game of Whack-a-Mole continued, and the bodies of the slain were quickly piling up. Still, like waves of black steel, his fanatical enemies kept on the pressure only to crash against him before they were again sent hurling back. It wasn’t as fluid or refined as anything done by Videl or Tao, but the sheer savagery by which the armored giant meted out punishment was the kind of stuff one read about in history books.

Given the nature of how Fury acquired his strength, his brutish ‘tactics’ were to be expected. With him, there was no deeper understanding of the martial arts… no lifetime of dedication to the study of esoteric philosophy. It was all size, weight, and blunt force. Only by sheer accident did he reinvent a time-proven training method that allowed him to surpass human limitations. Well, that and a few weeks spent in his work shed. If it hadn’t been for that one flash of insight and his subsequent pursuit of an idea, he wouldn’t have broken the wall of humanity. He wouldn’t have been drafted by that Son Goku guy! He wouldn’t be fighting here and now like some throwback gladiator to the days of the Roman Colosseum.

Brandishing an uprooted powerline in one hand and holding a random Majin grunt by the throat with the other, Goku’s behemoth charged forward. Holding said cultist in an outstretched grip, he indented the unfortunate minion face-first into the side of a parked moving van. The way the victim of his assault was pressed into the metal siding looked almost like something out of a Bugs Bunny cartoon.

In the face of this overwhelming display of raw power, the hordes of Majin followers stopped in their tracks.

Their hesitance didn’t go amiss by Fury. Skulking up to these throngs of darkness, the armored titan began to taunt them.

“WHO ELSE WANTS SOME?!!” he demanded, his steely glare flitting from one end of the mob to the other. “Anyone?! Come on! I thought you all wanted this!”

“I wouldn’t pat myself on the back if I were you!” came a gruff, booming voice.

Like a curtain, the crowd of marauders parted. From them stepped a hulking giant of a man. Stamped on his forehead was the calligraphic ‘M’ worn by the rest of the Order, but that was where the similarities ended. Dressed in matching tight-fitting wrestling trunks and frilly, knee high purple boots, he was a balding fella whose face sported a handlebar mustache reminiscent of the iconic one showcased by Mr. Satan. Slung over one shoulder was an up-scaled pickaxe drenched in blood.

Coming face to face with the mysterious stranger, it dawned on Goku’s student that this muscled giant was as big and imposing as himself. He also carried himself with an air of confidence that juxtaposed with the desperate disposition of the others he’d fought thus far.

“The real battle is only beginning…” the newcomer guffawed.

Elsewhere, Caroni and Pirowski were busy leading a batch of civilians to safety. With the Majin’s attack effectively paralyzing the city, the Orange Star Subway Terminal was their only real option. Thankfully, with so many of the cult’s ground-pounders kept bottled up by the heavy hitters, the longtime Satan alumni had an easy time with their one job.

“Come on folks! Just a bit further…” Caroni called out to his wards as he led them down a broken escalator. In his arms, he carried a wounded old man who was receiving a blood transfusion on the go. Bringing up his rear was a field medic, likely from Orange Star General, who administered the
procedure as they walked.

To his left, Pirowski led a blond-haired little girl by the hand. The hefty former pupil of Mr. Satan wore a pale, grave look on his face that spoke volumes of what he’d seen on the streets above. He may not have done much in the way of fighting, but it was hard not being affected by the sight of so much death.

“Eh…, Comrade Caroni…” began the hulking martial artist, breaking the silence.

“Yeah?”

“Maybe we get medal for this, eh?” joked the hulking grappler, his heavily accented voice carrying a hint of forced optimism. Though it was meant to lighten the mood, his sloppy attempt at brevity earned him incredulous looks from both his companion and their charges.

“Pfft! Speak for yourself!” Caroni responded. The blond show fighter paused in his step as the tunnel lights briefly flickered. There then came a shallow tremor followed by a dull booming sound, the tell-tale sign of a mortar round or some other powerful ordinance detonating on the surface. “As soon as we get these people underground, I’m gonna let Videl have this mess. I didn’t sign on to get killed!”

Right there, Pirowski came to a stop, prompting their entire rescue party to do the same.

“What’s wrong?” Caroni asked in a puzzled tone.

A long pregnant silence ensued as the massive pro fighter dwelled on the horrors he’d seen. He thought of all the people dying on the surface. He thought of his promise to help fight when the time came. More importantly, he thought of his cowardice, his own ineptitude in the face of adversity. First, it was at the Cell Games, and now, like his former master, he too ran like a yellow-bellied rat.

“This makes us no better than ‘He who shall not be named,’ don’t you think?”

Caroni couldn’t believe what he was hearing. “Are you listening to yourself? We can’t go back there!”

“But we agree to help!” his friend protested. “People are dying…!”

“We’ve done enough!” returned the blond. Missing a step, the former #1 student of the Satan Dojo had to steady himself lest both he and the old man took a trip down the stairs. “After this, I’m getting the hell out of here…”

Upon reaching their destination, the two show fighters were taken off guard by a flurry of bright flashes.

“Vuat the…?!” Pirowski sputtered, shielding his eyes against the sudden illumination.

All around them journalists swarmed like locusts. And why wouldn’t they? With the whole city in the grip of upheaval, it only made sense that their adoring paparazzi would be clamoring for the scoop of the century, albeit from a place of relative safety.

Caroni snorted derisively. “Figures…”

“Caroni!” screamed one reporter trying to be heard over her colleagues, “Can you shed some light on who’s attacking the city?! The people have a right to know!”

“Where’s the Great Saiyaman?” came a second.
“Pirowski! Pirowski! Where is Mr. Satan?!?” another all but demanded as he practically shoved his mic into the hefty circuit fighter’s face. The journalist in question was affiliated with ZTV, likely a coworker of Jimmy Firecracker.

“Who are these terrorists?! What do they want?!?”

“I-I-I don’t…” Caroni nervously stammered. At most of their press conferences, Mrs. Pizza handled the bottom feeders. It wasn’t that he was out of his element, as the occasional press ambush was a given for a celebrity of his stature. He was just too overwhelmed by everything that was happening.

“Why aren’t you out there fighting?!”

His mind going blank, Caroni visibly paled. That was the one question he wasn’t prepared to answer. Here is where the pros and cons of having his career so closely tied to Mark Satan’s came into play. What was he supposed to say? That he, the great and beautiful Caroni, pussed out like a bitch?! He’d be a laughing stock to the entire professional fighting circuit! His career and all the awesome perks that came with it would be gone. Videl’s discrediting following her defeat at the last World Tournament would be nothing compared to what the press corps would do to him and Piro. At least her fall from grace wasn’t televised! He had to think up a convincing lie, and he had to be quick.

“I-I-I…well… err…ya see…” he fumbled miserably.

Eying the blond fighter expectantly, the gaggle of reporters closed in inch by inch. The pressure in the air was palpable. Before the former top student of Mr. Satan could say anything however, his long-time partner piped up.

‘Pirowski, you idiot!!!’ Inwardly, Caroni was horrified. This was their last chance to get out of this mess without becoming a statistic, and what does Pirowski do?! He has a change of heart at the worst possible time! Or perhaps the big guy was trying to put some distance between themselves and their hangers-on?

‘This could work!’ A small smile quirked its’ way onto the blonde’s pretty face. With any luck, the two of them could slip off and hide somewhere else without anyone noticing. Oh, he could kiss Pirowski!

“Y-Yeah! We’re gonna head right back out there, and show those murderous thugs what-for!” he boasted in a way that sounded all too similar to a certain former master of his. Maybe he should’ve went into public speaking? “I, the fabulous Caroni, vow to never rest until this city is back in the hands of the people!”

The ensuing cheers that erupted from both the reporters and whoever they’d managed to rescue from the fighting aboveground sent almost as many shockwaves through their subterranean sanctuary as the carnage outside. Cheers of “SATAN!!! SATAN!!!!” filled the subway terminal.

Pirowski rolled his eyes at his longtime partner’s antics. Had he himself not fallen for Mr. Satan’s act, Pirowski would’ve been surprised at just how easily the paparazzi were buying Caroni’s brave front. Seriously! How could they not see Caroni was playing them? Weak journalism at it’s finest…

“Come!” he urged, yanking Caroni by the arm.

“WAIT! WAIT!! WAIT!!! What about my close-up!!?” whined the blond fighter, his friend dragging him away kicking and screeching.
It wasn’t until they were back on street level that Pirowski finally released his long-time associate, albeit not as gently as Caroni would like.

Stumbling forward from his hefty friend’s powerful grip, Caroni took a moment to regain his dignity.

“That was some slick shit you pulled back there!” he remarked in a shushed, congratulatory tone. “Now let’s get out of here while the getting’s good!”

“No.” came Pirowski’s gruff, clipped reply.

Caroni thought he’d heard wrong. “Beggin your pardon?”

“I will stay and fight…” the hulking Cossack answered resolutely.

The smaller of Mark’s former students simply couldn’t believe what his buddy was saying. “Are you fuckin mental?! I don’t wanna be a martyr!”

“We promised Videl.”

“Promises nothing!” griped the golden-locked grappler, “She didn’t say anything about a war zone!”

Pirowski glowered down at his old tag-team partner with a reproving leer, one that Caroni was quick to match. Had it not been for the sound of bombs and automatic fire ringing out over the surrounding town, their standoff would’ve been marked with a profound silence. Finally, it was Pirowski who spoke…

“Why did you become fighter?”

“Piro, this isn’t the ti-” Caroni started.

“WHY?!” the massive Slav demanded hotly, cutting him off.

Getting up in Pirowski’s face, Caroni in turn unloaded on his old friend. “Because I wanted to follow in Mark Satan’s footsteps! That’s why! I wanted to be as great as him!”

Stunned into silence, Pirowski stepped back from his exasperated compadre.

“HE FUCKIN LIED TO US!!!” Caroni screamed, his face flush with rage. Crossing his arms, the Fabioesque fighter turned away from his fellow Satan alumni. “We wasted so many years chasing a lie! He was my hero! He was like a father to us!”

“Comrade Caroni…”

“Why did we even agree to this…?” Caroni hissed between clenched teeth. “Why the hell are we even here?!”

It was then that Caroni felt a heavy hand settle on his shoulder.

Turning, the smaller celebrity was met with an unsettling sight. Fixing him with a stare that could melt through lead, his old partner’s demeanor was one of stone.

“Instead of crying, why not be better than him?” asked the Cossack in a calm tone that juxtaposed with his all-too-serious expression.

“Look around, Piro!” Caroni screamed, motioning to the surrounding devastation left by the Majin cult, “Do you wanna end up like them?! Don’t go noble on me, man!”
Through the darkness, the larger fighter gazed at the aftermath of the cult’s attack. It was like a scene straight out of the action movies he and Caroni had starred in.

Only… this was no movie. There were no directors. No make-up artists. No stage props... Right there, for the first time, the massive show fighter came to understand what Videl and Gohan were fighting for. Amidst the blast craters, totaled hover cars, and bombed out store fronts lay the twisted and burned remains of unlucky souls, some of whom he probably knew, who had been unable to flee the carnage. The area was ripe with the putrid stench of scorched flesh. Off in the distance, he could even see the telltale flashes of Videl’s own battle against the city’s attackers.

There could be no doubt. There was no turning back. All he had to do was take this final step and his inner chains would be broken. The hefty man didn’t understand it so much as he felt it. Here he stood at the crossroads to something that would change everything… forever. This was his Rubicon!

Swallowing hard, Pirowski turned back to his old friend. “I go to fight!”

Caroni massaged his temples in agitation. “Oh my God! This can’t be happening…”

“Join me or no Mistro Caroni, I go now!” the massive Cossack declared.

And without another word, the hefty Satan alumni trudged off, leaving his long-time associate utterly gob-smacked.

“Am I the only sane person left?!” the blond fighter asked himself aloud. The man was so stunned by his old buddy’s complete U-turn that he failed to notice he was no longer alone.

“Aren’t you gonna go after him?”

Jerking around, the blond grappler was shocked to find that some of the papparazi from the subway terminal had snuck up on him.

All Caroni could do was snarl a quick “SHIT!!!” before trailing off after his friend.

Chapter End Notes

Well, I’m back… I hope. I’m deeply sorry for the long hiatus, but between moving, getting hospitalized with a bad shoulder injury, and going on meds for my mental issues, there was a lot of adjusting I had to do over the past year. This chapter was also a real mess to write. For a long while, I struggled with trying to make this chapter work. I really wanted to showcase the struggles of the other lesser characters, particularly the dynamics that exist between Caroni and Pirowski. Seeing how these tertiary characters were the closest students of Mr. Satan, at least after Videl, I wanted to give them a little spotlight. Truthfully, I’m surprised these two goofballs aren’t used more often in ViHan fictions if for no other reason than their proximity to Mark. The two have a lot of potential for added drama and comic relief, so their lack of use is a real head-scratcher.

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