

-Chapter 1-

The first day of school is always the hardest. It's a simple fact of life which everyone must accept. But amazing things can happen upon first contact with something like school: new friendships can be forged, passions can be stoked, and much, much more. Like when a new President is elected, his first 100 days are what define him. With us we only have one day to define ourselves. And define myself I would.

I was late. It really means something when you miss the bus on the first day of school. I walked through those doors tired and out of breath. I took a water bottle out of my lunch bag and downed a good half of it while walking through the hall. All the while other kids were all around me talking to each other. It was kinda loud, so I put up the hood on my jacket and tried to tune the noise out. As I pushed every sound from around me, my vision picked up the slack, and I could pick up every little detail. The numbers on the lockers. Odd on the Left, Even on the Right. The traits of the other students. That kid I just passed with a scar going from his right eye to the top of his mouth. That russian-looking kid with very bushy eyebrows to my left. That kid with two different eye colors, leaning against the door to a room marked with "214: Mrs. Jones". As I passed him, his brown eye followed me, and his bright green eye looked unresponsive.

I glanced down at the paper resting loosely between my middle and index finger. My class number, which I had hastily scrawled down on that piece of paper as I finally remembered it about an hour ago chasing the bus. I looked back up and found myself standing at just that room. Room #314. As I reached out to grab the handle, the bell rang and all the others in the hall headed toward their classrooms. I quickly opened the door and went in just seconds before I would've been trampled by the other 28 students who had class in this room. Everyone instantly went about finding seats which would put them closest to wherever their friends sat. Not wanting to be an outlier, I got to one of the few empty seats... right smack-dab in the middle of the class. The teacher arrived soon enough, and sat a bag that was probably heavier than it should have been down on the "teacher's desk".

"Good morning students." She said in a sing-song voice befitting a stereotypical female teacher. "My name is Mrs. Bell."

"Hello Mrs. Bell." the whole class chorused. Mrs. Bell found this a welcome occurrence, but still looked like she had a worse morning than I had.

She was tall and lean, had blonde hair, and looked just a little older than my bro -who by the way, would've looked her up and down all day. She pulled a clipboard and sheet of paper out of her bag.

"Alrighty then... I will call your name, just tell me that you are indeed here."

"Sabir Aminachav."

"Here." The russian-looking kid with bushy eyebrows said.

"Sydney Andromina."

"Here." A girl I hadn't taken notice of yet said.

"Tyler Angus."

"Here." I said.

I didn't pay much attention to anything else in class, it was your typical first-day stuff the teachers probably *had* to tell the students. I just couldn't stop dwelling on how badly the morning had turned out. My parents are separated -by the ocean, not divorce- so my mom will almost at random take a month long trip to go see my dad in Great Britain, where he is a history teacher. My mom loves this town, and wanted the family to be here, but dad was transferred over there. I may not like this arrangement, but I have no say in it. My bro is in that sweet respite between highschool and college, and spends half the year hibernating and the other college hunting. It just so happened that the first day of school lined up with both of those events. I was essentially left on my own.

I was pulled from my thoughts by the feeling of being stared at. I turned and looked behind me, just in time to see a pale kid with stark-white hair look away from me. He stood out, looking like the main character from an anime. He had on a bright red jacket, and looked extremely uncomfortable, but that could've just been me catching him looking at me. He glanced back, and I saw his blood-red eyes. He quickly grabbed a pair of aviator sunglasses and put them on. It's strange that he would want to hide his eyes, there's nothing wrong with them. They're just an unusual color.

Soon enough, the bell rang and we were let out for recess. The entire time, I sat next to the outside door of the classroom, drawing the least attention as possible. I just kept thinking about what I was doing, and what I should be doing: going out and making friends. But I just kept thinking about it; I couldn't motivate myself to get up and do it... so I just idly doodled on a notepad. I saw the albino kid a few more times, but still didn't get up. The next, and only memorable thing about the first half of the day was when we actually did some class stuff after recess. It was math, which I'm pretty good at -my dad is a teacher after all. Following a typical middle-school formula, Lunch was next.

I wasn't able to pack a lunch from home, so I had to settle for... *cafeteria food*. It wasn't too bad; It was a cheeseburger and a drink. As I was "saying thanks" before eating, the albino kid sat down right across from me at the empty table.

"Um, hey." He said.

"Hi." I responded. "I saw you staring at me during class."

"Yeah... sorry. You got here late so I was going to go up to you and ask if you needed help with anything. We were in the same class as me, and I just kinda, stared."

"Why do you hide your eyes?" I asked after taking a bite of the burger.

"Huh? Oh." He reached up and felt his glasses. "Well, why shouldn't I? It's a defect, no one wants to hang out with a guy with weird eyes."

"I think it's cool." I said. That really caught him off guard.

"Wha-?" He then recomposed himself. "You, don't have any friends don't you."

I nodded in confirmation and took another bite.

"Let me start over. I'm Zachry." He extended a hand.

"Tyler." We shook hands.

-Chapter 2-

The year has come and gone, leaving me here just three weeks away from summer break. Mirroring the beginning of the year, I'm left alone at home. But the difference is, now I have friends. Zack and I became good friends and together we expanded our circle. There was Alexander, who had fiery-red hair, and an equally fiery personality; Ethan, who was generally laid back and could play the flute; and Mikel, who during one lab experiment in class had somehow turned his eyes purple and was kept home for the rest of the month -his eyes are still purple. There were a few others, but they're just the closest.

We all walked home together, as we lived in the same neighborhood, and walked past this sculpture on the way. It was apparently made by some artist about a hundred years ago in the likeness of a character from the local folklore (Zack did some research on the exact story, but the only site he could find that talked about it was all speculation). It was of a man in robes sitting on a bench. The man's robes and hair were carved to absolute perfection, looking just like rippling cloth and hair. The man's hands, which were on his knees, had the same attention to detail; every vein, every small armhair, and every miniscule chip in his fingernails was chiseled to a point that would be impossible for any artist today without the aid of a machine. The highlight of the sculpture was the man's face. For lack of better words, it was perfectly shaped, and every detail mirrored that of an actual person's to a "t". The eyes had a kind of depth to them, and if you were to stare into them you would almost expect the statue to blink after a while.

Making use of a key hidden under one of the many flower pots, I unlocked the front door of my house and waved goodbye to my friends. Upon entering the house I was met by the house's usual odor- that is to say, none. As it always was, the air inside was stagnant; every window was closed and locked with the only breeze being the brief one let in when I opened the door completely. I changed that, first thing, opening the windows on the front of the house. Standing directly across the livingroom was the grandfather clock, centered between two sets of glass sliding doors. It was plain, all things considered, and covered in scratches and scrapes denoting it's many moves along with the Angus family. It's oak casing coated in dust from over a dozen states. Laying my school supplies next to the divide in the floor where hardwood met carpet I made my way over to it, nearly stumbling over the row of bean bags that constituted a couch in this household. I carefully inserted a repurposed allen wrench into a hole on the side of the clock and made sure it was wound. Retrieving my school supplies, I started up the stairs next to the TV. As I walked past my Bro's room, I heard muffled snoring. He probably hasn't even left his bed today.

I opened the door to my room and promptly fell face first onto my waterbed. As I buried my face into the comforting top blanket that, along with its bottom counterpart, provided a shield between me and the uncomfortable plastic that held the water, I reminisced about the year. Specifically when we all met Mikel. The encounter was so full of... coincidences. It's funny to think of it really, all friends are made through some coincidences. But these were the kind of coincidences that were... not. Kind of like when someone passes off a planned maneuver into someone's life as a coincidence. As the topic is failing to go anywhere in my head other than in

circles, I pry myself up off my bed. As I slowly take off my jacket, I glance at the thermometer hanging from my window. It read 21 degrees celsius. I tossed my now removed jacket toward the door where the laundry basket was. I slipped off my shoes and socks, lazily tossing them at the basket as well. I finally got up and walked over to my art desk by the window, grabbing a handful of pencils from the jar I keep art supplies in and opened my notebook to a new page. Before I forgot, I grabbed the walkman my dad gave me and put in the earbuds. The track that came on was a bunch of nature-sounds, rain, wind, etc, it was really calming.

I got to drawing. I sketched the large open field which my house stood opposite of, and the two houses which flanked the opening to it: the varying greens framed by brown to the west, and the reds, white and tan to the east. The tall, wheat-like grass which sprung up where the concrete gave way to dirt. In my mind -and on paper- vines crept up the homes and opened up into lush purple morning glories. Then, there below the golden sun still high in the sky, was a Dragon, its majestic azure wings spread far above the rooftops and its lithe cobalt form coiling down between the buildings where the wheat-like grass reached up as if to touch its tail. No clouds were held by this sky, opposed to the summer storm threatening to break on the actual horizon.

The loud crashing of thunder nearly succeeded in making me ruin my drawing. I pulled the bud from one of my ears just to make sure it wasn't part of my music -it wasn't. I carefully got up after depositing my pencils in the jar and went downstairs. The windows on the ground floor were all open on account of the heat, but it would probably rain overnight so I got to closing them. As I went to close the window closest to the door, I noticed that there was a package. I leaned out the window -nearly falling- and retrieved the package. I went back upstairs and grabbed my box knife to open the package. It was probably my bro's, but I'd save him the trouble of opening it. Inside was, surprise surprise, another box. On second thought, I didn't dare go further, knowing my bro it could be literally anything. I still remember the... *last time* I opened one of his packages (*shudder*).

I set the box down in front of his door as I passed it going to my room. I felt a slight chill as I stepped inside. The window was open... I'm sure I never opened it. What's more, there was a flower sitting on top of my picture. It was a *Morning Glory* like the ones I drew. As I grabbed it and was about to toss it out the window, I saw that my picture had changed! The dragon had somehow moved, no longer floating mid air between the buildings in the mid-ground, but now at the forefront as if it were perched with its foreclaws resting on my window sill. As well, the sky was darker, mirroring reality, looking as if rain could fall from the burdened, dark clouds at any moment.

I closed the window and started to undress for bed, figuring I'd deal with this when I was less tired. After almost getting all my clothes into the bin and putting on some sleep pants, I pulled back the covers and lept in. The water sloshed and I shook, but it evened out and before long I had drifted off to the world each and every one of us goes to in our sleep, some people sometimes call dreams. I didn't dream about anything in particular, more or less just unspecific shapes and colors with no real meaning. Dreams are often like this, and no one pays attention to them. People say that dreams are your subconscious trying to tell you things. Others say other things, like that dreams are a "human thing", or that they tie us into the spirit world. I don't believe any of it. Dreams are just dreams, nothing more.

I was snapped awake by... something. I couldn't tell what it was, just that there was this presence. It felt as if something was clinging to my back, but since I had been sleeping on my back that couldn't be. I got up and walked to the second window opposite my desk, and one of the floorboards gave a shrill creak. Stupid old house. I looked out the window, which overlooked part of the pool and a bit of the lawn. It was raining. I could also see that the window to my bro's room was open, the drapes oddly paused partially blowing outwards. I walked over to the door, over more creaky floorboards and down the stairs. As I descended, everything started to gain this weird purple tint, like I was looking through purple glass.

I came to the living room and immediately looked at the clock. It had stopped. I know I had wound it, I've been doing so for the whole year first thing after school. I went up to it and put a hand on the side, feeling around in the moonlit room for the allen wrench. I then found that the clock was cold to the touch, much colder than it should be. I backed away, the presence getting stronger. My head pounded -not necessarily hurting- and my skin crawled. Along with the weight on my back, it became hard to breathe, so I stumbled over to the sliding glass door and threw it open, the presence disappearing instantly. I walked out into the rain, which fell despite many other things seemingly frozen in time, walking right up to the edge of the pool.

The moon was full tonight, and surrounded with a ring of pale light -a rare sight akin to a rainbow, called a moonbow. The moonlight filled the backyard and glimmered across the surface of the pool. I stood there for a good long while, taking in the sight. The presence then returned with a pure feeling of fear. I ran back inside. I ran up the stairs and into my room, and then dove under the covers, burying my face in the pillow.

I awoke the next morning to the loud chimes of the grandfather clock.

-Chapter 3-

It was Saturday, the start of the brief two-day respite from school which all students young and not as young look forward to, myself no different. The sky out my uncovered windows was foggy, but still just bright enough that I couldn't go back to sleep. I begrudgingly got up and selected a set of clothes from the dresser; after all I wasn't going to streak, even in my own home. After I got them on, I noticed that the tips of my fingers were wrinkled like when you've been in a pool or bath too long, but I ignored it... too drowsy to care. Bro's door was ajar, and the package was missing. I continued down through the living room to our pitifully tiny kitchen.

I went over to the sink and turned it on. I brought my hands under it, planning to splash some water in my face to wake me up, but instead pain shot through my entire body as soon as the water touched me! I stumbled back and looked down at my hands -From where the water hit them, my hands were beginning to turn blue and rigid. This... change began to spread up my arm. This feeling almost like my arm was asleep except painful, instead of just tingly. My fingernails grew out, turning black and into more of a cone shape. Turning my hands over as my fingers began to shorten, I saw my palms had grown squishy-looking pads. The rigid blue skin then segmented out into what I now recognized as scales.

Feeling unsteady on my feet, I got down on all my hands and knees, finding the pads on my hands comfortable against the hardwood flooring. An extra bend developed in each leg,

which made me adjust my position to put my feet flat on the floor. Scales grew over almost my entire body now, transforming my toes into talons as they reached there. I rolled over onto my side and clawed off my clothes, so the changes wouldn't completely destroy them. I could now see that there were fins coming off the sides of my legs, with a much lighter blue membrane. The scales on my stomach and chest were the same light blue.

Simultaneously, my tailbone and two spots on my back bulged out. I could painfully feel my spine shift slightly as the bulge on my rear extended into a lithe tail, complete with fins along either side. The ones on my back grew into what felt like arms, with long fingers connected by a thicker membrane... wings! Finally the change got to my face, first pushing my neck out at least a foot in length, then getting rid of the bits of my ears before covering them with yet more fins. I had to close my eyes, the pain was bad as my jaws elongated. I felt one of my teeth come loose, the snaggletooth I'd had since forever, so I opened my long mouth and spat it out. The final pain came as two somethings pushed through my skull on either side of the back of my head. Cracking one eye open, the tooth I spat out was longer and pointer, like a fang. I just lay there for a good while as the pain died down and various little adjustments to my body occurred.

Eventually I got up, or tried to. It would seem I'm quadrupedal now. Though, with the new body walking on all four limbs, er, I guess they're all legs now, was much more practicable. I walked over to the wall where the home-phone is. I was just able to reach it and batter it off the receiver with a wing, so now it's hanging there by the cord, but I have no way of reaching the buttons. So to fix that, I went over to the fridge and got out the broom that was wedged between it and the wall. My forepaws are actually still quite dexterous. After obtaining the broom I punched in Zack's phone number, which as you would expect took longer than normally. "Flamel residence, Zachry speaking."

"Zack, it's Tyler."

"Tyler? Your voice sounds weird dude."

"You need to come over to my house."

"What, no explanation on the voice thing? No whitty excuse?"

"Just come over, you won't believe this unless you see it."

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While I waited for Zack I tried to puzzle out what exactly happened. It's fairly obvious I was transformed into a dragon. It happened after I touched water and after I had what I'm starting to believe was a dream, where it was raining. Those two things *could* just be a coincidence, but I turned into a blue dragon and going by the color theming rule most fantasy stuff follows, blue means water. Then again, there was that thing with the picture last night. "The picture!" I said out loud, I was so surprised.

I had completely forgotten about it in the confusion of the transformation. I padded over to the stairs, taking care not to scratch the hardwood of the kitchen floor with my claws, but dropping that caution once I made it onto the carpet in the rest of the house. I had assumed that going up stairs in my new quadrupedal form would be like when I used to clamber up them on my hands as well as feet. I was only partially wrong in this assumption. From lower down the stairs appeared much steeper, and climbing them was less than a challenge, but more of a hassle. Still, I reached the upstairs hallway sooner than later. I quickly noticed that bro's door

was still open, and my ear-fins twitched as they picked up the sound of steps muffled by carpet within.

I froze as the door opened completely, and my brother Cody stepped partially out into the hall. He was tall, and deceptively muscular, though it is always hidden under a loose shirt and baggy pants. His hair, a yellow-ish brown just like mine, is a complete mess and partially obscuring his bleary eyes. He reached up and scratched his hairy chin as he stared down at me.

"H-hey bro." I said, trying to back up to the stairs.

He continued to stare.

"It's too early for this." He muttered.

He went back into his room, closing the door completely behind him. I let out a sigh and relaxed my body enough I nearly collapsed right there. I knew that the inevitable confrontation with my bro had merely been delayed. As I passed his room I could hear the telltale sounds of him climbing into bed, so maybe it's delayed all the way until tomorrow.

I got into my room and half-climbed onto my desk, putting my foreclaws on top and bending my long neck down to look over it. The picture was still there, but no longer in the altered, self-aware form it was before I went to bed. Had the dream started even sooner than I went to sleep? Or maybe something supernatural was going on -further than the whole becoming into a dragon thing. I've always been one to try and look at things logically, but there simply is no natural process for Transformation like something you'd read on Deviantart.

A knock on the front door sent me scampering downstairs to it. I parted the blinds of one of the windows and peeked through. Sure enough, Zack was there. I struggled slightly, trying to open the window without revealing myself, but once I got it open ajar I called out to him.

"Hey Zack!"

"Tyler?" He looked around, quickly finding where my voice had come from. "What you doing creeping over there?"

"Zack, listen, when I open the door to let you in, don't be scared."

"Scared? I have no idea what you could possibly have in there that'll scare me... and honestly that scares me more. Just get this over with."

"Okay."

I walked around to the door and reached up with a foreclaw, and turned the handle. I opened the door,

"What the f..."