

Young Oddish Questors

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Chapter 3 - Lock in and sleepy

“Fankie, scared.”

Adam pulled his shirt over his head so only his eyes and nose stuck out. He breathed heavily, gasping for air.

“Hey, hey, calm down. Take your inhaler.”

Adam dug the inhaler out and puffed a couple times. His breathing eased then he pulled his shirt back over his head. “Want to go home, Fankie.”

“Yeah, I know. We’ll find a way.”

Frankie rattled the chains that barred the doors. Every exit had been locked the same way. How crazy was that? How was he supposed to know they locked the school like this at night? He had just wanted to stay long enough for Adam to feel like they were investigating a haunted school.

Squeak

Adam spun to peer into the darkness. What was that? Frankie looked down the gloomy hall but saw nothing.

“Fankie, go home.” Adam paced back and forth in the hall. “Go home, Fankie.”

Oh man, this wasn’t good. “Calm down, Adam, it’ll be all right.”

Squeak

Adam jumped, his breathing ragged. His hands stuck out, and he rubbed them together.

What to do? “Come on, Adam. This is what we wanted. We can investigate.” Frankie started down the hall, but stopped when he realized Adam didn’t follow. He turned back. “Come on.”

Adam continued to pace while rubbing his hands, sure signs he was stressed. It would not be good if he freaked out right now.

Squeak

Was that closer?

Squeak

Frankie stepped close to Adam and grabbed the boy by the shoulders, forcing him to stop pacing. Adam’s eyes had that wild look.

Frankie leaned in to whisper. “OK, look, I don’t know what that is. Let’s go into that last classroom and see if we can get out the windows.” Adam blinked. “Nod if you understand, Adam.”

Squeak

Adam vigorously nodded his head.

Without another word, Frankie took his brother’s hand, and they walked to the classroom

door. After they entered, he heard another squeak as he shut it behind them. He made sure there was no sound as it closed.

“See? We’re safe in here.”

Adam sat on a desk and looked around wild-eyed. The glow of the exit sign provided minimal light, just enough, so you didn’t crack your shins trying to maneuver. Frankie patted his brother’s shoulder as he made his way slowly to the window. He was sure the sound wasn’t a ghost (well, pretty sure), but no reason to make noise and attract attention.

He tried each of the windows. Locked. This was not a good night. He returned to sit by Adam. What to do?

“Fankie, go home.”

“Yes, Adam, we’re gonna go home. Let’s give that noise a minute to go away.”

Together they sat in silence. How were they getting out of this? Their foster parents were probably going nuts about now.

After a few minutes, Adam asked, “Fankie, what’s that? Flashing lights.”

Frankie looked around. There were flashing lights. Red and blue colored. Oh no. Footsteps echoed in the hall.

“Adam, I think we’re about to go home.” He hoped that’s the only place they went.

The door flew open and a powerful beam of light shot into the room. Adam shrieked and leaped up. The desk clattered as he knocked it over.

“I found them,” a strange voice called out.

The overhead lights flicked on. Standing in the door were two policemen.

Squeak

The janitor walked into view, pushing the mop bucket.

Squeak

“See, officers, I told you I heard something.” The janitor walked off, bucket squeaking as he went. “Told them it wasn’t a haunted school,” he mumbled.

“All right, boys. What are you doing in here?”

Frankie ignored the question as he focused on Adam, who was in hysterics. Air whistled with each breath taken.

“Adam, Adam, listen, calm down.” Adam jerked his gaze back and forth around the room. “Adam, look at me.”

“Uh, what’s wrong with him?” one of the officer’s asked.

Frankie didn’t answer and heard the other one radio for an ambulance. They didn’t need that. He dug into his brother’s pocket and yanked out the inhaler. Frankie tried to put it between his brother’s lips, but Adam resisted. The first cop stepped behind Adam and grabbed the boy’s head. Adam shrieked and Frankie slapped the man’s hands away.

“Get your hands off! That’s not helping!”

He jammmed the inhaler into his brother’s mouth and pressed it. Adam whipped his head away and Frankie spent several more seconds struggling to get it back between his brother’s lips. When he did, he depressed it several times rapidly. Adam sucked in a deep breath and let it out. The air no longer whistled as he breathed easier.

“Son, I think you need to step away, we’ll handle this.”

The officer that had radioed stepped between Frankie and Adam and blocked Frankie from getting to his brother.

“Stop!” Frankie yelled as the other officer grabbed Adam’s arms and yanked them behind his back.

Adam shrieked and flung his entire body backwards, knocking him and the officer down. As soon as they hit the ground, Adam scrambled to get up as the policeman struggled to grab him. Adam pushed and shoved, he kicked and stomped, all while shrieking. His wild gaze flitting around the room, never settling on one item.

“Adam,” Frankie called again as he attempted to get around the officer.

Adam’s shrieks turned to words. “Fankie Fankie Fankie Fankie Fankie Fankie”

The officer on the ground got his feet underneath him, and he launched himself at Adam. They landed with a ‘Whumpf’ and he handcuffed Adam’s hands behind his back. Tears streamed down his face and dripped from his nose, and he called “Fankie” over and over.

“Adam, it’s OK. Please, guys, you don’t need to handcuff him. He’s autistic.. He’s just scared.” Frankie tried to approach his brother, but the officer held him back.

Frankie swatted at the man’s hands. The officer reacted by knocking Frankie to the ground and handcuffing him also.

“What is this?”

A female officer stood in the doorway with her hands on hips as she gazed around the room.

“They resisted and this one,” the speaking officer pointed at Adam, “might be on something.”

“No, he’s not,” Frankie yelled from the floor as he twisted around to look at the female officer. “He’s got autism, he’s just scared. I tried to tell these meddling fools.” He shifted his gaze to glare at the officer closest to him then turned his sight back to the female officer, imploring her with his eyes. “He’s just scared.”

She studied him a moment as Adam continued to shriek. Frankie let out a disgusted grunt, then said, “Adam. Adam. Zinks. Jinkies. Jeepers.”

Like a switch, Adam quieted. It was so sudden, the two officers closest stepped back and eyed the boy warily. Frankie smiled and twisted to face Adam.

“Jinkies, Adam, we would have gotten away with it, it if wasn’t for those meddling kids.” Why hadn’t he thought of this earlier?

“Roh ray, Fankie.” Adam used his Scooby voice. “Meddling kids. Hee hee hee.” He followed this with a “Awroo.”

The officers exchanged confused looks. Adam continued to talk in various voices, repeating lines from each character from his favorite cartoon.

“See, he was just scared. You just have to know how to take care of him.”

“Help them up,” the female officer said.

“No, wait, take my handcuffs off first. I’ll help Adam. If you touch him, he may become agitated again.”

Frankie locked eyes with the female officer until she said, “Do as he says.”

The officers removed Frankie's handcuffs, and he helped Adam up.

"Jinkies, Fankie," Adam said and Frankie laughed.

"Hand me the key and I can take these off him without any problems," Frankie said as he held his hand to one officer. When the man hesitated, Frankie said, "Please."

"Just do it," the other officer said.

Frankie snatched the key and said, "It's OK, Adam, I'll have you out in a second," as he fumbled with the lock. Adam kept moving, which made the task more difficult, but finally the handcuffs popped open. Adam immediately plowed across the room, scattering tables and chairs in his wake. He huddled in the corner.

Frankie realized his brother distracted the cops, so he slipped the key into his pocket and handed the cuffs back. The officer didn't notice the key wasn't there.

"*Well, that may come in handy,*" he thought as he rushed over to his brother.

"You're Frankie and Adam, right?" the female officer asked and Frankie nodded agreement. "Well, I'll take you home. Your parents called worried about you."

"Foster parents," Frankie said. He led Adam from the room and gave the other two officers a sour look as he passed.

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"Sara! What are you doing?"

Sara looked up at Ms. McFarland who stood in the door, her mouth slightly agape and one hand hovering at her throat. She looked at the screwdriver in her hand and the back of the computer that sat on the floor.

Confused, she looked back at Ms. McFarland. "I'm taking the computer apart." It was a silly question.

"I can see that dear, but why?" Ms. McFarland crossed the room and stood above Sara.

Sara craned her neck to look up at the lady. She liked Ms. McFarland but didn't think of her as a mom. "Because it couldn't connect to the internet. I wanted to see if I could fix it."

Ms. McFarland gasped, and her eyes widened. Uh oh. In adults, that was usually a sign they were shocked at something. That usually meant they didn't like it.

"Sara, dear, it couldn't connect to the internet because I don't have internet. No sense paying for that silly thing. It's not needed."

Now Sara was shocked. She looked at the computer. Don't have the internet because it's not needed. She turned her gaze back to Ms. McFarland. "But, I wanted to get online."

"Whatever for?"

Ms. McFarland looked shocked at the notion. That couldn't be good. Sara broke down crying.

"But I want some friends and online is the only way I know how to make them."

Ms. McFarland kneeled and laid a hand on Sara's shoulder, though she didn't hug her.

"But sweetie, you have all your school friends."

"No I don't. I don't have any friends. I go to school but no one talks to me because they

say I'm the weird new girl." She cried harder and felt snot hanging from her nose.

"But, why do you need to go online for friends? I've never been online in my life and I have friends."

How to explain it to someone like Ms. McFarland? She was a pleasant lady and Sara enjoyed staying here more than some other foster homes, but she was lonely. After a few more minutes of crying and snot slinging, Ms. McFarland got a tissue for Sara. Sara wiped her eyes and blew her nose.

"Thank you. I'm sorry if I busted your computer."

Ms. McFarland glanced at the computer. "Oh, it's all right. I don't use it much." She gave Sara a slight smile. "Maybe we can see about getting online. Would that be OK?"

Sara tried to smile back, but it turned into a yawn.

"Oh, dear, you're tired. Maybe things will look better after you get some rest." She stood and tried to help Sara up.

"Um, let me put this back together and then I'll be up. Will that be OK?"

Ms. McFarland hesitated then nodded. "Sure. You take care of that and then go to bed. You mustn't be tired for school. I'm sure it will be easier to make friends if you don't have these bags under your eyes."

Sara watched the woman leave the room. "I bet it still will be hard to make friends and I bet I don't get any more sleep."

She sighed and proceeded to put the computer back together.

To be continued in Part 4 - Faeries and Consequences