

The Year That Everyone Forgot

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August 19, 2019

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Chapter 1

The Trade

In the year that everyone forgot, two distinct villages were separated by a fast-flowing river that started high on a mountain in the North and slipped all the way down to the ocean in the South. The banks of the river were matted with brown slimy grass and moss and the water was moving so quickly, that the mist coming off it was a thick cloud hanging low on the ground.

In the eastern village lived a community of tree dwellers who called themselves Abers. These fast-climbing Abers avoided the slopes of the river by making huts connected by bridges and intricate rope work far above the ground. With a pipeline from the river supplying fresh water, they lived happily, feeding off the plentiful and aggressive birds called Bashtiks who also nested in the trees. While sharing an arboreal home with the Bashtiks, the Abers developed bark wardrobe, adorned with the colorful feathers of the Bashtik, to deal with the notorious ear-nipping nature of the birds.

Their lofty homes also served the purpose of protecting the Abers from the ground-dwelling Chiselgawks, who derived great pleasure from tunneling and snapping at the ankles of their unsuspecting victims. However, the

Chiselgawks could not climb, so the Abers felt safe.

In the western village lived a community of cave dwellers who called themselves the Dridori. The Bashtik birds often flew over the river and pestered the Dridori, so to escape the ear-biting birds, their ancestors decided to live in caves and tunnels, with beautiful maps painted on the walls and fresh water piped in from the river. Their subterranean lives often brought the Dridori into contact with the Chiselgawks until they found a certain rock that when crushed made a powder that deterred the Chiselgawks from coming close, giving the dridori a better chance to kill them for food and hides. The caves were damp, but wearing coats made from the always plentiful supply of furs, the Dridori were able to stay dry and warm.

And so, the Abers and the Dridori lived separate lives, until one day when the river ran so dry that both communities' pipes stopped supplying water. The Abers decided to send their fastest runner to the ground to check the pipeline while avoiding the Chiselgawks. At about the same time, the Dridori decided to do the same.

The two champions ventured out of their homes and for the first time, saw someone who looked different. Momentarily stupefied by the stranger, the Dridori girl froze. The Aber saw a Bashtik coming for her and tossed over his bark helmet, stopping its gnashing beak. Then the brave Dridori girl was able to swat the dopey bird away. A Chiselgawk came for the Aber champion, but the Dridori reached into a pouch and threw a handful of the rock dust and the beast passed just as soon as it got close to his ankles.

Both champions were amazed with what the other had brought but were wary of the stranger they had just met. Upon returning to their villages to report on the dry river, the champions also shared their stories of how

the mysterious people across the river were able to deal with the beasts that they so dreadfully feared.

In time, a passage was found on the mountain to cross the river and thus a trade route established. At first, the Bashtik feathers and tree bark that were so plentiful among the Abers were considered a valuable commodity to the Dridori while they had almost no value for the Abers who had an almost endless supply. Similarly, the Chiselgawk fur and repellent rocks were commonplace and ordinary in the Dridori community but were prized possessions among the Abers.

It remained like this for a short while: the richest of the communities were able to afford the nicest and most valuable things from across the river. Soon, however, the less wealthy citizens of both communities, who were paid by the rich to facilitate the trade, saved enough money to afford the merchandise they were carrying, and so it was no longer a status symbol to adorn themselves with the prizes of the beasts and land on the far side of the river.

With the separation of class closing, some decided to explore the other side. In time, the Abers and Dridori started living together and with their new protection from all the beasts in the land were able to finally live on the surface once again.

Having the necessary protection, the new Dridori-Aber house holds became accustomed to eating both of the beasts of the land. Because the Chiselgawks no longer had a safe home on the eastern side of the river, their population started to decrease. Similarly, the Bashtik birds that were able to escape the Abers by flying to the western side of the river no longer could, so their population started to decrease as well.

Since the Aber diet had consisted of only Bashtik birds, they immediately became ill when starting to eat

the Chiselgawk meat. Unbeknownst to the Abers, the water coming through the rock pipes on the western side of the river picked up a mineral necessary to neutralize a toxin in the Chiselgawk meat. The Dridori diet had consisted of only Chiselgawk, so the cave-natives started to get sick when eating the Bashtik, since the water coming through the wooden pipes on the eastern side of the river absorbed a sap that made the meat non-poisonous.

This development led to the families living on the Western (and formerly Dridori side) to go back underground to be close to the mineral water they needed to survive. The families on the Eastern (and formerly Aber side) resumed a life in the trees, so they could get the water from the sap lined pipes that were built and would make their food safe.

Once the people were once again separated and off the ground, the Chiselgawks and the Bashtik populations were no longer in danger, for the westerners no longer hunted the Bashtiks and the Easterners no longer hunted the Chiselgawks.

The once valuable relics of the other side faded away with lack of use and soon, the trade route overgrew and the river began flowing harder once again.

Chapter 2

The Potato

As the sun set on another day in the East fields of the kingdom, the potato farmer grunted as he inspected his plantings for the day. All eyes must be pushed into the earth by hand, and the work was tough. He knew that if he failed to meet his quota, he and his family would become the king's playthings, limp at the neck and strung up in his Majesty's theatre to be controlled by skilled puppeteers every Thursday. The past few months had been especially difficult, with his wife on bed rest due to another pregnancy.

He heard the shriek of his youngest daughter from his cottage south of the field. He scooped up his rake and trowel and rushed to the door where he could see her shaking. She cried out to her mother.

The farmer pushed her aside as he ran into the cramped kitchen where his wife was collapsed, blood running down her legs making a pool on the hard dirt floor. Firmly, the farmer commanded his daughters to their room.

He put his face close to his wife's, but she was not breathing. He closed her eyes, forced open with terror and pain and slumped onto the floor with frustration. He quickly realized what he had to do and pulled the

gardening shears from the pouch around his waist and sliced her open and pulled the crying twins out.

Obviously inexperienced, he slipped and accidentally slashed one of the baby's necks. He cut the cords and wept silently to himself as he held the two babies, one dead and one whose cries pierced the night.

The funeral was a simple affair, no money for elegance. A crude grave was dug by the flower garden that the farmer's wife used to tend before they were married. She was laid in the ground holding her dead child as the farmer shoveled dry dirt to cover her. Few people from the kingdom attended. The farm was far from the center of people's lives, and most weren't interested in consoling the grieving farmer. Those who did come were the rejects of the same society: the drunks and cripples who barely made it, a gypsy who was unable to bear children, and a man whose arms were taken by the king for saying that he could lift anything put in front of him.

The days got longer and longer. Without the help from his wife, he found himself going back to the field after he put the children to bed. The earth had been dry ever since his wife's passing, and the drought hadn't been kind to his crop.

He only slept a couple of hours each night, tending to the baby and working on the farm. Days blended into nights in an endless blur of labor. Nightmares and showed him visions of an axe. Slaughtering his children and killing himself seemed to be the only way to save them from an eternal life of humiliation for the king's sick pleasure.

One night as the farmer was putting the girls to bed he answered a knocking at the door to find one of the King's high inquisitors for an unexpected visit. When asked about the expected yield, the farmer shook his head and told how his crops were weak. The inquisi-

tor wrote something down on his manifest. He warned the farmer that with numbers this low, he could arrest him at once but heard the news of the farm wife's passing and scratched out what he had written.

"If your numbers aren't up by the end of the year, come harvesting season, the king will have your neck!"

The door wasn't so much as closed before he heard another knocking. The farmer thought the inquisitor must have changed his mind about letting him go. He opened the door, knowing it was worse to cause a struggle. What he saw was not the man but instead a gypsy covered in shawls and beaded talismans. Most people would have been afraid, but the farmer was hardened with age and work, and he seemed to recognize the old woman.

"You were at my wife and child's funeral. I don't even know you."

The gypsy spoke few words but made her message clear: she had nowhere to sleep, in the growing cold of the night. Remembering that her attendance was comforting in his time of grief, the farmer granted her room and board. He couldn't give her much, but what he did have he shared.

In the middle of that night, the farmer woke up to chanting. He walked around his sleeping girls and down to the storeroom where he had laid a pallet for his guest. He peered through the door and saw her kneeling on the ground, in her hands a shimmering glow and from her mouth, words he couldn't understand.

"Come in," she muttered. The light went out, but the moon shining through the window cast long shadows across her face.

To repay the farmer's kindness the gypsy granted him a favor. She decides to give him the answer to his farm troubles. She explained how to grow a giant potato that will be so appealing that the king will demand it. As soon

as it touches his evil lips he will fall dead. But she warns that this feat comes with a price, but he quickly accepts with a dismissive wave, so she began her instruction:

“Tomorrow night you must dig up your wife’s grave. Take the baby from her arms and cut out its heart. Plant it in the field and for the following two nights you must eat one of your wife’s eyes as you sing to the planted heart. You must leave the grave open and cut out the eyes fresh every night.”

The farmer was shocked but had no choice. He was desperate and other than killing himself and his family, there was no way to save them from disgrace. The gypsy wanted to stay and there was nothing the farmer could do to politely ask her to leave; he was worried that if he did, she would take back her magic.

The next night when his kids were asleep, the farmer went out with a shovel and a small knife. He dug up the body and looked at her sunken skin and the slimy carcass of his baby. He asked for forgiveness before taking the knife and slicing into the baby’s clammy flesh. He picked out the tiny heart and as soon as it touched his skin it started beating. He rushed to the field and pushed it into the soil, lightly covering it with dirt.

The tiny organ was slowly pushing dirt off itself. He pushed it deeper and covered it more heavily. The farmer placed his hand on the mound as he began singing the words the gypsy taught him, patting the earth with a bowed head and a swaying body.

*Ține-ți ochii în pământ
și inima în mâini.*

The next night the farmer went back to the grave. The smell of a rotting corpse spread over his farm. He tore out an eye from his wife and headed back to the

heart. He swallowed the eye. He could feel the heart beating in the ground with his hands as he patted it and sang the chant.

The next day he saw people in carriages in the distance turn their heads to the smell as they passed. The third night he could feel the heart beating under his feet as he walked out of his cottage and over to the grave. Pulling one more eye from his wife's head, he walked back toward the heart, thumping in the ground. With every step he took, the thumping got louder and the ground began to shake more violently under him. He got to the center of the noise, forced the eye down, and patted the ground as he started the chant.

The gypsy, watching from the window, led the sleepy girls out of the cottage while holding the baby. They walked to a clearing where the farm met a patch of woods. The older daughter rubbed her eyes sleepily, confused by the noise and vibration.

As the farmer sang the last words of the chant, the giant potato erupted out of the ground, throwing dirt far across the field. As it rose into the air, the farmer was shocked at its amazing size. Distant passersby saw the potato fly into the air and land, crushing the cottage, the field, the farmer, the grave, and the flower garden that the wife used to tend. No one saw as the Gypsy smiled and turned her back to the field, leading the girls into the woods.

Chapter 3

The Call of the Bells

Chara was grateful that after she tucked her son in at night she was able to walk quietly to her room across the hall (she'd memorized the spots of the floor she could step on so as not to make it creak), lie down on her bed, and peer through a slice of overlapped doorway to see him quietly dreaming. She was happy that in the morning she could wake up in a house in the hidden town of Clocher. Even though the house was furthest from the center of town and the only one she could afford after her husband left her, the shabby residence was a place where Chara and Henry knew that they could enjoy their peaceful lives with undying hope and optimism.

Clocher was famous for its bell tower. It loomed over the east end of the small town and was impressively massive. It was the first thing the sun touched in the morning and if you could manage to see it at the right angle and at just the right time, you could see the yellow glow creeping around the back of the tower, getting bigger at the base until the light was so intense that the tower almost looked like it was floating on the sun. If you looked at it from the right angle, that is.

Henry was still at the age where everything, includ-

ing his morning routine, was an adventure. He couldn't wait to be woken by the distant sounds of the bells ringing in the tower. Henry would wake up and go to his mom's room. She would take Henry up to the roof, carefully holding his hand, and sit, watching the sun make the tower float and feel the warm rays wash over them, providing them with energy for the day. If they sat still, cushioned by the thatched and mossy roof, the sound from the bells would make them vibrate. The music would ring loud and far. Henry would wait for the notes to clash together as hard and fierce as the bells against the clappers, and then sound **as if everything were falling back into place**, just right.

Henry would then wash up, kiss his mother goodbye and run down the twisty road. Under the hazy impression of independence, he didn't realize, day after day, Arlo Norman always sitting on his porch at the end of his street, nodding his head to him as Henry passed by quickly. Norman would then strain to stand and hold onto the railing of the porch as he made his way back inside, where he would spend the rest of his day.

Henry increased his speed as he drew closer to the center of town. Now he could see what he could not from his house: the large bells glinting sunlight through the holes of the carefully carved wooden framework. Henry admired the intricate wood work that must have been crafted deftly with experienced hands, but he didn't know how the workman got do high off the ground in the first place. The boards had patterns that came and went as Henry walked by the tower, changing his view. From one angle, Henry could have sworn it looked just like the doily that his mother laid out under the tray of sweet scones she made on Sunday mornings.

Every day, he heard the music playing and was entranced with the soulful melody. He thought to himself

that he might be good at making the music. He sometimes had a tune stuck in his head that he could not place, so he came to the conclusion that he had made it up himself. Anyway, even if he couldn't think of something, he could take parts of different songs and put them together to make something new. People probably wouldn't notice. He never told anyone, but he hoped, one day, that he could be the one to ring the bells in the morning.

Closer to town, he came across Mrs. Motts who had once scolded him for running on the cobbled stones **for danger of slipping**. He remembered not to run by playing a game with himself, counting stones and singing different notes as he landed perfectly in the center of certain stones. As he slowed down to pass her house, he thought it peculiar that she never reprimanded any other children.

The thought slipped his mind as he got close enough to the center of town and the air filled with the alluring aroma of fresh baked bread. Bartolo would always greet Henry in the morning, pulling him close by the hand, and slipping him a small jam Danish or pastry, and winking as he shook his hand, sending him toward the school building just a short ways away. Henry felt slightly guilty for taking food from Bartolo without paying. He knew the treat was a gift from Bartolo but enjoyed the slightly illicit feel of it. He started away from the small shop **darting his head over his shoulders**, smiling. As with his other thoughts, these were gone from his head as soon as he could no longer see **what was occupying him**.

As he ran the last stretch to the school, he got closer and closer to the bell tower. How interesting it would be, he thought, if, in the morning, he were running to the bell tower instead of school. It was past the school so he could, only he would have to stop part way, at the school. **So that's what he did**. Every morning he would focus on the tower in the distance and run toward it, with the

intent of actually getting there, but the school building always hit him before he wanted it to, and he had to go inside. One day he missed the school and accidentally ran right past the door and kept on going until Mr. Josephs stopped him and turned him in the right direction.

Licking the last bit of jam off his hand and attempting to clean the rest on his shorts, he made it to the steps of the schoolhouse. He wiped his shoes, just like he was told to do, and walked inside. The next few hours of the day were almost unbearable. The seats in the house all faced southwest so it was hard to sneak a glance outside the window without Mr. Josephs snapping his ruler onto the table, forcing him back to reality. Every morning the schoolmaster would have fun walking slowly down the aisle, **alternating sides** as he whacked his ruler on his students' ankles like an angry firsthand on a pirate ship. He would approach Henry, hesitate, mutter angrily to himself as he skipped him, and hit the next kid even harder. Try as the other kids might, they were never able to figure out how Henry was able to escape the teacher's fury. Even Henry didn't know.

Henry wanted to ring the bells in the tower but was too afraid to ask and be told that it was impossible. As long as he was never told no, it could always be a possibility. Finally, one day, he decided that Bartolo, who grew up in this town and would take him seriously, was the one to ask. When the clock struck 12:00 and the bells in the tower played their second song of the day, Henry jumped out of his seat and darted out the door for his 30-minute lunch. He skipped back down the steps and headed toward Bartolo to ask him a question. Even though he always felt a sense of awkwardness when talking to Bartolo, he was confident he could ask him a question that many adults would scoff at.

Henry finally made it to the shop and waited until

he could see Bartolo in the room behind the counter and called out to him. He smiled as he wiped his hands free of flour and walked around to the storefront. Henry took a deep breath and blurted out that he wanted to ring the bells in the tower, not just once; he wanted to ring them every day. The baker looked confused for a second and then started to chuckle and laugh louder and louder. Other customers were looking his way with confused looks. Feeling betrayed, Henry tucked his head into his shoulders and turned to leave. Bartolo held him back and slowly stopped laughing. ~~He could see that he had upset the boy and wanted to explain.~~ Bartolo invited Henry to sit, and after giving him a fresh scone to nibble on, he began.

He told Henry that about 20 years ago, a rich family had moved to Clocher with a habitual troublemaker named Brazen for their the youngest son. He would take candies from the town shop and break all of his teacher's chalk. The family did nothing to apologize, and the behavior got worse. He started to free horses from their ties on the street and light small firecrackers to scare them. As he grew to adolescence, he relied on his family's money to support him.

At this, Bartolo looked cautiously around and leaned a little closer before he continued. He explained that Brazen's life took a turn for the worse. A dispute that Bartolo didn't know much about at the time, led to a fight. Filled with confusion, Brazen had picked up a shovel and struck someone so hard on the side of the head that he was hospitalized and died a few days later. It turns out, that the fight was all because Paulo, the deceased, had nodded to Brazen from across the street. He must have been itching to pick a fight with someone that day.

Henry wanted to say something, but Bartolo contin-

ued, getting carried away the further into the story he went. He then told about the trial. The town had never had a problem like this and so no punishment existed for such a crime because the crime itself did not exist. The mayor decided that the family would be fined and the money would be used to improve the town. He ordered that the bell tower be built and Brazen be locked away in the belfry—a life sentence as opposed to a conventional death sentence. Brazen would need to fight for his life. Meanwhile, up in the clock tower alone, he was not given any sustenance. Starving, Brazen learned that he needed to trap his own food. He carved holes in the walls of the tower and played music on the bells to entice birds to fly into the belfry. When one flew in, it couldn't then fly out. It was trapped just like Brazen.

The story made Henry uncomfortable. His face betrayed his relief when he noticed that the large hand of the clock pointed to 20, giving him a reason to leave the bakery, forcing Bartolo to cut the story off **before Bartolo could protest**. He made his way back to the school and found his seat. The rest of the day he focused on the lesson of pronunciation of vowels. When the school day ended, he snaked back to his house the same way he had come in the morning. He walked somberly into his room and began his homework. When Chara came home later that night, he wasn't hungry for dinner so she tucked him in.

The next morning the bells woke Chara as she stretched **from her position** in bed. She looked around, confused. Her son had always greeted her in the morning, but not today. She slid into her slippers and lifted herself off the bed. She walked over to the window, waiting for Henry to burst in the door. She mused about her extra work with a secret smile: taking in the Normans' laundry, baking Mrs. Motts a pie each week for her book club, cleaning

the schoolhouse and letting Mr. Josephs escape early to the pub, and paying Bartolo at the local bakery every month for the morning pastries. She turned to look back at her door, still closed, hoping that Henry had just slept through the bells.

Chapter 4

The Man on the Barstool

The Champignon was a tired restaurant that looked as though its builders squeezed it to fit in between the two previously standing buildings on either side. Narrow and tall, The Champignon attracted couples from all over the area. The floors of the restaurant were so small that only one table could be fit on each one. One sitting at a table could look out the one window on the adjacent wall and see the ocean, stretch out for miles into the distance. The window was peephole that cut out all ambient noise from the busy street below.

Being so narrow on the way up, to have enough space to accommodate its plentiful customers, The Champignon had many personal floors, all with the same view out to the steady deep. This made the building very tall. The buildings left and right were low enough that at the top, was situated the most awe inspiring piece of architecture many locals had ever scene. Here, a long and wide floor hovered above the surrounding buildings, almost precariously balanced at one point in the center.

While the other floors were private seating for couples,

the top floor seated many more, all round a semi-circular bar in the middle, with giant panes of glass as walls behind customers and tilted mirrors at the center of the bar, providing a reflective view of the water behind them. Over time, the mirrors began to grow salt crystals, blown by the powerful winds high above the ocean, through imperfections around the glass. Like many things that can't be changed, the owners of the Champignon decided to embrace the uniqueness.

 All meals were served on
 salty drink sea?
 man always orders drink but never drinks it
 tells bartender story—younger boy
 at the end find out he made it up
 lonely
 man tries to get the young bartender to get a different
job

Chapter 5

The Stubborn Tree

The sound the pinecones made when they rustled up against each other and the smell of the sap oozing from the trees that somehow always made its way onto her hands and into her hair was one of the only things Laura remembered from her annual childhood visits to her grandparents' cabin during the early summer. Even though she always pretended not to want to go in front of her friends and parents, as soon as she got to the entrance to the woods road in the backseat of Nan and Pop's car, she could not help but let a smile of relaxing happiness sneak its way across her face. The stuffed panda that was not cool at home, somehow made it in to the car and she finally felt comfortable enough to take it out of the obscure compartment in her suitcase and pulled it to sit on her lap.

Pop turned around, as he always did, and looked her right in the eye as they momentarily stopped at the dark entrance. He asked in the tone that only a grandfather could have if she was ready to ascend the mountain, hopping over countless potholes, dodging trees, and venturing deeper and deeper into the widely un-touched wilderness. This moment was the bridge from out to in, and Pop's

little ritual made Laura understand that she should be treated like an equal member of the party, as long as she behaved maturely and made good decisions. The deep respect that Laura had for her grandparents only added to their persuasive demeanors, and without hesitation, she nodded silently, letting the smile come out as a full-fledged ear-to-ear grin. Laura had never met two people in her entire life who were so caring, fierce, funny, thoughtful, and warm.

This is what Laura thought about as she sat in her car at the same entrance with her coffee in one hand and the other on the wheel. Her eyes were red. She looked to the backseat and saw nothing. She nodded as she let a small inhaled chuckle escape and pulled out the tissue that she had purposefully kept so accessible, dabbed her eyes as she shifted the car back into drive and ventured up the hill.

The cabin was not as captivating as Laura remembered. The childhood wonder was replaced with wind-blown dirt and chipped paint and the patch of darker grass that pop had used to park was much higher, so Laura had to carefully drudge her used Camry into the waist high grass.

Chapter 6

The Roglean Castle

The Roglean castle was carved into the base of the sharp Blackrock mountains. The harsh appearance of the cold and jagged exterior contrasted the warm glow of the carpeted and candle-lit interior that leaked out through long slivers of window to the cold, wind torn landscape. Inside, lived a humble king and queen, the latest in a long lineage of cheerful rulers whose kind demeanors made the otherwise drab kingdom a place of happiness.

When the king was finally able to announce that after months of failed attempts, the queen was expecting a baby, the kingdom lit up for days. The day Prince Agassi was born, the kingdom began celebrating. The festivities ended only a few weeks later when the new prince fell gravely ill. The masses were filled with fearful hope while the light in the baby's eyes was slowly fading. Agassi was seen as such a miracle that the thought of losing him was devastating.

- [] Agassi stabilizes but is bed ridden and is taken care of by the advisor.

- [] At the direction from the king's advisor, the monarchs had another child, Bulldro, just in case

- [] Agassi starts to get worse

- [] The advisor tells the king and Queen to seek help from the wind spirits higher on the mountain

- [] King and queen Find the steamy lake high in the mountain

- [] The wind spirits take the child into their care to heal him

- [] The king and queen die in an avalanche on the way down the mountain

- [] The advisor shuts down the kingdom when he sees the avalanche come down and partially cover the castle

- [] It takes months before the snow is melted by hand and the castle is uncovered

- [] The advisor notices that Bulldro is not like his father. He is cruel and impulsive, difficult to control, so he restricts all communication until Bulldro is old enough to take the throne and doesn't tell him about his brother and says that the snow people killed his parents.

- [] The advisor realizes that this is the opportune moment to take more power. He gets a mountain goat. He stays hidden from the public and lies to Bulldro and tells him that he can communicate with the magic goat, who can tell the future, and so is the best source of advice. - [] By the time Bulldro is old enough for the throne, he believes the advisor's ruse so while bulldro is in charge, he does whatever the advisor says "the goat says" to do. - [] Bulldro becomes more and more militant and builds up the army more and more. - [] Afraid that the wind spirits threaten his secret power (being that they still have the first son, the rightful ruler, who knows the truth about the advisor), he says that the goat saw that the wind spirits are building an army to destroy the king so he must kill them first. - [] Bulldro ammasses an army by destroying the surrounding kingdoms, who have up until now been allies, not expecting an attack. He has mounted soldiers on horses with falcons on each

shoulder. - [] They find the lake and try to kill the spirits but they turn into tall pine trees. - [] The last with to turn is a little girl. Her tree has a falcon in a hole and it blends in with the rest as they fly back to the king. - [] That night, the falcon (the girl spirit) kills the goat and transfigures herself to replace it. - [] The next morning at the meeting with the advisor, the goat talks and tells the king directly that the advisor is lying to him. - [] The king seized the advisor. - [] The goat (spirit) tests the king. She says that she is growing in power and that by midnight she will be so powerful that she will be able to transform into anything, go anywhere, control anything, and see everything, but she needs that night to rest. - [] That night the goat takes the first goat (now dead) and lays her down in her bed, covered with a blanket. - [] The king failed the test— he “kills” the goat out of fear. When he does, the live goat turns back into a spirit and confronts the king. She tells him that he failed and turns into snow, whirling around him carrying him all the way back to the lake, where he is left in the center while the snow flies around the trees, turning them back into the wind spirits. - [] The spirits intend for Bulldro to drown. - [] They all crowd around and from within emerges the oldest brother, now stronger and filled with magic. - [] He walks out to his brother, who is struggling to stay afloat in the water that looks like it is hot but is deathly cold. He offers his hand out to his brother and he takes it, lifting him up to stand on the now-solidifying ice. Agassi looks at his brother and takes away the pain of his past: the effects of isolation and misinformation melt away. - [] The two brothers go back to the kingdom, rule together, and restore the warm glow that the roglean castle deserves.