

THE  
SECRET CLUB  
AND  
EJAD THE INVENTOR

TWO IN ONE VOLUME

THE SECRET CLUB AND THE MANAFULS

SECOND EDITION

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AND EASA MOHAMED

The Secret Club and Ejad the Inventor

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For Our 'Ohana





# ACT I



# PROLOGUE

**Manaful World**

**August 1, 2000**

**‘Ōma‘oma‘o Hopohopo City**

**Protectors’ Academy**

**Twenty-two Years Ago**

**H**e was a hell of a killer for being the runt of the family. Ejad Honua could become a top assassin easily. Elder Uli, the Protector’s Academy owner, instantly knew this. The diminutive Hopohopo, empowered with self-made gadgetry, walloped his bullies on that ominous night. Uli saw the entire take-down.

A foot shorter but miles smarter than most dwarves, teenaged Ejad defended himself with gadgetry. Uli was lucky to be near enough to sense the intense emotions involved. He arrived at once to investigate. Upon teleporting to the Academy, the Elder admired Ejad’s small switchblade baton. It was at full extension, dripping maroon droplets.

Elder Uli levitated in the twilight over the empty parking lot, studying the dismembered hands of two Hopohopo teens on the ground below him. His bioluminescent elder’s robe glowed

in the spectrum of greens from emeralds to aquas, floating around him with a mind of its own. The magical cloth's power uplifted him physically and spiritually. Source's eminence filled his every turn and nod with beauty. But his dark personage lessened its vibrance. He smirked at the fleeing bullies, a blonde and brunette, who sobbed with arms pressed against damp chests. Their severed hands lay haphazardly mismatched, the pale one beside the brown, fingers twitching on the now bloodstained asphalt.

Ejad tapped a button on the metal baton in his hand. The blade folded on itself and disappeared into the weapon's tip. He closed his eyes and bowed his head as if in prayer, completely stoic. He wasn't breathing hard nor shaking. He held his shoulders back almost proudly, strangely giving him a taller presence. Backpack at his feet, he rested his weaponed arm against his leg. Uli considered teleporting the weapon back to his mansion in a blink of the eye. But instinct told him the baton wasn't the most valuable weaponry here. The Elder descended gracefully until the youngster was bathed in the glow of his robes.

"Where'd you get that contraption?" Uli's deep baritone echoed in the lot. His feet came to rest in front of Ejad, whose eyes had widened into orbs of surprise. Uli waved at the dismembered hands at their feet. The body parts and stains vanished into thin air.

Ejad jumped in awe, having only heard of Elder Uli. Never dreamed of meeting him. It's a breathtaking moment akin to meeting the monarchy. There was protocol for this sort of thing.



The teen immediately kneeled on the ground before his Elder. Ejad's plain green sarong rode up his thighs, revealing rippling hamstrings from squatting to tend to his machinery and training at the Academy staff's gym. Ejad didn't reply to Uli about the weapon.

"Speak up!" Uli yelled, impatient by-half already that he had to voice his thoughts. Mind-reading and projecting one's thoughts was the Manaful way. Why won't this student answer? The youngster continued to kneel with nary a projected thought nor a spoken word.

The elder sighed, staring at the teen at his feet. With skills like that, the boy could have been a prized Academy member instead of a tech assistant. Uli squinted to peer into the shaggy, overly-long brown head. Huh, that's not the regulation cut. Come to think of it, the little fighter wasn't wearing the required teal sarong of Academy students nor the forest green of employees. His was a darker hue, deep moss.

Uli realized this boy must be a full-fledged Hopohopo. However clever they may be, they couldn't match a Manaful in anything. He shrugged at the ease of the task. These Hopohopo failed to mentally communicate much less screen their minds. Their thoughts were unshielded, practically screaming aloud on cartoonish bubbles above their heads.

"*Tell me your name,*" Elder Uli telepathically projected (TP) into Ejad's head.

"*I am Ejad, a lowly tech assistant, Great Elder!*" Ejad thought carefully, sensing Uli's intrusion into his mind.

*“I accept my punishment for maiming two of your students. But I am not in the wrong. Reach back into my brain for my rationale. They deserved this and more.”*

Uli’s left brow rose in curiosity. Though Ejad’s head was bowed, his thoughts rang with confidence and self-assurance. Such bravado to an elder was something Uli rarely saw in a young dwarf, not to mention a Hopohopo. He suddenly wanted to hear the boy speak aloud.

*“Stand up! Use your words!”* Uli commanded.

Ejad came to his feet smoothly like a breakdancer, arms and legs loosely relaxed. He didn’t speak a word. He lifted his chin, waiting for the elder to kill him or scramble his brain. Ejad emanated stillness and serenity despite having just assaulted two other young dwarves. His eyes were ice.

Uli’s normal disregard for *other’s* feelings or concerns dissipated. This young one fascinated him. He peered again into Ejad’s brain. He saw flashbacks of the injured teens bullying Ejad over the last few months. Each encounter was a snapshot of humiliation for Ejad. The humiliation came from having to restrain himself. Uli zeroed in on the events of this evening, viewing the memory clearly.

The three dwarfs were in an empty Academy classroom. The dirty blond student towered over a stoically serious Ejad. The former squeezed the life out of a furry hamster. He dropped the lifeless pet at Ejad’s feet. “I guess little Hammy can’t help with your experiments any more!” The blonde bully cackled.

Ejad looked down at the pet. He neither grimaced nor cried. His lack of reaction irked the bullies. The dark haired student opened a Jackson chameleon’s cage, grinning. Ejad’s breath finally

hitched. His eyes narrowed. This jazzed both bullies. Without a care for the pet's ribs, the second bully crushed the chameleon's body like gelatin with his bare hands. The bullies only laughed at the grotesque crunch of its bones. The student dropped the lifeless yet still beautiful rainbow reptile to the floor next to its deceased furrier companion. Ejad swallowed whatever screams were awakening in his throat. His eyes widened into saucers. He had yet to move.

The dirty blonde shouted, "Let's get out of here before he calls the Chief!" He was referring to Ejad's technology supervisor who normally ran the very lab they stood in. Being too poor to land a full Academy course, Ejad Honua had chosen part-time employment and attending free staff-only classes as the path to achieving his dreams.

"Sure thing! Let's bail!" The brunette answered as they exited much quicker than they'd entered. There was no rhyme nor reason why they chose to "visit" Ejad daily. This particular encounter had been by far the worst. Ejad's lack of verbal response nor reporting of their daily insults and slurs had urged them on. How'd they escalate from name-calling and toppling furniture to killing pets, Ejad couldn't guess. He'd get revenge.

A rodent scurried on the fire escape behind Ejad, bringing Elder Uli back to the present. He stared down at the young dwarf, who was at least a foot shorter than the elder. Ejad raised his brow as if to ask, *Got what you needed from my brain?*

Uli nodded at Ejad. His foray into the youngsters mind had shown him the Hopohopo's ingenuity. He had manufactured the multi-purpose switch-blade baton from scratch on his own

using springs and clockwork mechanics. He was an inventor.  
This one was a keeper.

### Uli's Song: Uli's New Pet:

“This one's a keeper –can it get any better?  
This one's for me I know things are looking up now.  
Asked Source for at least one worthy of me somehow.  
Waited a millenia for others to shape up– step up  
Find me one that's not wimpy and quivery when I say,  
“Shut up!”  
One who doesn't care whether he lives nor dies by my hand.  
One who sees past my foibles and occasional need to  
grandstand  
A youngster who is trainable in my wily ways  
A faithful acolyte who will not stray.  
A true killer –with none of that heart of gold mess  
Ejad will even call me out on my BS.  
I can't thank Source more for this makana of all makana  
Oh, boy! We're gonna plan, we're gonna scheme. I wanna!”

Ejad stood at attention and stared grimly at the Elder as if awaiting orders. This brought out a smile on Uli's sour face. The Elder lifted his chin. “*You're coming with me to the sandalwood forest.*”

Ejad mutely blinked his agreement.

The rest was history.

# CHAPTER 1

## ARI'S MOODY MOODS

Earth

Storyteller in Papakōlea, Hawai'i

August 4, 2022

At twelve years old, Ari had the spunk of a girl twice her age. She was often left to her own devices while her parents kept busy. She often hatched plans to amuse herself unbeknownst to whichever adult was keeping an eye on her. She still missed her parents and got into her little moods.

Aunt Ellie read her mind, “You can’t have it both ways. Either you want them around a lot or you want space.”

“Can’t they give lots of kisses and hugs like you do?” Ari mumbled.

“Oh, well, you have to admit: there’s only one of me!” Aunt Ellie winked and smooched Ari’s cheek to change the mood.

Ari giggled, yet her thoughts lingered on her parents. They did give her the occasional hugs and kisses. Just not as much as she wanted. They never phoned when they were at work, instead trusting her loneliness will be fixed by her Aunt.

“I don’t think they love me as much as they should,” Ari said.

Aunt Ellie almost laughed, but kept her lips pursed. She shook her head instead. She moved as fluidly as a forty-nine year-old could manage from the settee where she’d been re-hemming her culottes to the couch. She gracefully joined Ari who lounged on it. Dropping a hand on her niece’s shoulders, she bent down to peer into Ari’s dark brown eyes.

“They love you in their own way,” Aunt Ellie insisted.

She continued, “Remember there’s food on the table and clothes in your closet.”

Ari rolled her eyes, wishing her Aunt understood that provisions aren’t enough. It takes affection and patience from a parent for a child to feel appreciated.

As if mind-melded, Aunt Ellie kissed Ari’s cheek saying, “We all love you. We are all here for you, although I speak more for myself than your parents. Yet, the trust they instill in you and I to be strong without their continuous presence is precious. Everyone has their own unique way to kāko’o others.”

Ari shook her head stubbornly. “You can’t call this ‘support’.”

Aunt Ellie just held her tighter and said, “I can and I am. They definitely love you.”

Ari teared up and hugged her Aunt. It lasted exactly six seconds. Then she abruptly leaped up and ran to the front porch, leaving Aunt Ellie blinking at an empty spot on the couch.

“Hey, where are you going?”

Ari shouted over her shoulder, “A walk in Tantalus trails. I’ll be okay.”

Aunt Ellie frowned, debating whether to follow the pre-teen. She was never one hundred percent sure how safe it was on

the hilly trails. It was a block behind her mountain residence in Papakōlea. There were wild boar, feral chicken, and even wilder teens smoking marijuana in their trailside hideouts.

“I’ll be fine!” Ari said from the doorway. “It’s homestead land where everyone knows everyone. You’re such a worrier!”

Aunt Ellie watched the girl rocket off into the afternoon humidity. She scratched her graying head and got up to pace the living room. Keeping Ari by her side all the time was getting increasingly difficult as the girl aged. Recently she’d created an entire story to keep the preteen distracted from her absent parents. It had helped Ari recover from the tumultuous years of the COVID pandemic.

Aunt Ellie stopped in her tracks. The story! Ari needed The Secret Club in her life more than ever. Perhaps the story needed more spice. That’ll bring Ari back to herself.

“I can get her to sit still longer that way,” she told herself. She paced to recall where she’d left off in the fictional story.

In the magical world of Manaful, accessed through Shimmery Walls, her three young heroes witnessed the unfolding of Elder Uli’s plans to take control of the Elder Council and the whole Manaful World. They had seen his eventual demise by the hands of Maka, his grandson. However, the malevolent Spirit Lapu, who had empowered Uli, still controls part of Manaful. Nicole, Pierre, and Malie - the Secret Club - are molecularly traveling via the Shimmery Wall right into the aftermath of one of Lapu’s destructive rampages.

One problem was Aunt Ellie’s inability to answer all of Ari’s questions. The preteen didn’t like waiting a whole day for the

next part. Her niece was most inquisitive about mind powers. And Lapu. *I'm going to have to stretch my imagination*, she thought.

Aunt Ellie hummed a song of hope to herself and returned to her rehemming and waited for Ari's return. Her mind worked as fast as her fingers as the story evolved. The clock hanging over her decorative fireplace depicted native Hawaiian birds instead of numerals. It ticked towards the 'ōma'o thrush that represented two o'clock.

### **Aunt Ellie's Song of Hope:**

“God above helps us when we are lost.  
Our sacrifices sometimes have a cost.  
We grow through these changes daily.  
What would we do without family?  
Praise be for those who stick together.  
Facing the good and the bad weather.  
Trust one another to be there still.  
No matter how things go downhill,  
Love provides this deep inner hope.  
Remember that united we can cope!”