...interesting.

What is?

Oh, just about everything. Drake and Darius, King Gardenia's war, Prince Phoenix, an emissary from another Hero School, all these new kids... everything.

Yes, fair enough. It has been an interesting few months.

Say... I didn't get a chance to ask you when I left. About Lavender - Drake said that Neil said that she killed you...?

Well, she didn't. Nor did her companion.

Mm. I heard a rumour you are a ghost.

Yes, I heard that one too.

Whatever else is true, I am still me.

Indeed. It would not change anything. Your horn, whether or not you are a ghost. It doesn't change you, and I already know you are unique in some way.

At any rate, if you ever feel like talking about it, I am here. And I have been around a while, I've seen much stranger things than anything at DHS.

...Thank you.

...So then, what is the strangest thing you have seen?

Hm. I would have to think about that one. I've been around long enough that very little really surprises anymore.

I'm glad to hear that this school barely rates for weirdness.

Heh. DHS merely ranks as "interesting".
MM this food is so good... Getting such a good breakfast prepared for you is sort of the best thing.

I know, right??

You could have just shown up earlier and gotten breakfast here any day.

Not really, there's too many chores to get done at the ranch in the morning.

I thought you liked living off-campus at your ranch. Why'd you move in?

If I wanted to tell you why, I already would have.

Hey tricksters, what are you lot doing today?

Ugh.

Apparently our headmaster expects us to attend classes while we're here. So I guess we're doing what you're doing. I'm regretting staying on here already.

Well, at least it's no worse than hh, but um... Hey Loki, what was that about a ranch?

Huh? Oh, I have a monster ranch nearby, where I've got racing monsters.

Aha! I knew you looked familiar!

You're a monster racer!

That's right, I am.

Isn't race season right now though?

No, it ended a while ago now. But I pulled out early this year, anyway.

I guess you've got school to worry about instead huh?

Eh, there's been lots of things going on.

Anyway, I think it's time to head to class.
WHAT CLASS HAVE WE GOT?

UHM, LET’S SEE... WE’VE GOT MAGIC CLASS FIRST. THEN HISTORY. THEN, MATHS AND LINGO AFTER LUNCH.

WHAT? MISSUS PIPERION IS ALRIGHT, BUT I’M JUST NO GOOD AT MAGIC.

MISSUS PIPERION IS ALRIGHT. BUT I’M JUST NO GOOD AT MAGIC.

UH... YOU’RE PRINCE PHOENIX, AREN’T YOU?

YEAH.

YOU SUCK AT MAGIC, BUT I HEARD YOU’RE A MAGIC GOD.

WHO’S BEEN SAYIN’ I AM NOT!

SO... YOU DON’T HATE TRICKSTERS THEN, HUH?

...WHY GIVES Y’TH’ IDEA?

THAT REMINDS ME! DARIUS SAID DRAKE’S A TRICKSTER. DID YOU GUYS HEAR ABOUT THAT?

OH YEAH, HE TOLD ME THAT TOO. HE’S FULL OF IT, SHE’S TOO GOOD AT ACTUAL MAGIC FOR THAT.

HE’S A BIT... WEIRD.

OH... DRAKE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A LYING CURSE A FEW LESSONS AGO, DIDN’T SHE? MAYBE IT’S SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

PFFF... MORE LIKELY SHE JUST USES ILLUSIONS TO FAKE USING “REAL” MAGIC.

OH WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW?

HAHAHAHA! YOU’RE SERIOUS? HAH!

DEL, BE NICE...

HAHAHA YEAH TRAIPOSE, BE NICE!
ALRIGHT QUIET! IT'S TIME FOR CLASS.

TRICKSTERS SHOULD ESPECIALLY STAY QUIET. I WILL NOT BE TEACHING TRICKSTER MAGIC, BUT IF YOU SIT STILL AND SHUT UP, MAYBE YOU CAN LEARN BETTER THAN TO BE A TRICKSTER.

ANYWAY, SIT DOWN! LET'S BEGIN.

NOW, EVEN THOUGH TRICKSTERS ARE TERRIBLE, LOATHSOME FOLLOWERS OF A DESPICABLE EXILED GOD...

SO WHILE THEY MIGHT BE COMPLETELY APPALLING PEOPLE, WELL, WE'RE MEANT TO ACCEPT ALL SORTS AT DHS.

I GUESS WHAT I'M SAYING IS, TRY NOT TO BE TOO MEAN TO THOSE THREE TRICKSTERS RIGHT THERE.

THOUGH IF THEY WANTED THEY COULD GO HOME ANYTIME.

THANKS, MISS! THAT'S RIGHT KIND OF YOU!

WELL HEY, FINALLY FOUND A TEACHER MEANER THAN OUR MAGIC TEACHER.

WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?

N-NOTHING...

WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT QUIET?! SHEESH, WE NEVER HAD THESE PROBLEMS BEFORE THERE WERE TRICKSTERS IN CLASS!

....HEHEHEH.
WELL THAT WAS SOMETHING. IS THE NEXT CLASS GONNA BE ANY BETTER?

WELL IT'S HISTORY, SO NO.

HMPH. NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY THEY BOTHER TO TEACH HISTORY AT HERO SCHOOLS.

I KNOW, RIGHT?

HOPEFULLY THE HISTORY TEACHER IS NICER THAN THE MAGIC TEACHER, AT LEAST?

HAA. SHE'S NOT.

IT'S DHARFI VALCROSS, SHE JUST CAME BACK. SHE'S EXTREMELY UNBEARABLE.

PFFFT, I GUESS WITH THE NAME DHARFI YOU GOTTA DO SOMETHING HERO-RELATED, BUT BEING A HISTORY TEACHER? HAH.

ACTUALLY, I'M THE DHARFI ALL THE OTHERS ARE NAMED AFTER.

DHARFI VALCROSS NÉE HUATHE, DEPUTY HEADMISTRESS AND HISTORY TEACHER. NICE TO MEET HEADMASTER O'REILLY'S STUDENTS.

UH, SURE.

I DO FIND IT A BIT STRANGE THAT HE JUST SORT OF SENT YOU ALL HERE.

YEAH, IT WAS LIKE FIFTY-FIFTY "STRENGTHEN TIES WITH DHARK'S" AND "I WANNA GET RID OF THESE THREE GUYS FOR SOME REASON".

AH, SO YOU'RE TROUBLE-MAKERS, HMMM?

UHHH-

THEN YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY HERE FOR AS LONG AS YOU PLAN ON STAYING.

LOKI, DO YOU PLAN ON JOINING US FOR HISTORY CLASS FOR A CHANGE?

THAT DEPENDS, WILL YOU BE TALKING ABOUT ANYTHING INTERESTING?

LOKI KIBORN.

SHEESH! I WAS JOKING! OBVIOUSLY I CAN'T SKIP IT IF YOU'RE TAKING US ALL THERE. UNLESS... OH NO I'M SUDDENLY FEELING REAL SICK, I THINK I NEED TO-

LOKI.

STILL JOKING, MISS.
It has been a while. It was good of Miss San to cover my lessons while I was indisposed. What did you study?

I don’t remember. SSH, LOKI.... Um, the last thing we covered was the first Shadowslayer.

Oh, the Shadowslayer.... Is it true she had a sword like Saturn’s? ...

Oh, Hmm. Yes. I suppose she did. But I doubt it was from Jake, and many heroes have had swords like that.

...That reminds me of a hero I knew who had one. I wonder if—....

Ah, nevermind. That’s not something I’ll be covering in history class.

What’s not somethin’ you’ll be coverin’—?

Nevermind.

Well, I suppose if Miss San didn’t, I’ll continue from where I left off.

But Miss that’s really boring. LOKI KIBORN KEEP QUIET OR I WILL GIVE YOU DETENTION. Miss, you’re the one who wanted me to be here. QUIET!!

Pfft. What’d I say? Boring, right?

Heh, c’mon Lani, cut her some slack.

...Did you just call me Lani? H-Huh?

Did I? Oh no, I’m sorry. I have no idea where that came from...

No prob! Listening to Dharfi prattle on is enough to confuse anyone.
I've been feeling so spacey lately.

No dreams, strange thoughts, and such strong déjà vu....

This sword, it must be cursed. That's the only explanation, unless-

Hey, Saturn. Class is over, c'mon.

Huh? Oh... right.

Saturn, are you okay...? You seem worried.

Lmm....

Y-yeah, I think I just need a break. It's lunchtime now, right?

Okay... well, if you need help with anything, Lmm....

Hey Foxears, move it!

Jerks... you sure about what you said earlier, about leaving tricksters be? I mean... especially as she's got dark wings... especially the darkwinged.

Oh, y-yeah, it's no big deal.... better to leave them alone.

Trickster or not...

...some people are just jerks anyway.

So you're saying there's tricksters who aren't jerks?

Um, p-probably, somewhere...
Um... you haven’t had any more nightmares lately, right?

None... still no dreams at all, actually...

Lucky!

But I’m remembering a lot more about dreams I used to have. I used to dream lot about this tralipe who had this sword too... I wish I knew who she was.

...if she was real. Anyway, but I do prefer not having nightmares.

Um, you know... having nightmares is sort of a common curse from Jake.

But... I’m not sure that’s the case this time. Jake seemed um... weirdly friendly about you.

Oh, huh...

Jinx... thank you again for rescuing me from him.

It uh, it was really nothing!! Umm, but about your old nightmares, it might be worth asking a trickster about...

I don’t think a trickster would help. They tend to do the opposite.

Yeah...

I don’t have nightmares any more. I just want to know what the deal with this weird sword is...

Well, um, you got it from Jake, he must know what it’s for, you could um... ask him.

Ask? Jake??... you must be joking.

Um, hehe, ya... sorry that was a dumb idea....

I keep thinking about history class...

Really? But Dharfi is so boring... especially for a legendary hero...

Um, no... I was thinking about Shauni’s class...

I think I’m going to go talk to her about that class she taught on the shadow... I’ll see you after lunch, okay?

Good luck.
AW, ALL MY HISTORY CLASS PREP GONE
TO WASTE NOW DARF! I'S BACK...

I MEAN I AM HAPPY TO SEE HER BACK.
ONLY....

SKNOCK SKNOCK

AH? COME IN!

OH! SATURN! HII!

GOOD TO SEE YOU! WELL UH, NOT SEE YOU,
AS SUCH, SINCE I CAN'T LOOK AT ER ANYWAY!
WHAT BRINGS YOU TO MY OFFICE?

UM... I HAD A QUESTION
ABOUT THE SHADOWSLAYER...

OH SURE!

MISS VALCROSS IS THE HISTORY TEACHER
NOW THOUGH, YOU COULD ASK HER WHAT-

UH WELL, YOU TAUGHT THE
LESSON ON THE SHADOWSLAYER,
SO I THOUGHT I'D ASK YOU...

FAIR ENOUGH! WHAT DID YOU
WANT TO KNOW?

THE SHADOWSLAYER... SHE'S BEEN
REBORN TO FIGHT THE LIVING SHADOW
A LOT OF TIMES, HASN'T SHE?

YES, THAT'S RIGHT.

WERE ANY OF HER INCARNATIONS....
TRAIPSES?

A TRAIPSE SHADOWSLAYER? HMMM...

I DON'T THINK THERE HAS BEEN?
BUT I'M REALLY NOT SURE!

AH, I KNOW!

LET'S GO TO THE LIBRARY
AND FIND OUT FOR SURE!

UM, IF YOU COULD
WALK BEHIND, SO
I DON'T HAVE TO
WEAR A BLINDFOLD,
THAT'D BE NICE!
AH, I LOVE THE SMELL OF BOOKS!
I WONDER WHERE THE LIBRARIAN IS...
OH WELL! WE CAN FIND A BOOK BY OURSELVES.
LET ME SEE...

HISTORY
HEROES

LOOKS LIKE THERE'S QUITE A FEW ABOUT HER!

AH, THIS ONE LOOKS GOOD! SHOULD COVER ALL OF THEM WITH A TITLE LIKE THAT, RIGHT?
NICE, IT'S EVEN GOT WOODCUTS!

UH, HERE, I'LL LET YOU GO THROUGH IT!

The First Slayer
1303A-OB
Mars Kembre
From the small town of near the old
Hall of Nored, the World
no trace of

Janus Lockin
1058-2013
After the Worldsplit, it was unclear whether
or not the Living
Shadow Slayer would
return to what remains
of the world. In

IT CERTAINLY DOES GO ON A BIT, HUH?
YEAH... BUT I DIDN'T SEE A TRAIPSE.

Hmm...

Apollo C.
Minerva W.
Neptune W.
Ceres Cane
THIS LAST ONE...

IT'S 1503. THIS SAYS SHE DIED IN 1288. HAVE THERE NOT BEEN ANY SLAYERS SINCE THEN...?

YOU'RE RIGHT. HUH WEIRD, I THINK THERE HAS BEEN MORE...

OH. THIS BOOK WAS PUBLISHED MORE THAN 200 YEARS AGO. WELL, THAT EXPLAINS WHY THERE'S NOBODY RECENT IN HERE. MAYBE WE COULD FIND A MORE RECENT--

HA HA.

HUH? OH, HI EVO!

YOU KNOW, THIS JOINT CLOSED LIKE AGES AGO. AND THEN REOPENED. AND WE AIN'T GOT IN ANY NEW BOOKS SINCE I BEEN IN.

OH?

...OH.

TH-THANKS, MISS.

HMMMM.

I'LL HAVE TO TELL MANA WE NEED NEW BOOKS.

BUT UNTIL THEN... I DUNNO... WE CAN FIND OUT FROM ANOTHER SOURCE, LIKE GO INTO TOWN AND LOOK FOR A NEW BOOK OR--

AHA!

DHARF! EXCELLENT TIMING!

OH. SHAUNI, SATURN.

THAT'S MOST FORTUITOUS. I WAS WANTING TO SPEAK WITH YOU TWO.

WELL WE WANT TO TALK TO YOU FIRST!

UH, WE DO...?
Sure! Dharchi’s been alive for ages, I bet she’d know about this!

Know what?

Um… Oh, I wanted to know, was the Shadow Slayer ever a trapeze…?

Oh, why?

I don’t know…

We checked this book but it doesn’t cover anything in the past 200 years.

Ah… Let me think…

I think there have been two in the past 200 years.

But… I really couldn’t say whether one of them was a trapeze or not. I do not really know that much about the Shadow Slayer, to be quite honest.

She’s been around for longer than I am, in her various forms. And uh, rather a higher-ranked hero. So… I haven’t had very much to do with her at all.

Are you… scared of her??

Wh-What? Shush!

Anyway, so there’s only older books in this library, is that right? I must talk to Mana about getting new books in.

Yeah definitively. So why was it you wanted to talk to us, then?

R-right, uh…

Saturn, may I see your sword?

Um, sure.

Dharfi, what’s that book you’ve got?

Hopefully nothing…

But I had a thought. I’d like to compare Saturn’s sword to one in this book.
...But it has been a long while.

Dharfi, what is this book?

This sword...

I thought this sword was familiar, but it was so long ago... I'm not sure what I can really say about it, but...

Your sword was used at the splitting of the world...

Wh-when you became a hero...?

I was a hero before that. But... er, sort of.

That sword was used by a man named Dyaris...

Dyaris... Techqui.

Y-yes? That's... what does that mean...? Do you know of Dyaris?

N-no, that name doesn't ring a bell...

Suppose he would have to be a very, very distant ancestor...

That sword was used to... well it... Ligh! Dammit, Jake!!

What...?

Two things. First of all, I'm unable to tell the full truth of the events that took place during the world split.

Second, Dyaris used that sword to try to slay Gaea and take over the world.
I'M REALLY NOT SURE HOW TO TAKE THAT??

I'M SORRY. I SPORE AN OATH NOT TO TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT THE WORLDSPLIT IN EXCHANGE FOR... SOMETHING.

I CAN BE VAGUE... THE WORLDSPLIT WAS BAD. REALLY BAD. LAST I SAW THAT SWORD WAS THEN, AND THE WORLD NEARLY ENDED.

SEEING IT AGAIN IS DEEPLY TROUBLING.

TH-THAT'S- OH MY GOD.

YOU CAN'T TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT THE WORLDSPLIT?? BUT ALL OF THE HISTORY BOOKS WERE DRAWN FROM YOUR TESTIMONY!!

I UH- THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW!

I HAVE TO KNOW WHY SATURN HAS THAT SWORD, SHAUNI! I KNOW WHAT YOU PROMISED, BUT YOU HAVE TO LOOK. PLEASE. YOUR THIRD EYE WILL SEE THE TRUTH. YOU CAN TELL US-

DHARF, I CAN'T! I PROMISED JAKE! AND BEIDES, SECRETS ARE IMPORTANT.

YOU MUST! I HAVE TO KNOW- THE WORLD IS AT STAKE! THIS IS MORE IMPORTANT!

NO.

...DON'T WORRY, SATURN. IT'S PROBABLY NOTHING.

ANYWAY, JAKE SAID NOT TO LOOK FOR MERELY ONE YEAR, RIGHT SHAUNI? HE'S GENERALLY FAR MORE GENEROUS THAN YOU'D THINK, SO IT SHOULDN'T BE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT UNTIL WELL AFTER THAT, OKAY? FORGET IT.

O...OKAY....
Real, don't worry about it. It's probably not related to anything I said, and even if it was... we can handle it.

You were asking about the Shadow Slayer, right? Ah, Jared asked about that in class too, didn't he? Hmm. Something about her having a sword like yours.

The Shadow Slayer does always remember her past lives, but I suppose it is a possibility you got her sword as a prank. Perhaps... I mean I guess hers could be the same sword as Dyaris's. Bit of a stretch...

Ah, we could look at books to see if that sword is shown instead!

Right! If there's a book that has the Shadow Slayer's sword in it, maybe we'll see an illustration like that one.

...You won't.

Historically, the Shadow Slayer has been very protective of her sword. Though there may be illustrations of it, there would be no real accurate record of it.

But you wanted to know if she had specifically ever been a trapeze? Hm, interesting. Any reason for that?

I er... no, not really. It was just a thought.

Well, if you say so. I'll talk to the Headmistress about getting new books in.

...Anyway. I could sort of explain Jake having Dyaris's sword, but the Shadow Slayer's...?

...Well it is Jake. Maybe it's really just a super unfunny prank.

That does sound like the Trickster God.

You've still got time before lunch ends, Saturn. Go get yourself something to eat and take a break. And don't worry, okay?

O...okay...
...How am I meant to not worry about that?

...Maybe Jinx was right. Maybe I should ask a trickster... or Jake...

Hi Saturn! How's it going? Spent lunch in the library, huh? Nice place for it.

Oh hi Delta, ummm...

I'm sorry, I can't remember your names...

No worries! I'm kin and she's Sen!

You look worried. What's wrong?

It's nothing. I'm just tired.

Oh wait, one of you might know...

Hm?

Was there ever a Traipse Shadow Slayer?

Haha well, that's sort of out of nowhere...

But yes there absolutely was!

Didn't you know?

There was Mercury Crossroads! Probably the greatest Shadow Slayer ever.

Really? Do you know what she looked like?

Like a Traipse! You know, braids and stuff.

She was a Shadow Slayer, they're all blonde humans.

We can probably find a book in the library.

Uh, heh, no, they don't have one.
But that's okay, I can just check when the library gets new books in. I'm just glad to hear there was one!

Why did you want to know about the Traipse Shadow Slayer anyway?

Well, uh...

So... I have this weird sword, right?

Weird? Swords are cool, not weird.

Y-yeah, but this one I sort of got in a dream from this Traipse lady, and the Shadow Slayer had the same sort of sword, so... yeah. It's a bit weird.

Yeah at the very least...

I knew there was something weird going on, but I didn't know about all that.

Y-yeah, it's kind of worrying? So I don't like to talk about it...

Even if that wasn't the Shadow Slayer, it's still good luck to dream of a Traipse! I dunno about getting actual items out of dreams though, that could be bad luck or good luck.

Um, yeah... no idea what to make of the whole mess.

Yeah, I'll bet. Well, let me know if you need help with anything.

It does seem a bit... worrying... but hey, at least you're in the right place to get it sorted.

Yeah, true. I couldn't think of a better place for this to happen!

Do you want to hear about how great Mercury Crossroads was? Because we're Traipses, we got stories!!

Heh, thanks for the offer...

But another time, maybe. I really gotta get some food before lunch is over.
HEY, SATURN... HOW'D IT GO? ARE YOU OKAY?
OH, HI JINX.

YEAH, IT'S FINE. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

OKAY... IF I CAN HELP WITH ANYTHING, JUST LET ME KNOW...

YOU'VE ALREADY HELPED ME SO MUCH! THANK YOU, JINX.

SHOULDN'T HAVE ASKED HER TO TALK TO JAKE, THAT'S STUPID... STUPID JARED!!

IF I WANT TO FIND ANYTHING OUT, I'LL HAVE TO ASK JAKE MYSELF...

T-TRICKY, LORD OF DREAMS... HEAR MY PRAYER....

SURPRISE!

NOT REALLY A SURPRISE SINCE YOU CAME TO SEE ME, EH? WELL, I DON'T ALWAYS RESPOND TO PRAYERS, BUT SINCE YOU'RE MY FAVOURITE=)

OH, UM... H-HI...

SO, I ALREADY KNOW, BUT DO TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT.

I, UM... TH-THAT SWORD YOU GAVE SATURN... WHY DID YOU DO THAT?

OH, I DIDN'T GIVE THAT TO HER, I MERELY FACILITATED THINGS. BUT JARED, YOU'RE NOT THAT DUMB, HMM? YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T ACTUALLY TELL YOU WHAT'S GOING ON. SO...

TRUST ME. DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT IT.

OOGH...

...THAT'S NOT VERY REASSURING.
Good morning Miss Traoré. How are the enchantments going?

Slowly but surely.

And your apprentices?

Bloody terribly.

Can you believe this - I have to teach them everything!

Um. Hey, we're right here.

Well, they are apprentices. One does tend to teach them things.

Sad but true. Hey Ryushin, so we'll do some unicorn statues next, right?

No unicorns!!