

THE FATE'S FORTUNE

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It was quiet when the bell softly jingled, announcing that people had entered. "Ah, my favourite junior adventures," the shopkeeper's croaky voice exclaimed,

"Back again I see. What can I do for you on this fine evening?" his mouth forming a cheeky smile. Xixi, the oldest, replied.

"Hello there Mr Auz. We were stopping by to see if you had any other quests available?" She questioned, raising her eyebrows.

"All the others have been finished already." Mr Auz stared into their eyes intently,

"The only quest I have at the moment is extremely difficult, nothing like what you're used to. If I were any of you, I would wait and think it through."

Before Xixi could speak, Rory decided to slam his hands on the counter, "Oo oo! Yes! Yes! Yes! We'll do it!" Mr. Auz Chuckled sliding over a folded piece of paper with the quest details. Opal, the second oldest, grabbed the folded piece of paper and looked inside,

"This looks fun!" she told the group.

"Yeah and dangerous. Sweetheart, just because something looks fun doesn't mean we should do it. Plus, we're only three people, which makes it hard." Xixi spoke up. Mr Auz's ears perked at the last comment

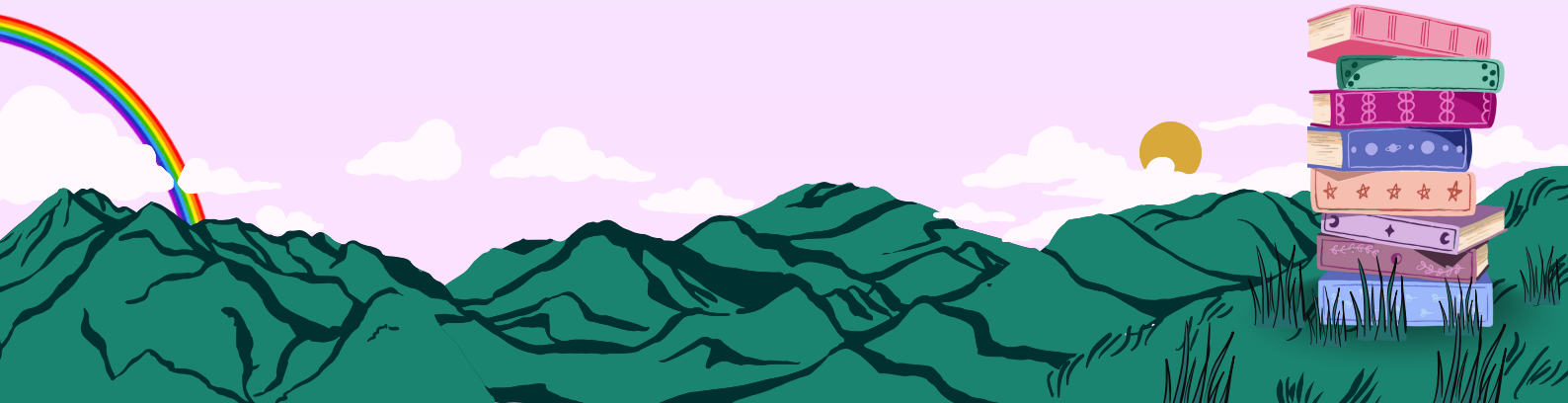
"You guys need a new member?" he asked.

"You could say that," Xixi replied,

"You know someone?" all the group was fully listening now, intrigued.

"Go to The Authors of Iron and ask for Alexandra, they're extremely skilled with the bow and could be a big help." Xixi frowned,

"I'm not sure. We'll think about it."



After Rory heard that, he protested.

“But Xixi I’ve always wanted to learn how to shoot a bow! They could teach us. Please!” his hands came up in front of his face, pleading to Xixi.

“C’mon Hon, it’ll be good for us.” Opal started doing puppy dog eyes, knowing that Xixi couldn’t say no.

“Fine. Let’s hurry and get to The Authors of Iron, then we can go to the Lagoon.”

The walk to The Authors of Iron was serene, it smelt like burning wood.

“Well then, here we are. The Authors of Iron.” Xixi slowed down, looking up at the wooden sign. By now it was nearly nighttime. The lanterns made the little building light up and look lively, Xixi looked at her two party members, “Here goes nothing.”

Approaching the big wooden door, Xixi knocked three times in a pattern. When the huge door opened, they were surprised to see a smaller figure than what they had expected.

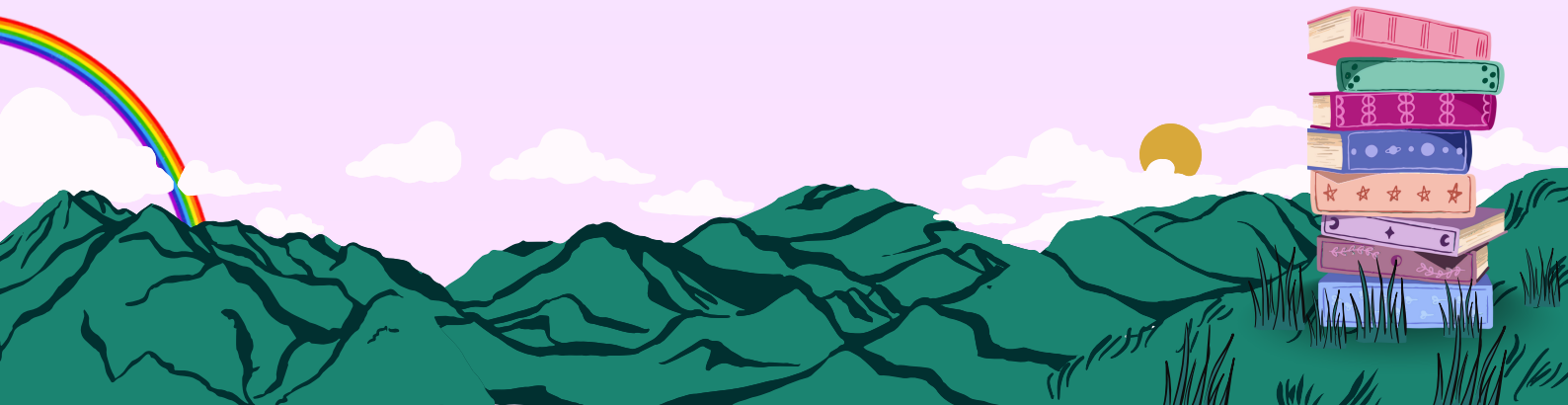
“Hello, I’m Xixi. I was wondering if someone named Alexandra lived here. Mr Auz told us that we could ask if they’d like to join our junior adventuring party, The Fate’s Fortune.” the small figure’s face lightened,

“A real adventuring party wants me to join them?” Xixi realised that the small figure that was standing in front of her was Alexandra.

“Yes! Mr Auz told us that you were good with a bow! We need someone who has a long ranged weapon as I use a sword, Rory over there-” Xixi points at Rory, he gives Alexandra a big smile and a small wave,

“Uses a curved dagger and Opal, the other one, uses a flute, she’s a bard.”

“The other one.” Opal gave Xixi a hurt expression, acting like her flute had stabbed her heart, “You wound me Hon.” Xixi rolled her eyes, “Sure I do. Anyways, Alexandra-” She turned back to see Alexandra gone, and a frown fell on her face. As she turned to leave they heard a voice behind them.



“Don’t forget me!” It was Alexandra! Xixi’s face lit up at the fact that they got a new member. Now the only thing left to do was start the quest.

“Ugh.” Alexandra dropped their bag before flopping on the ground
“I’m not moving for at least 5 minutes.” they groaned, their eyes closing slightly.

“I think we could all use a break,” Xixi said wearily whilst slumping against a tree. After a few moments, the rest of the group was back on their feet and heading towards the lagoon.

“Oh please don’t tell me we have to wade through that!” Alexandra yelled, annoyance lacing their voice.

“It looks like it,” Rory said, his pride still squashed from being yelled at previously.

“Stop moping you two, it’s just a bit of character-building!” Opal said cheerfully.

“You say that every time something like this happens...” Rory said under his breath.

“Well better late than never!” Xixi declared, taking the first steps in, looking back and waving them to follow. The Fate’s Fortune made their way through the lagoon. The sun started to lower behind the horizon,

“Guys we need to get a move on if we want the daylight!” Alexandra spoke, quickening their pace.

Once The Fate’s Fortune reached the centre of the lagoon, they found themselves standing in knee-deep water with a tower in front of them.

“That has a dragon in it,” Rory spoke with certainty in his voice.

“If you say so,” Opal replied. As they entered the tower our adventurers could hear a low rumbling sound coming from the top of the tower.

“Get your weapons ready everyone,” whispered Xixi,

“We’re In for a fight.”



They all made their way up the tower, touching the cold bricks as they went. Once The Fate's Fortune got to the top they crept into a big room with a podium containing a chalice on top of it. A huge dragon was sleeping next to it.

"Let's split up and attack the dragon from either side," suggested Alexandra.

"Sounds good," replied Opal and Xixi at the same time.

"Ok, how about Alexandra and I go right and Xixi and Opal go left?" Xixi looked concernedly at Rory,

"Are you two sure you can manage to be by yourselves?" quizzed Xixi.

"Of course, we can!" Alexandra replied, a small smile appearing on their face.

"Yeah! You guys have no faith in us." Rory said whilst grabbing Alexandra's hand and walking off. "Well, should we start going this way?" Opal said, walking in the opposite direction.

"Ok, what's the plan?" Xixi asked.

"You and your plans, eh?" Opal said in a mocking tone. At that comment Xixi scoffed, starting to follow Opal.

As they reach the dragon, Xixi sees an arrow fly into the foot of the dragon, waking it up. The dragon drew itself up to its full height, filling the once cavernous room, almost looking cartoonish. The fierce dragon was easily able to spot the adventurers in the darkness. It decided to go for Alexandra almost immediately. When it came swooping towards Alexandra Xixi and Opal took the opportunity to rush forward. The dragon flung itself around, knocking Xixi to the ground with its tail. An opportunity for Rory to run at it with his dagger appeared. Making the dragon stumbled and crash to the floor.

"Nice!" yelled Xixi as they scrambled to her feet. Alexandra went to draw another arrow but was face to face with the Dragon. With one great fiery breath, Alexandra was knocked to the floor and thoroughly singed. This allowed Opal to pull out her flute and begin to play. When she used her flute, she used animal friendship, making it so the dragon did them no harm.



Just as that happened someone yelled out,
“Alright kids, time to pack up for the night.” Whilst walking into the kitchen.
“But mum! We were just about to complete the quest!” Sam whined, a frown forming.
“No, it's almost midnight.” Sam's mum said, ushering them all up the stairs to bed.
“You can continue your little game in the morning. If you guys need anything, come and ask me! Goodnight The Fate's Fortune!” She said, putting on a scruffy accent. A course of good nights filled the room as Sam's mum backed out shutting the door behind her.
“Sam, Hannah, Rosa, and Arty, The Fate's Fortune slept well that night, dreaming of their soon-to-come victory,” said Maria, soon she too fell asleep.

