

Chapter 1: Interesting Times

My best friend, Ostin Liss, told me that there is an ancient Chinese curse that says:

MAY YOU LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES

My name is Michael Vey, and I'm definitely living in interesting times. Just a year ago that wasn't true. In fact, my life was about as exciting as one of Ostin's clogging recitals. I was just an average, no-name freshman at Meridian High School in Meridian, Idaho—a small town where the only thing above average is the cow-to-human ratio. Don't feel bad if you've never heard of Meridian, Idaho. Neither has anyone else.

I lived with my mother, who worked as a checker at the grocery store, in a tiny apartment with eggshell-white walls and green shag carpet. I walked to school every day; avoided bullies, the principal, most types of math, and organized sports; and played video games with my best (and only) friend, Ostin, six out of seven days of the week. And I watched Shark Week twice a year. That pretty much summed up my life.

I suppose the only thing vaguely interesting about me was my Tourette's syndrome, which isn't really that interesting because I don't do any of the fascinating things that some people with Tourette's do, like shout out swear words in public or make animal noises. I mostly just blink or gulp a lot. I know, boring.

Actually, what I just said about Tourette's being the only interesting thing about me isn't really true. There's something about me that has always been very interesting—I'm just not allowed to tell anyone. I'm electric.

Which is what's led to my new and very interesting life. For those keeping score, in the last year I've done the following:

- Made friends with a group of kids with electric powers like mine.
- Been locked up in a cell and tortured.

- Shut down a private school.
- Scored a really hot girlfriend. (Still can't believe that one.)
- Flown to Peru and rescued my mother.
- Been tied up and almost fed to rats.
- Blown up a major power plant.
- Made Peru's list of most wanted criminals.
- Been chased through the jungle by helicopters with flamethrowers.
- Lived with the Amacarra tribe in the Amazon jungle.
- Attacked the Peruvian army and rescued my friends before they could be executed for terrorism.
- Blew up the Ampere, a billion-dollar superyacht, before the Elgen could take over and enslave the entire island nation of Tuvalu (which, like Meridian, Idaho, you've also never heard of).

Now we're preparing to fly to Taiwan to rescue a nine-year-old Chinese girl from the Taiwanese army and a group of Elgen superninjas called the Lung Li.

I have a feeling things are about to get a whole lot more interesting.