

As the heavy oak door shut behind him, Matt slumped down into the leather armchair, ignoring the gaze of Dean Abraxas across the desk. The short clink that the Dean's quill made as it found its way back into its ivory resting place did nothing to draw the boy's curiosity. Nor did the metal clanking made by the suits of armor, which flanked the door, that Matt had just entered through, as they stood at attention. Matt also ignored the wrought iron lanterns floating above his head, each tipped slightly askew. Had he looked up, he could have noted that they contained fairy dust which twinkled with a distinct pinkish mirth that lit up the room. True, he had not seen fairy dust before, and the words that were scribed to contain the rare substance were unknown to him, he could have, if he had taken note of their presence, proposed vague guesses as to the words used.

Such guesses made by educated individuals were often called hypotheses by less educated individuals. No this would have only been a musing, a postulation. There was a multitude of guess that could be made for indeed magic, in its nature, varied greatly and almost always seemed to glow regardless of the form it takes. Although Matt could have guessed that likely the words contain, sustain, and retain were scribed on vellum that undoubtedly glued to the inside of the lanterns. One of his first year teacher's had called them the holy trinity for scribing magic vessels. Matt had countered with a trinity of his own; have, save, and stave; which had outlasted his teacher's wards. That had lead to the first time that Matt had been sent to the Dean's Office, although in this case it was due more to teacher's wounded pride than any fault of his own. It was also the time that Matt had established his penchant for his use and twisting of simple yet powerful words. Although already, he was becoming disillusioned with the school and, like now, he had taken no interest in the Dean's furnishings. So it was with a long sigh that

Dean Abraxas came to the conclusion that today's meeting would just be the next in a line of pointless meetings.

"So Mattathias," the Dean finally began, rubbing his forehead as he spoke, "Care to provide an excuse as to why you scribed 'it?'"

Betraying his mask of apathy, Matt chuckled, "Nope."

"'Nope.' You offer no reasoning, no excuse," Abraxas pressed, "Upon your acceptance here we gave you one rule that you must obey above all else, to never scribe that word. Being a Scribe means you have the power to change the world with the words you right. Do you remember Magic's Tenth Law?"

Matt did not answer.

"The Law of the Meta-Phenom: 'Magic is the phenom of manipulating phenoms'. You have the power to do anything with your quill. This is why you must be careful to never break our rules. They exist to protect both their Scribe and those around them. Even if you have deigned it necessary to break the other rules of this school, of which you have broken all of them, you were not to break that one and scribe that word. It is forbidden for a reason. And now, because of your disregard, I need to send word to young Varion's family to come pick him up. But all you offer me, young Mattathias, is 'Nope.'"

"Magic's Second Law of Names' First Sublaw of Words of Power: 'Choose your words carefully,'" the young student growled while looking up, "It's Matt."

Dean Abraxas waited for Matt to say more but once it became apparent that nothing else was forthcoming from the student's lips the Dean found himself sighing once again. Calmly he slipped the thin crystal goggles that had been resting across his forehead to his eyes. Without a

word, he stared at the parchment upon his desk for several minutes. These minutes should be noted were spent by Matt not yet taking note of the floating lanterns, the animated suits of armor, nor of the faint golden wisp that trailed the Dean's quill as it rose in its Scribe's hand. With shoulders hunched, Dean Abraxas beared down upon the parchment and slowly hovered his quill just above the single word that Matt had previously written upon it. Despite the gravity of the three lettered, monosyllabic word Abraxas had to admire it. He couldn't help feeling pride in the skills of the disillusioned student; he had a skill that many of his peers will likely burn themselves out aiming to achieve. His swashes were lofty, the stems angled exquisitely, and the shape that he had achieved in his counters were marvelous. Damn that boy.

It was with that thought that Abraxas set out to work. The tip of his quill danced across the letters, tugging at the stems and bowls. When they didn't budge he re-dipped his quill in preparation for his second approach. With deft precision, he lashed at the letters, aiming to add unnecessary flourishes to the font such as serifs which were gaudy redundancies given the aforementioned swashes. Each strike that the Dean made with his quill flung ink and magic sparks into the air like fireworks of desperation and inadequacy. For once again Dean Abraxas had to contend with the fact that his attempts were failing as the marks he made were simply repelled by the paper. Meanwhile, the ink had splattered on him, staining his hands, face, and even the shimmering silver hem of his blue robe.

After silently admonishing his uncharacteristic lack of care, Dean Abraxas came to the unfortunate theory that he would be unable to tarnish the letters and resolved himself to tarnish the word as a whole. The three letters Matt had provided were an irritatingly small sample size to discern the rules of his font. There was no letter with a descender, shoulder, nor an ear. If the first

letter had been lowercase then there would have at least been an ascender. With a quiet prayer, Dean Abraxas carefully began scribing new letters into existence alongside the horrid word hoping to transform it. It wasn't long before Abraxas found this too to be fruitless. However, in that short span he had scribed numerous letters which peeled themselves from the scroll and float into the air. Had Matt been paying attention he would have noticed them rise until they were struck from the air by a bolt of energy originating from the nearest lantern above. Finally in defeat, Dean Abraxas threw down his quill.

Matt continued to pay no mind to the sweaty and ink stained man who was currently panting before him. Once the older gentleman's breathing had returned to normal he straightened out his clothes, picked up his quill, then returned it to its proper resting place. Then he walked around to the front of his desk and leaned back against it. One might assume that he was putting the scroll safely behind his back in an effort to keep it out of the sight of his renegade pupil, but in truth it was an act of shame and nothing else.

Slowly he removed his goggles and then the humbled Dean spoke, "So, Power Word Kill? That's pretty advanced magic, young Mattathias."

Matt simply shrugged and looked into Dean Abraxas' eyes with his own void of emotion.

"Illegal too," the Dean continued, "Without proper magical protection those who read it in a Scribe's hand die."

Matt's expression remained unchanged.

"This is why it is forbidden, both in this school and the world."

Matt still had not found interest in a single word that the Dean had said.

“From the time they arrive to the time they leave, each and every student is reminded daily of that word’s illegal status!” with his anger now ringing through his voice Dean Abraxas moved forward until he was towering over Matt with eyes alit with rage, “Still you offer no defense for your actions! The fury of this school about to descend upon you and you say nothing!”

“You accepted me,” Matt began not bothering to reestablish eye contact, “you said that I seemed to understand Magic’s First Law of Knowledge better than anyone else. At the time I didn’t understand what the hell that meant because you practically kidnapped me and magic was not even in my vocabulary before. The Law of Knowledge’s Second Sublaw of Infinite Data: ‘You know not everything.’” The boy’s throat was now strangled by his own bulging veins, “I wouldn’t call it a defense but more of an error on your part. Magic’s Second Law: ‘Naming a phenom allows control over it.’ Don’t pretend you didn’t see this coming.”

Dean Abraxas paused with his mouth wide open. As his lips struggled to form words his hand slipped inside his robe and produced a handkerchief. This may not seem unusual, considering the man was still covered in ink and sweat. What he did with the handkerchief however, that is a different matter. For he did not dab at the ink on his hands or his sweaty brow. Rather he held it to his mouth and muttered words to himself that could not be repeated for they were not recorded. Had Matt bothered to look backward he would have noticed of fiery silver halo flicker into being just over the base of his neck before fading away.

A moment passed as the two remained locked in position, neither daring to move. Finally, Dean Abraxas returned his handkerchief to his pocket and responded to his student, “Well if you think you are talented enough to scribe Power Word Kill, then perhaps there is a suitable

punishment. Research Power Word Heal and scribe that for me. On second thought, you had the gall to believe your magic greater than Magic's Sixth Law of Reversal: 'What's done is done until it's undone.' You should have cited Magic's Fourth Law of Infinite Universes' First Sublaw of Finite Senses: 'You are limited in what you are able to perceive.' Why don't you scribe it for me one hundred times."

"Magic's Sixth Law of Triples' First Sublaw of Equivalency: 'All magic comes with a price.'"

The Dean gritted his teeth, "Until you do, you will go nowhere except to your room and the library to do the necessary research, not even to class, and don't think about disobeying me. I will know."

Slowly Matt pulled himself from the armchair chuckling as he did so. "Magic's Tenth Law of the Meta Phenom's Second Sublaw of Setting: 'The Laws will only work for as long as they do and where they are permitted,'" he replied before calmly walking out the door.

Once the door had slammed shut, Dean Abraxas lowered his goggles back over his eyes and faced his desk. Looking down at the parchment, he raised his hands to either side and took a deep breath, after all Matt was right. There is always a situation in which magic behaves differently.

"Float," he commanded, his voice echoing with magic as the parchment rose off of the table.

"Furl," the dean continued as the scroll rolled itself up using the Scribe's magic secret that was his alone.

“Seal,” as a red ribbon materialized between his hands before tying itself around the scroll. This was a secret only for those who saw magic from a perspective completely divorced from the real world.

“Store,” came his final command as the scroll floated to the cabinets behind his desk, one of which opened and promptly shut the scroll away. With that done, Dean Abraxas walked behind his desk and fell into his chair, sighing upon contact. While he sat there wondering when Matt would become worthy enough to take on this secret, he paid no attention to his door. For if he had he might have noticed that on its other side, peering through the keyhole, was Matt, finally taking interest.