Running across a field, Darius skidded to a stop in front of a dorm building. A few other people looked at him askance, but the badger paid them no mind. Walking up to the half-asleep vixen at the front desk (who was now wide awake), he said:

“Good morning. My name’s Darius Astros. I’m here for my room key.”

The relatively shapely vulpine shuffled through her papers, and then pulled out a key from her desk. “Here you go. You’re assigned to room 627, up the stairs to the right and a left. Enjoy your stay, handsome.” She winked.

“Thank you.” Darius sprinted up the stairs, causing the papers to flutter off the desk.

He followed the vixen’s directions to the room and unlocked it to a spacious room. The mid-sized flat screen TV on one of the walls was blaring a show Darius didn’t recognize. It was aggravating him, so he took the nearby remote and shut it off.

“Mmmf. Hey, I was watching that.”

The nearby mound under the covers stirred, and the person under the covers sat up.

Darius’ roommate was a Bernese Mt. dog. The breed was typically bulky, and this one was no exception. He was taller than sitting down, and was twice as thick. The boxers he wore didn’t flatter his figure either.

The Bernese ruffled his own head, then walked over and sat close next to Darius on the badger’s bed. Darius felt a little awkward, and even more so when his roommate ruffled his ears.

“So, what’s your name, badger?,” his roommate rumbled.

“Darius.”

“No last name?”

“Astros.”
His companion chuckled. “That’s not a name you see often.”
“Typically not. What’s your name?”

“Jacob Finn.”

“Sounds Irish.”

“I’m not though. Funny, isn’t it?” Jacob pulled him up. He gestured around the room.

“One sides’ mine, the other yours. Don’t be shy in asking me for something. Now if you don’t mind, I’m going to sleep. Wake me up in an hour.”

Darius left him to sleep. Taking out his clothes, he packed them away in the closet provided, then took out his laptop and connected it to the TV to play some Dark Souls 2.

When the hour passed he poked Jacob in the shoulder.

“Jacob.” The Bernese didn’t move. Darius pushed his shoulder, with some effort. Jacob murmured something, but stayed asleep. Faced with no other option, Darius took a glass of water and splashed it on Jacob’s face.

The Bernese’s face twitched, and he sat up.

“Thanks for that.” He went to dress for his classes. Darius stared after him. Jacob soon came back out, wearing another pair of shorts and a shirt.

“You’ve got the same classes as me, don’t you?”

“Yes. Don’t wait for me”

“Don’t be late. Our professor while wring you out to dry.”

Jacob was sitting in English. His instructor had stepped outside to use the restroom, and Darius still wasn’t here, putting him at risk for getting chewed out epically. He heard the toilet flush…

And Darius breezed into the room seconds after. Sitting next to Jacob, he muttered something about a “goddamn invader.” The tiger stepped back in, ready for her class to start.

That’s how they spent their first few weeks together. Each day, Darius woke up Jacob with some cold water. Then the dog lumbered off to whatever class he had, Darius following him.

Jacob had devised some strange conclusions about the badger. He never saw him sleep. That was supported by the fact that when Jacob occasionally woke up in the middle of night, Darius was either writing, or on Dark Souls. He concluded that the kid didn’t need sleep, cause’ he was always alert in his classes.

Secondly, the kid had an awesome metabolism. He always seemed to be snacking on something or another.

At lunch, when they were sitting together, Jacob struck up a conversation with him.

“Sooo… We’ve been roomates for like, a week and a half, and I still don’ know much about ya. You don’t seem to need sleep, you’re always hungry, and you like videogames. That’s about all I know.”

Darius gulped down his mouthful of lasagna.

“Well, since you asked, I like to eat.”

“I could gather that.”

“I also enjoy writing, gaming, and thinking. You’re right about the things you already said. You’re surprisingly smart.”

“Watch it wise guy.” Jacob tapped Darius on the nose.

“Or else what? You’ll sit on me?”

“Yeah, probably.”

“Have to catch me first. And you can’t do that.”

“Why not?”
 “Can’t you guess?” Darius poked Jacob in the belly.

 “How old are you, Darius?”
“Sixteen.”

The Bernese whistled. “Little precocious, aren’t you?”
 “I suppose. Being enrolled in accelerated schools will do that to you.”

“I’ve got something to tell you, Darius.”

“Hmm?”

“I asked for a roommate with your specific qualities for one reason; to be my alarm clock. I’ve always had trouble waking myself up. I sleep through most alarms I buy, so I need somebody to shake me awake. We’re cool right?”

“There are worse ways to be used. Anyway,” Darius said after sipping some water, “What do you plan to do with yourself? After college I mean.”

“Uhhh… I was thinking photography. Or perhaps bartending. I dunno, I’m still keeping my options open. What about you?”

“Either a chemist, a bountyhunter, a CIA agent, a culinary artist, or maybe a teacher. Haven’t decided yet.”

“That’s a lot of things to want to be. You’re making me feel a little small-minded in comparison. The bounty-hunter thing seems a little dangerous though. Wouldn’t want to see ya get hurt.”

“You should be worrying about the criminals out there instead of me, and besides that’s only my plan if I can’t do anything else.”

“Well, whatever you plan to do when you’re all big ‘n famous-“ he put his arm around Darius’ shoulder-“you’ll always be my little alarm clock.”

“Whatever. We’ve got some time to kill before our next class. I’m heading back to our room to play some games.”

“What about our homework? That’s important too.”

“Yes, I know, and I’ve already done it.”

“WHAT! When!?”

“In between classes, of course.”

“Jeez kid, slow down! I’m not driving you away am I?”

“Not really,” Darius said through a mouthful of goat cheese pizza. “Let’s go back.”

Darius and Jacob returned to their room. Darius immediately returned to Dark Souls 2, snatching his controller back up. Jacob walked over to the restroom.

After a few minutes of running around and killing Hollows, Darius heard the scraping of metal on tiles. Jacob then called:

“Uhhh, Darius? I need some help.” The badger got up. Entering the bathroom, he saw Jacob standing on a nondescript scale, frowning.

“What is it?”

“I can’t see the numbers.”

“Hmm?”

“Can’t see past this.” He poked his middle, and Darius caught on. The badger also noticed that Jacob was shirtless. The half-clothed Bernese towered over him, standing at the very least a foot over his 5’4.

“Ahhh, I can tell what you’re thinking. I’m a huge glutton.” The dog rubbed the back of his head.

“All right, let’s see how gluttonous you are, then.” Kneeling, Darius watched the numbers flick back and forth, finally slowing down.

“Soooo..??”

“Three hundred and fifty.”

“Erf. Well, could be worse.” Jacob stepped off the scale. “Thanks kid.”

“No trouble.”

“Oh, and one more thing.”

Jacob hugged Darius tightly, enough so that Darius’ face was submerged in fluffy undercoat.

“Awww, kid, you’re blushing.”

“(Muffled) No………”

“Yes you are! How can I tell? I can feel your face heating up.”

Darius extricated himself from Jacob’s grasp.

“You liked that, didn’t you?” Darius hid his face between his arms.

“You must have, cause you’ve got a nosebleed. Wow…. Never met someone who likes hugs so much.” Darius quickly wiped his nose with his sleeve.

“I’ve embarrassed you enough. Get back to your game.” Jacob slapped him on the back.