

Welcome to my story. Wherever you happen to be as you read this, maybe in a car, a plane, in a hole in the ground, in a submarine, or maybe at home, or in a tree, I hope you enjoy it. It is a 100% absolutely totally completely true story. I'm not some articulate adult who's writing a book from the view of a teenager. I AM that teenager, and this is my story, written by me, about how I live. It's not a autobiography, or any long, boring story of the struggles and joys of my years. It is about me and my life, ideas I have, difficulties in my life, and any other thing I feel like putting in it. In other words, welcome to the Z-Coordinate.

(I'll be right behind you the whole way, in case you get lost or stuck. Now GO!)

(Note: This book is your gateway into the Z-Coordinate, sort of like my personal realm. In this realm, ideas and thoughts sort of float around, so expect the unexpected and don't expect the orderly and rigid)

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1

All about me

This is the first step in this trip. In it, you're going to get information that will help you along the way: You're going to learn about me. My name, nationality, etc. You know, the interesting stuff. It'll come in handy along the way, trust me. Let's begin...

I was born in fourteen years ago in March. Before that, everything was normal and boring, then WHAM! A giant, purple asteroid crashed into the mud outside some little old lady's house. (Good heavens!) When the dust settled, there I was, emerging from the wreckage of my destroyed spacecraft surrounded by a purple halo. Or maybe I was born in a hospital with a doctor in a white mask and a whole parade of nurses, I'm not sure which. That's all you need to know. My exact birthday is secret. I was the second of four kids in my family, so that makes me a middle child. Whoopee.

Now, I will tell you what I look like, but it will be a very vague description. What's the purpose of writing a book under a psyundonym and remaining anonymous if you're going to describe yourself down the last detail. But I will give you some idea so you can come up with your image of me in your head. It's so much more fun to have to fill in the details of what a book character looks like if you don't know exactly.

My hair's complicated, so it deserves it's own section. I realize that hair might not be a big deal, but it's

the only part of your appearance you change (besides weight), so I think it's fit to describe it. But about my hair: It's black and straightish-wavyish. It's not actually pure black, it has some dark brown streaks in it. And I even found a few strands of dark red hair. No kidding. So in the light, my hair has kind of a black/burgundy glow. But only when the light hits it a certain way. Kind of like seeing the northern lights, all the conditions have to be perfect. I used to wear my hair shaggy and in my eyes, but my parents begged me for a change. Please, they said, it makes you look gloomy and intimidating. Cut your hair, you'll like it. You'll look brighter and happier. Of course, it might not've occurred to them that I had the look I wanted, that I was happy when I looked in the mirror and a gloomy-intimidating person looked back. But, I hate being difficult. So I complied and got a short, spiky cut. I'd give you a picture of me with shaggy hair, but that means another thousand words. Now, I'm waiting for my hair to grow back to how it was. Old habits die hard. But I'm not talking to a shrink here, so let's get back on track, shall we? Now, because my hair is short now, I might as well make the most of it. Here is a picture of the way I have my hair now. (Bear in mind that I could never do anything like this before.)

Told you my hair was complicated.

The rest of my appearance is easy to describe. I have brown skin that ranges in tone, depending on the light, from caramel colored to cinnamon. I have dark brown eyes that are kind of narrow, and a rounded nose that bumps out slightly in the middle. There isn't much I can say about my lips. They're just lips. On the subject of my face, there is something else: Most of the time, my body works as one. My eyes, ears, hands, lips, nose, and brain all function in harmony. But sometimes, they work individually. This might not seem that big of a deal, as my eyes and nose should, and do, work differently. But if my lips and brain don't work as a team, it might cause problems. So any mistakes you find in this book are a result of my hands working independently from my brain. Blame the hands.

They say that a person's eyes are a window into their soul. Can you see into my soul by looking at my eyes in the picture? I hope not. No offense, but I don't want someone poking around in my soul. That's my personal space. But in case you (hopefully) can't see into my soul, I, as the author, am obligated to tell you little bits of what my soul is like. You might not tell from this writing, but I am by nature a very quiet person. At home, I will start conversations, but in public, I usually don't speak unless spoken to. Standing quietly is more my speed. I also like to think a lot before speaking. Admittedly, I have a very...unique imagination. You'll see more as you progress through your journey. For example, I don't like routine. I find it horribly boring. I prefer unpredictability. I also might come off as aloof if you ever have the opportunity to run into me. Just say, 'Hi! You're the kid who wrote that book, right?' and I'll probably reply, 'Yeah, that's me. 'And you'd say 'I thought it was really interesting. Could you autograph a copy for me?'

As for my clothes, I have a rule: No more than three different colors in one outfit. I generally

wear blacks and grays mixed with small amounts of white and red. Okay, so my clothes are dark and forboding, and I do occasionally wear black military boots. Okay, and I also never show my arms and never, ever wear shorts. My clothes are expressions of who I am, so I'm proud of it. People can make snap judgements, but this book is designed to say 'Just because I dress in black and sometimes look angry doesn't mean I'm a bad person.' But my eyebrows do naturally arch, and my lips naturally curve a bit down. Since I was four, people have been telling me that I look angry, even though I'm not. So please don't take it the wrong way if you ever meet me.

Here's the lesson we can learn from our first few moments together: **Be confident and proud of who you are, and don't, in any way whatsoever, feel ashamed of something about yourself that you have no control over.**

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2

Something you should know...

Now, I, writing this book, am different than your average teenager. There's something specific about me that makes me a little unusual. I don't really want to go into specifics, but it's something that many people dislike. And it's something that I'm not going to change about myself because it's who I am. A large theme of this book is about being you and being unique. So what kind of person would I be if I changed who I was just to blend in? If you're dying to know what that 'thing' is, I may reveal it after the book is published. But I want you to read this with an unbiased opinion.

2

Philosophy Lesson: Another you

Let us delve into one of the many colorful (and possibly insane) ideas that float around here in the Z-Coordinate: The subject of an AY, or an Alternate You. Do you think that there might be another version of you? I don't mean like a clone, because that's just too weird. I mean like, the other version of you. Your other version would fill in any gaps you have, and you would fill in any gaps they had. Two sides of the same coin. You make up a whole. For example, there might be the opposite version of you. That means that they're everything that you're not, and vice versa.

Let's look at an example.

I have dark, straightish hair, so the opposite me would have light, wavyish-curlyish hair. I have dark, narrow eyes, so the opposite me would have light, wide eyes. I have a rounded nose, so the opposite me would have a sharp nose. I am medium height, so my opposite me would be tall. I'm quiet, so my opposite me would be loud...Get the picture? No? Never fear! A visual aid.

Maybe there are more 'other versions' of you. They wouldn't be your opposite, they would have all the same characteristics as you, only they're different. Like:

The opposite version?

The exact same version?

A version of the opposite gender?

An animal version?

The adult/kid version?

The version from the past?

Your other version is out there, people. Keep looking. (If you're an identical twin, it's pretty obvious who's your exact same version.)

Am I your other version?

PS: I hope you understood that. It might be a little hard to make sense of, it's really hard to write. Yeah.

The lesson we can learn from my 'Other You' idea: **Some concepts and ideas are extremely crazy, but don't disregard anything. We live in an amazing world, and amazing things can happen.**

3

Those people who you're related to...

In this part of your journey, I will introduce you to the people who I live with, talk with, fight with, and many other things. My FAMILY.

My family consists of six people. Some call us a large family, and I think that is strictly a matter of relevance. Compared to many families here who have four or five members; ours might be a little large. But compared to some dramatic, reality-film families with hoards of nagging children and fat uncles and aunts, ours is quite manageable. My family is a relatively calm one, but we make up with our outrageous lifestyle.

4

Home, sweet home

The place you live is the place you call home, a place where you always can return to if you're away. I've never lived in the same house for more than two years since I was born, so I've experienced a lot of different homes. That's a blessing in one way, but in another, it's created a sense of instability. I suppose that's part of the reason I like things to change. So, to make things simple, I have a '48 hour rule': If I'm in a city, or country, or any political entity for 48 hours or more, than I live there.

Simple.

My current place of residence is in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This is actually where I'm from, so I guess this what I could call home my whole life.

This is it. Home sweet home.

Although, actually, it might not be for much longer. Earlier today, my mother made an offhand

comment. (Offhand comments are never offhand comments. Trust me.)

"I'm sick of this house." She began. None of us replied; my parents were forever talking about where to move to next. And, I very nearly mean *forever*. When we first moved to Minnesota, my parents spent two years looking at big, beautiful homes on acres of land. But we were all smacked in the face when we bought a house *within* the city limits. And it's not too common to find horse-worthy land *inside* Minneapolis. I'll chronicle how this situation develops.

Here's the lesson we can learn from homes: **A home is a place where you truly feel secure and safe. Your home can be a house, an entire city, or a cardboard box. If your current home does not make you feel safe and secure, make another one. It can even be in your imagination.**

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5

Journal

My life as me as I am about to begin High School

9:50 pm, 9/11

I write this as I'm lying in bed. It is Sunday night, and you know what that means: (drumroll)...SCHOOL TOMORROW.

That's right. Tomorrow is Monday, the first day of school of the week. Not only that, but it is the first day of school of the year. Not only that, but it is my first day of high school. Not only that, but it is the first day of regular school for me EVER!

Right again, I've never gone to real school before. I've always either been homeschooled, or to special language school. Not that homeschooling isn't awesome, which it is. You can just wake up at 9 o'clock in the morning, go downstairs and eat breakfast in your pajamas, then start working when you feel like it. You get to take breaks when you feel like it, and you can do the next day's lessons if you feel like getting ahead.

So why, you wonder, would I give that up for a regular school with noisy kids, mean teachers, and unappetizing lunches?

The truth: I don't know. My parents want me in a regular school for the first year of high school so I could learn to be sociable. They say I spend too much time alone, and that I don't have any friends. Which is true, I don't really have any friends here. I had friends before, but long story short, I became a hermit and shrunk into my shell, not talking to people.

(Okay, the real reason I'm going to school is because my parents feel they'll be giving me more opportunities if I 'break out of my shell' and 'get some real-world experience'. My parents would want me to tell you the other story so they wouldn't look bad. So who's the lucky winner who gets to go to high school, to get out of their parents hair? Guess...)

(Also, a side note, the school I will be attending is no normal school. It is a small, private college preparatory school with only about three hundred students. The uniform for boys is navy blue polo shirts and khakis.)

So I await my first day at a private school with mixed feelings: Fear, nervousness, and anticipations. Will I have to deal with bullies, cliques, and other school issues? Maybe. Then again, maybe not. At least I don't have to take the bus (Shudder). My mother's driving me tomorrow. At least I know that will work out. Buses are the source of many horror stories, that include tripping, getting hands stuck in windows, glue being squeezed on seats, and mean old bus drivers. At least from what I'm told. Wish me luck. And maybe I'll see you at school.

Maybe you're one of the teachers. Maybe you're the principal. Who knows? Well, sleep tight. I'll be back in the morning. Go get some sleep. Or if you're not tired, draw a picture. Something. Leave me alone, I'm sleepy.

If there's one thing we can take away from my first day at high school: **Don't be afraid to take big advances in life. Because the journey to being who you want to be starts with a single step.**

Journal Entry:

My life as me: In High School

Today was the big Number 1. Numero Uno. Al-Awwal. The first day of high school.

My mom drove me, after a frantic half an hour of my mom being stressed and me trying not to be stressed.

"Good students always get to school early, especially on the first day," she told me. I took her word for it; she is an experienced school-goer. Anyway, we got there, and there were students and parents everywhere, even though it is a small school. I grabbed a salmon-colored freshman schedule (We are freshmen, never 9th graders. Freshmen just sounds far more mature.) and, with the help of my mom, found my first class: Foreign Language. (We had a specific language besides English, but if I tell you that it might give away the 'thing'). There was a thin student with dark hair and glasses standing in front of the door, who kept looking at his watch. My mother asked him if he was a freshman, to which he nodded nervously and looked at his watch. I dropped a few subtle hints that I was fine from here, which she picked up on, leaving me to absorb up my fears and sit down in class. She told me to get a chair in the very front, which made me uncomfortable. I did in Foreign Language, but in Geometry and Science, I took more of a middle seat. In English, our strict and no-nonsense teacher us introduce ourselves. We were seated in clusters, so we each had to introduce the person on our right, after we'd asked them questions:

What was their full name, an interesting thing they did during summer break, and one fact that you did not know about them. The person on my right was a tall (and for his discretion, unnamed) student with black hair and glasses. He volunteered in his local library during summer break, and he owns a PS3. Interesting. I won't tell you what I said. You will know all you need to know by the end of our little journey together.

I think I made quite the impression in Social Studies. Because I was a new face that year, he asked me where I was from. I told him I was from America, and after a little convincing, he finally believed me. For some reason, whenever people see me, they immediately assume I'm from abroad. Sheesh.

"Libya's the best country in Africa," he told our class of nineteen girls and nine boys, only some of whom

were listening. "Somalia is a close second, and Egypt is at the bottom of the list."

"I used to live in Egypt," my mouth muttered. My brain ordered my feet to give me a mental kick. Ouch.

"Did you like it?" he sounded worried, maybe he thought I was Egyptian, (there was just no convincing this guy, was there?) and was worried about offending my country. Good move. Trust me, you don't want to see me angry.

"Not really, no." I answered. Honestly. I know, negativity isn't good, but when I go this much out of my way to talk, I'm going to say everything on my mind.

"What was wrong with it?" he asked.

"It was dirty and crowded." I answered matter-of-factly. Honestly.

"Well, my wife's from there." he said. The whole class gasped at that wealth of new information.

Brilliant.

"Oh," I said, for lack of better comeback. "Does she like it there?" (If I were capable of blushing, I probably would be red as a tomato. Thankfully, light pink blush doesn't really show up on caramel skin. Thank you, skin.)

"No, she thinks it's dirty and crowded, too." My social studies teacher informed me.

Score one for Yours Truly.

The only other interesting things that happened at school are:

There is a boy in my class who told me got into a fight with my dad and almost punched him. I don't want to show my face in school ever again, on account of my parents embarrassing me even when they are nowhere near me.

I was one of two students who brought lunch with them. While the other kids were eating chicken patty buns (which I'm sure is much more fun to say than eat.), I was eating a Japanese salad, rice balls, and seaweed rolls. I made an impression in lunch, too.

So, what can I say about school? Well, looking back on my first day, I give it a grand total of...seven out of ten.

Why the deduction of three points, you ask? Well, here are the reasons...

Point deduction 1: The lockers. It's very clear that I'm a homeschool student. Never had a locker before. And I tell you, the things are difficult. At first, I couldn't remember if I was supposed to turn it right, then left, then right, or the other way around. I also forgot that you had to press the little black button once you've entered the combination to open it, so I just kept pulling and pulling and generally making myself feel foolish. Also, the lockers are very close together. I had to wait until a blasted crowd of people got out of the way before I could get my books and hurry to my next class, peering at my schedule.

Point deduction 2: The rules. Who likes rules? Don't answer. That is a rhetorical question. Anyway, there are a lot of rules. And when you're used to pretty much making your own rules, it can be rough. For example, there is a bell that signals the end of class. Four minutes later, there is another bell signaling the beginning of your next class. By then, they said, you should be in your seat. If not, you get a tardy. (I love the way the word 'tardy' sounds). Three tardies and you will have to go to the counselor. I do not love the way that sounds.

Point deduction 3: I didn't want to go to school in the first place. So this is just prejudice. Sorry, school. Nothin' personal.

Well, after school, I had many matters to tend to, so I'll tell you more tomorrow and even more on the weekends. Until then, do a good deed. Anything, from taking out the garbage to saving the world. Promise? I'll know if you don't. Really. Hopefully.

Also, I made a vow on the first day of school: I will never show my arms in public from this day forward, for the foreseeable future. Sometimes, it's fun to make vows for yourself to keep. Try it.

Lesson for this chapter: **Sometimes things aren't what you expect, so reserve judgement until you have a whole idea of the situation.**

7

The Human Mind is Highly Unusual

Was there ever something you wanted so much, or something you felt so strongly, and you thought you would never thought you would change your mind? And then, after a few months, or weeks, or days, or years, or whatever, you did? And then you felt like a complete traitor? Like a few months ago, I nagged and nagged my parents to let me go to a regular school for just one year of high school. To 'get to feel like a normal teen for once before I go to college'. Now, it's the other way around. I'm nagging my parents to let me go back into homeschooling, but they insist on a 'social schooling environment' to improve my social life'. Rediculous. I'm just starting to think that high school might not be my cup of tea. A regular private high school just isn't ready to take on someone such as myself. Looking at what I just said, I think we can make a conclusion: The human mind is weird.

Here's the lesson for this concept: **Don't fault your mind, or anyone's mind for anything, because the human mind is one of those fantastic, unpredictable things in life that has virtually no boundaries.**

8

The Peeving Pet

Do you have any pet peeves? Do you even know WHY it's called a pet peeve? Peeve comes from the word Peevish, which means angry or irritable. A pet peeve is a certain behavior or trait that causes you to become angry or irritated. There are hundreds of pet peeves out there, and everybody has some. I think I have an unusually high number of pet peeves. Here are a few:

Mispronunciations. Especially when it's another language. Learn how to say a foreign word first, then say it. Like how people call the Rio Grande the 'Rio Grand'. Or how they call Iraq 'Eye-Rack'. Or when they Puerto Rico 'Portariko'. I think you're getting my drift.

Talking during a movie. This also applies to TV shows, documentaries, etc. It's a simple rule: When the people on the screen are talking, you shouldn't be.

Repeating the same thing over and over. Fairly self-explanatory.

People holding the door open for you. Honestly, it makes me feel like a little old lady in Britain in the 1890's. And that's not a good thing.

Generalizations. Doesn't it positively irk you when people generalize a lot of things into one? Like when one says, "He's African," about somebody else and expects that to be enough information. As strange as it apparently seems to many people, Arabic-speaking Egyptians are just as African as Swahili-speaking Kenyans.

Those weren't real stereotypes. A real stereotype is when someone says that all blondes are dumb. But nobody really believes that, right? Right? More stereotypes that make me seethe:

I have straight As, so I must have no social life. (In my case, true.)

I am a teenage writer and poet, so I must be emo.

I am from Minnesota, so I must live on a farm and churn my own butter and say 'You betcha!'.

My parents have money, so I must be spoiled.

I like writing and drawing, so I must be terrible at maths and science.

I am American, so I must be loud, obese, and obnoxious.

I am Arab, so I must be a terrorist.

I am Irish, so I must have a drinking problem.

...etc. Do you get my point? The world is full of every kind of individual from everywhere who do everything. Stereotypes are just a cage preventing the ignorant from expanding their minds.

A pet peeve that people with me is something that Mother calls 'shadow talking' I think a more appropriate term is 'silent echoing', since talking is usually voluntary while echoing is not. Basically, silent echoing is when a person mouths whatever they said just after they said it. For example, if somebody asks me what would be the best way to cook scallops, and I might say 'pan seared'. Then, immediately, I would mouth the words *pan seared*. I don't realize I'm doing it, but when I meet people, it's the usually one of the first things they ask right along with *What's your race?* and *Are you angry?*

Another one of my adorable little pet peeves is when someone drones on and on and on and I loose focus and doze off and completely ignore them. So to keep your valuable focus on this book, I'm going to move on.

The lesson to be learned from this section is a little hard to come up with, but I think I've got it: **Don't be afraid to be annoyed at seemingly normal things; it's 100% natural. And try to be sensitive to other's pet peeves.**

9

Grow up.

How do you view growing up? You might see it as a wonderful opportunity to be able to drive, fly, become a superhero, and whatnot. But you might also see it as losing time, like me. I feel that my childhood is slipping away slowly, a part of my life that will be gone forever. I wish I wouldn't have to turn fifteen, and frankly, I wish I didn't turn fourteen.

If you're like me, then you're a demi-Gerascophobe. Gerascophobia is a fear of growing up or ageing. Symptoms of this are if, like me, you view birthdays as a day to mourn, not celebrate. I also dread becoming an adult, because based on my point of view, the older you are, the closer you are to dying.

I mentioned that I was 'semi'-Gerascophobic. Being gerasphobic means being afraid of being alone when being old and unable to care for one'sself. But I am merely afraid of my body aging. And I think this phobia is inflamed when the person reaches their transition from childhood to adulthood, which is what being a teenager signifies. At fifteen, wish I was...thirteen. That's the perfect age. So all you thirteen year-olds, enjoy yourself now. Because in two years, you might have evolved into a gerascophobe.

While I do not want to get older, I realize that there is actually very little to do to stop it. I don't wear watches because I don't like to see passing time, but what's out of sight is not out of mind in this case. I realized that the only way I will overcome my fear of losing my childhood is to make it worth something. That's the driving force behind me writing this book. If I get it published before I turn eighteen, I'll be able to move on to being an adult, content that I did something to help make the world a better place.

So if you were wondering why you're reading what you're reading, there you have it. I also happen to be very interested in the study of the space-time continuum. Hopefully, my research will result in man's ability to manipulate the spacetime continuum, bringing me back to age thirteen. But for now, this is what I can contribute.

Here's what you can take away from this concept: **Growing up getting older is probably the only thing in existence that cannot change. So if you are afraid of it, conquer it. You are the master of your time.**

10

Journal Entry:

My life as me: From the School Front

11:00 PM, October 17

I've been at high school for a little over a month now. And honestly, I can't wait till it's over. I remember when I thought I was so fortunate that my parents would drive me to school and home every day. But you know what they say: All good things must come to an end. I know, I think that saying is miserable, too. But yes, I ride the bus most days now. Twenty minutes to school in the morning, almost two hours home in the afternoon. I know, it's senseless to me as well. The fact that I get home two hours after school ends, as well as the fact that my parents don't seem to think that there's anything wrong with this really make me angry. They make me spend two hours to do the same thing that would take them twenty. I spend the entire time in the bus hating my parents, especially since they're the ones who put me in this situation. When one parent is absent, the other has to. But here's another saying that I use to get through my frustrations: All good things to those who wait. Now that one's much better. And, make no mistake, I'm waiting. I have eased the trouble by engaging myself in as many extracurricular activities as I can. I started fencing, for example, so Mother has to pick me up on the days I train at the sword club. And I have many other ideas planned for this troublesome issue.

But other than the nightmare bus matter, school is barely tolerable. I'd say the main problem is feeling like some sort of fascinating, exotic creature. I feel like everyone is always inspecting me. I want to just blend in. Is that too much to ask for? I guess my hair and clothes don't help. That and the fact that my confounded locker got jammed today and I had to go the office to get help getting the temperamental heap metal open. Which is highly unfortunate, because I hate causing problems for people. And right now, I'm causing a problem for myself because I'm exhausted after this long day. Father's departing again tonight, supposedly to the Bahamas. He'll be gone by the time I go to school, and other than that,

the only thing I have to talk about is our relocation.

My mother has her eyes set on Atlanta, Georgia. Both my parents lived there for a time, and they think it will be a 'beneficial move for our family', and a 'wonderful opportunity in a bigger city with more activities'. As for myself, I'm not entirely convinced.

This is the only thing useful that I can think of to offer you: **After you've experienced something, it's fine not to like it, even if you really want to like it. Just go with what you really want and don't let anybody tell you what you should like, because what you think is not important compared to how you act.**

11

The Perfect Word

Words are important in everyday life. You use them to communicate, mainly. Words are formed by vibrations, air, your teeth, lips, and tongue. So what combinations of these forms the perfect word? In my opinion? Banana. Banana is the perfect word, for a number of reasons. For one thing, it has repetition of the sound 'na'. Secondly, there are so many ways to say this word. Secondly, it brings up very vivid images and flavors and colors. The second best word is 'flub'. That is just so intriguing to say. It also sounds like what it is. Other words that fall under my 'favorite word list' are:

Tardy

Pumpkin

Marshmallow

Orb

Pomp

Bombastic

Pumpnickel

Pleasing-sounding words have values: **Save something in your head that you take pleasure in hearing, and say these words to boost your mood.**

12

Journal Entry

My life as me: From the High School Front, Rise to Power

October 19, 2011

Today was an important day at Al-Amal school. Nominations of the student council. Apparently, the all-powerful teacher body had selected the students who were 'most suitable' for the four positions: Treasurer, secretary, vice president, and president. As I sat in the assembly, listening to the rattle off names, I half expected to hear my name. Another thing I should mention is that one of the unusual abilities that humans can sometimes perform is the power of thought. Like you're walking on some sidewalk, humming, thinking of a friend, (I wouldn't know, I have none) and then suddenly you slam into that friend the moment they entered your mind. So I thought I might hear my name, and then it happened: My name was called out under the secretary position. Instantly, a million and one things ran through my brain. My hands can only write three however:

Secretaries answered phone calls and worked behind a desk.

Secretaries talked to a lot of people.

I am generally a quiet person, so becoming secretary might be out of my comfort zone.

I wasn't sure if becoming secretary was the right thing to do. Being a secretary seemed like something so against my personality, yet I couldn't really turn up an opportunity like this, right?

Well, my mind was made up for me when several people, including a freshman (whom I will not name) who I thought hated me, that I had their vote. One of the things I should probably tell you about me is that I hate having pressure on me. And becoming secretary would be totally unpredictable. And who doesn't like to be unpredictable? (Rhetorical). So I decided to just go on and do it.

And now I'm secretary. Apparently, I gave a 'whopper speech' to my...colleagues, beating out the other candidates.

As the new secretary of my school's Student Council, I have plenty to share with you: **Sometimes, the only way to expand is to leave your comfort zone and explore. The world has plenty to offer, just go and find it!**

13

Journal Entry

My Life as me: I'm a muskateer...

November 19, 2011

On this day, November 19th, the Catholic Memorial High School Fencing Meet is taking place in Waukegan, Wisconsin. Waukegan, Wisconsin is in the proximity of Pewaukee, Wisconsin, which is near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. My fencing coach, Tyler, suggested I go and compete in my first tournament. I don't quite fancy myself a muskateer, partly because I didn't make it all the way to the finals, and partly because I'd thought the Three Musketeers were foolish and oafish. For some reason, I'd had them muddled with the Three Stooges.

I did sojourn to the tournament, under the constant advice from others not to expect much from myself because I am relatively new to the sport. I ended up not making it to the finals, but I did win a few bouts and learned a lot in the process. I won't really discuss it with you, because there were a few moments I would really rather keep inside. But after my enlightening experience at the tournament, where I did not win and locked myself in a burning cocoon of self doubt, I decided that becoming a Muskateer

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