

OVER TIME

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CHAPTER ONE THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Karl swooped in close to the goal and tipped Starlight's pass perfectly over DJ's glove. "GOAL!"

Before Karl could celebrate, DJ swung his legs up like a bucking horse and kicked the puck back out. It flew up and over the side of the rink Karl had frozen on their **NEW HANGOUT'S ROOF**.

"You should have made the boards higher," Starlight said as the puck disappeared.

"And I forgot to reload my puck storage this morning," DJ said with a shrug. "GAME OVER."



"NEVER!" called the twins. "Karl, FREEZE something puck-shaped."

"Make it hard, like Jenny's head!" Benny said with a laugh.

"Or my knuckles!" Jenny made a fist and chased Benny around the rink.

Karl watched them, shaking his head. "I guess this is sort of like practising?" He was trying to keep his team sharp. They hadn't had a real mission since they **DEFEATED SLAPPER**. And something about that **STILL BUGGED HIM**. It was a victory that **DIDN'T FEEL LIKE A VICTORY**.

His thoughts were interrupted by the arrival of a GUMPP DRONE holding a jar filled with . . .

"Cookies!" Mo reached up and grabbed the jar from the drone. It was filled with Ron Dell the robot's cranberry and white chocolate chip cookies.

"Perfect timing!" hollered the twins, quickly grabbing four cookies each. Soon all six kids were leaning against DJ's net chowing down.



Karl's thoughts were not as wonderful as the cookies. "Don't you all think our virtual adventure **ENDED A LITTLE TOO FAST?** Why did Slapper send us back? **WHY NOT KEEP FIGHTING?**"

"YOU SAW THAT DRAGON EXPLODE," Jenny and Benny scoffed. "Our victory was assured."

DJ flexed his muscles. "Also, I was so buff after absorbing one of the golden pucks, I could have smashed our way out!"*

^{*} See Hockey Super Six In the Game.



Starlight chuckled. "Actually, DJ and I were about to seize control of the mainframe. Slapper decided to end the experiment rather than be caught."

"Ron said there was a large energy burst at their rink at the exact time we reappeared. I assume that means the **GANG** escaped too?" said Karl.

"March break ends in a couple of days," said DJ.
"I'm sure we'll see them in the hallways punching a locker or something."

"The past is boring," said the twins. "WHAT'S OUR NEXT MISSION?"

Karl tapped the "C" on his jersey and his mother's face appeared, hovering in the air. "Yes, son?"

"ANY THREATS WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT? We're getting a little ANTSY over here."

"I assume by 'we' you mean the twins?" Prime

Minister Pauline Patinage said.

Benny and Jenny smiled. "You know it!"

PM Patinage looked at her phone. "Well, there was a break-in at an agricultural storage silo in Weyburn, but the thief stole only a single bunch of carrots."

"Meh," said the twins.

"There was a **BLAST** at a hockey rink in Rimouski."

The twins leaped to their feet. "LET'S GO!"

"Wait. That was a text from Filbert saying they were **HAVING A BLAST** at the parliamentary skating party there."



The twins deflated like balloons.

"THINGS SEEM QUIET," the PM told them. THAT'S A

GOOD THING, BY THE WAY. And don't you all have homework you co—" Her face blipped and vanished.

"Oops, disconnected by mistake," Karl said, lifting his finger off the "C".

"We could practise other sports," DJ said. "I'm definitely **SWEARING OFF VIDEO GAMES** for now."

Mo pushed his 6 patch. "First I need some pizza, a nap and then more pizza."

"On it," Ron said. "Pies will be flown over soon."



Karl sighed. "WELL, TEAM, I GUESS WE COULD ALL JUST ENJOY THE QUIET." He took a final bite of his cookie and listened to the sound of approaching pizza delivery drones. That was fast, he thought. There were a lot of them. How many pizzas did Ron order? AND WHY DID THEY SOUND SO MUCH LIKE MISSILES?