

Chapter 1-

Fifth period served as a study hall for Kasper, and he was pretending to read again. The book he had was a science fiction book that had caught his attention when he passed through the bookstore shelves. He got it for a steal, yet he couldn't seem to focus on it. His eyes were darting back and forth between it and two of his classmates.

Normally Kasper wouldn't care much about what someone did in a class, he would just put his head down and get his own work done. But these two were in multiple classes with him, and as he had yet to make any friends at this school he figured they might be a safe bet. The issue however is Kasper was far too timid to approach.

He ran through simulations of how the conversations could go. 'Hi there, nice weather huh?' followed by a funny joke of some kind, something to grab their attention and start a dialogue. He tossed that idea out, it felt too awkward. He was running out of ideas, till today when he had spotted the two playing some kind of card game at their desk.

"I swing with Blade Maiden Tomoe for 4 damage." Rylee said. She was a lean girl with light caramel skin and wavy black hair. She turned something sideways on the desk, Kasper tried to stretch his neck to see what it was.

The person across from her was Elijah, he was hispanic with a round face that had laugh lines. He looked over a hand full of cards, Kasper could only see their backs, revealing the words System Gate.

“Dang it, I'm out of fizzles.” Elijah said with a sigh. He put the hand of cards on the table, revealing their contents to Rylee. “Nice, you think you'll take locals this weekend?”

Rylee started gathering her cards up. “Not sure, still not sure about my match up with Alger, Celestial Wyvern is a tough one.”

“Isn't Alger playing that Uranus deck now?” Elijah said, gathering his pile of cards together.

Rylee made a noise of distress. “You're right he was talking about that, at least Tomoe helps in that match up.”

“Uh, not too sure about that one.” Elijah said. “Anyways, you wanna stop by Other World Gaming today? I wanna pick up some sleeves for my new deck.”

“Sure why not.” Rylee said.

Kasper held his breath, he found an in. System gate, Other World Gaming, he saved those words into his head. If he learned this game, maybe he could approach them and ask to play, an in!

After school Kasper typed in the shop name and found its location, not far from the school, and only slightly out of the way of his home. He had to walk around the busy city streets of Indianapolis but before long he found the shop by its large sign.

Air conditioning hit Kasper in the face as he stepped through the glass door, making him feel like he entered a new world. Products of a large variety lined the walls and free standing shelves of the store, to one side was a gaming area with tables and

chairs set out. Two people sat at the table, cards spread out before them, discussing something.

An older man with graying hair stood behind a glass counter and smiled as Kasper approached.

“Welcome, anything I can help you with?” The man asked in a kindly voice.

“Um.” Kasper said, grabbing at the edge of his shirt and twisting it. “I was wondering about a game called System Gate.”

The man gave a very kind patient smile. “We got plenty of that here. Starter decks, sets, we also run tournaments every Saturday.” He turned and pointed at a line of product behind his counter. Boxes with varying art drew Kasper’s attention. One box had a green haired girl on its cover, labeled Set 4-B: Eternal Garden, another had what looked like martian walkers with the label Set 5: Iron Assault. Many more stood out, the lowest one being Set 6: Apex Battle, showing that it had been sold recently.

“So, anything in particular you want to try? I’d recommend a starter deck.” The shop owner said, pointing at a collection of other boxes.

“Uh, well what would be best to start with?” Kasper asked, chewing on his lip. “I don’t really know much about the game.” He gave a nervous laugh.

The Shopkeeper turned his eyes to Kasper’s left, Kasper turning to meet the look. There stood one of the guys who was sitting at the table only moments ago. He was tall, pale, and had wavy black hair.

“Hey Peter, mind if I offer some assistance?” The man said. He looked to be at least a college student.

“Of course, go ahead Alger.” The shopkeeper said, waving to welcome him to the conversation.

The man, Alger, smiled and turned his attention to Kasper. “Would you like to try the game? I bought the Battle box, which is a two player set, but I only needed one of the two decks. No one else is really interested in the other half, you can have it if you want.”

Kasper felt a rush of excitement. “Are you sure?”

“Yeah why not.” Alger said. “I can teach ya how to play if you want.”

Kasper nodded rapidly, so much so he got a little dizzy. “Thank you.”

Alger guided Kasper to the table where the other man sat. He was bulkier with dark skin, he was looking through a deck of cards that were sleeved with yellow sleeves. The sitting guy looked up as Kasper approached.

“Darryl, scoot your butt.” Alger said, waving his fingers to tell him to move.

Darryl sighed. “So needy man.” He slid over a bit and offered his seat to Kasper.

“Oh sorry.” Kasper said, taking the seat awkwardly.

“Don't be he is already set up, easier for me to move a bit.” Darryl said in a deep voice.

Kasper realized how tall Darryl was when he sat down, as the man towered over him even from a sitting position.

Alger put out a playmat in front of Kasper, it showed different areas that Kasper could not completely understand. Then he handed him a deck of cards, with three cards separate.

“First things first.” Alger said after Kasper took the deck of cards. “Let's look at the zones on the field okay? I'll give you a simple run down before we start.”

“Okay.” Kasper said. He looked at the field in front of him.

“First let's start with the deck and drop area, pretty simple, you put your deck in the deck zone, and any cards that are discarded go to the drop zone.” Alger said, pointing to the two zones along the right side. “Next would be the three zones in front of you, the Gate, Gate Master, and Set Zones.”

Alger reached out and pointed at the three cards he had put to the side. “So the first zone, the Gate zone, is where you put your gate zone. For the sake of teaching I gave you the Venus gate, normally the deck comes with a Volcano Valley gate, i'll give that to you in a second. Anyways, the gate card decides a lot about deck building. The Venus gate lets you use Venus cards and Asteroid belt cards. Gates are what let you summon creatures to fight for you.” With that, Alger put the Venus gate on Kaspers Gate zone.

“Next is the Gate master, that would be this card.” Alger pointed at another card from the side stack.

Kasper picked it up. It showed the image of a dragon wielding a flaming sword.

“Great Blazing Heart, Burnova A.S” Kasper read out.

“Yep, you put him in your gate master zone, and when you summon a copy of him from your hand you can gate master summon once per game by turning that card sideways. At the top right corner you'll see an ax with ASLT about it, that is his gate master gift. It gives you that last card in your stack there.”

Kasper put Burnova onto the gate master zone then looked at this last card, the image on it looked exactly like the ax icon on his gate master, it was labeled 'Assault Token'.

"Well get to that when it comes up." Alger said. "Next, we got the set zone, some cards will have the set ability. These are spells that stay on the field after they are played." He took a breath. "Here on the left side we have the energy zone. Energy is used to pay for costs of cards. Then in the middle we have the Unit zones, there are three slots, Left, Right, and Center. Your goal is to reduce your opponent to 0 health, and the best way to do that is to attack them."

Darryl gave Alger a look.

"For most decks." Alger corrected. "Anyways, if there is a Unit on the Center zone your opponent cannot attack you, and has to go through the center first. The left and right can also be attacked, but the center is the one most will care about."

Kasper took in the information, it seemed straightforward to him so far.

"Let's look at your gate master to talk about units, then we can start playing. If you look on the bottom left corner there are three numbers, a red, white, and blue one. The Red number is his attack, this is how much damage he does to an enemy Unit. the White number is his critical, and is the damage he deals to the player. The Blue number is the defense and shows how much damage he can take before being destroyed."

Burnova had 10k attack, 3 Crit, 2k Defense. He seems to hit hard but can't take many hits.

“Last thing we will need to talk about is the number at the top left, that is the limit value.” Alger said. “Your field can only have a limit of 3 on the field, Burnova is a 2 limit, meaning you can only have a 0 or 1 limit card on the field with him, meaning any other limit 2 cards cant be played.”

“I think I understand.” Kasper said.

Alger leaned back and smiled. He pulled out his deck and set up. His gate was also Venus, but his gate master was a little dragon guy named Celestial Wyvern Nord. “Alright, so to start we both have twenty life, we draw 6 cards. We can put any number of cards back on the bottom of the deck and redraw them, after that we put two cards face down into the energy zone from the top of the deck.”

Kasper drew the hand, and decided to keep it as he didnt know what cards were good or not. Several of the units looked like wrestler dragons. He spotted one card that caught his attention. The card was sideways with a crazy color pattern around its edges. Kasper tilted his head to read it.

“You drew a Finale card I see.” Alger said with a chuckle. “Those are special cards that can only be used during the Finale phase. Well get to that.”

Kasper set up his energy then looked at Alger. “Right.” Alger said, moving cards around in his hand. “I’ll go first to give you a feel for the game.”

“First you go through the stand phase, where you stand all cards on the field, then the draw phase where you draw the top card of your deck.” He took a card from the top of the deck. “Next you can put a card from your hand into the Energy zone and then if

you do draw a card.” He did so. He gave a little chuckle. “When you draw the exact card you charged huh Darryl?”

Darryl gave a little chuckle, he was watching Kasper intently, looking at his hand.

“Now you enter the main phase. In the main phase you can summon as many units as you want, cast spells, use skills, or equip items.” Alger considered his options. “I’ll play my Gate Master, Celestial Wyvern Nord.”

He moved his Gate master to his left zone, then put a rested version of Nord into its spot. Kasper looked at his hand, he didn't have Burnova.

“So, Nord's gate master ability is to gain 4 life, putting me at 24.” Alger said. “I won't play any other cards, since I am going first I can only attack once. I will now move to the battle phase. I declare attack, Nord will attack you through your open center for 2 Damage.” He turned Nord sideways.

Kasper looked at his hand. “Is there something I should do?”

“You can cast a spell to fizzle the attack.” Alger said. “Though you do not have to, you're bound to take small damage here and there. Holding those fizzle spells for when you need them is a big thing. You can use effects with counters during this time.”

Kasper looked through his hand. He found two cards with Counter. Orion's Clothesline, which for a cost of 1 energy said he could destroy a unit on your opponent's field if they had an open center, and Venus Energy which says that it gives a unit on your field +5k attack and defense, as well as Revenge. Revenge said if the unit that was attacked survives it can deal damage to whatever attacked it.

Kasper decided to hold the Orions Clothesline in hand; he figured it would be useful later.

“I’ll take the damage.” Kasper said.

“Right, Nord is a 12k/2/8k. Meaning you take 2 damage, putting you at 18.” Alger explained.

Alger pulled out counters that showed their health, Kasper lowered his to 18.

“Right, then I move to my End phase. During this phase I can cast and summon Finales.” Alger explained. “Nord has a special ability that lets me pay 2 energy to search my deck for 1 finale unit.” Alger moved 2 energy to his drop zone, then picked up his deck, revealing a Finale card. Nord, Star Striker. “Now, I could play him, however he has a cost of 2 energy, and I only have 1 energy left. If I did play him it would give me another attack phase to attack you with this unit. However since I cannot, I’ll just add it to my hand and end my turn.”

Kasper drew the top card of his deck, revealing Burnova. He felt a strange swell of joy at seeing the unit in his hand. He looked over the cards in his hand, looking for one to put into energy. He decided to put one called Flame Battler El Caliente into the energy zone. El Caliente’s ability would let Kasper remove a Soul or move an enemy Unit to the Center. That effect didn’t seem like it would help. Once he drew from his charge, Kasper moved to play cards.

“I summon my Gate Master, Great Blazing Heart, Burnova A.S. to the right.” Kasper said, playing his gate master. “His cost is 2 life, putting me at 16.”

“And he has the assault ability.” Alger explained. “So you add an assault token to your hand.”

Kasper added the token to hand. The card had three effects, all of which were good. “Alright, next I’ll play Firespin Thorny and activate his nova gift ability. Letting me put one card into my energy from top of deck and draw one card because you do not have a card on your center.” Thorny was a limit 1 card, making his field total 3.

“I’ll move to the battle phase.” Kasper said. “I’ll attack with Burnova first.” He turned his gate master sideways. “Burnova says when he attacks I give another unit +5k and penetrate, what’s penetrate?”

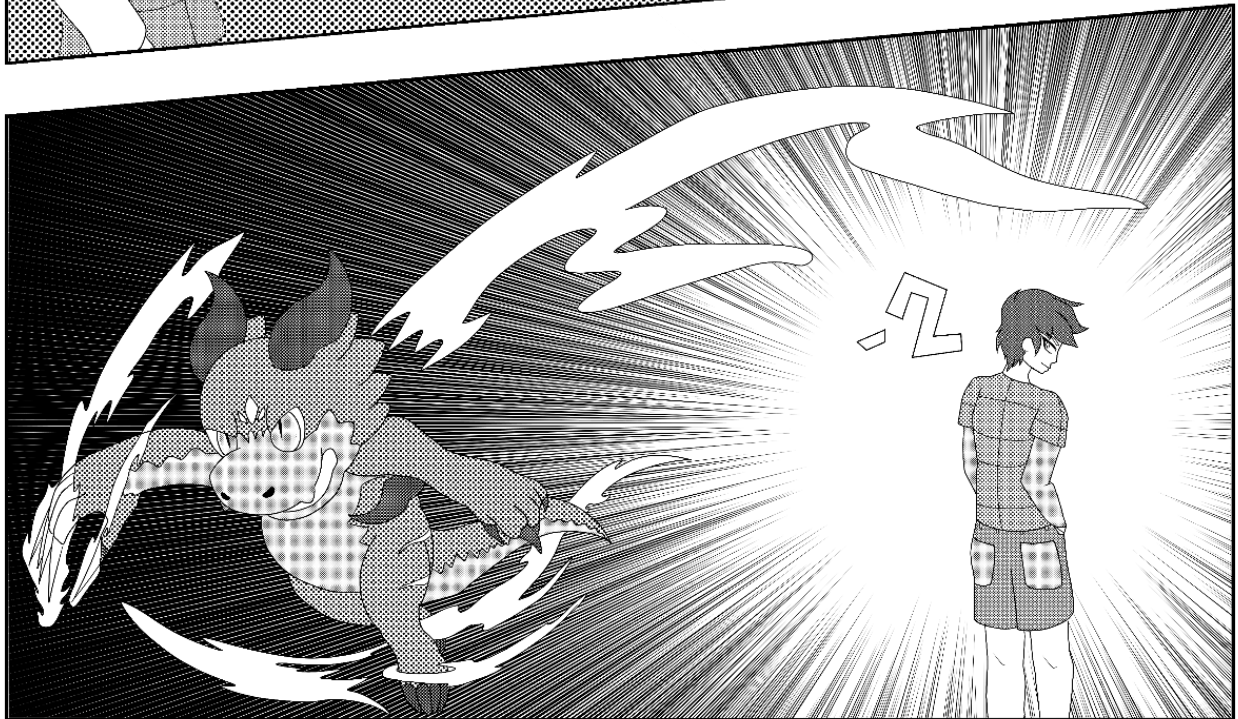
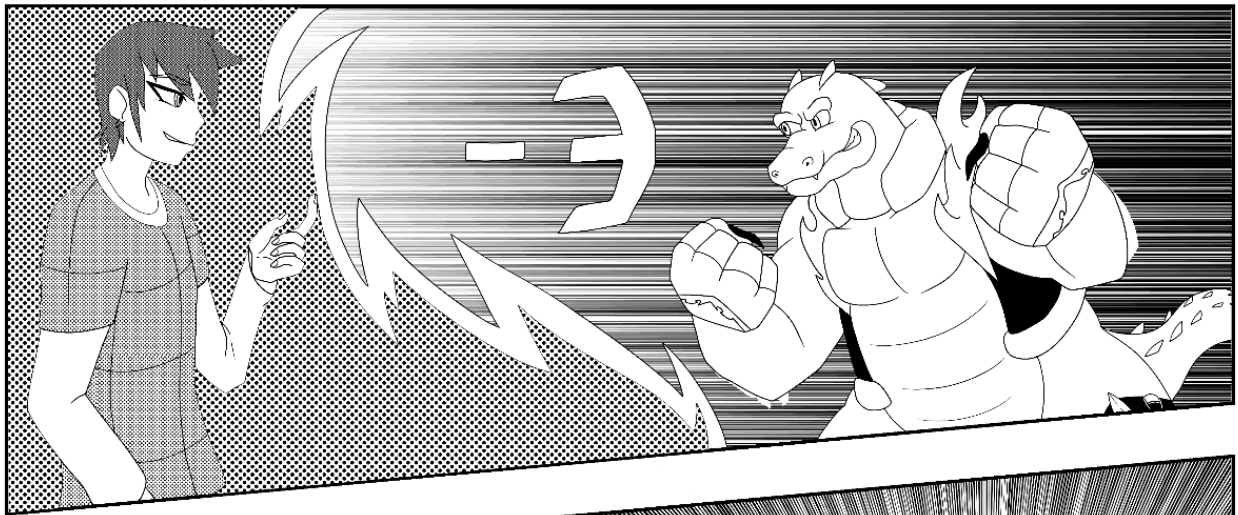
“Penetrate is if I had a card on my center you would deal damage to me equal to its crit if you destroy that center unit.” Alger explained. “I have no response to your attack, I take 3 damage, putting me at 21.”

“Power boost goes to Throny.” Kasper said. “And since you took the damage Burnova’s other effect goes off. Letting me search the top three cards of my deck for a Flaredrake unit and add it to my hand.” He looked at the top three, and saw another El Caliente. Kasper decided to add him, seeing how his ability would work well with Penetrate.

“Next I attack with Thorny for 2 damage.”

“I’ll take it.” Alger said. “19 left.”

Kasper looked at his finale card, then realized it could remove an enemy Center, but he couldn't use it now. “I end my turn.”



“Right, stand, draw, charge.” Alger said as he went through the steps. “Alright, I summon Cold Core Wyvern to the right.” Alger explained. The card was a limit 1 , 6k/2/6k. With Nords limit 2 his field was full. “Battle phase.”

Kasper looked at the cards on the field, he would only take 4 damage from those two cards, meaning Kaspers field was doing more damage over time.

“Nord and Cold Core will link attack your center.” Alger explained.

“What's a link attack?” Kasper asked.

“It's a move where you can have multiple units attack together, combining their damage. This is used to destroy big cards that one card couldn't do alone. I mostly just did it to show you how it works.” He turned nord and Cold core sideways at the same time. “4 damage unless you have a counter.”

“I'll take it.” Kasper said, still holding back his Orion's Clothesline. His life dropped to 12.

“Alright, End Phase.” Alger said. “I will summon my Finale Unit, Nord Star Striker by paying his cost of 2 energy and putting a Venus unit from the field into his soul, I choose the original Nord.”

His finale card was played on the center, and he put the original nord below it. This new Nord had a limit 2, 12k/3/6k.

“Why is the other Nord below him?” Kasper asked.

“That is his soul, basically if he would be destroyed I can instead drop a soul to keep him alive.” Alger explained.

Kasper suddenly was super happy he took El Caliente.

“Nord will attack for 3 damage.” Alger said, turning this nord to its side.

“I take that, putting me at 9” Kasper said.

“No mercy huh Alger.” Darryl said, looking at the board.

“I’m just teaching him everything I can, I still haven’t drawn my item yet.” Alger explained.

“Sure sure.”

“Stand, Draw, Charge.” Kasper explained. He charged a copy of Melty Chef Dragon, which he had two of in his hand. He now had 5 energy, and 9 cards in hand.

“What happens if I play another card that puts me over the limit?” Kasper asked.

“You drop cards from the field till you hit that limit, you can also play cards on top of others to drop that specific one, say you want to get rid of Thorny there for example but keep a unit on the left.” Alger explained.

Kasper thought that over. He did want to get rid of Thorny for El Caliente, but then he noticed another card in his hand.

“I play the Solar Breath spell.” Kasper explained. “Its cost says I have to destroy a Flaredrake on the field, I choose Thorny, then I can either gain three energy or destroy a card on my opponent’s field, choosing Cold Core.”

“I must let that happen.” Alger said, putting Cold Core in the drop. Kasper did the same with Thorny.

“Next, I summon Flame Battler, El Caliente. Using his skill I drop a soul from Nord.” Kasper explained.

“Dang, you sure you haven't played before? That is some advanced play there.”

Alger said, taking the soul out of Nord.

“It's about it get crazier.” Darryl said, looking at Kaspers hand.

“I enter my attack phase.” Kasper said, feeling excitement build up for what he was about to do.

Alger smiled. “I see, Burnova will give El Caliente Penetrate, letting him deal damage. However, in order for that to happen you need to attack with Burnova first. How will you go about solving that issue?”

“I play Assault Token, its ability gives 1 unit +4k power and Penetrate, I choose Burnova for the effect, then link attack with the two.” Kasper said, excited.

Alger smiled. “A good play, only thing is, I could just fizzle the attack and stop both attacks at once. However, I don't have a fizzle so it goes through.”

“I end my turn.” Kasper explained.

“Right, Stand, Draw, Charge.” Alger said. “I'll just play another Cold Core to my center and attack for 2.”

Kasper's life was 7 going into his next turn, he had to deal 17 damage quickly, before Alger got something bigger out and finished this.

“Stand, draw, charge.” Kasper said. He charged a copy of Flame Tag Team Blaze & Caliente, it was a size 2 card which would make him get rid of Burnova, which he didn't want to do. Somehow he knew that Burnova was his key to victory, even though Blaze & Caliente were strong cards. Luckily his draw was a Orions Clothes line, giving him two of those to work with.

“Right, I drop El Caliente, for Flame Battler Blaze Hitokage.” it was a Limit 1, 5k/2/3k. Its ability was useful here. “His ability destroys a unit on your center when it enters the field.”

“Cold Core goes to drop.” Alger said.

“Battle Phase!” Kasper exclaimed, not realizing how into the game he was.

“Burnova will attack for 3.”

“I take it, going down to 14.”

“Blaze for 2”

“12.”

“End my turn.”

“Stand, draw, charge.” Alger said. “Right, finally. I equip Star Gauntlet UpperCutting Knuckle.” He places a card over his gate. “This is an item card, which lets you attack.” The item was a 4k/2/0 with the penetrate ability. “You can't attack with an item if you have a unit in the center though. I'll then summon Nord to the right and enter battle.”

Kasper looked at his hand. “Can I use counter before you attack?”

“Yep, you can use it just about any time.” Alger explained.

“Right, I'll use Orion's clothesline, destroying the Cold Core.”

“Poor Cold Core, alright I'll just attack with my item for 2.”

“I'm at 5.”

“End my turn.” Alger said.

It was down to the wire, Kasper had two turns at most or he would lose. “Stand, Draw, Charge.” He charged a Venus Energy since Alger was not attacking his cards. Kasper had drawn a Melty chef last turn from Burnovas effect, and now he drew an item card. After reading the card he realized he had a better chance than he expected, he might not even need the Finale to win this.

“I play Inherited Soul Sword for 1 energy.” Kasper exclaimed. It was a 3k/2/0 card, with a special ability. “I enter Battle phase.”

“Go ahead.” Alger said.

“I Link attack with my Inherited Soul sword, and Burnova. Soul swords ability says when I link attack I choose an attacking unit and stand it, meaning that Burnova can attack again right?”

“That's right.” Alger said. “I take 5, putting me at 7”

Kasper grabbed another Burnova off of the effect of his attack. “Burnova attacks again for 3!”

“I'm at 4.” Alger said, a smile across his face.

Tag Team was his pick from the second hit from Burnova. “Now Blaze will attack for 2!”

“I'm at 2.”

Kasper was out of attacks, so he passed the turn.

“Stand, Draw, Charge.” Alger said, very casually. “I play Nord to the left, then enter the Battle phase, attacking with Nord.”

“I destroy him with Orion's Clothesline.” Kasper said, dropping the card and paying the cost.

“Darn, okay, I attack with my item for 2.” Alger said, not missing a beat.

“I'm at 3.” Kasper said, worried to have his life so low.

“So close.” Alger said with a sigh. “I end my turn.”

“Stand, draw, charge.” Kasper said, going through the motions. Sadly he couldn't use his Finale, as it required Alger to have a unit on the center. “I enter the battle phase, attacking with my sword and Burnova, restanding Burnova.” It was over kill, but he wanted to end it in a big way.

“I cast Sapphire Scales.” Alger said. “This card fizzles your attack, and then puts the top card of my deck into my energy.”

Kasper looked at his hand, he had just drawn that card too. So that is how fizzle cards work.

“Right, I attack for 2 with Blaze.” Kasper said.

“2 left.”

“Burnova for 3.” Kasper said, turning Burnova sideways with passion he wasn't used to.

“That's game.” Alger held out a hand. “Good game, seems like you were really getting into it there.”

Kasper took Alger's hand and shook it, realizing how eccentric he had become, and got embarrassed. “I liked it alot. Thank you for teaching me, and thank you for letting me use your deck.”

“Hm?” Alger said in confusion. “Oh, no, that deck is yours. All yours.”

Kasper raised his eyes in surprise. “Really?”

“Yeah man, all yours, seems like Burnova is perfect for you.” Alger gave a little laugh at that.

“You're telling me, this guy charged away Tag team over dropping Burnova.”

Darryl said from the side.

“Now way, that's funny,” Alger said with a laugh. “If you enjoyed it, you should come by on Saturdays, we run a tourney during the day. It is a good way to get practice. We also hang out here other days of the week to playtest and stuff, you're welcome to come any time.”

Kasper gave a sheepish smile. “Thank you, I will. I had a good time.”

“That's what System gate is all about. Normally we play best two out of three, but figured since it's a teaching game we would only do the one.”

“Can we play a few more?” Kasper asked.

Alger smiled, and they prepared for the second game. That night, after several games, Kasper returned home, head full of ideas. He had also reached a conclusion on his way home. Alger was going easy on him. He had cards in hand to beat him and just didn't play them. This thought didn't make Kasper upset, instead it made him want to play Alger at his best. Kasper's ambitious spirit began to come out as he looked over the collection of cards he got from Alger to change his deck if he wanted to. He was up late that night looking over the deck, looking for ways to make Burnova stronger than he already is.



Kasper Irving,
Age - 16
Born - October 17th (Libra)
Favorite Food - Chicago style hot dog
Favorite Book Genre - Science Fiction
Hobbies - Reading, Playing Video Games



Deck Profile -

- Gate - Venus Gate (Chapter 1) / Volcano Valley
- Gate Master - Great Blazing Heart, Burnova A.S
- 4x - Great Blazing Heart, Burnova A.S
- 4x - Flame Tag Team, Blaze and Caliente
- 4x - Flame Battler Blaze Caliente
- 4x - Flame Battler El Caliente
- 4x - Melty Chef Dragon
- 4x - Firespin Thorny
- 4x - Inherited Soul Sword
- 4x - Solar Breath
- 4x - Dragon Campfire
- 4x - Orion's Clothesline
- 3x - Sapphire Scales
- 3x - Venus Energy
- 4x - Crossfire Cyclone

Art By: Saga

SYSTEM GATE
CUSTOMIZABLE CARD GAME