

Hi Pep!

My friends and I are *secretly* doing a role play of the **Persona** series; one of my three characters would be the one you're about to read: Armada Shun. I do hope you enjoy reading this piece!

Unlike the Persona games that have been around, shadows come out of one thing in the dorms: the mirrors. And yes, Armada's dorm friends (even himself) are being lured into the mirrors.

Have a Merry Christmas! =D

PERSONA: THE JOURNEY

(An excerpt)

Armada Shun

Dreamtime Dorms, 21:00 GMT+9

During a shadow attack

Armada had watched as Erihana had approached them, slowly, mechanically. At first, he had noticed nothing strange, just happy that they would finally be able to leave this strange world at last. Suddenly, Atsuko spoke, blocking him from moving towards the other girl.

"I advise you to stay back," she said calmly, her eyes looking unwaveringly at Erihana as she continued to approach. At the closer distance, Armada could begin to see what disturbed Atsuko so much, for Erihana's eyes seemed glazed over and afraid at the same time, and she held a baseball bat in her hand, somewhat threateningly. Without warning, Erihana lunged forward, swinging baseball bat at Atsuko. The girl dodged, and Armada did as well, hearing the whoosh of the bat as it flew by a foot away from him. He fell to the ground again, landing on his hind end, and watched stunned at the skirmish that happened between Atsuko and Erihana.

Atsuko, after incapacitating Erihana and ordering Takehito to do something, fell to

her knees. Takehito nodded, and summoned the man from before, causing it to heal Erihana where she lay. Armada slowly got up, kicking himself mentally for doing nothing but sit there on the ground. He moved towards Erihana.

"I'm good coach, I can keep playing," he heard her say, "Only a concussion..." Then, her eyes opened wide and she let out a scream as she looked around wildly.

"Takehito-senpai? Armada-san? Wha... what is everyone doing here?" she asked, then brightened and began chattering, though she stopped after a moment and looked down sadly, murmuring, "Never mind..."

She attempted to stand, but sat down almost instantly. From the position, she managed a small blow, asking for a small break and how they were intending to get out.

"Sure, that's not a problem," Armada said, pasting a grin on his face, "We can probably get out by the...mirror?" He looked around, trying to find something in the flat plains that would represent the mirror, but his search from where he stood was fruitless. As he looked around, the smile had fallen from his face and he was murmuring to himself under his breath. Then he turned back to the others, smile back on his face.

"Well, it doesn't look like I can see the mirror right now. I'll just go walk around and see if I can find it." He did so without waiting for anybody to respond. Armada walked out a bit without incident, looking around the whole time for a mirror to walk out of. As he moved further out though, he suddenly felt a sense of foreboding surround him. Undeterred, however, he continued walking, even as a tendril of a root appeared in front of his feet. It slowly wrapped itself around his ankle and, when he began to walk out of its range, pulled on him.

"What the-" he cried out, as he tripped. He flipped himself around on the ground, just

as something began to come out of the ground. Quickly hacking at the root around his ankle, he managed to slice off the tip that was holding him, allowing some shadows to ooze out. He quickly got up on his feet while the “whatever” continued coming out. It quickly grew taller, far taller than he was, and had a yellow head that looked like a bunch of flower petals that had not opened quite yet. Armada backed up as he stared at it, eyes showing fear. The flower's head began swaying around, and the petals began to slowly open, until it revealed a yellow mask surrounded by a number of large petals in the pattern of a sunflower's.

"Th-this..." Armada stammered, "Is just not my day." He dodged past a root that came out of the ground and dashed towards the others.

He hadn't gone all that far from them, so it did not take long for him to reach them. Waving at them as he approached, Armada shouted at them.

"Hey! Something's coming! Get yourselves ready because it's a big - wah!" He was interrupted when a root suddenly shot out a bit to his side, though he managed to swerve barely in time and merely strike a foot on the root. He turned his head and spotted the flower thing, still standing where it had been before. Its head continued the swaying movement from before, though with the petals opened it appeared more as if it were looking for something on the ground. Occasionally the head would stop at a point and rock back and forth as if checking something out, but it would eventually return to its overall search.

Armada began hopping on one foot once the pain of his foot striking the root started to reach his brain. Some more roots came up through the ground and disappeared back into it at random intervals, but none were ever so well aimed as to even be near Armada this time.

He had nearly reached the others, moving slowly on his one foot, when suddenly a root managed to grab him. It picked him up into the air, where another root

sprouted from the ground and picked him up. The first root disappeared back into the ground, and then reappeared some distance away. The root holding Armada pulled itself back.

"Oh, hell no," Armada hissed as he realized what was about to happen. The root flung itself forward, releasing Armada, who soared through the air, the wind burning his eyes as they were wide open in fear and he felt a sense of vertigo from being so high off the ground. Finally, he was getting close to the other root. He overshot it.

Now afraid of the impact of landing, Armada held his breath. Fortunately, the root managed to catch him. It set him a few feet from the head of the flower thing, and went back into the ground. After a moment, the head swerved over to him and got close to him. Summoning up some courage, Armada made a swipe at it with his knife, but though he had a direct hit, nothing much happened to the flower head other than a small quiver. The head moved away and continued its searching movements.

Armada's brow furrowed. He stared angrily at the flower, annoyed that it had not even acknowledged his attack. He guessed that if it had been one of the others, Takehito with his weird person thing or Atsuko with her special gun abilities, they could have done something to the flower thing. Perhaps they would even have destroyed it, as with the shadows from before. But he...no, he had nothing but his small little knife. Pathetic in a situation like this. The anger bubbled up in his chest as he thought about this, as the flower head continued moving around.

He began hearing something in his mind's ear, soft murmurs unintelligible. He didn't think anything of it, concentrating so much on his annoyance and envious thoughts. He could not understand why those two had something special. Hadn't he also entered the mirror? Shouldn't he have something about him against these shadow beings? But no, he was left as he was, armed with a knife.

"Dammit!" he shouted out, and charged towards stalk of the flower-thing. A root

burst out of the ground and swiped at him, knocking him back some distance. He staggered onto his feet, wiping some blood from his mouth, and then made another dash. This time, though, something else blocked him.

Thou art I...

It was a wheel, divided into sections each with a color and some markings. Behind it, Armada could still see the flower, but it seemed to have stopped moving, held in time. The wheel began to spin.

The colors passed by quickly, getting more blurred every second as the wheel's spinning sped up. Eventually it was an entire blur and, suddenly, the colors glowed shining, white. A hand reached out of the wheel, a scroll in its hand. Armada instinctively attempted to step back, but found his legs frozen in place. Behind the hand came an arm, and from it, a body as a head with a hat on it that covered the wearer's eyes came through. Eventually, an entire man came out, floating in front of Armada, the scroll still in his left hand and a staff with a pair of entwined snakes slithering back and forth along the handle in his right.

...and I am thou...

Suddenly, the voices that had persisted in Armada's ears began to get louder, or one of them did. It reached a level where he could finally understand it.

I am Hermes, of the Fortune Arcana. We exist, alongside time, and place upon the path the uncertainty of life. If you will accept me, I shall be your blade. The man offered up his left hand, and the scroll vanished. A light shone from Armada's chest, and the pendant came out from under his sweatshirt. Placing a hand under it, Armada caught it as it fell back down. He examined it for a moment, and then offered it to the floating man before him. The figure gave what appeared to be a smile, and touched his hand to Armada's. A flash of bright light, and...

Suddenly, everything was moving again. Armada staggered backwards, his legs weak from standing for so long, or so he thought. Before him, the wheel slowed its spinning, fading as it did so, so that Armada never saw which section it landed on. The flower was moving as it had before, as if nothing had interrupted it.

Armada looked at the pendant, still in his hand. For a moment, nothing. Then a grin crept onto his face, and he gave a shouting, somewhat maniacal laugh as he brought the pendant up to his face. He kissed it, and then let it drop as he murmured...

"Per...so...na...!" He felt a rush of wind from behind him, and turned to see the figure - Hermes - from before. Armada's smile widened.

"Yes...Yes...YES!" he shouted. The flower head swung to face him.

"Destroy it!" Armada commanded, staring at the flower in glee. Hermes behind him nodded, and the eyes of the snakes on his staff glinted as he read a scroll. A burst of fire struck the flower's head, eliciting a laugh from Armada. Hermes continued reading, causing more bursts, each time causing the flower to recoil. Armada stood still, eyes wide with joy, until...

Something sparked through his mind. The look of happiness changed to one of surprise and pain as his hands reached up to hold his head. More sparks went through, and Armada staggered back and forth until he fell to his knees. He gave a whimper of pain. Behind him, Hermes turned his head to face the others in the world, but vanished before completing the glance.