

“Congratulations, Kid,” said my lawyer, “This is better than a stretch at the kingdom: You’re going to be *fashioned* as teenaged Benjamin Franklin and work on Planetoid 1776.”

So I was *fashioned*. TE - Terrestrial Entertainment - molded my body and face to look like Ben Franklin at age 17. It was either that or rot in a ripe prison for my crime. I was too old to go to a tot spot. Anyone convicted over the age of twelve goes straight to places like Stalinville, Fort Security, or worse, Bloody Mary Kingdom with the big kids.

I’ve been stuck on Planetoid 1776 playing the role of Franklin ever since. My friend John Collins was already here in Olde Philadelphia working in a print shop, how we met. His Anne works at the harbor selling fresh rolls to our incoming tourists, like history geeks and thermo soldiers and fake soldierboy types showing how patriotic they are. And fadlings - rich swats who hop from one themed planetoid to another because they can, and the smaller fadlings, spoiled crypto kids who visit just to get extra credit from service tutors.

When I first arrived, TE guard-boss said I’d fly Franklin’s original kite in the arena. I laughed. Everything on this and every other planetoid world above Earth is fake. Made to look like how things used to be when there were pure mountains, oceans, flower gardens, an America in 1776.

Said I’d be released in five years with good behavior. I’m still flying that damn kite in the arena. But they’re all in for a big surprise show tonight. John Collins rigged the weather so that there will be twice the storm, twice the lightning in the arena. Anne stole a ship from a naive swat weeks ago and hid it. When I take hold of the kite string tonight, it will be the last time I discover electricity. There will be bright flashing lights and deafening thunder as the three of us lift off from 1776 and away from this miserable toid. For good.