

Writing Sample – Historical Fantasy

Lora and the Cities of the Immortalized

Lora poured over the book as she held the torch ahead of her. This labyrinth was growing intensely difficult to solve and the book was beginning to run out of map lines.

“Do you even know where you are going Lora Tableditch?” Johnas asked.

“Johnas, I know exactly where I’m going. If I didn’t then I wouldn’t be using a book in order to make sure that I’m going in the right direction.” Lora stated.

“We’ve been down here for a month and we’ve lost four men... basically it’s just me and you.” Johnas complained.

Lora ignored him and continued forward, following the map laid out in the book diligently. When they began a month ago, there was always the distinct skeleton to show how unprepared their competition had been. The gross and disgusting odor of rotting meat filled the hallways.

The relief was that after two weeks of walking through the labyrinth, the traps had stopped being a surprise and no one got injured from them. However, the long trip made many of the other explorers quit and now it was just the two of them. Johnas was only there because his life was attached to Lora’s and if it wasn’t for that, then he wouldn’t be here either.

“We have one more passage way to go down.” Lora said as she plopped down in a sitting position.

“What?! We’re that close?” Johnas asked, completely astonished and relieved at the same time.

“Yes. According to this book there’s also a second and easier way into the cavern but the map full of traps is the only way to get there for the first time.” Lora said with a smile, “Once we find whatever’s buried down here then we can go out a way that doesn’t take a month. Luckily, we’ve only been a few days without the caravan but I would love to have a meal...” she said while biting into a protein bar, “instead of this wax with nutrition.”

Johnas laughed as he pulled out his can of jerky, “Why do you think I brought this along?”

“Jerky is not a meal.”

Johnas bit off a piece and pointed it at Lora, “When we were trapped in Hitler’s balloon, this is what they served us. Technically, it classifies as a low to poor quality meal.”

“Oh the fun times of war, yea, let’s bring that up again Johnas.” Lora said, “It’s not like we’ve lived through all of them miraculously.”

“You can blame that gypsy witch for doing whatever mumbo jumbo she did on us.”

“You know, after a century or two, I would think your methodology of speaking might change but nooo. I have to deal with an immortal teenager who simply doesn’t see the wrong in cheating on a gypsy.”

“That must be why the curse is so hard to break because I’m supposed to learn my lesson.” Johnas laughed, “All she did was make a cheater immortal.”

“You cheated on her with me. Would you grow up?!” Lora said as she chugged on what was left of the water, “If it wasn’t for the fact of that curse, I would’ve dumped your butt then and there. However, if I want to live, I have to make sure you live too.”

“Ain’t that a twisted sense of karma.” Johnas said.

“Just shut up.”

They sat there for a while before moving on. The air down here was near cold temperatures and it kept them from losing most of their naturally body sweat, which tends to be the killer of long trips. Their feet were sore from every day walking and their bodies were as toned as they could possibly be after carrying food packs for a month. Lora didn’t think she’d ever see herself gain any weight ever again at the rate that they were going.

Finally, they helped each other up and continued down the hallway. The hallway opened up to a large cavern covered with ruins and their eyes lit up with amazement.

“Oh my, these ruins are covered in the Sumarian language.” Lora said after careful examination, “However, there’s also every original language under the sun.”

Johnas looked at her with a frown, “Does that mean that this ruin is a fake?”

“No, it means that we have found the historical point of our history of life.” Lora said.

Johnas waited for a long time to think about what she had said but his small intelligence simply couldn’t put the dots together, “Whaaaa?”

“Every language differentiation started here. Without this point in our history, we wouldn’t have the languages and culture differences we have today. In fact, the world would be made up of three languages if it wasn’t for the collaboration of this ruin.” Lora stated, “This is the most important historical find in history.”

Lora began to walk towards another ruin but the floor gave out on her and she fell through.

“Lora!” Johnas yelled as he jumped to grab her hand but missed.

Lora fell into the darkness of the cavern and felt as though she had been falling for nearly an hour before a soft cushion hit her back. She looked down to see that she had fallen on a giant bed of pillows that had grown dusty with age.

She looked around and saw fires just outside of the pillow range. Clambering down from the small mountain, she went up to the fires and saw that there were people sitting around them. Lora was about to attempt to speak Summarian when a man with a long overcoat tipped his hat towards her.

“Hello lady. What brings you to this cavern?” he questioned.

“Wait, you speak English?” She asked.

“Yes ma’am we speak this here English language pretty well but we have a mash up of the different languages down here.” He said.

“You look like you’re right out of a western movie.” She said with a slight chuckle slipping out.

“Well ma’am, I’ve been down here quite some time so I don’t know much about this movie thing you’re talkin’ ‘bout.” The man stated, “However, that’s not quite surprisin’ seein’ how many of us have come from different areas. Hell, over ‘der is dem Arg-oh-nauts or some such. They can’t speak a lick of English but their good for when you need a good scrapplin’ when you’re drunk.”

“Argonauts? Wait, what’s your name?” She asked with wide eyes.

“Name’s Billy, people used to call me Billy the Kid back in my time.” He tipped his hat again and spit off to his side.

“This can’t be real. You’re dead. People buried you and had a detailed account of how you died.” She said as her head involuntarily shook.

“Well ma’am, as you can clearly see, I’m right here in front of ya.” Billy said, “This is here is what I reckon to be the City of Villians. Somewhere down the rode on the other side is another city but it’s a lot nicer than this if I do mind so sayin’. I reckon that city’s the City of Heroes.”

“How do you think that this is a city for villains?”

Billy laughed, “Well for one thing, I’m here. However, if you need absolute proof, then that German guy who has a hard on for Jews is over there. Keeps on talkin’ ‘bout some stupid Third Rich or somethin’ or ‘nother.”

“Hitler is here?! Wow, this completely changes the rule books.”

“Well you see, we don’t really know how it happens but we end up here. I’ve only gathered a little bit from my hero friends in the other city. However, if you ended up here then that means you’re a villain ma’am.”

“I’m not dead though.”

“Watcha mean you ain’t dead?”

“We spent a month finding this place. Neither of us is dead.”

“There’s another one? All the dead ones drop there. We put pillows there to make sure they’re not pissed when they land.”

Lora stopped talking for a while but as she looked at the City of Villains, she couldn’t help but wonder what had pulled them there. Little did Lora know it but she was going to be the first one in history to find out what happens to some of us who’ve died but kept immortal through paper. What other cities were out there and how many dead people were still walking around? Lora’s head buzzed with questions and she felt faint enough to sit down.

Meanwhile with Johnas