

Not a Lonely Work

A Short Furry Story by **KitsuneJey** (JNC)

Featuring **Adam Primaeros** and **GoldenBoiBlaze**

*“If our friendship depends on things like space and time,
then when we finally overcome space and time,
we've destroyed our own brotherhood!
But overcome space, and all we have left is Here.
Overcome time, and all we have left is Now.
And in the middle of Here and Now,
don't you think that we might see each other once or twice?”*

— **Richard Bach**

Jonathan Livingston Seagull

“**IT’S LOVELY THE VIEW** you’ve chosen for your room, Adam”, the fox said to the owl, smiling at the window.

“Excuse me for getting philosophical here, my friend”, Adam whispered, still typing and without looking at the fox. “But some choices are far more satisfying than any others made by us, Jey”.

“I have to agree”, the fox replied. “But, please, you don’t have to criticize your choices that hard, man..., especially the good ones, you know that?”

“A necessary bad habit of mine. Sorry”, Adam laughed softly, still looking at the computer screen. “But I think I could have chosen a better view for you and Blaze”.

“Perhaps you could, modest owl”, Jey said friskily, still looking at the window. “However... Man, some of your choices speak volumes about the treatment you give to your guests!”, he added enthusiastically.

The owl didn’t say a thing... He just kept typing, smiling at the computer screen...

The fox kept his body resting against the frame of the window, silent and contemplative... The curtains were half open, and the reddish sunset with traces of pink was bathing both the faint outlines of the clouds afar from the fox’s eyes, and the terracotta roofs that crowned every house nearby the window. “I’ve been playing Devil Survivor”, Adam said to Jey. “The sky is pretty much red this time around”.

“Well, I’m digging that MegaTen vibe, heh, heh!”, the fox laughed along with the owl. “You got some of the best tastes, Adam, I must say it again”.

“At least, that’s what you think”, Adam mocked kindly, quoting one of the fox’s usual war cries.

“And it seems you *do* agree about that last thing, aren’t you?”, the fox replied playfully, walking away from the window while he and Adam were laughing loudly. “You told me your monograph for your PhD is about A.D.G., am I right?”, Jey added, approaching to the owl.

“Do you remember what A.D.G. is?” Adam kept typing before the computer screen.

“You talked about the meaning of that acronym time ago, my friend”. Jey stopped his steps, right behind the owl’s chair.

“Did you understand it when I explained it to you, buddy?”

“Nope. Just the acronym”, Jey said naively. The owl snorted the draft of a laugh.

The fox finally laid each of his hands on each of the chair’s arms, his chin resting on the top of the owl’s head. “Comfortable up there?” “Yeap.” “I figured that out, heh!” The owl patted softly the fox’s hand that was resting on the chair’s right arm, and resumed typing. Jey’s head was a little bit heavy, but Adam just let his vulpine fellow to rest like that. No matter how much Jey was trying to hide it, Adam knew perfectly well that his friend was very worried; indeed, the fox’s eyes were sadder than usual...

“Tired?”, Jey asked, looking down at the owl’s eyes.

“Actually...”, Adam returned the look to the fox, “...Hungry”.

The room’s door was knocked firmly. “Adam, Jey, I’m here! Dinner!”

“Man, about time!” The fox raised his chin from the owl’s head, right before walking to the door. “Hold on a sec, Blazel I’ll open it to you!”

“Jey!... Jey!...”, Adam exclaimed. “The key of the room! You still don’t have one”.

“Oops, sorry”, Jey apologized, halting his steps and catching in the air the key that Adam had just thrown to him. “So, can I keep the key this time?”

“Of course, dude. I’ve just made that copy for you”.

* * *

Adam couldn't afford to stop typing. He was sure Blaze was going to understand; the monograph for his PhD still needed the owl's full attention... But Adam couldn't help to feel a little pinch of pain, while the fox and the golden badger were greeting and embracing each other. Adam didn't had the chance to embrace Jey either, given that he was already working on his monograph by the time the fox arrived. However, to wrap his arms tightly around the owl's shoulders, as soon as Adam resumed typing after closing the door from the computer screen, was more than enough for Jey as a greeting. Or at least, that's what it seemed to Adam...

"The red sky is lovely, Adam!", the golden badger told the owl, wrapping his arms tightly around the owl's shoulders, who smiled and kept typing. "Okay, it's true I told you that I was expecting the roof", Blaze acknowledged, retiring his arms from Adam, but keeping both hands on the owl's shoulders. "Although this room's view has a charm of its very own!"

"Come on, Blaze!", Adam said humorously, rubbing his nape with his hand. "You don't fool us! We know you were looking forward to that roof!"

"Yeah, but we all agree it wouldn't had been the same without these two", the fox intervened, pointing at the picture frame on Adam's desk, beside the computer screen. "Wasn't that the photo you took with Falcon's app, by the way?"

"The very same photograph", the owl celebrated, looking fondly at the photo of a cat, a goat and an owl, who were dancing on a roof under a polychrome sunset sky, while the three of them were surrounded by psychedelic yellow stripes. "And with the very same 'caballeros', Jey".

"But you still don't have any news from Ryu and Yaali, am I right, Adam?", the golden badger commented suddenly.

"No... Not yet, unfortunately". Adam sighed, looking at Jey and Blaze. "I assume Ryu is still working with his editor on their new 'Manga' project, and Yaali has been pretty busy after his promotion in the software company".

"We should make sure to invite them to have dinner with us", Jey suggested, staring nostalgic at the cat and the goat who were dancing in the photograph. "I really hope it could be soon, guys".

"Time will tell..., like you always say, Jey", Blaze affirmed, smiling at the fox. "Oh, guys! Speaking of dinner..."

"I thought you had forgotten it!", Adam laughed, along with the fox.

The golden badger took a little polyethylene box from the plastic bag he had brought, a box with the logo of R.E.A.L.'s Desserts printed on it. "Here... Your dinner, Adam", Blaze said, giving the

box to the owl. “And... Alright, I suppose this is ‘breakfast’ to you, Jey”, the badger said to the fox, giving him another box from R.E.A.L.’s Desserts. “Sorry about that, guys, but the people from R.E.A.L.’s never pack spoons”.

“At least they packed napkins”, Adam kidded, giving to his apple pie the first bite. “Ow, just curious...”, Adam chewed and swallowed before continuing. “What time is it in Minneapolis?”

“About... Five forty five in the morning”, Blaze informed, looking at his wrist watch. “I got up early, but I’m gonna have breakfast later... Oh, Jey, I suppose the time right now in Caracas is...”

“5:45 AM, the very same!”, Jey interrupted Blaze, despite the fox didn’t have his wrist watch with him. “It’s summer after all, so blame Minneapolis’ daylight saving time, heh!... (Or I guess so)”, the fox mumbled to himself. His ‘Dulce de Leche’ cheesecake hadn’t been bitten yet. “Anyway, I’ve never been good with time zones and all that jazz, guys”.

“No wonder why you haven’t had breakfast yet, Blaze. It’s way too early there”, Adam laughed.

“Well, I didn’t want to be too much late today... So I paid R.E.A.L.’s a quick visit when I logged in”, Blaze admitted, giggling a little. “Besides, I still have to download a cooking app that could S-A-A-A-A-A-, -T-I-I-I-I-I-S-, -F-Y-Y-Y-Y-Y, M-E...”

“Dammit!!”, the fox yelled, staring at the suddenly pixelated face of the golden badger. “Blaze, just hold on still! I’m gonna fix this, okay?!”

Jey delivered a strong slap on the pixelated badger’s back. “O-O-O-O-O-U-U-U-U-C-C-C-H-H!!... Woah! Thanks, foxy!”, Blaze said, right after his body and his voice came back to normal. “Geez, that update is really screwing me up, don’t you hate it?!” The badger knocked the air twice, and opened his fist to unfold before his eyes an aquamarine holographic disc. “Not again”, Blaze complained. “The Voice Synth is eating all my bandwidth!”

“Now you see why we couldn’t have the roof today”, the owl began to rant, knocking his computer screen twice, and unfolding with his open hand his own aquamarine holographic disc. “Office’s bandwidth is nicer with heavy files! I simply can’t run that roof’s simulation from home”, the owl added, pointing at the statistics on his holographic disc.

“Come on, that doesn’t diminish the merit of this room!”, Jey intervened, his hands on his hips. “Okay, my opinion might be biased because I’m a homey fox... But this simulation suits us best this time, I believe it”, the fox stated, shrugging and extending both palms to the air.

“Besides...” Blaze typed two commands into his holographic disc, deactivating his Voice Synth and turning on his microphone. “This red sky is still lovely, no matter the bandwidth shenanigans”,

the badger affirmed, right after his voice changed kind of like from Stereo to Monaural. “Jey and I still agree with that, you know, Adam?”

“Yeah, but... Hey, Jey’s Voice Synth seems to work just fine”, Adam commented, checking once again the statistics on his holographic disc. “I thought you told me Venezuela had one of the worst bandwidths ever, buddy”. While laughing, the owl turned his head, looking at the surprised fox...

“Yeah... It’s true... Unfortunately...”, Jey whispered, uncomfortable, typing quickly a command into his unfolded holographic disc, knowing it might be late to hide anything by then...

* * *

The owl resumed working on his monograph. He and the fox kept eating their dinner/breakfast, while the golden badger just kept gazing at the owl’s computer screen... Jey finished quickly his ‘Dulce de Leche’ cheesecake, but Adam began to chew slowly after the last bite of his apple pie... He and Blaze were staring at Jey’s Voice Synth statistics, on Adam’s holographic disc, statistics that were now highlighted as ‘Private’ to the owl and the badger, just like Jey’s Bandwidth Speed...

“Hold on a second, guys”. The red sky outside the room flickered twice among electric creaks. “My bad. Bandwidth shenanigans”, Adam said. But the owl just kept typing like if nothing had happened, opening immediately his traditional web browser’s window on his computer screen...

The fox, the badger and the owl remained silent for just some seconds...

“Jey... Buddy...” The owl turned his head once again to Jey, speaking with a serious tone while the fox kept himself silent. “It was 6:15 AM in Venezuela..., not 5:45 AM, like you said to us a couple of minutes ago”.

“Caracas’ time is half an hour ahead from Minneapolis right now”, Blaze finally reminded. “Venezuela turned its clocks 30 minutes back from the global time standard, when the country officially changed its time zone on September of 2007”.

“Where are you, dude?”, Adam asked calmly, looking at the fox’s sad eyes. “You can tell me freely... Are you in the United States right now?”

“I doubt it. He’d had told me by now”, the badger said, while the fox still remained silent.

“Wait there!”, Adam exclaimed. “No... fucking... way!” Adam fell silent, staring at the fox with his beak wide open. “That’s why you insisted to log in outside AA Neuronet Cell!” The owl began to smile warmly. Jey just kept himself silent. “I can’t believe it, foxy!!... You’re in Malaysia, right?!!”

“Kuala Lumpur”, the fox finally admitted, gloomy. “But I can’t, man... I can’t see any of the folks we know in KL... And I’m...”, Jey sighed deeply, “I’m afraid I can’t go to Johor Bahru either”.

“Bullshit, buddy! I just might call it a day as soon as tomorrow, and go to see each other in KL!”

“It’s impossible for me this time, man”, the fox mourned, holding his left arm. “I’ll be going back to Venezuela tomorrow morning in the first flight”.

“Yeah, but... Hey... How so, buddy?”, Adam whispered, suddenly sad. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“It’s a quick round-trip for business”, the fox said, looking downwards. “Arrival at the first day... Dealing with jetlag at the second... The third day for negotiating with a local entrepreneur, interested in selling Venezuelan traditional crafts in Malaysia... And going back to Venezuela at the fourth day, as quickly as I came”. Adam and Blaze didn’t dare to interrupt, listening to Jey carefully. “I was the only one available for that trip where I work, and I’d be fired if I break this ‘four-days-itinerary’ agreement... The management still needs me in the store..., or so they said”.

“So go back, then... I don’t mind, buddy”, Adam replied. “We can see each other any other time”.

“You don’t know how much I want to believe something like that, man”, Jey acknowledged, looking again at Adam’s eyes. “I really would like things like that could be for granted, be sure”.

“Look! If that’s because I couldn’t spend this summer with you and Blaze, as the three of us had been planning for months..., I’m terribly sorry for not being able to go, remember that, please!”

“No, Adam, no! It’s not your fault, man! I’ve already told you it’s not your fault, my friend!”, the fox said, trying to not cry. “You need to focus on your monograph; your teaching career really depends on that... So I still believe you took the right decision when you delayed our trip”.

“Also”, Blaze took part, “the three of us already made arrangements for seeing each other later this year, as soon as Adam is done with his monograph”.

“God willing, guys. God willing”, Jey whispered, praying to himself.

“So why you’re still that sad, foxy?”, the owl wondered. “Why you seem to be so tormented because I wasn’t able to go?”

“The problem is not you, Adam”, the fox answered. “It’s myself... It’s me, and only myself”. Jey was again looking downwards, now clenching his fists. “I just can’t help feeling guilty, man... Feeling guilty about not being by your side, my friend..., when you’re needing us the most”.

“But you’re right here, Jey”, the badger said to the fox. “Right now..., in this simulation”, Blaze extended his palm to the red sky outside the window, while his hand was being followed by the fox’s eyes. “The three of us have been able to keep in touch with each other online... And here, in the virtual escapes we have in common, our friendship had been able to blossom”.

“Of course our friendship had been able to blossom”, Jey endorsed the badger statement. “But no, Blaze... I might be right ‘now’, in this simulation”. The fox unclenched his fists, taking away his eyes from the badger’s hand. “But you both know perfectly well that I’m not really ‘here’... I’m not right here, by the side of any of you, guys... As I really would like to be”.

Against himself, Jey walked away from the badger and the owl, resting his hands later on the ledge of the window, gazing again at the reddish sunset... Adam didn’t leave his chair, but he had stopped typing at all. Blaze had begun to walk toward the window as well, both him and Adam gazing at the fox and at the view outside...

“I won’t deny the beauty of simulations... The beauty of illusions”, Jey reflected. “But illusions are too fragile before the eyes of an adult like me..., maybe because I got pretty much used to my surrounding reality”. The fox turned away from the sky, looking again at Blaze and Adam, resting his body once again on the frame of the window. “It’s true our friendship had been able to blossom thanks to the beauty of those illusions..., to the point of becoming one of the few things that are real in these virtual escapes”.

“A real friendship has a real meaning”, Blaze said.

“A real friendship makes a real difference”, Adam added.

“And there’s always hope that real meanings and differences can be stronger than any beautiful illusion”, Jey replied. “However...”, Jey ended looking upwards, one tear escaping from his eyes, “it’s pretty hard to get rid of the awareness of the surrounding reality, no matter the power of these virtual escapes... Our moments together might be real, at least at an emotional level... But I’m pretty aware that the desserts, this room..., the red sky we all enjoy..., and even the bodies of the friends that I’m more than willing to embrace..., are no more than dreams provided by a Neuronet headset, while my body dwells in a bed of an hotel in Kuala Lumpur”.

“We all know this is just a dream, Jey”, Adam agreed. “But this is a ‘shared’ dream... ‘Shared’..., after all, okay?... Do you remember that, buddy?”

“Yeah... And this is one of the most beautiful dreams I’ve ever shared in my entire life”, Jey said, smiling warmly at Adam, while the tear was still sliding on the fox’s face. “I’m feeling totally grateful because I had been able to share this dream... To share this dream with you, with Blaze... With Ryuu and Yaali, despite they can’t share the dream at this moment... To share this dream with the people I

had the pleasure to meet through simulations..., especially the people who have become in my most dear friends!”

“I’m sure your feelings are the very same that the feelings your friends have, Jey”, Blaze expressed. “They have showed it already with their constant presence..., their presence for their friends”.

“It’s true, Blaze. It’s true... But their constant presence, like my very own presence, in these virtual escapes... All those presences keep being just a dream... ‘Shared’, and all that. But this is still just a dream”, the fox stated. “And because this fucking awareness of reality that doesn’t stop to haunt my thoughts...”, Jey manifested, looking at the owl, “I can’t help yearning that your presences..., and most important, my own presence, at moments when it’s needed by people dear to me..., could finally become in something..., you know...”, the fox sighed. “Something ‘real’, guys”.

“The friendship is ‘real’, Jey”, Adam and Blaze asserted again, almost with one voice.

“The friendship ‘is’, that’s out of question... But the presence still ‘isn’t’, guys”, Jey insisted. “And I’m really yearning that my friendship could become... in something that could be really ‘here’..., by your side, Blaze, and by your side, Adam..., where it’s really needed the most... Something that could be way more useful than my very own absence in reality”.

“When you can’t stop thinking about someone who is absent, (...)”, Blaze began to quote.

“(...) you truly realize how important is that person for you..., (...)”, Adam followed.

“(...) no matter the distance”, Jey finished. “I see you two remember the thoughts I wrote for you both last year, guys”, the fox smiled at them, melancholic. “But I’ve concluded that the true problem is not the distance..., but the agendas... (My damn-own-business-agenda, in this particular case)”, Jey dared to rant. “And I’m truly feeling guilty because I can’t overcome my absence right now..., because I can’t overcome my absence for ‘real’..., especially at this very moment, when I feel someone is in the need of a truly ‘real’ presence”.

“You don’t need to... I don’t mind, foxy”, Adam intervened. “I know you feel that I... that I’m really needing someone..., right now..., right ‘here’, by my side..., like a friend, or anyone close..., in order to endure a little bit better... this lonely work of mine”. The owl rested his hands on the sides of the keyboard, looking at his computer screen. “I must confess the last few months have been pretty difficult to me..., and even more difficult after I told you and Blaze that I couldn’t reunite with you both this summer”.

“I really felt destroyed when you said that, Adam”, the fox confessed too, walking away from the window, and coming along with the badger back to the owl’s chair. “But don’t forget what I said, please... You took the right decision staying and focusing on your monograph”.

“But you are still feeling guilty for not being by my side, right?”, Adam inquired.

“It’s not only because of that, Adam”, Jey reclaimed. “It’s not only because you need to... I’m really needing that too, man... I mean it... I really need you can feel this is not a lonely work anymore, thanks to a ‘real’ company from friends like Blaze, or me, as long as you’re willing to accept that company by your side”, the fox acknowledged. “I’m really needing that so bad, man... I’m really needing to be ‘here’..., for making sure that anyone dear to me is going to be fine for ‘real!’”

“Foxy..., listen me well”. Without notice, the owl took one of the fox’s hands, and rested it firmly on his own shoulder, without releasing it. “You don’t have to hold my hand all the time, Jey!”, Adam said. “I know you’re there, but... You’re not ‘here’, like you said... I know you’re still not ‘real’, at least not in the reality where I’m needing anyone... But you don’t have to feel obligated to anything at all”, the owl pleaded. “Just keep in mind that suffering because of someone dear to you... won’t solve anything at all... It won’t solve anything at all, my friend”.

“It’s just I can’t stand seeing you suffering that much, man”, Jey said, almost losing the battle against the tears. “I’ve never been able to stand something like that from anyone dear to me..., to the point that my need of my friends could become greater than their need of...!”

“Buddy”, Adam whispered gently, silencing the voice of Jey. “It’s cool, dude... It’s okay”. The owl squeezed gently the fox’s hand. “This is my own fight”, Adam said. “You want to be ‘here’ for your friends, I know... But in the meantime you won’t have any other choice than to ‘trust us’..., than to trust me, for example..., at least while you can’t become ‘real’..., alright?”

“Are you sure everything is gonna be okay?... Are you sure you’re gonna be fine?... Without us?”, the fox asked, a little bit apprehensive.

“Honestly...” Adam closed his eyes, sighing deeply, and looked at Jey again, still holding the fox’s hand. “There’s no any guarantee... I’ll do my best, but there’s no any guarantee”, the owl spoke calmly. “However..., if our friendship is something ‘real’ to you, as it is to Blaze and me..., you must begin to treat us like adults, and trust us”. The owl began to laugh, softly. “Not that I look and behave like an adult, speaking the truth”.

“If you think so, I got some bad news for you”. Blaze came closer, and rested his palm on both Jey and Adam’s hands, right on the shoulder of Adam. “You are an adult”, the badger mocked.

“There’s still worst news for you, Adam... You’re mature”, Jey kidded, finally smiling again. “You certainly have matured a lot..., that’s my opinion about these matters.... Despite neither of us are the best sources for granting that qualification”.

The fox began to laugh..., to laugh long and loudly, along with the badger and the owl..., before a computer screen that showed to them the monograph for an owl’s PhD...

“So... I suppose that means you trust me”, Adam said kindly, still holding the hand of the fox, both hands wrapped by the badger’s palm.

“As a so-called-adult... Always, no matter what”, Jey told the owl, relieved. “But I hope you’re still okay about my wishes of becoming ‘real’..., ‘real’ beyond all these... common virtual escapes”, the fox added, looking around. “As long as people dear to me want it, and at the right time, of course”.

“We’ll keep you informed, foxy”, Blaze whispered, sharing a look with the owl and the fox.

* * *

“Jey... Blaze...” The owl retired his hand from his shoulder, leaving there only the fox and the badger’s hands. “Would you do me a favor and stand still, please?”, Adam said, typing on his keyboard. “This will take just one second, I promise”.

“What’s that?”, Jey asked, looking at the computer screen.

“Vye’s app, foxy”. The owl returned his hand to his shoulder, holding gently the badger and the fox’s hands, and sharing again a look with his two friends. “Just stand still, guys”.

In just one second, a shutter clicked, accompanied by the gleam of a flash...

“Not bad!”, Adam smiled. With his free hand, the owl tossed away from the computer screen a new photograph, which was surrounded by a series of brown stripes of pixels, becoming these pixels in a brand new picture frame. “And Vye’s style suits us just nice!” Adam took with his free hand the new photograph, and placed it by the side of the other image that depicted Adam, Ryuu and Yaali, the ‘caballeros’ who were dancing on the simulation of a roof.

“Oh, my!”, Blaze laughed, amused. “I look so cuddly and harmless there!”

“Ha-Ha!! Look over there! An ‘Anime’ fox!”, Jey celebrated loudly.

“So, this is how a scientist owl looks like in a ‘Manga’, huh?!” Adam kidded, smiling warmly to Jey and Blaze, after the three of them released each other’s hands.

“Someday”, the fox said, moved at the sight of the two photographs on the computer’s desk, “there will be a picture of the five of us”.

“You mean... the *six* of us, right?”, Adam suggested, winking an eye to Jey.

“The *six*, you said?”. The fox found himself a little bit clueless. “Oh!”, Jey exclaimed, understanding his friend, before rubbing his nape with his hand and starting to blush slightly. “But...” The fox hesitated, shyly. “How did you know?”

The golden badger couldn’t help to giggle softly, wrapping later his left arm around Jey’s shoulders. “Chevise”, Blaze whispered to the fox’s right ear. “He has just begun to snore”.

The fox just remained quiet, looking unhurriedly to nowhere, with the strong badger’s arm still wrapping his friend’s shoulders... Jey, poker-faced, took his time for knocking the air twice, right before opening his fist to unfold once again the aquamarine holographic disc...

As the poker-faced fox suspected, despite his Voice Synth was working perfectly fine, Jey had forgotten to shut down his microphone. In fact, the fox had just lowered its volume to 0% but, since the controls of his microphone weren’t configured as ‘Private’, like Jey had previously expected, the volume of those snores was still at 100% for both the badger and the owl...

Jey, still poker-faced before Adam and Blaze, typed a command into his holographic disc, shutting down his microphone and silencing those deep and loud snores from Chevise. “So... He is making you company”, the badger observed, nudging the fox gently with his elbow. “We thought you weren’t going to see any friend in Kuala Lumpur this time”.

“And our friend still snores loud, huh?!” Adam laughed, looking at Jey as sympathetically as Blaze.

“Actually”, Jey said, smiling nervously and rubbing again his nape, “Chev is the ‘connection’ between the store where I work..., and the malay entrepreneur who wants to sell Venezuelan crafts... Chev owed me a favor”, the fox told to his friends, grateful. “And when he learnt I was going to be the store’s ‘representative’..., he came to Venezuela for taking me to KL and being part of the negotiations with me... You already know Chevise, guys. He’s a very supportive friend”.

“That’s a quality hard to forget, foxy”, Blaze reminded fondly.

“Chevise was too tired for logging in”, Jey continued. “But he encouraged me for being present... in this common virtual escape... that the three of us are sharing right now”, the fox whispered, sighing deeply. “Chevise already knows I’ve been having a hard time..., a very hard time, indeed..., dealing with...” The fox in the end lost his battle against the tears, and began to cry quietly. “...dealing with not being ‘real’ for two great friends as dear to me as him”.

Jey never knew what happened right after beginning to cry, and he could never be completely sure if to blame the unusual irruption of sorrow or any of those bandwidth shenanigans capable to leave deep imprints in perception... The fox was only capable to remember when the golden badger hugged him tightly, caressing the back of his head while Jey cried on Blaze’s shoulder, and when the owl wrapped his arm around the fox’s neck, Jey embracing Adam’s shoulders strongly and resting his forehead on the owl’s head feathers. The fox couldn’t tell as well if the badger and the owl were crying along with him...

But the last thing the fox could remember clearly was his own chin on the owl’s head, hugging both of Adam’s shoulders, and the badger’s chin on the fox’s head, while Blaze was hugging both of Jey’s shoulders, the owl still sitting on his chair, and the three of them staring not at the computer screen, but at the reddish sunset outside the simulation of a window...

“Like good old Chev would say...”, Adam began.

“*The Rooms and the Roofs might not be real for us... (...)*”, Jey continued.

“*(...) ...But the Bonds and the Feelings still are for sure*”, Blaze accomplished.

“Chevise asked me to tell you both something very important to him”, the fox reminded. “He miss you two very much, guys”.

Adam patted softly one of the hands Jey had on him, sharing later another look with the fox and the badger from above, while Blaze and Jey were smiling as silently as the owl...

“Tell Chevise for us”, the owl whispered to the badger and the fox, “that we miss him too”.

E N D

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Story © **KitsuneJey** (JNC), 2012
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Honourable Mentions for **Ryuu Majin**, **Yaali Annar** and **Chevise Samyaz**
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