**Disclaimer! This novel takes place over a long amount of time, but the part I am working on at the moment takes place in the late 70’s and throughout the 80’s. To not censor history, I have made my novel accurate to the time. It contains many swear words, ableist, and homophobic slurs. Viewer discretion is advised.**

I’ve been living with the Misteros for about 2 months. For the most part, I like it. They welcomed me with their whole family! It’s crazy how big American families are. They gave me a long white robe, hanging down to my feet, special arm bands and a wrap for my ears. I miss my mama but I’m sure my friends will find her soon.

Me and one of the preacher’s apprentices Silkvre talk sometimes. She talks to me in English all the time, and I have to tell her over and over I don’t speak it yet! I sure hope I can learn one day. I have to stick to Kezian for now. She watches horror movies with me. She likes them a whole lot. Especially the exorcist. I can’t even see it and it scares me... Silkvre says that it doesn’t scare her at all!! That’s crazy.

Silkvre’s mama is nice. She smokes cigarettes in the house though. That makes it hard for me to find my way around sometimes. Silkvre’s papa makes me a little nervous. But I understand it must be hard running a house. He calls me “retard boy”. That’s what Silkvre told me. I didn’t know what a retard was. Silkvre told me it was someone who was really dumb. That kind of hurt my feelings. It is probably because I can’t speak English. I guess that might be my fault, I mean I am living in their community and I can’t even speak one of their main languages!

So I’ve been going to Silkvre’s brother Gold to teach me. He teaches me basic words, and reads me sacred texts translated into English. He prays a whole lot, which reminds me, Americans take their religion real seriously. Everyday they bring me to a building where Silkvre and her parents talk to the whole family about Keznivizdan. I was Kezian back in France, but it’s crazy here! Gold tells me the people who practice casually like my mama will not go where we’re going when we die. He says only the most devoted Kezians go to where good people go. That his family saves people so they can go there. That sounds very nice. I’m glad for them. Maybe when we find my mama they can save her too.

Gold is a nice boy. He always seems to be wearing his robes of worship. He says he always needs to be praying when he can so Keznivizdan will save him. He wears one necklace, the dice hanging around his neck. My mom gave me one of those when we were back in France.

Another thing about Americans is that they aren’t afraid of anything. Silkvre had me go into her basement and hide in a cabinet because she needed to speak to her parents alone, and it was family stuff that they didn’t want me to hear because I was just a family friend. Silkvre came back later and she had a black eye! She had said she went out fighting the creatures of the forest without me after her parents talked to her about morning plans and a bear got her right in the eye!! She said she killed it. I wish I was brave like her.

For a girl she really acts like a boy. I asked Gold why Sil acts like that when he is so quiet and he says that she tries to be special. And that if she doesn’t stop she won’t go to where the good people go. I went to tell her about her brothers advice and she cursed at me. It scared me because kids aren’t aloud to curse. She and her brother must have a different way of doing things. But I hear that’s how siblings are. Silkvre cuts my hair short all the time. She says it’s better for fighting if it’s like that. I don’t really plan on fighting anytime soon though..