

Chapter 13

Center of AreteU's Campus

Sunday March 2nd

1:00 PM

Despite the short amount of time from last night to midday, the snow had managed to melt a bit. Still lots of patches of thick snow about, but the sun was brilliantly present making the environment pretty nice to be in. I look around hearing some birds tweet in the distance as I bite into a grilled cheese sandwich, before taking a sip of Pepsi. I look over at Nathan who was blabbering on about the day so far.

“And then there was this marine animal protection group that I grabbed a pamphlet from. They seemed a bit rehearsed, but they have a lot of cool events like summer trips where they go scuba diving and go to places like SeaWorld. It was really cool. And then lastly, I saw this juggling club, which I've always been interested in, but I don't know how to do very well heh. However, I don't want to be too involved, but I also do need to explore my interests more. Since we are only a couple months out from being done with freshman year already. Might as well live it up, you know?”

I nod as I listen to him, even though I wasn't paying a lot of attention, I did happen to catch a bit of what he was talking about, I nod before responding, “I can see that. And I agree. College is that kind of time, to not just get a degree but take it in a way that is fun. Which sometimes fun comes outside the classroom.”

“Very deep, even for us nerds who need to get out of our shell a bit.” Nathan replies with a giggle, before asking, “So, what have you gotten into?”

“Well, I’ve already joined a frat a while back. But, that is kind of it. I haven’t really found anything else yet.” I say with a sigh.

Nathan tilts his head, “Really? Just a frat? Well, if you want to keep looking to see if there was something you missed, we can try and go around again.”

“Please. I don’t need you to feel like you need to get me involved, I’m okay.” I say, brushing it off. I was too shaken up by the already wild individuals I had met so far, I don’t know if my sophisticated elvish self could take more.

“Nonsense!” Nathan exclaims, before he grabs me by the arm and leading me into the center of the giant field filled with all the tables of various clubs, I chuckle a little at the persistence, but I reluctantly follow.

“What’s going on?” I ask with a frown, as we get to the center.

Nathan turns back to me and says, “Close your eyes and then you are going to spin and go in the direction you face, and the first station you run into you are gonna do! No questions asked!”

I raise an eyebrow, “Really, Nathan? Is this necessary?”

“I mean, nooooo. But it could be exciting, seeing what there will be for you, right?”

I shrug at his godly wisdom, “Good point.”

“Soooooooo...?” Nathan says, egging me on.

“Alright, I guess it can’t hurt. Unless I walk and step in a bear trap or something.” I reply, smiling a bit.

Nathan laughs as I close my eyes, before he helps spin me. Realizing how rather odd this really was deep down, as I feel the need to say something.

“Nathan. This is stupid! I’m just going to crash into something and hurt myself.”

I hear his voice around me as I spin, “Not if you just trust. Spin around a bit more and then go straight, follow the path!”

I sigh and think to myself. *Why was I doing this? I was already involved enough, right? I had my frat. But, Nathan had a point about not wasting one year of these pinnacle four years. And I guess it's not a big deal, I can always say no if it doesn't interest me.*

So I carefully keep turning around, and around, and around, several times, not too fast but enough times to not know where I am. After a few seconds, I stop, and feel the ground in front of me with a foot before breathing and stepping forward, step, step, step, step, step, step. Walking, with my eyes closed, even though there was nothing terrible that could hurt me, it still seemed like a bad plan.

Eventually, my foot pings against a pole as I yank it back, opening my eyes and grabbing my foot, “Ah!”

Rubbing at my shoe where my toe would be as it throbbed, I always hated stubbing my toe. I hiss at the pain as my fingers massage it, before looking up to see the table I ran into, there was no one at it, and I look around before going to the table and looking at the board presenting the name: The Japanese Club.

Really? Some world nation club? No offense to them, but I wasn't even interested in Japanese. Why would I want to do this? I shake my head as I decide to just read some different info, some of it in Kanji, with some in English before seeing a meeting date.

“This Friday! 9 PM! Anime Night! Cosplay, Food, Anime! Please join us! More club info to follow. Scan the QR code to RSVP!”

As I contemplate, my thoughts are interrupted as I hear footsteps run up behind me and I look to see Nathan join me at the table.

“What did you run into Josiah? Oooh! Japanese Club! That sounds interesting, doesn’t it?” He asks me curiously.

“I mean, sure, but I don’t know Japanese, I’m not interested in it.”

“Oh pish posh! Just do the thing, you don’t have to stay if you don’t like it, but what’s the point of almost embarrassing yourself just to quit? Huh? Make it worth it.”

“Worth the exercise you made me do?” I look at Nathan with an unenthusiastic look before Nathan chuckles.

“Alright. I won’t lie, it was an interesting exercise, but hear me out! You should do it! But I won’t influence you, if you really don’t want to, you can just walk away. But it’s up to you, I’m going to go see the other tables! Catch you later back at the dorm!”

I wave at him, watching him run off before looking back at the board. I sigh and grab my phone, and click it on to the Camera app, I scan the QR and download a Google Forms page with basic questions for RSVP, I quickly fill it out before submitting and putting the event in my calendar.

Even though I could still say no, I felt like I couldn’t. Maybe I wasn’t completely honest. The club could be interesting, but I’m just never confident in inviting myself to new things. All these anime fans knew everything there is to know about anime and some new guy with no idea what to talk about, showing up to a club clearly meant for people more in tune with Japanese culture than himself. Felt awkward, but I guess I would just need to wait and see. I felt unsure about the frat before I joined, so maybe this was going to be another one of those times.

6 Days Later

Friday, March 8th

Student Union Complex

8:57 PM

I stand in a big line of people wearing colored neon wigs and sketchy art outfits, costumes meant to resemble many animes I was unaware of. Looking around, I could see I was literally surrounded by people waiting for the club. Part of me felt a sense of this not being worth it and that this would be embarrassing.

But, I was already here, no use in pulling out now. So I decide to distract myself from my thoughts. I pull out my phone and pretend to scroll through apps I don't have. Before just checking out some pictures on my phone, a couple of photos of Dallas. That silly cat. He apparently snatched my phone when I wasn't paying attention at the AXK meeting and spammed selfies of himself making odd facial expressions. I chuckle to myself before hearing a megaphone turn on as I look up at the source to find a young Asian girl messing with the megaphone before speaking.

“こんにちは、いらっしゃいませ！ここにいてくれてありがとうございます！どうぞお入りください。ピザとボバをご用意しております。他の人のためにいくつかを残してください。ありがとうございます！”

I scratch my head as some others make faces, chuckling awkwardly, indicating that we have no idea what was just said. Before the same lady hush our chuckling, as she says, “ごめん！ごめんごめん！”

She clears her throat before flashing down into a little tanuki, making many people go “*awww*” before the tanuki looks at a fellow guy who runs over and turns on the megaphone and holds it for the little tanuki, speaking in a decent English accent.

“Sorry! I am Iris! I can only speak English in this form since it is natural.” Her tail wishes before iterating, “As I was saying! Hello and welcome! Thank you for being here! Please come in, there is pizza and boba for you. But make sure to leave some for others. Thank you!”

She flashes back to a human form before the guy follows her up to the doors and opens them up to let people usher in, as the line progresses eventually, I get past the doors and over to a table with food and drinks. I grab some as I make my way into the ballroom with everyone in it, decorated with many Asian themes. A TV was set up and running some anime show.

I shyly go to a corner as everyone is filing in and talking with each other. I sigh, thinking to myself that this was stupid. I wasn’t going to relate to anyone here. I close my eyes and lean my head back before looking up at the ceiling, cursing the fact that I let myself do this. I looked like an idiot. However, before I know it, the megaphone announces again, this time with the guy who helped Iris, the tanuki.

“Now since everybody is here! Let us introduce our Japanese club leaders. Obviously, we have Iris, who you met earlier. She is our events coordinator. I am Patrick, you Secretary. And we have Mako, Lucy, and John as our dance captain, treasurer, and representative respectively. And then as your President, give it up for Fumihiro!”

Suddenly, a man steps into the room, as suddenly a wind tears through the room, empty cups and plates flip up, curtains wave in the sharp breeze as a scaly figure is shown. A Fujin! My eyes widen in fascination at the guy. Quite unique, but awesome. People clap and cheer before Patrick returns the attention to himself.

“And now! Introducing our Vice President Haruko!”

I gasp as I see a familiar face step out! It was Haruko from the frat! I clap as he steps out and adjusts his glasses, which shimmer in the lighted room. Then the leaders step together and bow before Fumihiro steps forward and speaks without the megaphone.

“Please enjoy the festivities, if you have questions about the club, please read our brochures on the table by the food or talk to one of us leaders, and we will explain more. For now, feel free to have some more food, watch some anime. Anything! Thank you all for being here!”

He steps back as everyone claps for the group again, as people slowly return to what was going on before. I decide to make my way over to Haruko. He has his hands in his pockets as he looks around before seeing me and smiling and waving a little.

He frowns, “Josiah? What brings you here?”

“Oh well, I ran into the table for this club at the festival the other day. So I thought it might be interesting to check out.”

“Oh! Of course!” He rushes and quickly grabs a brochure and holds it out to me, “What makes you want to join this club?”

I shrug and take the brochure, “Oh well, I kind of just went to the first club I saw at the fair and this was it. But to be honest, I was skeptical as to how I would do this, but with you it doesn't seem as bad since I know you. And you are also Vice President, which is super cool.”

He waves at me playfully, “Ohhh, it's not really that cool.”

My eyes widen as I scoff humorously, “You kidding, Haruko? Vice President is a big honor! Don't shoot it down!”

He looks at me with large eyes, intrigued with what I said before, bowing his head,

“Sorry. I don't think so.”

“Why not?”

“I don’t know. I mean, I’m just a freshman. I think people view me as weird for having this position so young.” He looks down at his own feet.

I shake my head and smile softly. “Not at all. At least from me, you have my respect. You carry yourself well, so you deserve it.”

He looks at me before he gestures to the party, “Well, are you going to do other things? I’m sure you don’t want to just sit and entertain me.”

I chuckle before setting a hand on his shoulder, to which he tenses, and his eyes widen,

“Of course I want to!”

“Josiah?”

“What? I mean it!”

Haruko looks at my hand on his shoulder and then at me, “No... y-you are touching me.”

I frown and look, before jumping, not realizing I just invaded his space, “Oh! I... I uhhhh... sorryyy...” Suddenly, before I could finish, my head and my eyes were heavy with fatigue, as I feel myself start to fall, only to black out as my world darkens.

Day - Unknown

Place - Unknown

Time - Unknown

A bright light pierces my eyes as they open, heavy with what seemed to be sleep. My head was surprisingly fine even though I thought that my passing out would leave me aching.

I rub my hair and then my eyes before looking at a window, a window that... was not mine. I sit up suddenly, taking note of no body aches from the sudden movement as I look around the living room I was in. *Where was I? Was I kidnapped?* Oh no...

Suddenly, I feel a nudge against my feet as I look down to find a creature filling up the other part of the couch I was lying on. A tapir. I tilt my head at it before taking my foot away from it, which it was sitting against. I suddenly feel a rush of pain in my head as my body stiffens and I groan. What was happening? I try to stifle my noises, but the tapir soon rustles and looks at me before flashing back to a human. It was Haruko! He rushes over and touches my temples with his fingers as I pass out again.

Saturday March 9th

Haruko's Dorm

12:13 PM

Light once again hits my eyes as I open them. To reveal the same thing I saw before I passed out. However, along with a face that came into focus, looking directly at me. Haruko again.

“H-Haruko? Is that...”

“Shhhh... don't stress Josiah. You're head will hurt more. Just relax.”

I shut my mouth as I stare at him, I look down to notice his finger glowing pink, and touching my chest. I adjust uncomfortably as he notices my unease.

He nods, “I know. Weird. I'm a Baku. I eat nightmares and headaches to make people feel better.”

“Eat?”

“Yes, Josiah... well... I don’t literally, you know, chew and swallow. But I can help people, and when you touched me last night, I knew the outcome of you falling to the ground would not feel good.”

“Thanks? Wait. What happened the other night? Did I really pass out?”

“Well, you see, I have sensitive body, anything more aggressive than a tap will cause my body to emit energy depending on the mental state of the individual. In your case, you were stressed and because of my being, it eliminated that, which caused you to pass out.”

My eyes widen in disbelief, but in awe. “W-wow. That’s actually really awesome. And thank you by the way.”

“For what? Kidnapping you? I’m sorry, but I had no way to get you back to your dorm. So I brought you to mine, I hope you don’t mind.”

“No, it’s cool. You have a really nice dorm.”

“Oh... it’s barely decorated please.” He says looking at the Japanese style living, but with very minimal flashy decorations.

Suddenly, I remembered the conversation from yesterday, before turning to him. “You know you shouldn’t be so hard on yourself.”

“What?” Haruko says, looking at me.

“Well, I mean, you don’t take enough credit for things.”

“Oh,” Haruko adjusts his glasses as he sighs and gulps, “yeah. I’m bad about it.”

“It’s okay, just maybe be a bit more positive. Accept compliments more.” I suggest.

He looks at me a bit sad, “I just have always been self-conscious about me and my abilities, sometimes helping others comes at the expense of not being able to help yourself. If you know what I mean.”

“It’s okay not to be okay, but... that’s what friends are for, right?” I say, as he looks at me with a look of hope.

He then nods before removing his finger from my chest. “Well, speaking of okay, you are drained of the aching, so you should be good. Are you hungry?”

My stomach grumbles audibly as I look up at Haruko who was now standing, waiting patiently. “Yeah, actually. I don’t think I ever ate the pizza I got last night.”

“Oh, well, I have ramen and soba, if either of those are alright.”

I shrug, “This is your hospitality, you don’t need to please me. I’ll take anything.”

He nods, “Okay. Well, give me one second, then. I’ll make the ramen. I have the ingredients chopped and prepared. I just need the broth and noodles.”

“Oh well, do you need any help?”

“Oh, no, you don’t need to. I can manage.”

“Mmmm... I don’t like that answer.” I stand up, “Let’s get cooking!”

Haruko smiles, his glasses tilting up from the wild smile, “Wow! Really? Well, alright then, yes. Let’s go cook!”

The two of us get into the kitchen, as Haruko gives me some instructions, and we get cooking. Warm, smelly ramen scent fills the air before we know it. And about an hour later that same scent floods my mouth as broth and some extra noodles pour into my mouth. I feel it go down, the spice biting my tongue and back of the throat before a warm, comforting feeling fills my chest. I lean back and sigh, before wiping my lips with a napkin.

“Mmmmmmm... I’ve never had ramen before, but that was awesome Haruko.”

Haruko smiles shyly as he uses his chopsticks to grab a piece of pork and eating it, he chews and swallows before answering, “Well, you did help me a lot, wouldn’t had been done so

quickly without you. But my family does takes pride in cooking, lots of homemade meals growing up, so that's also why it's good. But thank you."

"That's awesome. And the ramen was awesome. You've got to teach me how to prep all those ingredients, cause I definitely need to have this again."

"Well, perhaps we can hang out more during the weeks ahead, I can teach you." He says with a smile to me.

"Sounds fun!" I smile back at Haruko, before leaning back in my chair and looking around the little eating area and the window next to us, the time was clearly about 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Haruko sighs and swallows down a small sip of the ramen broth and wiping his mouth with a napkin, as he clears his throat before asking, "Are you wanting to get back to your dorm now?"

"Well, actually, I've been meaning to hang out with you. We need to since it's required for the frat. And I also kind of missed out on a lot of Japanese culture in yesterday's meeting, that ramen makes me want to learn more."

"Oh! Really? I thought you weren't interested, but I can definitely do that. What would you like to learn more about? Dance? Music? Anime?"

"Hmmm..." I thought for a bit, before asking. "Any good anime you like?"

He blushes, seemingly embarrassed to admit, "Almost too many. Pokémon, Attack on Titan, Demon Slayer, Fairy Tail, One Piece, Cowboy Bebop, Assassination Classroom. Anime movies like Princess Mononoke. It's embarrassing how many I watch."

I chuckle, "No, it's cool. I watch way too much of the Lord of the Rings and Hobbit movies personally. We are all guilty of indulgence."

“I suppose, but yeah. Do you have any favorites? Are you interested in watching anime?”

He asks.

I shrug, “I don’t know any personally, but given all those you mentioned, I suppose I am a bit interested in it.”

Haruko seemingly gets more intrigued at my response before nodding, “Wonderful, well if you don’t want to leave, I can watch some with you tonight!”

“Great! I have got no plans, so I’d love to!”

Haruko claps happily, but softly. Before grabbing both of our dishes and bringing them to the dishwasher after rinsing them in the sink. He returns, a little smile on his face as he goes to his TV and turns it on. It starts playing some program he must have been in the middle of watching, before he paused it and flipped to a little menu screen of anime shows and movies, before turning to me and holding out the remote.

“Why don’t you pick something, Josiah? I’ve seen a lot of these anyway, so I’m good with whatever you pick.”

I nod and take the remote, “Thanks! Let’s see...” I drift my gaze back to the wide selection of entertainment options.

I lean forward and my hand on my chin as I search. Pressing down on the cold remote button and watching the covers flip by before one caught my eye, Drifting Home, I click on it to bring up more information. Reading all the different genres it displayed, I look at Haruko, “How about this?”

He was on his phone on a chair next to the couch, scrolling through something before looking up at me and then at the TV. He looks at the movie as if secretly judging it before he chuckles and nods, “Yes! I love this one! Just give me a sec!”

He stands and looks back at his phone and swipes to get rid of tabs before he sits down and then sets his phone on the coffee table and leans back, taking a very proper and upright position.

“Ready?” I ask.

Haruko looks over and smiles, “Yes! I’m excited! You’ll like it!”

“Counting on it,” I chuckle before pressing play.

As the movie played throughout the night, I watched the characters work together and learn to become friends. It got me thinking. How come I got so lucky? You would think that this frat group would have had a nut job or two, but honestly, every person has been super chill. Matthew is super nice, Dallas has cool abilities and is very friendly. Jonathon is rambunctious, but brave. And Haruko was timid but kind. And myself. Who was I? The weird person who just goes along with it all? Or was I really contributing something?

I glance at Haruko, who was heavily invested in the movie, before looking back at the screen, eyes glazed, as I was no longer paying attention. Is this a sign? Have I been so blinded by who I want to be that I’ve never been able to fully invest myself in the possibility that I can be like these guys, or maybe I’m too invested and too willing to want friends because of my introverted ass that has gotten me into trouble. Used by a friendship I had started to hold dear.

I sigh sadly, to myself as I fold my hands in my lap and stare at my thumbs, twiddling them, seeing if maybe the movement of my fingers would distract me from just how sad I was. Maybe Nathan was right, I needed to do more. Get active. Or would that be a mistake and end me with another Parker? I look at Haruko once again before speaking up, “Haruko?”

He looks at me, “Yeah?”

“Can you pause the movie real quick? I need to ask you something.”

He nods and pauses the movie before turning to me, “Yeah, is something wrong?”

“Uhhmm... no. But, Haruko, what is your opinion of me?”

“Of you? What do you mean?” He adjusts his glasses.

“Like, how do you see me? Personality-wise, I guess.”

He thinks before looking at me, the glow from the TV in his eyes, “I see you as a smart person with potential. More potential than most.”

Hearing this, I turn to him intrigued, “What do you mean ‘more than most’?”

“You really don’t know? I mean, your major, your intelligence, you’re an elf, you have amazing wit, and they all exceed many other people’s abilities. Especially at this college.” He admits. Only confirming the thoughts that had plagued me, as I respond.

“Well, what if I told you I sort of wish I didn’t exceed?”

“What? Well, I would say that is insane. How can you not want to exceed? It’s in your nature.” He says, clearly hinting at the elvish nature to excel at everything an elf does.

I answer him, saying, “Because it makes me upset. I really believe that my excelling is the only thing I’ll ever be good at. You never mentioned me being friendly, kind, or considerate. I’m just this nerd. A no-good nerd who doesn’t know how to make friends.”

“But you have the frat. Right?”

“I hope so! But the problem I think I have is... I don’t think I have a personality, I have a stereotype, a standard. But other than that, I’m not impressive in any other way. I go along with how I was brought up, not by thinking. Not by my emotions. I’m just hopeless.”

“Woah! Hey! Josiah. Look at me.”

I didn’t even realize I was staring off at a wall during my crisis moment, because when I look at Haruko, his eyes were glowing. He reaches a handout to me, and I back away confused.

“Shhh. Josiah. I’m not going to hurt you, I will help you.” Haruko says.

“H-how?” I ask, concerned by his look.

“I will read your dreams and memories.”

I blink before responding. “Are you sure you want to do that?”

He sighs and nods and I could tell it was sincere, as he answers, “Yes, now just relax and breathe.”

His hand touches the top of my head, and I feel a magnetic pulse as I close my eyes. After what felt like 10 minutes, Haruko takes his hand off me and then proceeds to wrap me in a hug.

“What is this for?” I say as I hesitantly hug him back.

“Josiah.” He says, “I saw a lot of things. I can see the werewolf that you are scared of. I can see the people you have felt pressured by. Parents, friends. And... I’m so sorry. But, you need to hear something.”

“What?” I ask, feeling like I could cry from hearing all this spoken, before he said something I didn’t expect.

“You belong in our frat. In our little group. You need friends. But most of all we need you. You can’t keep living in this uncertainty of yourself, because it isn’t true.”

“But, I’ve been hanging out with you guys, and it only makes me realize my ineptitude. What more do I need to do?”

Haruko pulls away, “You need to be happy. You’ve had excitement, you’ve had relaxation. But you need to feel happy. That’s what needs to be done. Whatever works to make you happy.”

“But... what if I don’t know what makes me happy?”

“Hmmm...” Haruko looks away as he thinks before looking back, “Let’s think about it, use this movie that has a lot of friendship themes and figure it out.”

“Okay.” I say, glancing back at the TV.

Haruko nods and pats my shoulder before playing the movie. He then sits down next to me again, as we watch. Happiness. It seemed so simple. So quaint. But clearly for me, it was a lot harder than it would appear. But, I guess the closest I’ve gotten to being happy is being around the partners in my life who make me feel good. This group of friends and all their distinct personalities. But they don’t hide them, they wear them on their sleeve. I would just have to learn to fit it into my own introverted, nerdy personality, which I know will be very difficult. But I was determined to adjust to it.

I sigh again and look around the little apartment, the peace of it reaching my soul. At least, Haruko got lucky with such a nice squalor squalor-little single apartment style dorm. To fit both areas of his life, he seemed to admire, but it served his personality well. Fun. Solo. Shy. And it inspired me.

7 Hours Later

Josiah’s Dorm

7:54 PM

The unlocking sound of my dorm room door sounds as I finish punching in my code. I walk into see the bathroom being occupied, as I sit down and check my watch. Not surprised to see that it was still relatively early in the night. Unlike others I have met, Haruko was very adamant on needing to go to bed, and even though it was pretty early, I didn’t question it. He

helped me anyway and housed me in his apartment. I figured I'd relieve him of being inconvenienced by my sorry ass taking up his space.

The door opens to the bathroom door and Nathan exits and startles, wings flapping as he sees me before grasping his chest, "Geez, you scared me, Josiah! I didn't hear you get back."

"Sorry. I can a pretty silent creature." I say with a smirk.

"Yes, anyways. Why weren't you here last night? I was about to text you, but now that you are here. What happened?"

"Oh well, I stayed at a friend's place overnight. I actually went to that Japanese club and met a friend there!"

"Oh! Oh wonderful! That's so good to hear." Nathan says with a happy vibrant smile.

I nod, "Yes. And how about you? Do anything fun?"

I then see his smile falter a bit as he sighs. "Well... no actually. My Bible study group was disbanded this morning."

I gasp, knowing how important it was to him, given his nature, "Awww... why?"

"I don't know, logistics. I guess management was not as good as they made it seem at the fair. But, I guess I'll have more free time now." He shrugs, clearly still disappointed by it.

It then got me thinking, looking at my own group of friends, they were all so different, but we had nothing like Nathan yet. And I did want to know about this literal angel in my life.

So I speak up to say, "You know, you could probably join my little group of friends. We'd love to have you. It's not a Bible study, but if you are looking for some good people. They are really nice."

"Oh no, please. It's part of a frat that I'm not in, it would be too much of a hassle."

“Mmm... not really Nathan. I can literally ask my group leader and he could set you up by the end of the weekend.”

“Oh... really?” Nathan answered surprised.

“Yeah, I’ll message him right now if you want!” I say, grabbing my phone from my pocket.

“That would be really nice, Josiah. Thanks.” Nathan said, his smile returning.

“Dude, of course. If it weren’t for you, I wouldn’t have had such a good time at that club and with my friend, it’s the least I can do.”

I open up my phone and open my messages app to Matthew’s number. To which I type in, *“Hey Matthew! So my roommate just got kicked out of a group he was in, and I was wondering if maybe he would be a good addition to our group? I know he would need to be added to the frat, but he is willing to do it. I’ll put his number in, and you can talk to him. P.S He is an angel, so be nice!!!”*

I then hit the send button and look back at Nathan. “Aaaaaand sent! I also sent your number to him too. His name is Matthew and he is a Minotaur. He’ll hopefully be getting back to you for more info and other frat stuff.”

Nathan’s angel wings flap quickly as he blushed, happy, “Josiah. That was very kind of you to do that for me. Thank you!”

“Anytime, Nathan.” I say, putting my phone away.

“Well, I technically don’t have any homework for next week, so do you want to do something?”

“Yeah!” I knew Nathan cherished more simple activities, so I ask. “Board game?”

“Sorry?” He asks, happily.

“Sure! Let’s do it!”

We both laugh as I grab the board game from my suitcase that I brought, and Nathan sets up some snacks for us as we pull up a couple of chairs. Nathan then mutters a blessing and the board game floats solidly in the air as if it were on an invisible table. I smile, impressed by all the cool powers people have before we get started playing.

It made me even more happy glad that I got Nathan to join. Not just for his sake, but for mine. I had a feeling that being around people who cared for me and liked me would make me more happy. And to say the least, I was feeling a bit happier already.