

Anna and the Azura Realm

By
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Chapter I: Normality

Anna crouched in the shadows of the old farmhouse, while fear and adrenaline rushed through her veins and bones. Damped in sweat, dirt, and blood, Anna's brown hair tangled around her face upon her ragged clothes. Lights and footsteps rushed around the perimeter of the farmhouse searching for her. Pinned between bails of hay, Anna lessened her heavy breathing to minimize the chances of getting caught.

"Anna we know you are hiding in here somewhere!" A male voiced echoed at a close range. Holding in tears and panic, Anna thought out her escape routes, *It's either I can make a run for it, hopefully making it to the neighbors house across the street, or I can think of a way to knock out these potential assassins?* Anna thought carefully to herself what she needed to do.

Thinking back on her memories, she remembered what her father told her 10 years ago when she was just 8 years old.

"If you are ever in a life threatening situation sweetheart, listen carefully to these words and advice for when you get older, I need you to throw something to distract those bad guys, then

make a run to their belonging, a house, a car, etc...you need to trap the location in order to escape! Think like the movie "Home Alone."

This is exactly what Anna is gonna do! Her dad passed away from a heart attack that following year on her birthday...July 12th 2010.

Examining her surroundings, Anna spots a potential object to throw, a mason jar filled with maple syrup. Trying to extend her arm to the left, she stretches herself to reach the jar located on top of a barrel. Accidentally being a klutz, she knocks over a milk pitcher, exposing herself to the gang of guys.

"There you are!, get her boys!" The leader demanded.

Running for her life, Anna throws the jar and accidently hits the leader on the head making him furious! Running as fast as Anna can carry her, she quickly jumps into the leader's 1977, gold and black Mustang with the license plate "Hell Bkr". Luckily the keys were in the ignition. Trying to start the car, the first turn stalls. Losing time, the gang is now 10 feet away from the car at running speed. One of the men takes out a revolver and starts to load the bullets in. Quickly Anna tries to ignite the car again, it finally starts on the second try.

Drifting and skirting away, 4 bullets are fired at the car, one shattering the back windshield, and the others denting the body of the car. One last bullet was fired, but this one was from a sniper rifle. On top of the barn roof, the leader positioned himself and shot at Anna in the driver's seat from 400 feet away, hitting her in the right shoulder.

Bleeding not only from the scratches on her forehead, but now an excruciating pain in her shoulder from the bullet. Being able to escape, Anna looks at the analog clock on the

dashboard, 2:45am. It turns out Anna has been running and hiding for 2 entire days! Her belly growling and extremely dehydrated, she pulls over to the side of Avril Road about 3 miles from the farmhouse. Looking for money in the car she stumbles upon 3 stacks of cash in the glove box of the passenger seat. "I ought to feed myself, I suppose I have some time." She said to herself.

Driving another mile or so, she stumbles upon a gas station called "Bernies" This gas station is located in the middle of nowhere in Oregon. Fueling up the car with only 2 lines above empty, she sees a shadowy figure standing on the other side of the road. It seems to look like a teenage boy. "Hello! Who is there? You need something?" Anna tries to communicate but no response is given. Still standing there, Her name is yelled, "Anna!"

"Hey! Who are you? W-w-wait!" Anna questioned as the figure darted back into the woods. *How can he know my name? Who is this stalker?* Anna thought to herself.

Finally filled up on gas, the price was \$15.45. She grabbed the cash from the glove box and entered "Bernies". She quickly grabbed a bandage wrapping from the same glovebox to obtain the pressure around her shoulder. One worker was on duty at the cash register, she was a lady that looked like she was at the age of 60.

"Hello dear how may I help you?"

It seemed odd how a gas station can be open so late, it's 3:30am.

"Hello ma'am! I'm okay I can get stuff myself, thank you though!"

Grabbing a bag of ranch flavored Doritos and a few other snacks, Anna located herself in the drink aisle; grabbing 2 gallons of "Arrowhead" water. Cashing out, the lady at the cash register questioned her,

"You are quite thirsty dear? Have you got yourself in trouble?"

"No i'm okay, thank you though, just went camping and all haha" Anna bluffed to her, something about her just creeped everyone out..she had both of her front teeth missing, a weird grin, and something so sinister in her eyes. Anna grabbed her groceries and entered the car.

Driving farther on Avril road, a thick blanket of fog formed in her area. Surrounding in nothing but trees and road, Anna put the fog lights on and the windshield wipers for the mist.

Just about to turn onto Jacksonville Road where the police station is located, a boy figure stood in front of Anna, Swerving trying to avoid the person in front of her, she crashed into a tree at 80mph. Glass and metal shattered all over her. Lying on the ground half unconscious, this figure started to walk towards her, a set of gold wings were thought to be seen on it, the last is unknown...she fell unconscious...

Chapter II: The World of Azura

Anna woke from a coma she resided in for 3 days. With a broken femur, cuts, and a few bumps on her head, it was a miracle she survived! Waking up, her surroundings were very mysterious and unfamiliar. *I must be dreaming...* she thought to herself. Looking around her peripherals, it seemed as though she was stuck in a fantasy dream of some sort, To the left of

her, potions and an alchemy set rested on an old wooden table. To the right of her laid a book called "Azura Magic".

Anna decided to get out of bed and try to hop her way to the book, grabbing whatever she can leverage herself with. "What do we have here?" As she questioned to herself. Dusting off the front of the book with her hand, she reads the words "The Book of Azura Magics".

Opening the first page, curiosity struck her eye when the right page became a 3 dimensional image. She couldn't believe her eyes!

Reading the font to the left, read the title "Natures Abyss of Azura"

"Is this a map of some sort?" She murmured to herself.

Reading the inked page, only gave her a huge description of the location previewed, and a confusing poem;

The golden wings are closer than you assume

Find a creature to have your life resume,

But with a price in dragon's tongue!

3 gold coins, a magic ring and a trolls lung,

And don't forget the phoenix feather!

There are puzzles and mysterious weather.

Start your journey at the golden gate

Go through the forest of souls and lost fate,

Then there is a kingdom of dawn and dusk

Where you talk to the king and it is a must!

He will send you to the phoenix mountain

But watch out for trolls and the cursed fountain!

Anna thought to herself what this poem could mean...thinking thoroughly she finally gets it! It is a map back to her home!

Chapter III: The Secrets Beneath the Shadows

Why would the weird humanoid creature bring me here? Anna thought to herself as she hopped around the room.

"Anna are you awake?" A male voice echoed from a room downstairs.

"Who are you?" Anna questioned.

"My name is Grafton, no need to be alarmed when you see me."

"What do you mean by "alarmed"? Should I be worried?"

"No dear of course not! I am just an unusual creature you have never seen before."

Anna started to freak out to herself, questioning and picturing what Grafton might look like.

As the footsteps came closer to her room, her heart started to race - with a lump in her throat.

Turning the knob, a blue creature with scales entered the room, trying not to freak, Anna calms her breathing.

"Wha-Wh-What are you??"

"I am a warlock, I know what you are probably thinking "Why does this man look like a dragon?" Well...Short story...those assassins that were after you...they chased me as well...and

I was cursed with the body of a dragon...Only way I get back to my human-self, is if the HellBreaker leader is dead. I also knew your father.”

“I am so sorry to hear! How did you know him??” Anna looked at Grafton in daze.

“He was a part of a group called the Nightingales. I am one as well, as your uncle Gibson, and your grandfather Mike.”

“Wait! Do you mean he was a-”

“Yes Anna your father was a warlock, he didn't die of a heart attack...poison was struck by the stinger of the creature of evil, half man, half scorpion. This creature was sent by these assassins, the same ones that chased you. They call themselves “The HellBreakers.” They work for an evil lord in Azura, they were sent to the mainland to capture you, and kill you like your father...”

“Does that mean I'm a witch? Also why they ended up chasing me?” Anna said in daze and confusion.

“We don't know for sure, that's why we sent you here, if you have powers, you can kill the Hell Lord, if not, we brought you here for a lost cause, there is also someone I would love for you to meet here! His name is Alyx, he will be your companion on your journey, in discovering these powers. He is located in the house furthest east of the village.

“Is Alyx normal?” Anna questioned.

"I wouldn't say normal haha, but he is as human as we know. He studies magic and he is an alchemist, so he knows a few tricks up his sleeve. He knows how to travel to the mainland from time to time, but with only those ingredients listed in the book...Off you go!"

Anna grabs the book, and a few supplies to take with her to Alyx.

"Thank you so much Grafton!, But I have a broken femur...?"

"No problem! Always here to help!, Ahh I'll take care of that!"

In the alchemist lab, Grafton brews up a potion of healing.

"3 frog warts...a fairy wing...and 4 gold trinkets! Here you are!"

Grabbing the goblet filled with blue liquid that glows, Anna swallows the potion while gagging afterwards.

"This stuff is nasty! Yuck!"

"Haha, it isn't supposed to taste delightfully silly!"

10 seconds later, her cuts and broken femur starts to heal.

"I feel so much better thank you!"

"My pleasure dear! Now off you go!"

On Anna's way out, she is startled by the beauty in the village! Glowing mushrooms everywhere, enchanted treehouses, mushroom homes, and much more!

About 200 feet layed Alyx's house.

"Here we go I guess..." Anna says to herself nervously.

About to knock on the door, Alyx provokes Anna before the knock. While holding a bunch of ingredients, he says,

"Oh hello Anna! I'm Alyx! You might remember me from the gas station! I love your new dress, got rid of your old ragged clothes I see?"

“That was you!?” As Anna stood in shock.

“Haha yeah! I was gathering important supplies but I was too nervous to approach you. I don’t have enough ingredients to enter the mainland again...I used the last of what I had, these ingredients are hefty to collect!”

In the light Alyx looks like he is in his early twenties, black hair and dark blue eyes. He wore tunic armor with a quiver of arrows draped around him.

“What kind of journey will we go on?” Anna asked Alyx.

“First we will give you a book of spells, like the one you have, to test if you have powers, instead of a book producing the powers, you will be casting them from your hands!”

“Where will we begin?” Anna complied.

“Follow me to the spell room!” He demanded.

Entering the spell room, a huge grand globe laid in the center of the room with magic elements everywhere!

“Wow this place is so gorgeous!” Anna implied.

“Thank you! This is my ancestors place! Where all the warlocks and witches casted their new powers! Here take this ring! This is the only way you can control what powers are inside of you!”

Alyx handed Anna a magical ring with a large glowing gem on top of it, made from the breath of a phoenix!

“Thank you!!” Anna thanked Alyx while he handed her the ring.

“This is the Azura Diamond, one of a kind! Very valuable! Don’t ever lose it! Made from the phoenix itself!”

“Wow! What does it do?” Anna questioned.

“It is the only way you can defeat whatever evil is in this world, the way you can use your power for good! The only way you can cast from the spirit inside of you, keep your head level and you can control all the powers of light!” Alyx explained.

With lots of training and hours, Anna did have special powers! She was a full blooded witch, this discovery changed her life forever!

“Let the training begin!” Alyx demanded.

Hours upon hours, Alyx trained all the powers he knew to Anna, from telichenis to controlling elements! Finally getting her powers under control, She was ready to start the journey to escape this realm!

Chapter IV: Light the Journey Up

Alyx and Anna packed all the supplies they both needed for their long journey ahead!

“Our first stop, the cursed well!” Anna implied

“You mean the well at the edge of the village? The one NOBODY is ever to enter or they will have cursed magic for life!!” Alyx had fear in his voice, starting to sweat.

“Yes that one! Don't worry, all we need to do is grab 3 coins from it! Let's get to it!” Anna demanded in confidence.

At the edge of the village, there was a golden gate that needed to be entered before getting into the cursed well. Only witches and warlocks can enter.

As they approached the golden gate, the book in Anna's hand started to open on its own, there was a secret pocket in the middle of the book with a glowing key! This was the key to open the gate! Anna needed to place her ring in one of the sutures in the gate, along with a keyhole.

With the click of sound, the gate opened up into the cursed well!

Fairies, and spirits surrounded the premises of the well.

"Careful not to hurt yourself hehe" 3 of the fairies said at the same time.

"Okay keep a clear head Anna, go grab those coins, there is a curse on this well, it feeds on your emotions, don't let it control you!"

"I will try my best..." Anna nervously replied.

Avoiding the whispers, negative things and twisted events from her past were trying to be drilled into Anna's head.

"Alyx I can't do this, these whispers are getting to me!"

"Anna, keep your head high you can do this! The well feeds on emotions and regrets, don't let it get to you, or your powers will become out of control! Don't you want to go home and see your little sister, your mom, and your friends? Do this in revenge for your father's death, and grandfather's passing!"

"I can do this! You will not get to me, you cursed well!" Anna successfully bypassed the curse and grabbed the 3 coins to continue her journey home!

"Now we have to *gulp* enter the f-forest of l-lost souls!" Alyx shook his voice in fear.

"Trust me Alyx I am nervous myself, just the sound of that scares me!"

Chapter V: Wretched Souls That Linger

Exiting Azura village, a boat is needed to cross through the Evergreen Swamp, from there on out, is the Forest of Lost Souls and Fate!

Rowing along the swamp, Anna and Alyx stumble upon a crossway stream. 4 signs are located in the middle of the crossway, on a rock laid these signs:

North: The Labyrinth Jungle, South: Azura Village, West: Forest of Lost Souls and Fate, East: Troll Cavern.

"Guess we need to row to the left...although the Labyrinth jungle seems interesting?" Alyx tried to suggest to Anna.

"Let's not get distracted Alyx, I know the jungle seems fun, but once we gather all the ingredients, the sooner I can kill the Hell lord and go home."

"Fineeee I suppose we can go through the forest..." Alyx complained to Anna.

About 2 miles west, a thick fog surrounded the area, this brought flashbacks of Anna driving on Jacksonville road. Reminding her of the creature standing in the road she asks Alyx about it,

"Alyx do you happen to know of a creature that is human but with wings of gold?"

"Ahh you mean Felix the Golden Phoenix? Nah not possible we haven't seen him in decades!"

"Wait! You mean THE phoenix? The one who created this ring?" Anna excitedly pronounced.

"Well not exactly haha his father was pure phoenix and his mother was human. He was the one who created this ring."

"Wow that is incredible! Isn't it true that phoenixes live for centuries, and sometimes millennia?"

"Yes it is! Felix is said to be 200 years old! However he doesn't live as long as purebred phoenixes like his father, that is the unfortunate thing about being half human." Alyx explained.

I can't believe I actually saw this creature, he must have brought me here!

“Is it possible that Felix was the one who brought me here?” Anna asked Alyx

“Yes it is certainly positive he did! He is the only power in this realm who can bring people back and forth from the mainland with no problem!”

“Thank goodness he saved me from the HellBreakers! I must find him again so I can thank him!”

Anna determinedly exclaimed.

“Well...we will be stopping at his kingdom located on top of Phoenix Mountain to grab that feather you need. Mine as well thank him then? It is a hefty journey to the top of course! Spells need to be casted in order to get to the top, with twists and traps along the way!”

Entering the fog, the swamp route ended.

“I suppose we can get off here and walk the rest of the way, it seems like the route has ended.”

Anna suggested.

Tall but dead trees sprouted high above the ground. Faces of screaming souls implanted as an impression within the bark.

“Just those trees...they give me a quiver...” Alyx said with a lump in his throat.

“Wait, is that my grandfather? He died while he was ziplining!” As Anna started to walk towards a tree with a familiar face.

“Yes...souls that are lost, they are imprinted on these trees, hundreds of lost souls reside on these trees as a reminder of the pain they endured. Here is my mother.” Alyx points to the face of a woman.

“Oh my! What happened to her?”

“She passed away of cancer when I was just 7...” As Alyx started to choke on his tears.

"No child should have to go through that oh goodness! I am so sorry you experienced such a thing!!" Anna hugged Alyx to calm him down.

Hugging each other, The full moon lit up the night sky while a pathway of fireflies lit up the trails.

"Wow this is so gorgeous! I thought this forest would be much creepier haha!" Anna exclaimed in joy.

"I agree it is, Alyx turned to Anna with a smirk on his face."

"What's that smirk about?" She questioned.

"Oh nothing...it's just that-" Alyx's face started to turn red.

"What is it!" Anna abruptly interrupted.

"You are stunning...you are just so beautiful...I think I like you" He pushed Anna's hair behind her ear and leaned in for a kiss. Before their lips touched, voices from the distance interrupted.

"Oh no the HellBreakers found me!" Anna ripped away from Alyx, running as fast as her legs carried her.

"W-wait for me!" Alyx ran to catch up to Anna, panting for air the whole time.

"Oh no they are close!" Anna started to panic with fear.

Torches in the distance lit up the darkest parts of the forest from the hands of the assassins.

"Anna we know you are here somewhere! Think you can escape me? Ha I think not!" One of the men screamed into the direction of them.

Footsteps and shuffling of leaves intensified as the assassins got closer.

"Oh no they are picking up speed, what should we do? Should we hide or run?" Anna looked at Alyx while they stood in plain sight.

"We need to hide!" Alyx demanded.

Looking for potential objects to hide in, they spot an abandoned treehouse pinned between 2 trees.

“Over here!” Anna pointed out.

Running into the treehouse, they closed the vined door behind them. This leaves a centimeter gap from the frame.

Listening like a hawk, the footsteps are right outside the treehouse, Anna ends panting and shaking of fear as she sees the lights in front of her..

“Here let me hold you.” Alyx wraps his arms around her while they are crouched in the caved treehouse.

“Ughh she isn't here boss” The man outside of the door explained to the leader.

“Well keep looking!” He snarled at the man.

“Boss but-”

“No buts or you will be fed to the trolls!”

“She isn't here!” He argued back.

The leader tackles the man into the treehouse which destroys half of a wall.

“Slowly move under this rubble, then run outside of that hole in the back of the treehouse” Alyx whispers to Anna.

“But what about you?” She says in concernment.

“I'll be okay. I need to distract them so you can run, I need you to run as fast as you can onto the firefly trail. Meet me at Excalibur Rock, it lights up in the moonlight's peek. I need to use my powers against them!” Alyx then grabs Anna by the cheeks and kisses her on the lips.

“W-wait! Let me help you!”

“Im sorry Anna, I need to protect you, I'll try my best” As Alyx runs into the open.

“Hey boys! Remember me!” He yells to the HellBreakers.

Anna quickly crawls to the hole located in the wall while she weeps in tears. She escapes then runs as fast as she can to Excalibur Rock.

In the distance, lights and spells are casted inside of the treehouse. She can hear Alyx,
“How does that feel, you bastard....ahh! Wait...wait, now that isn't fair of you, you are gonna regret this! Wait no dont kill me!”

Finally reaching Excalibur Rock, the moonlight beams on a sword stuck within it.

Wow...this place is so beautiful! I should try and get this sword I suppose?”

With an easy heave she is able to grab the sword out of the rock.

“Hm that wasn't so hard?” She says to herself.

“You...you are the next leader of Azura!” a male voice talks to her.

“Who said that? Don't make me use this sword on you? Or my powers?”

“Buttercup it is me!”

“D-dad!!” Anna is overwhelmed with joy!

“Yes it is me! Look up at the sky!”

Anna looks up at the sky and an angelic figure descends to her.

“You're an angel!”

“Yes my girl! Seek vengeance on my death. I'm sure you know the truth by now?”

“Yeah...Grafton told me...”

“Ah a good man indeed! I'm glad he told you! Your mother promised not to tell you until you were old enough to understand this realm, but I guess chaos happened earlier then she can tell you...haha!”

“Daddy...!” Anna started to cry and run towards him.

“I'm here darling!” The plasm from his spirit became solid matter, able to hug her tightly.

“I love you so much! You have no idea how much I have to tell you!” Anna wrapped around her dad tightly.

“I am here to grant you all the powers of this sword! I am giving you my wisdom and magic for you! All I know should be able to defeat the Hell Lord in no time! I love you too Buttercup!”

“This means so so much dad! Need me to tell mom or Stephen anything? He is now 13!”

“Wow he has grown up so much! But look at how beautiful you are now sweetheart! You remind me so much of your mother...” As he pushes her hair back and hugs her tighter. “I am afraid I need to go...the peak of the moon is almost down...”

“I wish I can see you forever dad...” Anna snuffles her stuffy nose from crying.

“Ik Buttercup...when you pass you can see me, but for now, know i’m in here” As he puts his palm on her collarbone where her heart is. “I love you my sweet girl! Take care of Stephen and your mother! I’ll be watching over you!”

Her father starts to ascend into the clouds, as the moon's peak descends from Excalibur Rock.

“I need to fight justice for my dad!” Anna yells while raising the Excalibur high above her head.

To be continued...