

BOOK FIVE CHAPTER 8 JULIAN UNITED STATES

After the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Ayres the orangutan and Victoria the chimpanzee, Julian knew well he had no idea what the future held. It was up to him to decide what part he would play in the exciting, constantly changing, anything can happen world. Known for his sense of humor, satire his newest interest, he began drawing cartoons and making videos about the events of the day.

When he had first met Silas the Labrador at the trial, he felt a instant connection. When the animals appeared at the U.S. Embassy on Christmas Eve, his dog Marco and Silas also had an immediate rapport. When the time came to leave, Julian asked Silas if he wanted to come home with them. "Yes."

His friendships with Shilli, Emilie, Asha, Samuel and Lapis, his love for Marcus and Snug, came to mind daily. Memories of laughter, frustration and learning, caring for each other, always returned to one recurring thought. How had it been possible for everyone to have understood what the animals had communicated? Whatever the process was, it needed to widen. The way to accomplish the inclusion of animals and the natural world into a channel, a forum, began to obsess him.

Several weeks after arriving home, Julian noticed Marco wasn't himself. Instead of jumping on the bed at night, leaping off the next morning, (the whistling tea kettle signaling time for breakfast), he slept outside under his favorite tree. The veterinarian was kind and clear. "He's old, but not in any pain." In the middle of the night, it was Silas who nudged Julian awake. Silas - "He knew it was his time. He went to sleep."

Julian couldn't remember when Marco wasn't there. Everywhere he looked, he was flooded with memories: his favorite toys, the feel of him sleeping curled at the foot of the bed, their walks. In all their years together, never had there been one moment of anything but playfulness and joy.

Sitting down at the computer, tears running down his face, he began typing a love letter to Marco the Dalmatian. When Silas jumped onto his lap, his right paw hitting the keyboard, two pictures appeared side by side on the screen. A sweet puppy and a young boy. An adult dog and a young man. Julian and Marco had grown up together. Silas - "You are alike: intelligent, sensitive, playful, energetic, and friendly. You will always be a part of him. He will always be a part of you."

The week after Marco died, while walking home from the local market, daydreaming about an interspecies corridor. Julian noticed a large Dalmatian running toward him. As the dog ran by, the grocery bag went flying, the flat linguini noodles scattering over the sidewalk. Having broken into different sized pieces, the pasta formed letters.

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The oddly shaped letters reminded him of a sheet of paper his parents had kept in a memory folder - his first attempt, age three, to write his name, his motor skills and hand eye coordination just beginning to develop. Picking up the empty pasta box, he started to laugh. "*In Italian, linguine means little tongues.*" Last year, Emilie had written him she no longer believed in coincidences. Now it was his turn to tell her how *little tongues* had pointed him in the right direction. All of us. Frequencies.

His dream that night was curious. Standing in a forest clearing, he was looking at some sort of seats arranged in a circle. Were they mushrooms of different sizes? Behind each one, attached by lichens to a vertical tree branch in the ground, was a large translucent mother of pearl oyster shell.

Since meeting in an art gallery in Sydney three years past, Wayne and Julian had kept in constant touch, becoming close friends. Shilli and Neil had taught them both morse code. The fun they had tapping out, sometimes even blinking, messages to one another became second nature.

Although Wayne had visited San Francisco, Julian had never been to Arizona. When the invitation came, he was both thrilled and intrigued. The Hopi Reservation. First Mesa. The town of Walpi, dating from 900 A.D. had no running water or electricity. The sandstone cliffs, their hues of red, tan and yellow, were unlike anything he'd ever seen.

As they made their way to the place Wayne called home, Julian asked about the cultural background of the Hopi people. Dating from 1540, Oraibi Village was on the third Mesa, one of the oldest inhabited villages in the country. They were greeted by one of the Hopi Nation's Elders. What happened next was something Julian would never forget.

Clasping his hands together, the Elder looked at Julian and smiled. "This could be a good time. There is a river flowing now very fast. It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid. They will try to hold on to the shore. They will feel they are torn apart and will suffer greatly. Know the river has its destination. We must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above water. At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For the moment that we do, our growth and journey comes to a halt.

The time for the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves! Banish the word struggle from your attitude and your vocabulary. All that we do now must be done in a scared manner and in celebration. We are the ones we've been waiting for."

When Julian arrived home, a letter from the four attorneys was waiting for him.

"Go ahead and make your plans. Decide what you are going to do with your life, but, as you do, remember that there are people places and things that are, at the moment that you are reading these words, on their way to you, to change your life in ways you cannot imagine. We invite you to spend a week with us in Bhutan, beginning September 28th."

So much had happened over the past three years. Was missing his first week of college for a trip to Bhutan unthinkable? His parents said if the University agreed, it would be all right with them. After reviewing the notes from his interview with Julian, his faculty advisor knew that missing such a once in a lifetime opportunity wasn't an option.

Global literacy was the issue he'd championed in court. Now he was totally preoccupied with an interspecies interface. Ideas came to him day and night, filling one notepad after another. How, while navigating his freshman year, would he ever have enough time to do everything?

Next week he would leave for Asha's wedding in India. She had told him how, as a young girl, she used flowers to send secret messages to her friends. Arranging she receive those with names beginning with the letters H, E and A, Julian knew his message would be understood. Hydrangeas, Echinacea and Agapanthus. Happily Ever After.