

A Knight's Day Off



This story is set a few months before the Magical Candy competition of Magical Girl Raising Project

Offline Meetups.

People that you meet in online chats, message boards, MMORPGs, all gathering together to have a meal, a drink, sing songs, or just to have a nice chat with each other.

He's never really wanted to have offline meetings, not even once or twice. For Souta Kishibe, who hides his love for Magical Girls, he can only show his true self in online Magical Girl forums.

All around the world, since the old days, the Magical Girl aggregator site *MagiMagiCalCal* covered almost everything about Magical Girls, and in the Anime-related section of the site, there was a message board boasting the largest amount of posts. Various threads appeared and disappeared just as fast.

He got to know the forum regulars. Which series do they like? Which character? Which season? The time they argued about theories, discussed interpretations, and uncovered the history of Magical Girls, and talked about their love for them, as fellow fans of Magical Girls, they were able to match up with one another.

When they planned for an offline meeting, he saw the schedule and thought, "Hmm, a meetup?" "If it's just for talking though, we could just IM each other, or use the message boards, though". But at the same time, he thought, "It might just be fun!" "Wonder what I can talk about if I join up with them".

Cutie Healer First Series signed comic. *Star Queen* Golden PS version. The collectible *Hiyoko-Chan* transformation set, which he had an accident with that involved pinching his finger with it.

He wanted to boast the rare items that he had, which would be impossible to anyone that didn't have the same tastes and knew the value of these things. In real life, there's no one that he knew that he could show off to at all.

Souta was a 2nd grade middle schooler. He was at the age where he wanted to be cool. He was living in a time where being uncool would be worse than anything. Not to mention, Souta was in the soccer club. He was supposed to be a sportsman. Especially because the head of the soccer club would find any opportunity to make fun of the indoor clubs, like saying "Why do the science club have a bunch of people wearing glasses?" The soccer club right now has recently been dyed in that kind of ambience.

Souta was also just going with the flow, but if they ever found out that he liked Magical Girls, he didn't even want to think about what would happen.

There were boys that loved Anime, and there were boys that loved Manga. But even though there were boys who were otaku like that, not one of them were like Souta, who loved Magical Girls. If he was into Shonen manga, then society would treat him kinder, but Magical Girls? That's a different story. He was also aware that the world wouldn't look kindly if they thought he was just looking at these Anime girls in a sexual sense.

For Souta Kishibe, being found out that he loved Magical Girls was equal to his social life being utterly obliterated. His secret can never be known, ever.

That was one reason he couldn't join the offline meetup. Should he join, and he met someone he knew in real life... "Huh, Kishibe? What are *you* doing in a place like this? What kind of gathering is this, anyway?" If they asked him that kind of question... If he couldn't misrepresent himself, then the following days, he'd probably be better off disappearing from school.

There was one more reason. Souta lied about his gender on the website. He put in his gender as a girl on the site.

He wasn't disgusted, nor did he do it for any perverted desire. Somehow, noticing it made him calm down a bit, and he didn't know when, but he started playing the part of a girl, and being called "Onee-san", probably because his online handle was '*Magical Girlish Girl*'

He's heard of and laughed at stories where there were girls online who turned out to be 40-year old men in real life, but he never thought he'd actually be one of them. Souta wouldn't really look very thick-skinned saying "*Yeah guys, I'm actually a middle school boy*" while laughing along and joining the meetup, he'd just look like a naive adolescent boy.

He was always pretty hidden in real life, and he wasn't careless online either, he wouldn't talk about everything there. He was walking along this maniacal path completely solo. Souta had first found the social game *Magical Girl Raising Project* about half a year ago, that was the time he became a genuine Magical Girl.

Magical Girl Raising Project was rumored to be a game that would allow you to become a real Magical Girl if you had played it.

Souta originally didn't really expect to play the game thinking he'd become a Magical Girl at all. He wasn't a girl, so even if he got magical powers, it'd be too much trouble if people realized what he'd look like. He could easily imagine what would happen if someone saw him cosplaying as *Cutie Healer* or *Star Queen*. He'll just enjoy the game as it is, and if he actually became a Magical Girl in real life... Well, in his case, a Magical Boy, then so be it. Souta will just enjoy the game. The task of making his ideal Magical Girl, for any Magical Girl fan, isn't something that's boring.

But, he became a Magical Girl. He actually did it.

"No, this is bad. I know I like Magical Girls, but I never said I wanted to be one"

"Well that's bad for *me*, Pon. Male Magical Girls are rare enough as it is"

"It's not just rare, there's almost no demand for it"

"There *is* demand for it, Pon!"

"No there isn't!"

"Yes, there is, Pon"

"No. There. Is. Not."

"Okay, this is getting annoying, just look in the mirror, Pon"

"Oh, this is bad"

"Look, you clearly don't question the existence of Magical Girls, so what's wrong, Pon?"

"Of course I don't question it, Magical Girls are real!"

"Has anyone ever told you that you seem to be the type that doesn't listen to others, Pon? Have you even noticed your own voice, Pon?"

Afterwards, he listened to the mascot character Fav's dedicated persuasive efforts, looked at the mirror, understood his magical powers, and investigated if he really did turn into a real girl, Souta Kishibe had become the Magical Girl *La Pucelle*, and would perform Magical Girl activities as La Pucelle.

When he was in kindergarten, he had a childhood friend that he watched Anime with all the time, and had always become fascinated with Magical Girls. People with big dreams, strange powers, and who always made people happy, not to mention they fight bad guys, that was the kind of Magical Girl he had become.

One month since he became a Magical Girl, he's been relatively busy. Since he was leisurely helping people, he shouldn't be just as busy, but he still wasn't used to this yet. He exchanged information with veteran Magical Girls, doing a variety of activities involving helping people without revealing his real identity, Souta was tired.

Still, when one week has passed, he's gotten used to being a Magical Girl. His life now consisted of sneaking out from the window of his room when night came, and heading out to the city, finding and rescuing people in trouble, increasing his candies, until morning arrived, and he would return home from his activities.

Humans, when they get used to something, they're able to make leeway for other things. When they make leeway for other things, they start thinking of what to do to fill up that spare time.

If I can't do something as a boy, I could just do it as a Magical Girl, he thought to himself, his excitement rising as he did, but then he cooled down over time, and regained his calmness, there's no way he could misuse this kind of power.

The first thing that Souta had thought of was, *'I could be like a thief that wouldn't get caught'*, but when he thought of it, he hurriedly got rid of those thoughts. Sure there are slapstic Magical Girl-type Manga, but as a Magical Girl, doing criminal acts is just wrong. Even though *Dark Cutie*, from the *Cutie Healer Series* has robbed banks before, she *is* supposed to be a villain. Some of the seasons of *Baby Clown* depicted magical thieves, but a noble character like La Pucelle isn't the type of character to do those things.

'I shouldn't be a thief' concluded Souta, and while he was lying on his bed, his next thoughts were, *'If I transformed, I could just go into places normally meant for girls,'* only to then be ashamed at how low those thoughts were for him. At the same time though, that thought gave him an idea.

If I transformed... That means I can join the Offline Meetup, right?

There were two reasons he couldn't join the meetup. The first was that he was afraid that someone he knew would catch him, and the second was because he'd lied about his gender online, both of them can easily be solved by La Pucelle.

He might just be able to get his wish of participating in this meetup.

As he thought of that, he looked at La Pucelle's figure in the mirror. He had horns. That was a problem. Normal people didn't have horns. He also had a tail. That was also a problem. When he wanted to make his ideal Magical Girl, he didn't just want to make a knight, so he added dragon elements to her. He kind of regretted putting in those extra things, but then he had another thought.

If I can hide these things, then I can join up in the meetup, right?

Souta detransformed, turning on his PC, looking at the plans for the next offline meetup.

He checked the thread for the next offline meeting, and it was in a week from now, on a Sunday. The location was a family restaurant in the city. By day it's a family restaurant, but by night, it had some secondary and tertiary functions too.

...I wanna join up.

He wanted to join, he *really* wanted to join. He wanted to talk about Magical Girls. He wanted to tell stories. He wanted to share opinions. He wanted to boast. Last time, he heard that there was a Magical Girl quiz. He wondered how his knowledge will take him there. He probably won't win, but he'll at least be one of the top scorers. Thinking about it made him unable to stand still, and before he knew it, his fingers were already typing up that he wanted to participate in the thread.

"Magical Girlish Girl is joining up, that's the first time, right?" "I'm glad Magical Girlish Girl's joining us!" When he read those responses, Souta knew there was no turning back. With butterflies in his stomach, he knew, he *had* to join the meetup.

He transformed into La Pucelle, took off his Magical Girl outfit, and changed to regular ones. No matter what happens, he'll have to pretend to be a girl. That was Souta's battle plan.

The only obstacle was hiding his horns and tail.

A knitted cap would be fine enough to hide his horns... that's what he thought, at least, but since his horns were longer than he thought, it actually pierced through his knitted cap. No caps. Had to be a hat. It also had to be taller than he expected too, so that his horns could be properly hidden.

He looked for one. He couldn't find any.

There's no point in trying to borrow it. He didn't have a lot of friends that owned stylish hats, and since he was an only child, he couldn't exactly borrow from any brothers or sisters. He didn't expect his parents to have it either. If only his childhood friend was still here, he probably could just ask her, "Could I borrow a hat for a bit?" Maybe his mentor, Sister Nana, would have a hat like that, but how was he supposed to ask for one? If he told her he wanted to hide his horns, then she'd obviously ask him why he'd want to do that. If he said he wanted to get rid of his noble knight image, would Sister Nana be disappointed? Think he's an idiot? Or look down on him? He didn't like any of those possibilities.

He could wrap a towel like a turban, or wax his hair so it could hide his horns, he could even be like Sister Nana and wear a veil. But none of them seemed quite appealing to him.

Should he just give up? But if he gave up now, he probably won't be able to participate in any other offline meetups for a lifetime.

Souta opened his folded up wallet, and from there he took out a single cash card. The card had been filled with money to buy some spiked shoes originally. Bit by bit, bit by bit, pocket change, New Year's money, his mother's allowance, he withdrew them all, and saved everything.

Souta stared at his card, he was at a crossroads now.

On one hand, Magical Girls. On the other, soccer. Both of them are important in Souta's life. But, he had to choose. He couldn't choose both. He actually *could* choose both, but it wasn't within his financial power right now.

Souta chose Magical Girls.

Soccer was important to him. He still dreams of one day being a pro who plays across Europe. But right now, he was already a professional Magical Girl, so that takes precedent, so it should be fine... probably.

18 tickets to transit from express train to express train. His head spun with all the directions he had to ask the Tokyo Station staff, asking where his next platform is before passing through several stations and finally reaching his destination. His head was entirely covered with a crochet hat, like a lump. He hid his face entirely, up till the bottom of his eyebrows. He wore a pink full skirt, in order to mask his body shape and disguise his tail. With all this, he was completely covered.

There was only one mass retail shop, and everything there was cheap, but it made it look like everything he's wearing was only temporary.

He came all the way from his room to Tokyo dressed like this. *It shouldn't be so bad*, he thought to himself at first, but since he's always worn travelling rucksacks and sneakers usually, his balance was off in this getup, since the shoes didn't match his sneaker size, he moved strangely, there was a tiny sliver of incongruity in his movements.

...I knew I should've changed somewhere.

He thought of changing in the toilet, but if Souta Kishibe entered a toilet and La Pucelle exited the toilet, that would've been weird. He waited until his parents were out of the house before he transformed, as going out when no one was looking should be the best solution.

Although Souta was still worried despite being inside the train, when he got to the Family Restaurant, there was already many other participants gathered around. He heard some words of familiarity.

"Um, is this the meeting place?"

“That’s right”

“Nice to meet you all, I’m *Magical Girlish Girl*.”

“Oh, *Magical Girlish Girl*?”

“Wow, I never imagined you’d look like this!”

“Your skin’s so beautiful~”

He was being welcomed, as he gently stroked his chest. He went through to the very back and sat down. If his soccer club leader was here, he’d probably say something like “There’s way too many people will glasses,” or something. Right now, these are the people Souta wanted to be with. The locals, in the corner of this chain family restaurant, were discussing Magical Girls. *So is this what an offline meetup is like?* Souta thought as his heart soared.

“Welcome, welcome! I’m Genopsycho!”

“Oh, Genopsycho! Thanks again for all you’ve done”

The central figure of the message boards, Genopsycho. She had the look of a young woman, not unlike how Souta imagined her to be. She stretched out the french fries while smiling at Souta.

“Y’know I never thought you’d *actually* come and join us, Magical Girlish Girl”

“Ahaha”

“Wow, you’re pretty”

“Oh, I wouldn’t say that”

“I wonder, are you in the business? Your face really gives off that kinda... atmosphere”

“Excuse me?”

“Oh, if you don’t get it, don’t sweat it, haha... If only Pellet was here, we’ll have all the regulars at last!”

“Pellet’s not coming?”

“Aw, Pelett never shows up”

Genopsycho lowered her voice, whispering to La Pucelle.

“I think he’s secretly one of the producers of a show. I think the reason he doesn’t show up is cuz’ people will know it’s him if he shows his face.”

“Oh, I get it”

Pellet was also a forum regular, he knew more about Magical Girls than Souta did. He was an especially big fan of *Magical Daisy*. He once said “The end of Magical Daisy means the end of my childhood,” which he always cypasted.

Now that she mentioned it, although it was just a rumor, he was able to vividly explain everything... From sponsors to voice actors, company policies, Pellet was able to explain every detail, and all of it was related to Magical Daisy.

“So an Anime person also visits the forums, huh?”

“Oh there’s *lots* of people like that on the forums, like me, for example... hehehe”

“Wait, Genopsycho? You work in the Anime industry too?”

“No, no, no, I don’t work in *that* industry, buuut... hehehe”

Souta changed seats, always introducing himself repeatedly.

“Kanossa, do you play *Magical Girl Raising Project*?”

“Oh, I’ve heard the rumors there, too lazy to try it though”

“Doesn’t look like a lot of people in this city play it, huh”

“Yeah, it’s rare for a social game to only be booming in some places. I mean I’m interested in the game, it’s just, I’m too lazy to actually get it. Weird, huh? Usually if it’s *Magical Girls*, I’m interested. Besides, it’s free, right? Yeah, I don’t mind just watching the mystery, but I don’t know why. Maybe I’m getting old”

As she talked, he could see everyone’s social relationships.

“Oh, be careful of Miso-Yaki, kay?”

“Huh?”

“That dude has problems, especially when it comes to cute girls”

She looked over at *Miso-Yaki*, wearing a brand-name jacket with *Magical Girl* written in cursive. He was a self-asserted *Fashionable Man*, though his beard smelled somewhat stinky.

“I was thinking it’d be better just to ban him. Genopsycho’s too nice, though”

“Ah, gotcha... Thanks for the heads up”

He looked at Miso-Yaki once more, and their eyes met. He bowed, and Misoyaki stood up and smiled. Was he planning on coming here? They told him to be careful of him, now he was worried, he should probably move away.

“Excuse me for a bit,” said Souta as he hurriedly moved from his seat.

“Nice to meet you, I’m *Magical Girlish Girl*.”

He had a smile on his face, but the girl sitting next to him simply nodded in response.

“Umm...”

Souta saw the girl’s slightly bewildered look on her face. She might be a bit troubled, but Souta would be troubled too like this. He better find something to talk about. *Magical Girls*? The forums? The weather? Everything was responded by a nod, as if the only thing this girl could do was nod her head.

“So what do you think of that season?”

“ ... ”

“Wow, what great sunny weather we have today”

“ ... ”

“Magical Girls are awesome, right?”

“...Nda”

So she did hear what he was saying, and her response was only that short sentence.

Afterwards, Souta asked Genopsycho, “What’s up with that girl?” and Genopsycho simply replied with a shrug and a shaking of her head.

“Who can tell, maybe she’s a newbie. She paid for the entry fee, so it’s all good to me”

What a curious girl, a loner, and one who didn’t participate in any conversations, constantly eating silently, and her facial features matched his as well, or maybe it didn’t, either way, she didn’t *look* like the quiet type, she reminded Souta a bit of his childhood friend too, maybe it was just her atmosphere?

He was curious, but Souta didn’t really have much time to continue talking with her, too. He had a nice talk about Magical Girls, brag about his rare items, talk about the excitement of Magical Girls and play word games, and complimented people’s merchandises, regretting that he wasn’t able to get the ones he didn’t have, and he also turned down some men who were trying to hook up with her, but his train will arrive soon.

He wanted to talk more, and he also wanted to know about the after-party, and the after-after-party, but if he didn’t go home now, his parents would be home before him. If he came home as La Pucelle and saw them as that form, that would spell big trouble for him. Even if he changed in a toilet, Souta coming out of a female toilet, that would spell big trouble in a *different* way.

“Today was fun!”

“It was fun for me too”

“Let’s chat again in the forums, kay?”

“And I can’t wait to see you in the next offline meeting”

“Yeah, I wanna talk about Cutie Healer’s new season”

When he left, he glanced a look at the silent girl, and as she looked back at him... He saw a small... smile. As if she was happy. Souta left the restaurant afterwards.

There were still things he wanted to see, but he just didn’t have the time for that. He wanted to go sightseeing in Tokyo again when he had the chance. He took a look at his map, seeing that there was a shortcut through an alley, but as he went in there, something tapped his shoulder, as he looked back.

“Hey, where ya headed?”

It was Misoyaki. He wasn’t like when he was back at the shop. He had large sunglasses on, and probably because of that, his stench has increased.

“Um, why?”

“You mean why am I here? Well, can’t leave a girl going home all by herself, can I?”

“Oh, it’s no big deal, really”

“You don’t have to hold back, now.”

He wasn’t holding back, but this guy certainly wasn’t going to listen.

“Hey, before you get back, you wanna go sightseeing for a bit? I live in Tokyo, so it’s fine, right?”

His people skills, his attitude, just looking at his face, even a middle schooler like Souta could tell he’s had a little too much to drink. But Souta wasn’t really in the mood right now.

“Sorry, I’m late for my train”

“It’s fiiiine”

“I won’t be able to go back otherwise”

“Goin’ home is boooring”

“That’s not the problem”

“Hey, you’re from that restaurant, right? Let’s hang out and have dinner. You want French or Italian?”

He couldn’t exactly beat him up, and the guy won’t listen if he refused. If he just shook him off, the guy might follow him home, which would be the worst case scenario.

Souta had no experience on how to chase off a persistent stalker before. Because of that, he’s never even simulated what to do in this kind of situation. His heart was racing. What would a woman do at a time like this? What should *he* do at a time like this? All he’s doing is panicking. *Ah, what am I supposed to do!?*

“Hold up!”

There was a girl who carried the light of the day on her back. She was dressed in a combat suit straight out of a special effects show. Inside her visor, Souta could see a beautiful face. Souta understood, *this girl’s a real Magical Girl*.

“What makes you think you can corner a girl in an unpopular alley there, citizen!?”

“W-What the? What are you!? What’s with that outfit!?”

“That’s *Who* are you to you, sir!”

“I don’t care about that! You shouldn’t poke your neck where it don’t belong!”

“Can’t you see she doesn’t *want* to go with you?”

While Misoyaki was talking to the Magical Girl, the Magical Girl looked past his shoulder and winked at Souta. Basically saying, *run while you can!*

The Magical Girl in charge of this district has just rescued Souta, who was in distress. Souta thanked the Magical Girl, and ran to the station at full power. That's right, he ran with all his power.

When he arrived at the station, he finally noticed something weird when he went to grab the ticket from his rucksack.

Magical Girl costumes were custom made. They were able to endure a Magical Girl's actions. Whether they move at sound breaking speed, or whether they burrow deep into the ground, they'd never be torn. On the other hand, human clothes were not designed to be worn by Magical Girls. If the human wearing them only did human-capable things, that wouldn't be a problem, but it could never handle a Magical Girl's full power.

His skirt was gone, his hat flew off, his shirt was ripped apart, and the inside of his rucksack were practically filled with junk now, Souta screamed when he realized what happened to his rare items. The surrounding humans heard Souta's scream and looked towards him, and because of that, Souta screamed out once again. His first scream was an *Eep*, and now it was a screech.

Was it reflexes that made him cover his breasts, or was it reflexes?

He couldn't go back home with the train, he had no ticket nor purse, not to mention he had no clothes on, he only had his embarrassment, his feet couldn't move. And on La Pucelle's shoulders, he felt the palm of a hand.



“...Huh?”

The color of his body changed. Sleeves, patterns, pockets and fasteners, and when he took another look, it was like he was wearing skintight clothes.

He turned around to look behind him, but there was nothing there, and no one there.

“Anfourtunate, buht thiz shuuld lazt yuu oll ze wei home”

He rotated his body, turning around 360 degrees, confirming his surroundings, there really was no one, but that voice just now wasn’t an illusion either.

Buttons and fasteners, when he touched it, he felt only his own skin. Also, if he looked closely, he could see that he wasn’t *really* wearing any clothes at all. Still, this should be enough to fool most people.

He didn’t know what was going on, but he *did* know the pain of being stared at. He had no choice, La Pucelle shook off the crowd’s line of sight and ran, all the way towards his house, if he ran across the railroad tracks he should be able to reach home.

...But... Who was that... Just now?

There was no way that it *wasn’t* another Magical Girl. Whenever he had trouble in Tokyo, a Magical Girl always showed up, was Tokyo some sort of Magical Girl center or something? There was a lot of people who lived there.

The following days, he read the report of the meetup, “Magical Girlish Girl was so cute!” Souta merely smiled weakly.

She could see the Sky Tree from the window, at least that’s what the hotel’s pamphlet said, so she chose to stay in that room, but since there was an under-construction building in the way, she couldn’t see the Sky Tree at all. Since she wanted to see it though, she held her cheek at the window, until her mark stayed there.

Sitting on the business hotel’s bed, Mashiro Kuji was depressed.

She had received a message from Clamberry, “Melville, I have one request for you, do you mind? There’s a Magical Girl site that’s planning an offline meetup soon, and I’d like you to infiltrate it. People who love Magical Girls tends to have the potential to become Magical Girls. If you find these people, I’d like you to scout them... I think it won’t be a problem, I’m sure you can do it. Do your best, okay! Fight!” so she tried to endure the meetup, but she was always embarrassed to actually talk to people, especially not when the person trying to talk to her was La Pucelle, who was already a member of Clamberry’s current test. She panicked, and the meetup ended, without her accomplishing her job. Clamberry believed in Mashiro... In *Melville*, so there was no excuse for this.

She was curious about La Pucelle, who talked to her about a variety of things, but she was saved by Yumenoshima Genopsycho. Melville missed her timing of being transparent. She ended up saving La Pucelle as well, when she had no clothes on. It’d be difficult if La Pucelle were stuck there, it would’ve been an impediment to Clamberry’s test. This meant that Melville was actually useful for Clamberry... or she should be. That’s what she hoped.

Mashiro felt regret. Speaking to people wasn’t her specialty, and she was never good with strangers. But, she wouldn’t be able to grow herself if she didn’t face what she wasn’t good at. Without fearing her accent, she had resolved to actually speak to someone today.