

# Starlust

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## Characters

### **Halbart "Hal" Grand, 20, Rank 944 -**

Former child star who gained lots of attention during his GOB debut at age 12. It seemed he had great potential and up until his late teens he only became more and more popular until the last several years where he has hardly climbed the ranks at all. He wears a lot of shounen cliches as his outfit. He has goggles, shorts, fingerless gloves, spiky hair, the works. Hal wears these even though he's too old for them in an attempt to regain his youthful feeling.

Halbart is a name meaning brilliant hero.

### **Shelbie Shylah, 19 -**

Childhood friend of Hal. Your average, run of the mill shy, glasses wearing girl who became an Agent to support Hal. Normally meek and awkward, Shelbie had a very hard time becoming an Agent and she has some sort of light trauma surrounding this time in her life. She always had a crush on Hal but their relationship is kind of weird right now, as though they travel and live together there's a strong distance between the two from both of their hang ups. While her outfit isn't as slutty as some Agents, she's still wearing an idol costume that looks pretty out of place on someone plain like her. She's cute, but in that down to earth hometown girl kind of way.

Both parts of her name come from words that mean loyal, as well as the obvious shy.

Page 1,

1, We open on a Battle clearly set in Ring, with alien scenery to boot. Hal is fighting against a Starman.

Shelbie- The battle is winding down here after a grueling fight for both Battlers! It's still anyone's guess who'll pull through in the end, b-but... um...

2, Shelbie is shown here holding onto her mic awkwardly with both hands.

Shelbie- Will it be the challenger, Hal? Or will his opponent, the powerful Starman Donsta Menau, utilize his home field advantage to win the day?

3, Hal jumps up and warms up a gatling punch style attack, while Donsta looks up in shock of his speed.

4, Hal lands the flurry of punches although he looks really, really worn out. He's gritting his teeth, covered in sweat and torn up. You get the sense we're just seeing the finale of what was a very intense battle.

Hal- APEX RUSH!!!!

5, Donsta flies into the distance from the power of the attack.

6, Hal stands victorious and Shelbie comes to raise his hand up.

Shelbie- Wow! Looks another win for Halbart Grand in his tour of Ring! Look's like he's, um... guess he's the real Star... man?

7, He gives her a look for how bad her joke was.

Page 2,

1, Shelbie smiles awkwardly while Hal pulls out his phone not really paying attention to her. She talks more to show how she seems comfortable around Hal compared to when she's commentating.

Shelbie- Yeah, I know... it was all I could come up with on the spot. You know I'm not real good at those zingers mid-match. The worst part is when I come up with a way better one a couple hours later and it's like, 'ugh this is so much better why couldn't you think of it earlier, Shelbie???'.

2, Hal frowns and curses as we see his face looking at the phone screen, showing a miniscule +1 ranking after his battle.

Hal- Damn it, all I got were enough points to rank up once... Again. It won't even matter, in an hour someone's just going to pass me by. I need to make a bigger jump in the rankings so I can keep my place.

I keep telling you you need to find me better fights than this. Are you even looking or just scheduling me with any Battler nearby?

3, Shelbie becomes sad but tries to handle the situation.

Shelbie- H-Hal... don't be so stressed. We came to Ring so we can find you lots of strong Battlers, remember? I've been trying to warm you up to get you used to the island before we go after more valuable targets... so come on.

I'll rent us a car, we have another Battle scheduled tomorrow that's a few hours drive from here. Ok?

4, Hal takes a deep breath and closes his eyes.

Hal- Yeah, whatever.

5, Shelbie takes out her phone and taps it a few times.

6, She summons a rental hardlight speeder, it's a convertible and similar to a sports car.

Page 3,

1, A scenic shot of Ring's bizarre landscapes as they drive past them in the speeder. Some time has passed.

Shelbie- You did real good today, you know? It was a close one, but you were really cool... a-as usual, of course!

2, We see Hal looking out the window in a wistful, yearning way. He's miles away in his head as she continues to talk.

Shelbie- Oh, and about the merchandising deals you were asking me to look for the other day. I, uh, couldn't find us any takers. I found a few that said they'd be willing to make plushies and t-shirts of you if we can move you up another 100 spots in the ranking, so... Not bad, right?

3, close up on Hal's expression becoming more annoyed.

Hal- Shelbie.

4, She looks ahead while driving calmly.

5, Long panel. Hal continues to look out the window and avoids all eye contact while Shelbie looks ahead and turns to stone from sheer shock.

Hal- Can you put me in contact with some other agents?

Page 4,

1, Wasting no time at all, Shelbie freaks out and crashes the hard light speeder into a nearby rocky outcropping. The car disappears on impact and they are both pushed out of it to safety.

Hal- WHAT THE HELL?!

2, Hal lands on his feet and staggers.

Hal- I knew you weren't going to take it well, but seriously? You crashed the damn car! Even if it was just hard light, we still could've gotten hurt...

3, Shelbie stumbles over to his pant leg like a lost kitten and looks up at him.

Shelbie- I-it's ok Hal!! I'll just rent us another one and we can get going t-to your... your next match, right?!

4, Hal looks away guiltily. He tries to hide his face behind his hand.

Hal- Look, can you just... not take this personally? I want to see what other opportunities a different agent can bring me. We'll always still be friends and stuff, I guess, but-

5, Close up on Shelbie's face becoming irritated.

Shelbie- Not take it personally...? Are... ARE YOU FOR R-

6, She stands up and yells at him, causing him to shrink. She is crying angrily.

Shelbie- I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE I WAS 5!! HOW THE HELL CAN I NOT TAKE IT PERSONALLY, YOU ASSHOLE?!

YOU'RE THE ENTIRE REASON I EVEN BECAME AN AGENT!!

Page 5,

1, Hal looks back at her with a nervous but determined look.

Hal- And where has that got me?! I'm out here fighting as hard as I can against mid tier scrubs day in and day out, hell, I never get a chance to improve myself!!

2, Hal gets angrier.

Hal- When we were kids, you were all 'Oh you're so strong! We'll always be best friends!! I know you can make it to the top 10, Hal! You can be a pro Battler and I'll be the agent who takes you there!'

3, He looks away.

Hal- Yeah, I was pretty strong as a kid. But there are plenty of kids like that who show potential, Shelbie. You always told me how I could just go off and be a Battler so dumb old kid me didn't think I needed any help. When I got that invitation to Toriyama Academy, you know what I did?

4, He points at her.

Hal- I tore it up, because of YOU! You were soooo sure that I could take the world by storm but what I really needed was... a hard kick in the ass and someone to teach me!

I NEED TO FIGHT STRONGER BATTLERS! WE BARELY HAVE ENOUGH MONEY AS IT IS, SO I CAN'T JUST TAKE TIME OFF TO GO TRAIN! IF YOU CAN'T HELP ME PUSH MY LIMITS THEN... THEN...

5, Shelbie looks at him, pityingly.

Shelbie- This... this is really how you feel? About me, about us? Everything we've been through?

... Alright.

6, Hal looks surprised.

Shelbie- I'll do it, I'll get you those stronger Battlers. Before you run off on me, at least let me try giving you what you want.

7, Hal is fired up now.

Hal- You got yourself a deal! This is what I need, a chance to prove myself... I'll get stronger fighting enemies above my own level. This is it, Shelbie. This is IT!

Page 6

1, Shelbie pulls out her phone and taps a few buttons.

2, Cut to Hal's surprised face.

Shelbie- Ok, there. I matched you up with a popular Starman a few hundred ranks above you. Le-Zdahns, #712.

Hal- Wait, just like that? He's like... one of the most popular Starmen in my tier. I haven't seen any of his matches, but I hear he's good!

3, Shelbie looks at him a bit upset.

Shelbie- I'm a good Agent, Hal. Getting you a match with a strong opponent isn't hard and I can do that anytime I want to.

4, Hal is dumb and doesn't get the implication, instead getting upset that she could have done this earlier.

Hal- Well, then why haven't you until now? I mean if it's just so easy for you...

5, Shelbie is frustrated and looks away, with her phone pulled out.

Shelbie- Ugh. We don't have time for this... We need to be there by tomorrow. Instead of blaming me, prove you got what it takes and I'll get you more matches like this one... Ok? Just rest up.

6, Hal looks away.

Hal- Yeah, I got it. Let's get going, I have a match to win!

Page 7,

1, We cut to a different part of Ring's landscape. Still out in the middle of nowhere though so it's fit for a battle.

Shelbie- This is Shelbie Shylah bringing you another 1v1 Format Live Battle straight from Ring Island! The Challenger, my partnered Battler Hal Grand has travelled this alien land to cross fists with a deadly, dangerous Starman who has done nothing but climb the ranks since his debut..

2, We are introduced to Le-Zdahns here. He looks like a member of Frieza's race only the face is more handsome and not ugly, and overall he seems like a friendly person. He's sleek, but very tall and he has well over a foot on Hal. He extends his hand kindly to Hal.

Text Box-

Le-Zdahns, Friendship Tier Rank #721, "Galactic Terror"

Shelbie- LE-ZDAHNS!!

Le-Zdahns- It's very nice to meet you, human. We don't receive many visitors of your kind here in Ring, so I'm excited to see what you can do. Show me the hidden power that mankind possesses, please!

3, Hal awkwardly smiles back and shakes his hand.

Hal- Sure. I'll show you how we do things on Palm Island!

Le-Zdahns- Looking forward to it.

4, Shelbie tries to hype things up with a cool pose.

Shelbie- Both Battlers have exchanged pleasantries, so all that remains is... BATTLE!!

Give it your all and show the world what you're made of!! A-and remember, there's no shame in giving up if one of you can't take anymore!

5, Hal looks to the side, noticing this was clearly a message to him.

Hal- Shelbie...?



Page 8,

1, Le-Zdahns punches Hal square in the face because of the massive opening he gave him. Hal is knocked backwards it's a light blow but it's still a good one.

2, Close up on Le-Zdahns, smiling but very serious.

Le-Zdahns- My, my. I hope you're not always this defenseless, otherwise this will be over very shortly...

3, Hal gets up, blood coming from his mouth and gritting his teeth.

Hal- Lucky shot, try me again!

4, Shelbie holds onto her mic. She's slightly upset but unsure of how to react here.

Shelbie- A strong punch but Hal shrugs it off... What a strong start from him...!

4, Le-Zdahns gets into a stance to shoot some beams.

Le-Zdahns- Gladly.

LUPUS...

5, He shoots a number of smaller ki blasts in a round bubble form.

Le-Zdahns- BARRAGE!!!

Page 9,

1, Larger panel of Hal wading his way through the multitude of burst attacks.

2, he breaks through, jumped in the air and his fist is readied to punch in the next panel.

3, Hal lands a similar blow straight into Le-Zdahns' face just like he did to him.

Shelbie- And he returns with a great HIT! Does it even matter though?  
Le-Zdahns is built like a tank..

4, Hand pressed against his cheek, Le-Zdahns smiles as he staggers backwards.

Le-Zdahns- Marvelous... This power... It seems you just might be worth my time after all!

5, Hal smirks and cracks his knuckles.

Hal- Then why are we standing around cracking cliches? Let's get to it, fight me!

6, Both of them launch at each other. Le-Zdahns gives a small laugh.

Page 10.

\*Let's change this part to just be four panels, so I can add the thing you wanted. Rather than describing the whole page blow for blow, I'd rather improvise it. It's a montage of them beating the crap out of each other and they're close to each other's power level. Very even.

5- Shelbie holds onto the mic desperately.

Shelbie- I... I can't believe I'm seeing it folks, but Hal is standing dead even against someone more than 200 ranks below him...! He's really doing it!

I'm sure if... there were any special fans of his who've been cheering for him all this time they'd be...

6, We get a cool idle pose of Hal being surprised.

Shelbie- They'd be really, really proud to be his Number 1. Fan!!

7, Close up of Hal cracking a smile.



Page 12-13 spread

1, We see a figure clouded by dust and rock particles flying around.

2, Halbart looks up with a completely deadpan expression in his face. He has lost all amount of fight left in him and the sheer size of Le-Zdahns' unseen final form dwarfs him and covers Hal in shadows.

3, We see the figure behind the cloud of dust and it's just this disgustingly strong powerhouse that's like 3 times taller than Hal and he's just absolutely monstrous. Gone is the campy Frieza-alike and he's replaced with a mashup of Toriyama and say, a Xenomorph or some other terrifying crap like that.

Also all of the battle damage has left him and he healed during his transformation.

Textbox- 'Le-Zdahns Final Form: 100% Full Power Unleashed Tempered Space Predator Unrivaled -THASAIIDON-'

Le-Zdahns- LET US END THIS BATTLE, MY FRIEND!! COME AT ME WITH YOUR STRONGEST ATTACK!!!

4, Hal, still soulless, tries to mumble his attack name.

Hal- A...A-p-p-pex...

5, Le-Zdahns raises his arm to create a similar death ball thingy to the one Frieza uses, only brimming with more destructive power and size.

Le-Zdahns- HYPER-GIGATON URSA MAJOR EXPLODING SUPERNOVA, THE LAST REQUIEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

6- We see Hal's face one last time, this time with the harsh lighting of the oncoming attack.

7- Shelbie screams desperately out of worry.

Shelbie- HAL?!

Page 14,

1, We make a hard cut here as the results of the attack were a little too brutal to show. We see a brief external shot of a Ring Hospital, though the sign is in their alien language there's a little text box translating it.

2, Hal is in a restoration tank thing wearing nothing but his underwear, absolutely covered in damage and obviously broken bones. Like, we will really, really play this up to show how badly he got his ass kicked. He's got lots of wires hooked up to him as well. Shelbie is in the room, along with a Starman nurse. To add a little background humor, on a table near the restoration tank there's a bouquet of alien Ring flowers saying 'Get well soon, my rival! - Le-Zdahns' .

3, Hal looks down in a deep sadness from within the tank.

Hal- You... were matching me against mid tier scrubs because I am one. Weren't you?

4, Shelbie awkwardly smiles.

Shelbie- I'm, well... I'm good at my job, Hal... I wouldn't have passed the Agent training program if I didn't know what I was doing... I was trying to match you against Battlers on your level to gradually build your strength in a manner that suits your lifestyle.

Hal- My lifestyle?

5, Shelbie looks at him with serious.

Shelbie- You don't train, Hal. You think just because you were strong as a kid that you're strong now, but come on...

6, Hal becomes flustered inside the tank.

Hal- But... the money. Since I don't gain rank fast enough, I have to constantly fight in order to keep making enough.

Page 15,

1, We have a serious panel of the both of them from the side, Shelbie looking him straight in the face from outside the tank.

Shelbie- I'm not just your Agent. I'm... well, whatever. W-What I'm trying to say is if you weren't such an asshole and actually talked to me, we could have worked something out...

I'm still here in this room for you even after the things you said to me, because even now... I do think you have something inside you that can get you to the top.

2, Shelbie tears up a tiny bit with a smile.

Shelbie- I could do part time work and commentate other Battlers. Maybe ref a few small tournaments... buy you some time to actually go and improve your skills instead of burning yourself out every day of your life.

I...

3, She blushes and wipes a tear out of her face.

Shelbie- I just want you to rely on me...

4, Hal cries inside the tank, his tears bubble up to the top.

5, Hal speaks more.

Hal- Can we... can we just start this whole thing over?

Oh wait- I know. Let's do that cliché thing where I put my hand against the glass and you put yours on the other side so it's like we're touching.

6, She looks at him skeptically.

Shelbie- Um. I uh, really don't think you should be moving in there. You won't be fully regenerated for another few weeks...

Page 16,

1, Hal places his hand against the glass anyway.

Hal- Shelbie... please?

2, She looks away somewhat shyly, and raises her hand.

3, She places it against his on the glass and a warm fuzzy aura spreads between their hands.

4, Shelbie smiles warmly.

5 Hal's expression turns into violent pain.

Hal- ... I've made a huge mistake. G-go get s-s-s-someone... my hand.. I-IT'S GONNA SNAP!!!

6, Shelbie turns to horror and jumps back, shouting,

Shelbie- N-NURSE!!! ...NURSE!!!!!!!

End.



Notes to the Editor

This ended up having a small life of its own, and I think it's a good example of write what you know. I didn't intend it to reflect my experiences as much as it did, but I guess it's kind of an allegory for how I feel when relying on Angela and doing less commissions. We've never had a big talk about it or anything as she's very understanding when I need to do less, but the insecurities and all that.

My concern was making Hal not come off as TOO big of an asshole, but I think that since he almost dies it balances out, and he does indeed learn a lesson.

I also decided to set this story in Ring because both Hal and Shelbie are out of their element here. I was sort of going for a 'Lost in Translation' effect where they just feel really uncomfortable and it negatively influences them. The landscapes will really emphasize the distance between the two of them and how out of place they are.

Title has no super deep meaning, but I think Starlust has a cool ring to it, is memorable and slightly controversial, which is good. I think though it kind of speaks about how Hal and even Shelbie both lust for Hal to be a Star (or Shelbie lusting for Hal in general if you want to make it lewd), while also referencing the Starmen.

I feel like this Oneshot could be the very first one after the introduction, as it sets the tone for this being a series that is about battles and also real human problems, while explaining the Battler/Agent relationship in an organic, non expository manner. Not to mention Hardlight.

I think there kinda might be some overlap between this story and the first one I wrote, the swordsman, but I can change that one up when I get there. Kenji from that story has the same sort of problem as Hal, only he bottles it up inside and its magnified since he was trained by a top 10. They deal with it in different ways but they both have Agent GFs that support them in different ways, but it's not the focal point in Kenji's story.