*How My Hero Saved Me*

750 words

“Taro, Taro.”

That’s all I hear, someone calling my name. It’s driving me crazy. Why won’t it stop? The funny thing is, there’s no one there, it’s just me. Maybe it’s a ghost. Everyone said I was crazy when I was little; that it was just my imagination but it’s not, I sense things other people don’t. I notice more than other people. When I look out the window and through the rain, I swear there’s something out there. But all I see is my reflection, a boy of twenty-two with dark black hair streaked with blue. Lately I’ve been doing things I shouldn’t be, but I can’t help it, it’s the only thing that calms me nowadays. And maybe I should just give up.

My mind keeps going back to yesterday. Someone was there when I was doing graffiti in an alleyway. There was a boy with bright blue eyes, blonde hair, tall and maybe somewhere in his twenties. He almost stopped me but then he didn’t, and I don’t know why. When I saw him the voices in my head stopped for a moment. Something about him was different, I just don’t know what.

I watch the rain go away and the sun come out. So, I stand up off the ground and decide to go on a walk. The park smells of petrichor. As I walk, I see *him*, in a dark green T-shirt and jeans. I can feel my heart racing. I observe him from afar. I watch him help a cat out of a tree. Then he helps an elderly lady who dropped her groceries; he seems so nice. After I overthink it a lot, I decide to go and talk to him. But at the last second, I chicken out. Why do I even want to talk to him? I mean, he is cute but I’m not gay. Well, I mean I do think boys are cute, wait maybe I am. I keep spiraling. Then I hear a voice.

“Excuse me sir, but um I’ve noticed you watching me and I thought you were kind of cute and I was wondering if you want to go get some coffee?”

I look at *him* snapping out of my gay spiraling and nod slowly. “Yeah, I’d like that. Oh, and my name is Taro.”

“Taro, that’s pretty. I’m Asahi.”

We talk for a while and go to a coffee shop, and it is great. As I walk back to my apartment, I feel like there’s a light in my life now. I walk through my door and get ready for bed and go to sleep.

Over the next few weeks, Asahi and I get to know each other. He loves cats and likes the cheesiest music. He’s so funny and makes me laugh all the time. He even asked me to be his boyfriend. I said yes. Huh, I guess I am gay.

On a nice winter night, Asahi and I go out for dinner to a fancy Italian restaurant. I get spaghetti and he gets pizza.

I ask,“ Why do you like me?”

He says, “Because you’re smart, nice to be around and cute. It’s just something about you.”

After we eat, we go ice skating. He’s not the best at it and falls a lot, but he gets up and tries again.

One time when he tumbles he says, “I can’t help but fall for you.”

My face instantly gets red, then he gets up and ruffles my hair.

After a while he gets the hang of it, and we hold hands as we ice skate around the rink. When we finish ice skating, he walks me home and he kisses me before he leaves. I fall asleep that night with a smile. The next day, he comes over to my apartment for a movie marathon. We sit on the couch, and he holds me in his arms. I think about how much happier I am with him and how he kind of saved me from the emptiness and being alone. And I no longer hear the mysterious voices when I am with him. It’s like he’s my hero.

Grateful, I look up at him then say, “You know you’re like my hero.”

He responds by saying, “How so?’’

“Because you brought light into my life and make me not want to give up.”

He smiles and kisses me on the forehead and says, “I love you.”

And that’s how my hero saved me.