

It hurts to say good bye

By Maleficus

Submitted: February 1, 2006

Updated: April 17, 2006

When Starfire sees a friend pass away, she fears for the safety of the others... and her sanity.(This is for nicole_titans contest... even though it might not seem that way at first.)

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Maleficus/27517/It-hurts-to-say-good-bye>

Chapter 1 - A beautiful beginning for a bad day	2
Chapter 2 - A forced farewell	4
Chapter 3 - Painful silence	6
Chapter 4 - Acceptance	8
Chapter 5 - A living nightmare	10
Chapter 6 - Waking Up	12

1 - A beautiful beginning for a bad day

Chapter 1

A beautiful beginning for a bad day

A cool morning in Jump City started a new day for the inhabitants. It was a clear sunrise in late spring that would turn into a warm afternoon. Some of the citizens were beginning their day early, going to work or school without worry. They had little to fear, the Teen Titans were there to protect them. In the T-shaped tower, the Teen Titans watched over their city. Robin was already awake, as usual, practicing his fighting techniques to stay in top shape for whatever may lie ahead.

In the living room on the top floor of the tower, Starfire was admiring the early morning sun. It seemed that no matter how many times she saw it, the sunrise remained astoundingly beautiful. Starfire sighed at the wonderful sight before her, laughing at the thoughts of what she could do on such a nice day. "Glorious... A day such as this surely give way to great fun." Starfire said to herself as she watched the sun rise higher into the sky.

The others were up and about soon after Starfire started planning fun things they could do together, and soon after they all gathered into the same room they began to argue. "I'm using the stove first. I don't want to lose my appetite to the smell of your nasty soy sludge." Cyborg told Beast Boy as he shoved him away from the stove.

Beast Boy shoved Cyborg back. "I don't want to go clogging my arteries up with the grease left from your cooking... I still have all my arteries to watch out for." Beast Boy said, taking the frying pan from the cupboard and slamming it on top of the stove.

Cyborg growled at Beast Boy and grabbed him by the collar. "That's low... Back off and I might let you keep a few teeth." Cyborg told Beast Boy before throwing him over his shoulder. Cyborg was annoyed further to find that Raven had already taken the stove to prepare her own breakfast. "Yo! I was using that!" He shouted as he approached Raven.

Raven looked up at Cyborg calmly. "No, you were fighting with Beast Boy." Raven said smartly before she went back to what she was doing.

Starfire was discouraged to see her friends arguing on such a nice day. Cyborg sat down and stared at the wall while he waited for Raven to finish using the stove. Beast Boy picked himself up and scoffed at Cyborg before he left the room in anger. Robin bumped into Beast Boy and was surprised to see Beast Boy brush past him and continue walking. Robin walked into the living room to see that everyone

seemed to be in a bad mood. "Did I miss something?" Robin asked Starfire as he walked to the computer to monitor activity in town.

Starfire looked a little sad as she followed Robin to the computer. "I do not believe our friends are morning people." Starfire said as she looked at Cyborg and Raven. Cyborg looked as though he was trying to ignore everyone else and Raven looked as though she was regretting getting out of bed this morning. "There was an argument... They do not seem happy with each others company today."

Robin sighed at the news. "Sometimes people just don't want to get along for a while... I'm sure they'll get over it and be back to their old selves after some time to themselves." Robin told Starfire when he saw the sad look in her eyes.

Starfire wasn't quite satisfied with Robin's words, they seemed too passive. Starfire wanted her friends to get along, but it was difficult for them sometimes. "I hope you are right." Starfire said as she sat down on the couch and looked out at the city.

A few hours passed and the Titans still seemed to be on edge. Starfire could never get used to the feeling, no matter how many times she felt it before. All she could hope was that they forgot about their squabble and went back to being friends soon.

Robin was still in the living room, watching a cooking show while the others were off doing their own thing. Robin had gotten used to the constant fights the others had between themselves, it was regular human nature. Robin knew that, after a while, they would forget the whole thing and go back to being friends.

The alarm began to sound, calling the titans to action before they got a chance to forget about the earlier troubles. Robin got up and assembled everyone together before he gave them the order to move out. Starfire felt even more afraid now that they had to go and fight. Starfire now feared that her friends wouldn't work together like they normally did, which might lead to further troubles. "I hope that it is nothing to serious... I have a very bad feeling about what we are facing." Starfire said to herself as she followed the others out to the city.

2 - A forced farewell

Chapter 2

A forced farewell

A bank was in the middle of being robbed by a short, tired looking man. He wore a breath control mask and carried several pouches on his belt. The Titans arrived at the bank just as he was about to open the vault. The Titans noticed that everyone in the bank was asleep, but showed no signs of struggle. "Hold it!" Robin demanded to the short man in the mask.

The man turned to the Titans and put up his hands. "I plan to hold nothing but the gold in this vault." He said before he grabbed a pouch from his belt and threw it in front of Robin. The pouch exploded and Robin felt his movements get slower, as though he was moving through thick mud. "I am your worst nightmares come true... you can call me The Sleeper." The man proclaimed, tossing another pouch at the vault door. The pouch burst and the powder inside caused the vault door to rust and fall away. "Go away, unless you want to face your worst fears." The Sleeper said as he entered the open vault.

Raven appeared from a shadow in front of the tired looking villain, looking very menacing. "Even though I'm terrified of your small bags of dust," Raven said, sarcastically. "I'm not letting you walk out of here with a single cent." Raven said as she put up a fighting stance.

The Sleeper looked at Raven with an exhausted expression. "You shouldn't be afraid of the powder... you should be afraid of what you can't see." The Sleeper said as though he was yawning. He tossed another pouch at Raven's eyes and she fell to the floor.

Raven rubbed her eyes but could only see darkness. It was as though the lights had been turned off. Raven couldn't hear anything except for a loud growl behind her. When Raven tried to move away from the growling thing it moved closer. Beast Boy saw Raven stumbling around blindly and went after the robber. Beast Boy turned into a T-rex and charged the villain. The Sleeper turned towards Beast Boy and tossed a pouch of dust at his feet. The ground under Beast Boy seemed to turn into liquid, making Beast Boy sink quickly. Beast Boy tried to swim free, but no matter what he tried he couldn't escape.

Cyborg and Starfire charged The Sleeper at the same time, hoping he wouldn't be able to stop them both. The Sleeper turned to face them and threw a pouch at Starfire. "Goodnight little girl." He said as the powder bag burst on Starfire's face. Starfire yawned and began to fall asleep, feeling her eyes get heavier with every passing second. The last thing Starfire saw before she fell asleep was Cyborg grabbing The Sleeper by the collar of his shirt. "You oaf, put me down!" The Sleeper shouted, but Starfire was unconscious before she could see what happened next.

Starfire woke up a few minutes later when Raven shook her. "Are you okay?" Raven asked slowly as

she helped Starfire stand.

Starfire still felt a little dizzy from the sleep powder but she noticed that Raven looked very sad. "We were victorious?" Starfire asked, looking around the room. Raven was silent, but Starfire could see what was troubling her. Robin was injured and sitting next to a large object under a sheet. The object had a familiar shape, Starfire began to feel sick about what she was going to find under the sheet. Starfire walked over slowly and heard Beast Boy crying in the corner, making it easier to tell what had happened.

Starfire could see Cyborg's hand sticking out one side of the sheet, making it painfully obvious that her suspicions had been correct. The shock was too sudden, Starfire could feel the painful sadness building up, but she wasn't able to cry. "Wha... why... how did this happen?" Starfire asked, cautiously kneeling down to look at hold the exposed hand.

Robin pointed across the room to show Starfire the charred remains of The Sleeper. "His powder caused catastrophic system failure in Cyborg's main power core... Cyborg power core exploded and nearly destroyed us all... there was nothing we could do for them." Robin said, sounding as though he was holding back a lump in his throat.

Beast Boy was still crying in the corner. He sounded as though he was muttering something. "I never said I was sorry... I was a jerk and I never said I was sorry." Beast Boy said to himself, not looking away from the wall.

Starfire couldn't believe what was happening, one of her best friends was taken from her by a man they had only met minutes before. It didn't seem possible that Cyborg could be gone, but the proof was lying right in front of her. Starfire felt a warm tear run down her face as he pulled the sheet back enough to see Cyborg's face. His human eye was still open, but it was dull and showed no signs of life. Starfire felt her heart sink as she stood up and walked out of the bank. Starfire could hardly think, the day she had planned had turned into something horrible. Starfire woke up that morning hoping to have fun with her friends, but she would now have to say good bye to one.

3 - Painful silence

Chapter 3

Painful silence

The sunny day had become an overcast evening, threatening to rain on Cyborg's burial. The four remaining Titans carried the casket containing their fallen friend to the hole that had been dug for him. The only people who attended the ceremony besides the Titan's were an old priest who read Cyborg's final farewell to the Titans and the gravedigger. Robin tried to ignore his broken arm and the scrapes Raven was unable to heal while he listened to the words of the priest. "To my friends... I have been ready for this day for a long time... I made peace with the fact that, one day, I would have to die protecting the city... I'm sorry I won't be there to help you fight any longer... I hope you can get along without me." The old priest said slowly as he read the note from Cyborg.

Rain began to fall, staining the black clothes the Titans wore. The priest hurried to read the note before the rain smeared the writing. "You were like family to me... like the brothers and sisters I had been with out for so long... Do not be sad for me... I'm leaving all of my gadgets and creations to you... along with blueprints and instructions for maintenance... Don't let my death distract you from the protection of the city... Good bye my friends... maybe we will meet in the after life some day... then we can be together again." The priest said before folding up the letter and handing it to Robin.

They watched the coffin lower into the ground. Starfire looked around at the others, none of them could stop crying. Raven, who was normally so calm, could not help but shed a few tears for Cyborg. Even Robin, who was always strong and serious, let tears soak through his mask as he dropped the first handful of dirt on the coffin, even though he tried to keep a strait face and hide the tears in rain water. Beast Boy was inconsolable, he didn't was his friend to be buried. Starfire felt her heart break even more as she watched Beast Boy run over to the grave and begin to throw dirt off of it while he shouted. "No! It isn't true! He isn't dead... He can't be dead! He can't go!" Robin had to restrain Beast Boy from hurting the gravedigger who was in charger of burying the coffin. Starfire went over to Beast Boy and hugged him to try to calm him. Beast Boy cried loudly on Starfire's shoulder. "It's not fair... he was my best friend... I didn't even get a chance to say good bye." Beast Boy said as the team began to walk out of the cemetery. Starfire looked back one last time at the grave of her friend and said a silent prayer for him to reach ascension in peace.

When the team got back to the tower they all split up and went to their own rooms, except for Starfire, who stayed in the living room to watch to rain fall against the windows. Starfire could hear music blasting in the other rooms, most likely Robin, trying to block the sound of his own sorrow. Starfire stood up and walked to the window so she could see the city, it looked cold and dull while the rain soaked its streets. Starfire let out a loud sigh, feeling too sad to cry.

Cyborg's reflection smiled back at her from the window. "I'm fine... don't worry." Cyborg's voice said. His voice sounded strange, like it wasn't meant to match his expression. Starfire turned around to see her friend, but found nothing but an empty room. Starfire sighed and went to the couch to sit down and think the whole situation through.

Starfire sat and thought until she could no longer hear the music coming from the other rooms. The others had all gone to bed and she was the only one left awake to mourn. Starfire got up and decided she may as well go to bed as well, but before she could leave the room she heard a strange noise. It was like a muted explosion, as though someone had put a pillow over her head before lighting the fuse to a heavy explosive. Starfire looked around quickly to find the source of the disturbing noise but she couldn't find anything. When Starfire heard the noise again she ran to Robin's room and knocked on the door quickly. "Robin, it is Starfire... I have an urgent question." Starfire said as she heard Robin getting up and moving around the room.

Robin opened his door and looked at Starfire with a tired expression. "What is it?" Robin asked in a yawn.

Starfire looked down the hallway, expecting to hear the noise again, but when it didn't come, she looked back at Robin. "I have been hearing strange noises... I am worried for the safety of our home." Starfire said, sounding serious.

Robin stood up straight and made himself seem as though he was no longer tired. "What kind of noise was it?" Robin asked, stepping out of his room.

Starfire waited to hear the noise again, hoping Robin could hear it for himself. "It sounded as though there was a battle somewhere in the tower... but it seems to have gone away." Starfire said with a shrug, not feeling like herself. "I'm sorry... I suppose I am merely tired."

Robin looked up at Starfire, he didn't look the same as he normally did. Starfire could see that Robin was sick over the loss of their friend, but he was trying to hide it. Robin continued to show a calm expression. "Don't worry about it Star... I think we could all use some rest." Robin said, his voice sounding empty.

Starfire sighed and nodded in agreement. "Perhaps you are right... I will go now." Starfire said before she wandered off to her room. Starfire didn't think it was going to be that simple though, she knew that she heard strange noises coming from somewhere in the tower. Starfire leaned against the wall and let the tears fall from her eyes, finally feeling the emotions inside overwhelm her. Starfire sat and hugged her knees as she let out her sadness in a stream of tears. She didn't know what to do, so Starfire just let herself cry until the sun rose to greet a new day.

4 - Acceptance

Chapter 4

Acceptance

Starfire went back to the living room after a few hours of crying, she felt sick and didn't look much better then that. The others were all gathered around the table, silently eating their breakfasts. Robin jabbed at his eggs with his fork, trying not to make eye contact with the others. Starfire noticed that the cast on Robin's arm was gone, she wondered if she had only imagined it being there. Beast Boy was oddly silent, he didn't even want to cheer up the others with a joke. Raven was wearing her hood differently, trying to hide her blood shot, tear filled eyes. Starfire sighed and watched the others for a moment, it wasn't long before the alarm sounded to call them to battle.

Starfire felt worried for her friends as she watched them run out the door to stop the bad guys. She could tell that none of them were in the right state of mind to fight at the moment. "Please, friends, we must be extra careful in battle today... It will be more difficult then usual." Starfire warned the team as they rushed toward the city.

Robin stopped and looked at Starfire. "Don't worry Star... it won't end the same way this time... I promise." Robin said before he jumped through a window leading into the jewelry that was being robbed.

A lanky thug was pilfering the shelves of all of their valuables, laughing as he watched them shine and sparkle. The lanky thug didn't notice the Titans over the noise from the alarm, it wasn't until he saw Robin's shadow looming over him that he turned to face them. "Only four a ya...? What happened to the big shiny guy?" The thug asked mockingly as he slowly edged toward the emergency exit.

Robin seemed to go crazy over the man's taunt, diving forward and talking the man to the ground. The thug screamed as Robin repeatedly pounded him with his fists. Robin didn't stop until the man stopped screaming and Starfire pulled Robin away. Starfire couldn't stop crying as she restrained Robin from attacking the badly injured burglar, she could see that Robin had broken the man's nose in several places and left the rest of his face horribly bruised. Raven went to help the man and make sure he would survive his trip to jail. "This is not the way we do things... If Cyborg were here..." Starfire began as she let go of Robin.

Robin turned his back on Starfire and walked out of the jewelry store. "Cyborg isn't here... he never will be again." Robin said coldly.

Beast Boy had been standing back, apparently afraid that something bad might happen if he interfered, but as he saw Robin walk out and leave Starfire to cry, he went over to comfort her. "Hey, come one

Star... you're supposed to be the cheery one, remember.” Beast Boy said, straining to sound lighthearted. Beast Boy knelt down beside Starfire and handed her one of the tissues he had been carrying since the funeral. Starfire looked up at Beast Boy and wrapped her arms around him tightly, crying loudly into his shoulder. Beast Boy put his arms around Starfire and held her gently to comfort her as she cried. “It will be hard for a while... but somehow... things will go back to the way they were.” Beast Boy said sounding as though he didn't believe in what he was saying. Beast Boy took a deep breath to keep from crying for just a little longer so he could say. “Cyborg would want us to stay positive... even though it might seem impossible.”

After returning to the tower, Beast Boy and Raven went back to their rooms, leaving Starfire and Robin alone in opposite sides of the living room. Starfire sat on the couch and looked out the window at the city, Robin sat next to the radio and listened to some music, both of them were completely silent. It seemed like hours of painful quiet to Starfire. Even though she could hear music, she felt as though she was deaf to the world. Starfire was hoping that Robin would say something, or at least do something besides sit next to the radio. Starfire jumped in surprise when Robin finally did do something, slamming his fist through the radio and driving the room into complete silence.

Robin looked over at Starfire, she looked frightened as she hid behind the couch. Robin looked as though he was trying to turn and run, but his legs wouldn't move. All Robin could do was fall to his knees and slam his fist on the floor. Starfire stood up and walked over to him, remembering the words Beast Boy had used to calm her earlier. “Robin... please do not cry.” Starfire said as she knelt down beside Robin. “It was one of Cyborg's wishes that we... remain positive.”

Robin was still for a second, quivering every couple of seconds from all of his pent up frustration and sadness. Starfire was surprised when Robin reached up and removed his mask to wipe away a few tears. Robin put the mask back on to hide his puffy, red eyes, and looked up at Starfire. “I'm sorry... I shouldn't have acted the way I did earlier.” Robin said in a shaky voice.

Starfire saw Robin differently now than she ever did before, he was so different now. Starfire had never seen these kinds of emotions from Robin and it made her realize that, even though he was a strong and brave leader of heroes, he was still young. “It is okay... anger is a common emotion to feel when dealing with the loss of a loved one.” Starfire said as she put her hand on Robin's shoulder.

Robin wrapped his arms around Starfire quickly and held on tight, as though he was afraid she would disappear. “He was my best friend... I didn't realize until now how much you all mean to me... Starfire... I...” Robin said, sound as though he was trying to gather his thoughts back together. “As soon as I heard that Cyborg was dead... I knew I would have to be more careful... I knew I would have to stop taking you for granted.” Robin said slowly before taking another deep breath and continued. “I'll never get a chance to tell Cyborg that he was like a brother to me. I'll never be able to let him know.” Robin suddenly looked into Starfire's eyes. “But I still have a chance to tell you... I have a chance to tell you that... I love you.”

5 - A living nightmare

Chapter 5

A living nightmare

Starfire was sitting on the roof of the tower, trying to put all of her thoughts together. Starfire had started hearing voices and the sounds of explosions immediately after Robin had expressed his feelings for her. The voices belonged to her friends, but it sounded as though they were fighting someone. Starfire was trying to deal with the thoughts of all the strange things she had noticed lately, but it seemed to be too much for her. Starfire wanted to go to her room and sleep, but for some reason she couldn't keep her eyes closed.

It was a while before Starfire noticed that someone was on the roof with her, waiting for her to pay attention to them. "You know what the trouble is with most people these days... they don't know how to listen." Said the familiar slow voice of The Sleeper.

Starfire turned and stood up to fight the drowsy villain, but hesitated when the thought that it could merely be her imagination crossed her mind. "You are deceased. You cannot be real." Starfire said out loud, as though to convince herself that it was just her mind laying tricks.

The Sleeper stepped forward. "Can't I? There is no reason I can't be as real as you just because I have supposedly died." The Sleeper said as he got closer to Starfire. "I just wanted to talk... I figure I owe you that much." Starfire flew forward, only to freeze as The Sleeper rose up his hand. Starfire struggled while suspended in the air. "I've learned a few new tricks... you'd be surprised what can happen to a guy when he comes back from the dead." The Sleeper said mockingly.

Starfire cursed at The Sleeper in Tameranian, then gave up and took a deep breath. "What do you want with me? Why did you bother coming back?" Starfire asked through grinding teeth.

The Sleeper set Starfire down slowly. "I came back because I wasn't able to finish my job the first time we met... And what I want you to do is sit back and watch while I destroy the rest of your friends." The Sleeper said with a smile. "I think I'll start with the green one... no... I know who to get rid of first." The sleeper muttered, grinning sinisterly. "The leader... the one you fancy."

Starfire gasped and began to struggle again. "No! You will leave us in peace! I will stop you from causing any more harm to my friends!" Starfire shouted as she broke free of The Sleeper's control and punched him off the roof. The Sleeper screamed as he began to fall only to chock slightly as Starfire grabbed him by the collar of his shirt. "I do not want to see you ever again! Leave here at once!" Starfire demanded as she threw The Sleeper out to sea.

The Sleeper laughed as he flew away, seeming happy about angering Starfire. "I admire your optimism... but it won't be enough to end this nightmare!" The Sleeper called out just before hitting the water's surface.

Starfire flew back inside and locked the door behind her, now fearing that her friends might be in danger. Starfire reflected on the words of The Sleeper, his choice of words made her thoughts even more frantic. "*I have been seeing strange things lately... could it all be a dream?*" Starfire asked herself before she bumped into Robin. Starfire just stood and stared at Robin for a while, not sure what to think at the moment. Everything seemed so vivid and real, it couldn't possibly be something as simple as a dream. She could still feel pain, she could still feel the world around her as it went on living. There was something strange about this world, but it was as real as it had ever been.

Starfire reached out her hand and slowly ran her fingers across Robin's forehead, making sure he was actually standing in front of her. "Are you... feeling alright?" Robin asked as he took Starfire's outstretched hand and held it gently in his own. "You look as though you've just seen a ghost."

Starfire felt a warm tear run down the side of her face, she couldn't stand to lose another friend. "The Sleeper is alive... he has manipulated us in to thinking that he had been destroyed so that he could surprise us and destroy us one by one." Starfire said, her voice shaking. "I am afraid... he has already taken one friend away... I do not want him to take any more." Starfire said as she stepped forward and hugged Robin.

Robin hugged Starfire hesitantly, apparently taken aback by her news. "He's still alive?" Robin asked slowly, pondering the words in his head. "How do you know this?" Robin asked as he gently pushed Starfire to arm's length.

Starfire looked into Robin's masked eyes. Although Robin's eyes were covered, Starfire could still see the concern behind them. "I saw him on the roof... he told me this himself." Starfire said, trying to stop the tears.

Robin turned around to go to the operations room as soon as Starfire stopped talking, but she grabbed his hand and pulled him back. "You said that you loved me earlier... please stay with me and let me know that you are out of the path of danger." Starfire pleaded quietly. "The last few days have been confusing and frightening... I don't want it to get any worse."

Robin looked down at her and wrapped his arms around her. "I'm sorry Starfire... I don't think things will ever go back to the way they were." Robin said sounding slightly cold to Starfire's emotions. "The best we can do is stop The Sleeper from doing any more." Robin looked into Starfire's eyes and tried to look confident in the words he spoke.

Starfire nodded and looked toward the operations room. "We should hurry then... there is no telling how much time we could have." Starfire said, but she was interrupted by the sound of a cry of pain.

6 - Waking Up

Chapter 6

Waking up

Starfire and Robin rushed to see who cried out and saw Beast Boy lying face down on the floor in his room. "Beast Boy!" Robin shouted as he rushed to see if Beast Boy was alright. Robin turned Beast Boy over so he was lying on his back, Beast Boy was limp and showed no signs of consciousness. There was a small mark on Beast Boy's neck, it looked as though he had just been given a shot.

Starfire got closer slowly, fearing the worst. Robin felt for Beast Boy's pulse for a few seconds, but silently stood up and walked out of the room. "He's here... we have to get to him now!" Robin said as he walked. Robin took out his communicator and turned it on. "Raven, be on guard for an attack. We've got an intruder." Robin said quickly as he rushed to the operations room.

Starfire stared quietly at Beast boy before hurrying to catch up to Robin, she swore that he would not meet the same end. Starfire was mad, almost blinded by her hatred of the villain who was taking away her friends. Starfire's hatred was made worse when The Sleeper's smug voice came across Robin's communicator. "It isn't nice to spread rumors about someone behind their back... I had to teach your pale friend that the hard way." The Sleeper said with a laugh. He kept laughing for several seconds before clearing his throat and regaining his composure. "Give a message to your pretty red headed friend, will you kid." The Sleeper said to Robin, acting as though they were friends. "Tell her I said that she should not fear anything I do from here on out... because you're going to finish her off for me." The Sleeper said before laughing again.

Robin threw the communicator at the wall and shattered it into pieces, then he turned to Starfire. "I promise that I will end this... he's going to pay for his crimes." Robin said as he clenched his fist. "We'll get through this no matter what!"

Starfire looked into Robin's eyes one more time before she took a deep breath and went to look for The Sleeper. "This will be my fight... You have to go find help." Starfire demanded as she walked through the hall. Starfire didn't wait to hear Robin's comments, she wanted to make The Sleeper suffer for what he had done and nothing was going to stop her.

Starfire walked to the operations room and went to the table. "If you wish to destroy me, come and face me." She said, knowing that The Sleeper was listening somewhere close by.

The Sleeper's laughter filled the room. "You must not have heard my message, I'm not the one you should be afraid of." He said as he stopped laughing. "I've got others to do my dirty work now."

Starfire looked around the room and tried to locate the origin of the sound, but was instead confronted by a large attacker. "This will not be enough to stop me! When I'm done with him, I'm coming after you!" Starfire shouted as she charged the attacker. Starfire jumped into the air and formed a star bolt in her hand. Starfire was ready to punch straight through the attacker, but she had to stop when she saw who it was. "No... you can't... but how?" Starfire said as the voices and strange noises flooded her mind again.

Cyborg stood over Starfire and watched her with a blank expression. The voices that she was hearing sounded more desperate, as though they were losing the fight and needed help. Starfire looked up at Cyborg and saw him pointing his sonic cannon at her. "I have my own ways of doing things... but it was quite difficult to get your friend moving again after I hit him with my death sleep powder." The Sleeper said, sounding as though he was explaining a science fair project. "Tell me something... would you be able to watch your friend die again?" The Sleeper asked slowly, sounding like he wanted Starfire to carefully think about her situation. "If you don't fight, you die... if you do, your friend will die."

Starfire was sitting and listening to the strange voices that were flooding her mind, they needed help. Starfire didn't know if what she was seeing was real, she didn't think it really mattered anymore. Starfire stood up and punched the arm that held Cyborg's sonic canon. With her star bolt, the punch was powerful enough to shatter the arm. "This can't be the real Cyborg... He would never be manipulated like this!" Starfire shouted as she punched Cyborg across the room. "You can't fight me using this imposter!"

The Sleeper stepped in to the room and shook his head. "This boy is Cyborg, you know it to be the truth... Maybe I did underestimate the limit of your strength." The Sleeper said as he handed Cyborg a replacement arm. "Maybe your other friends will help."

Just as The Sleeper finished speaking, Beast Boy and Raven rushed at into the room and attacked Starfire. Beast Boy transformed into a Kodiak bear and slashed at Starfire with his massive claws. Starfire tried to block the attack but found that she was unable to move, Raven was holding Starfire's arms with a strong dark aura. Starfire was smacked into the large window overlooking the city, leaving a large crack in the spot where she hit. Starfire tried to stand up, but Cyborg ran up to her and punched her back to the floor.

Starfire felt dizzy, her entire body felt heavy, she could barely keep her eyes open any longer. The voices that filled the room began to get quieter and began to sound distant. Starfire closed her eyes and tried to focus on the sound of the voices, they belonged to her friends, they were fighting someone. Starfire opened her eyes again and saw Robin trying to fight The Sleeper. Cyborg, Beast Boy, and Raven were standing over Starfire, about to finish her off. "Starfire!" Robin shouted, trying to get past The Sleeper to help her.

Robin jumped over The Sleeper and tried to run to Starfire but was hit by a sack of sand The Sleeper threw. Robin's body froze up and he fell to the ground. Starfire couldn't do anything but watch as everything happened. No matter how hard she tried, Starfire couldn't move. Starfire's three former comrades stood over her, all readying their final attack. Starfire closed her eyes and listened to the voices of her friends get farther and farther. "This isn't real... none of this can be the truth." Starfire said to herself in a sigh.

Just as Starfire finished speaking, she heard on of the far away voices of her friends calling out to her. It

was hard to distinguish what any of the voices were saying but she understood most of what was said. "Starfire! Starfire, please wake up." Robin's voice called out. Starfire could hear the tone of panic in Robin's voice, she could instantly tell that he needed her.

Starfire opened her eyes and the tower, her friends, and The Sleeper were all gone. The only thing left was a white room and Robin, who was lying on the floor across from her. "Robin!" Starfire called out, tears running down her cheek. Starfire dragged herself over to Robin, feeling a strange numbness all over her body. "Robin... What is happening to us?" Starfire asked as she collapsed next to Robin.

Robin looked at Starfire and smiled at her, his voice called out to her again. Robin sounded more desperate now. Starfire felt very confused as she looked at the person in front of her. "It's time to wake up Starfire... everyone needs you." Robin said as he reached over and ran his hand along Starfire's cheek to wipe away the tears.

Starfire began to understand everything that had been happening to her lately, a mix of many powerful emotions began to overwhelm her. "What should I do... how can I wake up?" Starfire asked through the tears.

Robin smiled. "Follow the voices of your friends, they will lead you back." Robin said as his image began to fade.

Starfire smiled and leaned closer to Robin, kissing him softly as he disappeared and left her alone with the voices. The voices were getting loud again. "Don't worry... I'm on my way." Starfire said as she closed her eyes and focused on the voices until she was certain she was right next to them.

When Starfire opened her eyes again she saw that Robin was crying over her, she could tell that he thought she was dead. "Robin... I'm okay." Starfire said in a whisper.

Robin looked up and was silent for a moment before he hugged Starfire. "I thought you weren't going to wake up... I thought I lost you." Robin said as he hugged Starfire.

Starfire hugged Robin for a moment before she remembered The Sleeper. "Is the fight over... are we victorious?" Starfire asked as she stood up to look around.

Robin shook his head. "No, the others are still fighting." Robin said, just before Starfire went to find out what was happening.

Starfire looked down at Robin. "Stay here, I'm going to end this fight." Starfire said forcefully as she walked away. Starfire saw The Sleeper fending off the others, he looked smug and proud of himself. "Cyborg, Raven, Beast Boy, look out!" Starfire shouted as she focused all of her anger and strength into her hands and shot a giant star bolt at The Sleeper. "I will not let you hurt anyone else, not now, not ever again!" Starfire shouted as her star bolt sent The Sleeper through a wall.

There was a moment of silence as everyone looked from the smoking hole in the wall, where The Sleeper was, to Starfire. "Whoa... nice shot." Beast Boy said to break the silence.

After the police had arrived to take The Sleeper to prison, the Titans all gathered outside the bank to

talk. "You dreamed all that in only ten seconds?" Raven asked, sounding amazed. "I knew I felt something strange... but I didn't think it was anything like that."

Cyborg looked put his hand on Starfire's shoulder and smiled. "There's no need to worry now." Cyborg said as he flexed his arm. "You know I'm too tough to be hurt by a wimp like The Sleeper." Cyborg said confidently.

Starfire hugged Cyborg, then Raven and Beast Boy, feeling glad her friends were safe. Then Starfire walked over to Robin, who seemed to want to hide his face from the others. "I'm glad you're safe Starfire. I don't know what..." Robin began, but was interrupted when Starfire grabbed his arm.

Starfire gave Robin a quick kiss on the cheek. "Thanks for leading me back." Starfire said, smiling brightly.

Robin blushed and looked away. "I'm glad you're safe." Robin said quietly. Starfire giggled and pulled led Robin over to the others.

Beast Boy took a deep breath. "Well, since breakfast was interrupted... how about I treat us all to pizza?" Beast Boy said, smiling at the others.

Cyborg jumped over to Beast Boy and tossed him on to his shoulder. "Let's go!" Cyborg said enthusiastically as he began to run off toward the pizza place. Raven sighed and walked after them.

Robin began to walk after them but stopped to look back at Starfire. "Are you okay?" Robin asked cautiously.

Starfire smiled and began to walk after them. "I'm fine Robin." She said comfortingly. Starfire took a deep breath and looked around at all her friends and felt a tear run down her cheek. Starfire wiped away the tear, she couldn't help but feel overwhelming joy from seeing everything go back to normal. Starfire was relieved to get a second chance at her perfect day, she ran over to Robin and took his arm so she could lead him over to the others.

The warm afternoon lingered for hours as the Teen Titans had fun and protected the town together as friends. The warm air cooled as the sun set and Titans went home to the giant T shaped tower. That night Starfire slept and dreamed that the next day would truly be perfect.

The End