

Chapter 1

Deja Vu

1 New Notification!

3 Hours Ago

[+1827462762 has added you as a friend!]

Accept the request? [Y/N]

Success!

Would you like to register a name and photo for them?

['Noel B.' has been registered as a friend!]

. . .

Start of your messages with Noel B.

finally, do u know how long ago i sent that??

Read Sorry, don't check my phone too often.

ill say. anyways, the boss gave me ur # since im gonna be working under you from this point. U dont mind, right?

Read Not really, no.

cool. sooo, u gonna tell me about that curse thingy i keep hearing about?

Read I've had you added for less than 5 minutes and *that's* the first thing you decide you want to know about?

ye :3

Read Sure, I guess?

Read There's not much to know, really. I just have pretty bad luck. Stuff like my phone falling out of my pocket while I'm walking, the waitress at the coffee shop near the office spilling my drink onto me fairly often, little stuff like that.

huh. thats all?

Read What exactly were you expecting?

i dunno, the guys at work make it sound like u get struc by lightning twice a day or something lol struck*

Read They make it a bigger deal than it actually is, really.

Read It's nothing more than minor inconveniences most of the time. If it was any more than that I'd be

under investigation for being psionic or something.

imagine that lmfao, id be impressed at that point
okay thats all i wanted to kno thankies

[Read Sure. See you at work tomorrow?](#)

ive gotta keep my job somehow, rite?
ye ill be there. nite boss <3

[Read Goodnight.](#)

ps, u type like an old man. okay gn for real this time

[Read . . .](#)

Noel B. has gone offline.

With something halfway between an annoyed sigh and a frustrated grunt, Edmund Hall shoves his phone back into his pocket. While he almost always wore a sort of half-frown regardless of his current mood, he was actually quite annoyed this go around. Contrary to what he'd told her, he had actually noticed Noel's friend request almost immediately, but had a sneaking suspicion that she had only added him to ask him about his 'curse', and was spitefully ignoring it like some sort of child. He eventually caved to the curiosity and added her back, and little to his surprise, was correct.

On one hand, he couldn't blame her too much, it's a pretty common point of interest, but after a point he couldn't help but wonder if that was the only interesting thing about him.

Glancing down at his watch, he sucks his teeth quietly. The bus was late, as it tends to be on this side of town, but that didn't mean he was any less unhappy about it. Plus, almost entirely off the fact that he forgot his umbrella today, he had a sinking feeling it was about to rai-

Drip.
Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.
Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.
Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.
Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.
Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.
Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.
Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.

Yup.

Well, Noel had a point, hearing about it all from an outsider's perspective probably does make it sound almost comical, but as the person living with said 'curse' Edmund knew better than to start crying wolf about something so trivial. Holding his suitcase under his armpit, he shakes himself out of his work coat, holding it over his head with his free hand. While the small bus stop had a roof at some point, it'd long since collapsed during a pretty heavy storm, with Edmund standing directly below it.

Nothing aside from his pride was hurt.

Thankfully, it seemed he wouldn't be in this purgatory for too long. The incandescent lights of the bus round the corner further down the road, and Edmund lets out a sigh of relief. He was used to these things, but was more than happy to enjoy the comforts of modern society; primarily not being rained on.

Never happier to have his ears blown out by the hiss of a bus as it slows to a stop in front of him, he hurriedly reaches into his back pocket for his wallet, ready to scan his ID so he can get out of this god forsaken rain and—

‘ . . . You've got to be fucking kidding.’

His wallet was gone.

Or, more aptly, the entirety of his back pocket was gone, likely meaning his wallet was on the ground somewhere between the bar he had just left and the bus stop, which was at least a 20 minute walk if you were being generous. Feeling the migraine coming already, he groans loudly, running a hand through his soaking hair.

“So uh, I've got a favour to ask.”

The bus driver, already cocking a brow at his misfortune, gives a knowing smile, nodding.

“Again?”

“Again.”

“Yer somethin' else, Ed. Hop in and dry off, I know you're good for it.”

“You're a saint.”

Not wanting to spend another second taking an involuntary cold shower, Edmund gives him a grateful nod and hurriedly steps in. Without thinking he gives his friend another thankful smile before starting down the isles, finding his favourite seat near the back. There wasn't any real reason for it being his favourite, he just found he ends up sitting there more often than not.

Maybe he just felt like his luck got ever so slightly better when he sat here.

In any case, he was through the worst of it. Save for being late half the time and not letting him board the other half, this bus was one of his few safe havens.

A silly thing to say aloud, but most things are.

. . .

“Ole' Boy Edmund, this is yer stop, kid.”

Groggy, Edmund blinks a few times, adjusting to the light.

He hadn't even noticed himself dozing off, probably something to do with the comforting familiarity of the ride home. The sight of his own apartment outside and the realisation that the bus was now completely empty was enough to shake him out of any remaining tiredness, thankfully enough. That, and the bus driver being a long time friend of his meant he'd already known what stop Ed was meant to get off, something he'd have to thank him in spades for later.

With a curt groan, he drags himself to his feet, clothes still uncomfortably damp from his previous escapades in the rain. He'd need a shower immediately, so long as his pipes weren't busted or something equally inconvenient.

1 New Notification!

“ . . . ”

He didn't bother glancing at his phone, he already knew exactly what message he'd be reading and was in far too dour a mood to deal with it at the moment. A shower could wait, he muses.

“Thanks again, Joe.”

“Y'know I like ya far too much to leave you out in the rain like a stray, kid.”

The two share a chuckle and Edmund pats the driver on the shoulder. Nodding one last time, he takes measured steps out of the bus and back onto the sidewalk. The rain had cleared since he'd fallen asleep: the mossy smell and hazy skies were all that was left in its wake.

2 New Notifications!

“Oh?”

The first message was expected, but Edmund can't help but wonder what the second was about. With a neutral frown, Edmund pulls his phone back out of his pocket, eyes widening when a very familiar name pops up again.

Noel B. is typing. . .

hey boss, quick q for u

Read Sure, what's up?

i just got hit by some rain outta nowhere
were you thinking about how much rain would
suck rn lol

Edmund cocks a brow, confused for a myriad of reasons. A small part of him wonders how much of this is a joke and whether or not she's actually being genuine, but figures there's no harm in answering honestly either way.

Read Funnily enough, I was.

wow lmao, maybe u are cursed after all
okay thats all, gn fr this time

Noel B. has gone offline.

. . . Riiight.

Either too tired, annoyed, or both to follow up on her reasoning behind the question, Edmund simply shrugs as his phone glides back into his pocket. Maybe he was, maybe he wasn't. For all he knew he could be an esper and just never realised it. He chuckles at the thought: espers were highly sought after by basically everyone for very obvious reasons. Though he wonders what the purpose of a man who can summon bad luck upon himself would be in that case.

Before he can amuse those thoughts any further,

wip ahahahahahahaha

. . .

With an exhausted sigh, Olivia White lets her arm fall to her side, her phone along with it. Texting like that was enough to give her a migraine, and she had no shortage of headaches to deal with already. Pointedly, one was sitting on the edge of the bed she was laying on, laughing his lungs out. She felt the sudden urge to throw her phone at him, but thought better of it for no other reason than because she was already in hot water for the last phone she had to get replaced.

“Holy fuck, ‘thankies’??”

“Shut up.”

“No no no, please, text him back, I want to see what else you can pull from the fucking ether. I haven’t laughed that hard in forever.”

“I’m sure you’ll find it even funnier when—”

“I kid, I kid, I get it. Sorry~”

His fading laughter was a sign that he did not actually ‘get it’, but Olivia was already too tired to fight him on this and just let out an even louder sigh.

“Man, that guy is either paranoid or fuckin’ brilliant. I heard you choke on your breath when he said ‘I’d be under investigation for it’, haha.”

“ . . . ”

“But no, there’s definitely something going on there, right? I lost track after a point but the sheer amount of ‘minor inconveniences’ he had just in the 8 hours he was at work was something out of a movie.”

“Yeah, it’s definitely abnormal, but I’m not sure if it’s worth moving forward yet.”

“Agreed, but man, manifesting your abilities in the form of supernaturally bad luck. I’d be pissed.”

The pair share a chuckle, though the male figure’s face seems to change as he stands up, shoving his hands into his pockets as he paces across the room. Olivia raises a brow, knowing that’s a habit he only does when he’s thinking hard, a very rare occurrence.

“What’s it this time, Jack?”

He flinches, giving her a sheepish grin.

“I had a thought.”

“Uh-huh.”

“So one thing I picked up on fairly quickly was that he always seemed to be prepared for whatever ‘bad thing’ happened. Beyond just being generally cautious, more in the sense of ‘almost seemed to know it would happen before it happened.’”

“Mhm.”

“So I started reading his thoughts throughout the day, right? And something I noticed is that his streaks of ‘bad luck’ always seemed to correspond to what he was currently thinking would be bad luck.”

He continues pacing, a hand tapping his chin as he walks.

“This is just me spitballing, so don’t take any of this too seriously, right?”

“I know the drill already.”

“Yeah, yeah. But seriously, it might actually go deeper than we’re assuming it does. Assuming that my observations are correct and that the bad things happening to him perfectly correspond to his own thoughts, i.e. ‘Knowing my luck it’s going to rain today’ and suddenly it starts raining. You’d have to wonder what would happen if he thought something positive, say ‘It’d be really lucky if I were to win a million dollars out of nowhere’.”

Olivia sits up, reaching for her phone.

It didn’t happen often, but when Jack got into his groove like this, it was worth jotting down whatever it was he’d spit out.

“You think it goes both ways.”

“I think it *might*, but we have no way of knowing, really.”

She nods, already a paragraph into her notepad. She makes sure to bold the important bits so she could know at a glance what to focus on later down the road.

“And, as another example. You didn’t actually text him with the intent to ask about his manifestation directly, right? I was distracted by the way you were texting—”

“Shut up.”

“No no, let me finish. I was laughing too hard about it to think correctly, but you didn’t even think twice about asking him about it, right? Even though you explicitly stated you weren’t going to beforehand.”

Olivia pauses for a moment.

“I . . . didn’t, no.”

“What if, and again, purely theoretical here, it’s not just ‘luck’ at all.”

Finally catching where her partner was going with this, Olivia looks up from her phone, her jaw slack. Jack looks back at her with a nervous smile, his free hand now fiddling with a coin, rolling it across his fingers.

“You think that whatever he thinks will happen just happens.”

“Yup.”

“But that’s—”

“Causality.”

The dead air hangs over the two for what feels endless, neither wanting to give that train of thought any more attention. But, unfortunately for them both, Jack had a knack for figuring these sorts of things out, and had yet to be wholly wrong in far longer than

his partner would ever admit. But still, in this case specifically she hesitates to believe him wholeheartedly. Even her own manifestation, 'hypercognition', was considered extremely potent in comparison to the average.

Jack's, a point he never let anyone at HQ forget, was within the top 1% of manifested abilities, and it was absolute pennies compared to what he was suggesting this ordinary salaryman possessed.

Before she can think on it any further, though, he clears his throat, hands falling back into his pockets.

"So uh, am I reaching a bit too much?"

"I . . . couldn't tell you, J. We both know that manifestations lean on the less extreme side of Murphy's Law, so I'm inclined to believe it's not that big. Just somebody manifesting their own 'bad luck' that caters to exactly what they'd think it'd be."

Left unsaid was the 'but that makes too much sense to ignore'.

Before either can finish their next thought, the soft patter of rain raps against the

You're never gonna believe this.

WIP.