

# **GINGER AND CHASE** *ACROSS* **TIME AND SPACE**

**An Intergalactic Adventure  
By Tyler J. Rinne**

## **Cast of Characters** in order of appearance

Ginger	Buster Crab
Chase	Wormie
Old Lady	Plantoid 1
Rae	Plantoid 2
Bradd	Plantoid 3
Bari	Plantoid 4
Billy Tesla	Fran the Fern
The Gatekeeper	Ralph McRockQuarry
Sludge	The Tormento
Iolite	Florence
Ken Ada	Bambar
Tet Susan	Larry
Biblio.Tech.A	Granny Garbage
Biblio.Tech.B	Halitosis 9000
Jones	Queen Glean
Batty Roy	

## **Extras** in order of appearance

Garage Sale Patrons  
Liebrary Denizens  
Space Junk  
Plantoids  
Moon Rakers  
Asteroids  
Galactic Garage Sale Workers  
Galactic Garage Sale Patrons

# Act One - Scene One

## The Garage Sale

*(Folding tables and cardboard boxes full of junk and old clothes sit on a driveway at the end of a cul-de-sac. A sign stuck in the grass reads "Garage Sale." GINGER, a middle-school girl, mans the cash box, on her phone. Her younger brother, CHASE, plays in a large Space Saver cardboard box, pretending it's a ship adrift on the sea. An OLD LADY browses.)*

CHASE: Hoist the mainsail and man the jack-block, men! Those masts won't raise themselves! *(He spins an imaginary wheel.)* Cap'n Chase's at the helm and I'll be a scurvy dog if any one of these seven seas gets the best of me! *(Beat.)* I said "I'll be a scurvy dog!" Ginger, that's your cue.

GINGER: *(Not looking up from her phone.)* What?

CHASE: That's when you're supposed to splash the water.

GINGER: *(Throws a cup of water in CHASE'S direction, but it's empty. She sets the cup back down, still just looking at her phone.)* I drank it.

CHASE: *(Sighs deeply, gets up, grabs the cup, fills it from a large orange jug, sets it back next to his sister, gets back in the box.)* I'll be a scurvy dog if any one of these seven seas gets the best of me, men! *(GINGER takes a sip, sets it back down.)* Ginger, you promised you'd play!

GINGER: I changed my mind. *(Sips, then pours it out.)* Ugh. It's hot.

CHASE: But you promised. No take-backs. *(GINGER ignores him.)* Back to your bunks, mates. Looks like the storm's passed. All clear.

*(Three figures in trench coats and hats, RAE, BRADD, and BARI, enter. The disguises hide that they are aliens called Gleaners. They greet CHASE as someone buys something from GINGER.)*

RAE: Good afternoon, young human.

BRADD: We hope you are well doing on this day!

BARI: Are these junks all of *your* wondrous junks? (*CHASE, unbearably shy around strangers, only shrugs.*) Excuse us, young human, we don't mean to put scares in you.

BRADD: Not! We are simply three (*Looks at a note on his palm.*) humans in search of excellent green collectible things!

BARI: We see that you have many. If they do not belong to you, perhaps can we speak to who has these many things, please?

RAE: Yes, please and thanks you, please!

*(CHASE sinks into the box. The Gleaners look to one another, confused. They argue, each thinking that the other has said something wrong. GINGER notices them, sighs deeply and comes over.)*

GINGER: Can I help you?

RAE: Yes, please and thanks you! One-ly: we fear we have made the young human melt! Two-ly: are you the owner of these wonderful amazing things that we see all around us at this time now?

GINGER: He didn't melt. He's just weird. And scared of people.

BARI: Oh! Ha-ha! But we are not *people*, we are— (*RAE and BRAD nudge him.*) We *are* people but we are not for scaring, we are for happy.

BRADD: Yes, happy! Have: would you like soda?

*(BRADD offers GINGER a can of soda from his trench coat.)*

GINGER: (*Not taking it.*) This isn't my stuff. Or my brother's stuff. It's my parents'. If you have questions, they're back there. In the garden.

RAE: Thanks you!

BRADD: Yes, please and thanks you! Have soda please?

*(The GLEANERS scurry off to the backyard.)*

GINGER: (*Kicking CHASE'S box.*) You *can* talk, can't you?

CHASE: ...Yes.

GINGER: Then you can talk to people that aren't me or Mom or Dad. (*CHASE is silent. GINGER'S phone dings with an incoming text. She starts to read it, but notices something in CHASE'S box.*) Hey, move it.

CHASE: No.

GINGER: Move it, *please*. (*GINGER reaches into the box and pulls out a small pair of gardening shears, some yellowed paperbacks, and a little telescope.*) This is my *stuff*. Mom and Dad are selling my *stuff*?

CHASE: They're just old toys.

GINGER: They're getting *rid* of all this? Without even *asking* me? (*To CHASE.*) Get out of there! You're smashing it! (*CHASE climbs out. GINGER storms away, violently typing on her phone.*) Unbelievable!

*(A young man in space cop uniform rushes on, his eyes glued to a communicator on his wrist. He is BILLY TESLA, Space Ace in Training. He and GINGER collide and fall to the ground.)*

GINGER/BILLY: Watch where you're going!

*(BILLY realizes he's knocked down a girl about his age. He scrambles to his feet, offers his hand. Unnoticed is the small device, a Teleportation Tracer, that has fallen from his belt to the pavement.)*

BILLY: Sizzling shooting stars! I'm sorry! *Ahem.* (*HE extends a hand to help her up.*) I offer my assistance.

GINGER: (*Getting up, ignoring his hand.*) I'm *fine*. (*Looks him up and down.*) You're a little early for Halloween, aren't you, Buck Lightyear?

BILLY: Early for...? Miss, this is the official uniform of the Space Aces, the premiere law enforcement agency of the *galaxy*! Officer Billy Tesla at your service.

GINGER: Where's your badge?

BILLY: (*Beat.*) I haven't earned it yet.

GINGER: *Whatever*, just— (*Turning away, glancing at her phone.*) Ugh! You scratched my screen!

BILLY: I am on the trail of three highly dangerous criminals wanted across innumerable star systems. If there is *any* information— (*An enormous white flash explodes from the backyard.*) Zipping zephyrs! It's them!

*(BILLY runs off, leaving GINGER and CHASE alone and confused. The OLD LADY totters up and, with much effort, picks up the Teleportation Tracer. She shows it to GINGER.)*

OLD LADY: Excuse me, dearie, but how much for this toothbrush? (*She turns to CHASE.*) Little girl, how much for this toothbrush? (*CHASE is*

*too shy to answer. The OLD LADY digs out a coin purse, hands GINGER money.) Here is a nickel for this toothbrush.*

*(The OLD LADY exits, BILLY enters, out of breath.)*

BILLY: *(To CHASE.)* What was in your backyard? *(To GINGER.)* What was in your backyard? Because there's *nothing* in it now.

GINGER: But—what? My parents were back there...

BILLY: There's no time to explain, but it appears that your mother and father have been spirited away or “gleaned” by a parasitic alien race known as the Gleaners. Don't worry: Billy Tesla, Space Ace, is on the case.

GINGER: I thought you didn't have time to explain!

CHASE: Mom and Dad?

BILLY: My Teleportation Tracer can lock onto their signal. It's lucky I was here to... *(BILLY reaches for the Tracer, but it's gone.)* Blistering black holes, where's my—? Did you see my—? *(He spots the Space Saver box.)* Ah! Citizens, I'll need to commandeer this Space Saver for the good of the galaxy. *(BILLY hops into the box and begins flipping invisible switches. It hums to life. CHASE jumps in with BILLY.)* I'll track them down...all the way across Outer Space!

GINGER: What is going on? *(She rushes to the box.)* Chase, you can't go into Outer Space! *(To BILLY.)* And you can't go into Outer Space! Not in a cardboard box!

BILLY: This is a Space Saver, miss. Of course it can go into Outer Space. Now kindly remove this young man from the spacecraft.

GINGER: *(Grabbing CHASE, shouting to the backyard.)* Mom! Dad!

BILLY: Liftoff initiated. Please stand back.

GINGER: Nothing's happening! Chase—out!

BILLY: Countdown to liftoff: five, four...

GINGER: We are literally just sitting on the sidewalk!

BILLY: Three, two...

*(An enormous blast rockets down the block as everything flashes brilliant white and then cuts immediately to black. GINGER and CHASE have begun their journey across time and space!)*

# Act One - Scene Two

## Outer Space I

*(Stars wink and galaxies pulse with purple-blue life behind GINGER, CHASE, and BILLY. They bob across the endless ocean of Outer Space in the commandeered Space Saver cardboard box.)*

BILLY: *(Patting the “dash” of the Space Saver.)* Nice ride. Steering’s a little sticky...when’s the last time you took this girl around the block?

GINGER: What’s. Happening.

BILLY: I’m catching criminals and becoming a full-fledged Space Ace. You two *shouldn’t* be here, that’s clear. I must request that you stay back there and, *ahem*, remain silent. It’s too late to turn back now.

GINGER: *(Suddenly grasping her throat.)* How are we breathing?

BILLY: Like this: *(He breathes in and out a couple times.)* Now, if you please. *(Turns to GINGER, shushes her.)* I should still be able to lock into the Gleaner’s energy signal...

*(BILLY looks at his communicator. His divided attention causes the Space Saver to drift off course, which he hastily corrects.)*

GINGER: *(Pinching herself.)* Ow. *(Pinching again.)* Ow. *(To CHASE.)* Pinch me. *(He does.)* Ow! Okay. We’re in Outer Space. My parents have been...abducted by...

BILLY: *(Not looking, drifting again.)* Gleaners.

GINGER: By space aliens...and they’re taking them *where*?

BILLY: *(Looks up, corrects their path with a bigger jerk than before.)* The Gleaners don’t have a homeworld. Maybe they did at one point, but they don’t anymore. It’s because they can’t stop *collecting*.

GINGER: Collecting? You mean *people*?

BILLY: No, *that's* a new one. Usually it's just stuff. *All* of the stuff. They move from planet to planet, filling them up with *junk* until they're no more than big, cluttered...curios. Once a planet's full, they move on, repeat, repeat, repeat. Pollution by accumulation, see?

GINGER: But why would they—?

BILLY: Need all that stuff? I don't know. Looking for *something*, I guess. Probably Beanie Babies. They do love Beanie Babies.

GINGER: Why would they take Mom and Dad?

BILLY: They must've seen all the junk at your garage sale, figured your folks were rich or fellow *treasure hunters*. Maybe they're taking them back to their current home planet to, I don't know, talk shop?

GINGER: What happens when the...*Gleaners*...realize they're *not* any of those things?

BILLY: (*Pretending to throw trash out of a car window.*) The Gleaners are also notorious *litterbugs*. (*BILLY glances down at his communicator, accidentally jerking the Space Saver to the side.*) Gah! I've lost the trace! This is why you two were supposed to stay *quiet*. Okay. Plan B. If *we* don't know where the Gleaners are heading, we'll find someone who does. (*Punches buttons on the dash.*) Rerouting.

GINGER: Where are we going?

BILLY: To one of the most dangerous places in the galaxy—a hive of secrets and thieves, rumors and information. A place we *really* shouldn't be. You ready?

GINGER: (*Considers, then smiles for the first time today.*) Ready.



# Act One - Scene Three

## The Barnes & Nebula System

*(GINGER, CHASE, and BILLY arrive at their destination: a planet-sized library in the Barnes & Nebula System. Rows and rows of books tower over them, fading into the foggy haze above. Birds nest in the shelves, cawing. Enormous ladders cling to the stacks, dangling discarded carabiners, dotted with vines and moss. It is an amazing sight to behold, but also somehow threatening. A sign above a gap in the shelving reads “LIEBRARY.” It is guarded by a bookish thug, the GATEKEEPER.)*

GINGER: *(Unimpressed.)* A library?

BILLY: Not just a library. The Barnes and Nebula System is *the* library: an entire ecosystem of stories and secrets. We're headed in *there*.

*(He points to the opening guarded by the GATEKEEPER.)*

GINGER: The *Lie*-brary. Cute. What's with Mr. Chuckles?

BILLY: That's the Gatekeeper. I'll deal with him. If he catches you saying something that *isn't the truth*, he'll look it up and lock you up. And here the prison sentences run on and on and on...

*(BILLY strides up to the GATEKEEPER, leaving GINGER and CHASE behind. CHASE eats from a bag of cookies he brought.)*

CHASE: Can I pick out a book?

GINGER: I left my library card in my other *galaxy*, kiddo. Come on.

BILLY: *(To GATEKEEPER.)* Billy Tesla. Space Ace. Please step aside.

GATEKEEPER: I'm afraid, good sir, I doth protest. One does not find your pressed lapel to be adorned with any sort of glistening signal of out-and-out authority. *(BILLY doesn't get it.)* Where's your badge?

BILLY: I haven't earned it yet. Now move—this is urgent.

*(The GATEKEEPER easily knocks BILLY to the ground. CHASE tries to help him up, but BILLY refuses his hand.)*

GINGER: *(To GATEKEEPER.)* Okay. You caught us, buddy. This guy? He's not a Space Ace. Never will be.

BILLY: Hey!

GINGER: But us? We're with the Grammar Police. Undercover.

GATEKEEPER: Perchance you possess yon credentials? Only then would this stoic Gatekeeper be permitted—

GINGER: You don't need to see my credentials. Not the credentials of a Caption Captain. Call headquarters. *They'll* tell you who I am. Move.

*(CHASE and BILLY look nervously on as GINGER taps an impatient foot. The GATEKEEPER steps aside. GINGER, CHASE, and BILLY enter the Liebrary. Tattered books, depressed lamps, and suspicious eyes make up this landscape.)*

BILLY: You *lied*.

GINGER: It's in the *title* of the place. Why *wouldn't* I lie?

BILLY: Because I told you not to.

GINGER: *Keep* telling me not to things. See where *that* gets you.

BILLY: *I'm* here to talk to one of *my* informants. *(GINGER mimes zipping her lip.)* Thank you. The guy we're going to talk to is a Pudge, an alien race that values one's *worth* in one's *weight*. As far as Pudges go, he is grotesquely skinny, so don't stare or...*comment* on it. Okay?

GINGER: *("Unzipping.")* Okay.

*(She "zips" her lips again.)*

BILLY: *(Leading them deeper into the Liebrary.)* A couple other things to watch out for: Biblio.Techs, the robot watchdogs of the library. And Bookworms. *(They come to the table where SLUDGE sits. He is slumped down, feet propped up, hat over his three eyes, asleep.)* Wake up, Sludge!

SLUDGE: Hey! What's the big idea?! Oh. Billy-boy. What's shakin'?

BILLY: I need some information, Sludge.

SLUDGE: *(Eating snacks.)* Eh. That's all you *ever* want. Who're *they*?

BILLY: Their parents were kidnapped by Gleaners. Heard anything about it, or where they're making their home these days?

SLUDGE: Gleaners? Kidnapping? That's a new one.

BILLY: That's what I said.

SLUDGE: Then why'd you need to hear *me* say it? I was sleepin'. You got anything to eat?

BILLY: If you've got something to say.

*(CHASE offers SLUDGE his cookies. BILLY protests, SLUDGE takes a handful.)*

SLUDGE: Thanks, kid. *(Stuffing cookies in his mouth.)* What's your name, huh? *(CHASE doesn't answer. SLUDGE laughs.)* Smart kid! Loose lips sink spaceships, right? The name's Sludge. Your parents went missing, huh? Forget about 'em. You're better off anyhow.

BILLY: Sludge!

SLUDGE: What? It's the truth. What'd family ever get me except a nickname? "The Skinny Pudge," that's what they called me. Too thin to fit in. Feh. Who needs 'em? Buncha' fatties, anyway. Wouldn't be like 'em if I could. *(BILLY smirks at him. SLUDGE scowls.)* Ah, get outta' here, huh? I lost my appetite.

*(SLUDGE goes back to his table, tips his hat over his eyes.)*

BILLY: Y'know...Sludge...I saw a funny thing the other day...

SLUDGE: What'd you do, look in a mirror?

BILLY: Security footage. Bing the Bottomless's Seafood Buffet. You know the place? Couple systems over, just behind the StarMart. Anyway, some...*scrawny guy* broke in during the night, gorged himself, didn't even bother to leave a tip...

SLUDGE: Aw, get outta here, wouldja?! I'm tryin' to sleep!

BILLY: *(Backing away.)* Okay, Sludge. Okay.

*(BILLY walks away, followed by GINGER and CHASE.)*

SLUDGE: *(To himself.)* Bigger pain in my eye than your *mom* ever was...

BILLY: *(Stopping.)* What'd you say?

SLUDGE: I said you're even worse than you're big-time, big-hero Space Ace *mommy*, Billy-Boy, that's what I said! Now your dad...I liked *him*.

Good guy. Well, not *good*, really, but more in line with my, ah, particular point of *view*, you know what I mean?

BILLY: (*Suppressing anger, to GINGER.*) Maybe I can find some information in the Deep Stacks. Wait here.

SLUDGE: (*Calling after BILLY, who storms off.*) Where you goin', Billy-boy? Thought you wanted me to *talk*, huh?

(*SLUDGE cackles, putting his feet up. Two huge robots, BIBLIO.TECH.A and BIBLIO.TECH.B, flank SLUDGE.*)

BIBLIO.TECH.A: Quiet, please. First warning. Additional warnings will result in...cancellation.

SLUDGE: (*Draping his hat over his eyes again.*) Alright, alright. Just trying to get a little shut-eyes, buddy.

BIBLIO.TECH.B: Fragment. Consider revising.

SLUDGE: (*Whispering.*) Leave. Me. Alone.

(*The BIBLIO.TECHS exits. GINGER and CHASE sit at a table.*)

CHASE: This place is cool, huh?

GINGER: (*Sarcastically, on her phone.*) Yeah. The *best*.

CHASE: Do you think they have any books on boats? I've read everything in *our* library.

GINGER: (*Phone to ear.*) I don't know. (*Beat.*) Don't go look.

CHASE: But—! What're you doing?

GINGER: Calling Mom. (*She listens.*) No service. Maybe I can *text* her.

(*She types on her phone. CHASE slumps down.*)

CHASE: Billy will find them.

GINGER: That guy couldn't find Earth if he was standing on it.

CHASE: Was that robot back there a Biblio.Tech? I bet it was. (*GINGER shrugs.*) Billy said to look out for Bookworms, too. Wonder what *those* are?

GINGER: (*Turning away, with finality.*) I don't know, Chase. Okay?

CHASE: We're in a library! I'll look it up! (*CHASE moves to a dark section of the Liebrary. He scans the shelves closely, then pulls out a*

*book and reads.)* Let's see...Beanie Babies...Big Bang Button...Bookworms! "Distant, nerdier relatives of the Shai-Hulud...frequently found in old books...entering their victim's ear, Bookworms eat, digest and regurgitate their host's "story," leaving the host "blank" and producing one nicely hardbound book. Gross. And cool. I gotta tell Ginger.

*(Teasing laughter echoes CHASE'S way. He ducks behind a stack of books as IOLITE, a purple-skinned girl, enters, followed by two bullies, KEN ADA and TET SUSAN.)*

KEN ADA: Nah, she's got too many eyes!

TET SUSAN: And I don't see no horn, neither!

KEN ADA: Why don't you fly, little purple people eater?

IOLITE: I know not what you speak of. Please leave me be and I will continue on my way.

TET SUSAN: Oh, she talks *pretty*, don't she, Ken?

KEN ADA: Indeed she do, Tet! Indeed she *do*!

TET SUSAN: I think all these books are making her *too* smart. *(Knocks them out of IOLITE'S hands.)* Whoops!

*(IOLITE bends to pick up a book, but KEN ADA kicks it away.)*

KEN ADA: Whoa! Things've got a mind of their own, huh? *(IOLITE reaches again. KEN ADA kicks again.)* Slippery! Watch out!

*(KEN ADA kicks the book over by CHASE, who shrinks away, scared he might be seen. IOLITE reaches for the book and KEN ADA kicks her into CHASE'S cover, scattering the books and revealing him.)*

IOLITE: *(To CHASE.)* Oof! Oh, excuse me...

TET SUSSAN: Welllllll...who's *this*, then?

KEN ADA: Little spy? Little spy spying on old Ken Ada and Tet Susan and their new purple friend?

TET SUSAN: *(Gesturing threateningly.)* Like what you see, little spy?

KEN ADA: *(Advancing on CHASE.)* Let's give ya a better *look*, huh?

IOLITE: Leave him be, *please*.

*(The bullies walk past IOLITE. CHASE runs. They chase CHASE. IOLITE hesitates a moment, then goes after chases CHASE too. The*

*focus shifts back to GINGER, sitting alone at her table. She throws her phone onto the table. Moping, she flips through a nearby book.)*

GINGER: Hey, I used to read these! *(Flipping pages.)* Man, I was such a nerd. *(Reading.)* Oh, I remember this part! *(Turns the page, recoils in disgust.)* Oh! Gross! *(She throws the book down. Beat. GINGER opens the book, peers into it.)* What a disgusting little...worm! Gross...but cool. I think it's still *alive*. *(She plucks out a writhing green Bookworm from the volume.)* Hey Chase, look at this thing. Chase?

*(CHASE is gone. She starts to stand up, but is pushed back down into her chair by the just-arrived GATEKEEPER.)*

GATEKEEPER: The Gatekeeper would share in parlay with you.

GINGER: *(Chuckling nervously.)* That's okay, I'm not really hungry.

GATEKEEPER: Upon investigation, mine eyes and ears were alerted to the lack of humans on the payroll of the Galactic Grammar Police, much less ones of such small stature. An appropriate punishment shall be meted out in due course. Come with me, to yon Dungeon of Purple Prose and Past Participles. *(He notices the Bookworm.)* Lo! Behold! Yon grubby Bookworm betwixt yon grubby fingers! *(Shouting.)* Gird your minds and steel your girders, my fellowship of library-goers! A Bookworm abounds and a child is its bearer! Summon the Biblio.Tech bots to bring them asunder, posthaste!

*(Alarms wail and red lights flash. Library patrons flee.)*

GINGER: It's just a little...worm? *(Suddenly, the worm takes control of GINGER'S hand, writhing, trying to burrow into her ear. GINGER fights it off.)* No, get away from me! Stop it! *(GINGER falls onto the table. She grabs her possessed wrist with her other hand, barely holding it at bay. CHASE and IOLITE run on, pursued by TET SUSAN and KEN ADA)* Chase! Chase, help me! Get a...*flyswatter* or something!

*(CHASE and IOLITE slide under GINGER'S table. TET SUSAN and KEN ADA hit the table, smashing down on top of GINGER and crushing the Bookworm between them! All three sit up, looking down at the green goo they're now covered in.)*

GINGER/TET SUSAN/KEN ADA: *Yeerk!*

*(TET SUSAN and KEN ADA turn their fury to GINGER. She rolls off of the table, landing next to CHASE, just as the bullies slam hardbound books down where her head used to be. BILLY runs on,*

*an old black book under his arm, pursued by BIBLIO.TECH.A and BIBLIO.TECH.B. He screeches to a halt.)*

BILLY: Billy Tesla, Space Ace. What seems to be the trouble?

GINGER: I think it's us.

*(The BIBLIO.TECHS flank our heroes. TET SUSAN and KEN ADA scramble over the table, holding books like weapons.)*

TET SUSAN: Get back here!

KEN ADA: We ain't done with you yet!

BIBLIO.TECH.A: Bookend maneuver.

BIBLIO.TECH.B: Engage.

*(With a mechanical whistle, the two robots charge. BILLY pulls CHASE and GINGER out of the way, leaving the two bullies to be smashed. All four of them collapse in a heap.)*

BILLY: Ha ha! I think we're *overdue* for a change of scenery. *(Waits for a response, doesn't get one.)* Get it? "Overdue"?

GINGER: I get it. I just chose to ignore it. Let's go.

*(GINGER, CHASE, and BILLY, followed by IOLITE, exit. SLUDGE slinks back on, watching them go.)*

SLUDGE: *(Into wrist communicator.)* Yeah, connect me to Jonesy. Tell her I *found* one.

*(SLUDGE follows after.)*

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***Hey! That's not the end of the script!***

***Want to read more? [Contact the author!](#)***

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