

— *September 23rd, 1932. Magierhain Academy, 3:00 P.M.* —

“Alright, children! Good work out there today! I’m proud of each and every one of you!”

Ingrid congratulated the children, high fiving them individually.

“What did you think of our show and tell projects, Frau Heinrich?” A random curious girl asked.

“Well, let me see... We had some wonderful drawings and paintings... some great projects about insects, and some great stories and poems. You all have mamas and papas who love you all very much. We had some wonderful drawings and paintings... some great projects about insects, and some great stories and poems. You all have mamas and papas who love you all very much, I can tell. So, keep up the good work and remember: Don’t forget to practice your magic every night, even the skills you think are easiest, and especially the ones that give you trouble. It takes a lot of work, and we’ll only get better if we put in the effort.” Ingrid answered. The children all filed out to go meet with their parents outside. That left one child behind: Dieter Heinrich Jr. Dieter Jr. was now six years old, and was a bit on the small side for his age, and had dark brown hair like his mother, but his eyes were light blue, like his father. Ingrid noticed he had segregated himself away from the other kids. He simply sat on a windowsill, staring out the window with his hands in his lap. He’d been like this for a couple of days.

“Everything okay, DJ?” Ingrid asked, taking a seat next to him. DJ didn’t say anything. Ingrid noticed the little boy had started sucking his thumb, which was a habit he still had yet to grow out of.

“Why wasn’t Papa at the Festival of Harvest?” He whined, still staring out the window.

Ingrid sighed, and rubbed the little boy on his back. She didn't know what to tell him, so she just decided to go with the truth.

“He had to stay in Berlin late.”

“Why does he always stay in Berlin?”

“Because he’s a Reichstag member.”

Dieter Jr. turned and looked up at his mother, and stared her straight in the eye. His little face had a look of frustration.

“Why can't he be a member here?”

“Because the Reichstag Building is in Berlin. That’s where the Reichstag is, silly.”

“But why does he have to stay so long?”

Ingrid sighed, shaking her head. “Look, I know he’s gone for a long time during the year, but he does so much good for Germany. If your papa didn’t have his job, there wouldn’t be any money to pay for the food on our table, the clothes on our backs, or the roof over our heads.”

Dieter Jr. curled up into a little ball. “He doesn’t come home because he hates me!”

“That’s not true. He loves you, DJ.”

Dieter Jr.’s lip quivered a bit. “Well, I hate HIM!”

“DJ!” Ingrid shouted in response. She didn’t mean to raise her voice at her son, it sort of just slipped out. “Don’t say that!”

“It’s true! He doesn’t do anything for me! He’s just gone so he doesn’t have to see me!”

Ingrid ran her fingers through her auburn hair. She didn’t blame him for thinking like that. He was just a boy, unaware of the social justice issues regarding PK rights. He knew nothing about how difficult his father had to work for what he had, and the things he had to sacrifice. That was when she got an idea.

“Come with me. I have something I want to show you.” Ingrid took her son by the hand, and brought him to a room in the back of the Academy. A giant paper was on the wall. On it,

multicolored splotches of paint scattered the paper. Next to the splotches were names of the children in Dieter Jr.'s class. In the bottom-right corner lay President von Hindenburg's signature. Next to it was written "09/07/1931". That one had a visible giant handprint.

"Do you remember what this is?" She gently prompted him.

"The trip to Berlin when we got to meet President von Hindenburg last year. I remember."

"Do you remember what you did on that trip?"

DJ pointed at the handprint. "Before we left, we did hand painting with him. And we got to tell him about our magic and our families. I wish Papa was there to see that."

"And how did it make you feel telling the President about your magic and your family?"

Dieter Jr.'s hardened expression finally loosened up a bit as he remembered that field trip. "It made me feel happy."

"Why?"

"Like I was special. Everyone's magic is different, and nobody else has my family. It makes me feel... like I belong somewhere. Like I have a place in the world. Like I was... unique. Even though Papa wasn't there, I still felt like I belonged."

Ingrid put a knuckle over her mouth. "Guess who planned that field trip? Guess who was responsible for bringing the President down to meet you all personally, so that you would feel good about your magic and your families?"

"Wait..." Dieter Jr. gasped. Ingrid nodded. She put her hands on his shoulders, and turned him around to face her.

"Your papa worked day and night for a week straight without resting, to get that trip planned."

“Just for us to go see the President?”

Ingrid nodded.

“But we were in that building. I could sense him there, but why couldn’t I see him?”

“Because of his job,” Ingrid explained. “Your father fights restlessly to allow Psychokinetics to feel safe in Germany, to have the same freedoms as humans, to be able to learn magic, and to go to school with you and have a life. And not everyone in Germany likes that idea. It takes a lot of hard work, and a lot of long hours, to convince those people to stop fighting, and let us live peacefully together. That’s what he’s doing whenever he’s away.”

Dieter Jr. looked down at his shoes. His hands were at his sides, and his thumbs were twiddling. He could feel the guilt welling up inside him. Ingrid led him back to the entrance of the academy and the two of them returned to their apartment complex. Once they got home, they saw Dieter on the bed, his suit blazer off, his tie undone, and the top button of his shirt unbuttoned. He had gotten into yet another nasty verbal brawl at the Reichstag, as Hitler and the Nazis tried to scapegoat him again for the economy and the recent economic recession. It was his fault, they said. He was the one responsible for the depression, not Hindenburg, and the only way to solve the problem was for Dieter to step down. Dieter Jr. slowly walked over to the bed and looked up at his father. Dieter looked down at his son and gave him a small smile. Dieter Jr. leaped up and gave his father a hug.

“Thank you for everything, papa,” He confessed, his voice muffled as his mouth was pressed up against his father’s chest. “Don’t ever stop fighting for us.”

Dieter hugged him back, his eyes a bit watery. This year especially, it was easy to forget what his end goal was. But to see his wife and son be happy? He’d take all the abuse that he needed to in order to secure a better future for his family and fellow Psychokinetic brethren.