

SARYON MICHAEL WHITE



ROYA SANDS
AND THE
BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS

BOOK 1

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Roya Sands and the Bridge Between Worlds

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Excerpt of Roya Sands and the Bridge Between Worlds

For years, the library had been her temple. Reaching the stairs, she greeted the two marble lions that guarded the entrance. She had named them Faith and Courage, and she looked at each of them as she walked by. She liked to imagine that they would have bowed to her as she entered, if they had been real. To her, they were the guardians of knowledge.

As she entered the foyer, she walked to the right to examine the message between the two trees near the entrance to the South Reading Room. The words, written in all capital letters, read:

TONGUES IN TREES BOOKS IN THE
RUNNING BROOKS SERMONS IN STONES
AND GOOD IN EVERYTHING

For a moment, she gazed at the letters, playing with the words in her mind, but nothing leaped out at her. She did, however, notice an odd parallel between this message and her thoughts about the apple tree whispering messages to Sir Isaac Newton. She was having that feeling again, that something was on the edge of her awareness, but she could not quite pinpoint it. She then pulled out her phone and snapped a picture of the quote before walking over to see the message between the two trees on the adjacent wall. Just at the entrance to the North Reading Room, the other quote read:

A LITTLE LEARNING IS
A DANGEROUS THING DRINK DEEP OR
TASTE NOT THE PIERIAN SPRING

Again, Roya played with the words and letters in her mind, but nothing was obvious. She then texted the pictures to Ami and started to explain what she was up to. At some point, she realized that she was stalling and that the same nervousness about seeing Claire was still swirling around inside her. It occurred to her that she would only be having this feeling if Claire were in the building somewhere, and that this was an intuitive feeling. She knew she would have time to explore the quotes later.

She walked around the corner to the main circulation desk, but Claire was nowhere to be seen, so she decided to head downstairs to the main collection. Walking through the middle of the room, she looked up and down each aisle on either side as she went. Then, toward the back of the room, she saw Claire with a book cart, placing returned books back on the shelves. For a moment, she backed up out of sight, feeling a wave of nervous energy about meeting her. She had hoped to get a better look at Claire without being noticed, but that did not seem possible now.

All she could see was that Claire was wearing a white, button-up, collared shirt with sleeves that came down to the elbows. She appeared to be wearing dress pants, but it was hard to see with the cart in front of her.

Roya made a funny face to herself to break up her own tension, took a deep breath, and walked into the aisle until she was standing directly in front of Claire, who stood only slightly taller than her. Claire's eyes opened wide with recognition as she turned to face Roya, and Roya instantly felt welcomed.

"Hi, I'm Roya. Do you remember me from last Sunday? I checked out a little violet book with golden letters."

Roya was certain from the first glance that Claire *did* remember her, but she felt more comfortable opening the dialogue the way she had rehearsed it in her mind.

"Yes, it's a pleasure to meet you. I'm Claire," she said, offering Roya her hand.

Roya immediately noticed a gentleness to the way Claire held her hand without shaking it, really taking the opportunity to acknowledge her presence. She even felt a little zing of energy up the back of her spine that seemed like a kind of energetic *hello*.

"I was wondering, what do you know about that book?" Roya asked.

"I thought you might be back to ask me," she said as she continued to casually put books away. "I'm glad you came. I was given very specific instructions about you."

"Instructions?" Roya was surprised and immediately began to wonder what she was talking about. "What sort of instructions, and who gave them to you?"

"I'm not at liberty to say, but I *can* answer some of your questions." Roya was all ears. "The author of the book wanted you to have it. As you might have guessed, it was made just for you, to help you on your journey."

"What journey?" Roya inquired as her curiosity continued to grow.

Claire stopped putting books away, smiled warmly, and gazed at her silently for a few seconds, as if answering first with her eyes.

"The one you have always wanted to go on," she said in a soft voice.

These words were spoken directly from Claire's heart, and she appeared to have thought about her response carefully, as if she knew that Roya was going to remember these words for the rest of her life.

Roya became lost for a moment, feeling the impact of Claire's last sentence. It felt like she was still drinking in the words through Claire's big, bright eyes. It was not just a librarian speaking to her, but a vast soul presence that filled Roya's inner senses. Staring into her eyes, it was like the opportunity she had been waiting for had arrived...the beginning of a journey. This was it. It was like a switch had been flipped on, and she knew that Claire was to be a part of that journey. This was the moment when Roya began to accept that her life was being guided by something greater than herself.

"If that book was meant for me, then how did it end up here?" Roya asked.

"I brought it here—or rather, it brought me," Claire replied with an enigmatic smile. "The book must have known there was a volunteer position open, just like it knew you would be here. It said, *Flower Memorial Library, Watertown, New York* inside the front cover. I started a couple of weeks ago and slipped the book onto a shelf."

"But what if someone else had taken it? Someone it wasn't meant for," asked Roya.

"We didn't think that would be a problem. I'm not even sure most people can see it," she said a little quieter with another smile. "Besides, we suspected that the book would choose its reader, just like it chose me to come here."

"Umm, I hope you don't mind me asking, but who is *we*?" Roya was polite, but the answers could not come quickly enough.

"The community I came from," Claire answered, while considering how best to explain further. Roya sensed that there was something more that Claire was not ready to share quite yet.

"And, where are they? I mean, where are *you* from?"

"Well, we are not from the future," Claire said, obviously avoiding a more direct answer, "but the book certainly is. I'm sure you've noticed its lightness."

"Does that mean everything is lighter in the future?" *Now we are getting somewhere*, Roya thought, absolutely intrigued.

"Yes. In fact, this book was originally even lighter, but mass had to be added to it to entangle the book with our present time reference."

Something about this idea made sense, even though Roya had never thought in such terms before, and Claire said this so matter-of-factly that it just sounded real. She thought about getting out her notebook, not just to write down Claire's answers, but also to write down all of her new questions. There were so many of them, she hardly knew where to go next.

"So how did the book come to you?" asked Roya.

"It just appeared."

"It just appeared? Like out of nowhere?" Roya was astonished. Her imagination was stretched, but not challenged. "Is that sort of thing unusual for you?"

"This whole chain of events is *highly* unusual. Perhaps you could tell me about your experience with the book," invited Claire.

Roya then proceeded to tell the whole story, from finding the book, to winning the contest, to sharing the book with Ami and Mandy.

"So, there are *three* of you," Claire said suddenly with a look of surprise. She seemed to have deduced something from the story that gave her an epiphany.

"What do you mean?" asked Roya.

"I am not exactly sure what this means but let me ask you something. What do you think about the state of the world?"

Roya thought about it for a moment. It was a simple question, but she wanted to honor the depth of Claire's mind with some depth of her own. She could tell that Claire was patient enough to allow her time to think about it more deeply before answering. Something about Claire's presence helped Roya's thoughts become more focused. Even as she was looking away and considering her answer, she could feel Claire's eyes, as if they were radiating warmth, and she wondered if Claire could sense all of the memories and ideas that were rolling together into a single description in her mind. Finally, even though her sentences were not yet fully formed, she began to describe her perception.

"There's something very wrong with the way things are—with the world, I mean. I feel like we're inheriting a huge mess left behind by the older generations. And even though they know they're leaving this terrible burden for us, they aren't doing enough to try to change it. I think about it a lot—why it seems like so much power is in the wrong hands, and how so many people don't even care about the truth." She paused for a moment, grasping for something that was still on the edge of her awareness. "It's like...there's something hidden, but it's in plain sight. I feel like I'm seeing something everywhere I look: in people's faces, in the media, but it's... elusive."

"What's elusive?" probed Claire.

"Whatever it is that keeps interfering with all of us coming together. It's like most people are living in some kind of illusion, and they don't want to see past it, to see how we're all connected. We're being exploited, and yet, we're doing it to ourselves. People just seem so distracted by things that aren't important, even when they know our world is in danger. I know there's a better way, but it feels like time is running out for us to do something about it."

"You are very observant for your age. How old are you?"

"Sixteen. I'll be seventeen next February."

"So young. We expected you would be older. This is highly unusual, indeed."

"What does my age have to do with anything?" Roya questioned.

"A sixteen-year-old still has many restrictions—on the ability to travel, for instance. But other than that, you are young for what you are about to face. The whole world is going through a great change, and no one can escape it. It's affecting everything and everyone, but the final outcome of history has yet to be decided. There are many dangers, and every decision we make is important. That's why the appearance of the book gave us hope. It mentioned the possibility of a desired outcome for all involved, and as I see it, this is a matter of life and death." Claire paused so Roya could take this in.

"You still haven't told me where you are from." Roya reminded her.

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you."

"Try me," Roya said playfully, hoping to tempt some more information out of her.

"It's too soon." She paused. "It's not that I don't think you are capable of understanding, but I was given explicit instructions. I was told you would be able to find something that was hidden long ago, and that I could not reveal any more until you did."

"But how am I supposed to know what I am looking for, or where to look?"

"Here, come with me. Do you have something to write on?"

"Yes." Roya said, taking off her backpack where her notebook was stashed.

"Let's go up to the reading room so we can sit at a table."

It bothered Roya that some unknown person or group of people knew about her but wanted to remain anonymous. This might have seemed highly suspicious, but Claire's presence was so warm and reassuring that she decided to go along with the flow of things and not get too demanding for more information. More than anything, she trusted herself and was happy to have a private little adventure unfolding that gave her imagination more freedom to expand.

Just up the stairs and around the corner to the right was the North Reading Room, Roya's favorite sanctuary. It had a high ceiling and an old feel to it with all of the shelves of old books and antiques. Just below the antique clock that sat on the fireplace mantle was a large golden inscription with the words: Knowledge is Power. It was a statement that always reminded her that knowledge could be either creative or destructive.

Fortunately, the room was empty. Claire pulled out a chair for Roya at the table and sat down opposite her. Roya unzipped her backpack, retrieved her notebook and pencils, and looked across the table at Claire expectantly.

"What you need is a map that shows you the way to what's hidden."

"Where on Earth am I supposed to find that?" Roya said, humorously.

"You won't. You will have to create it yourself." Claire smiled.

"Create a map from nothing?"

"No, not from nothing. You can draw it from intuition." She made this seem like it was as easy and normal as taking a shower, but Roya was not as confident.

"How does that work?" she asked.

"Intuition is like a navigation system. It feeds you signals from a wider reality to help you enter the specific reality that your soul desires. Most people have just forgotten how to pay attention to these kinds of inner signals. And even those who *do* pay attention are often not in the habit of acting on the information."

"So, Mandy was really being intuitive when she made me the perfect dress."

"Yes. Her soul knew it was for you, but she acted on the intuitive signal, because she trusted a feeling that would take her into a desired reality. Intuition loves to bring you what your heart desires most. In her case, it was making you a gift that you would love. When you are willing to act spontaneously without needing to know why the guidance is right, your life can become more graceful and synchronistic."

"Spontaneity empowers intuition to guide you where you want to go, without the logical mind needing to be involved in every decision. The key is to let go of thinking linearly all the time. People so often think in straight lines, trying to get from point A to point B with no room for the creativity of the soul to dance with you on the path. When you are willing to follow the impulse of intuitive guidance, you will find surprises that you didn't expect as a reward for trusting in your inner senses."

"So where does the guidance come from?" Roya's mind was beginning to open even more.

"Part of it comes from you, that is, the version of you that is the happiest with how things worked out. The happiest version of your future self is always the guide for the part of you that is searching for direction," Claire explained.

"So that would mean that the future is communicating with the past," said Roya, remembering what the book had said about the light of the future.

"Exactly!"

"So how can this help me create a map?"

“Well, you already know you are meant to find something. Let’s assume there is a version of your future where you have already found it. Then, ask that version of you to send you the map, complete with all the information you need to enter that reality.”

“You can do that?”

“Naturally. The soul is much vaster than the incarnated personality. We are multidimensional beings. A part of the soul exists beyond the world of time and physicality as you know it, and so that greater part of you is capable of passing you information from the future in exactly this way. If you can believe that the book came from the future, this shouldn’t be a stretch for you.”

Claire was right. Roya’s experience with the book had prepared her well to digest this kind of information, but that did not make her feel any more capable of the task at hand.

“I have a problem, though. I’m not good at drawing—not like my friend Mandy,” said Roya. “She’s really gifted.”

“Perfect. You can borrow her abilities.”

“What? How do I do that?” asked Roya. Clearly Claire’s knowledge of reality was very different than her own, but nothing she said seemed impossible, just beyond what she was currently aware of.

“I’ll help you. Just focus on the piece of paper in front of you, let go of all of your thoughts, and pretend that you are Mandy. The part of her soul that is beyond time wants to help you, just like she would if she were physically here, so we will just call in her presence and invite her to participate,” Claire encouraged.

“But, will Mandy know—I mean, the part of her that’s in the body?”

“She might have some awareness of the connection, but the personality doesn’t have to be fully aware for the greater self to be involved. Just trust that she wants to help you because she’s your friend, and I will focus on the connection between you by seeing you both as one. Once the connection has been made, start to think about finding the hidden object. This is an object that *wants* to be found, so imagine that its energy is already arriving in your present, giving you signals that you can interpret as images. It is just a matter of remembering the future until the path becomes clear.”

Roya stared at the page for several minutes while Claire focused on her. She imagined Mandy’s energy all around her, until she began to vividly pretend that she was Mandy. She almost started to make one of Mandy’s silly faces, but she didn’t want to have to explain that to Claire. This was starting to feel fun, as if Mandy’s soul could feel what she was doing and was entertained by it. For a moment, she started to get distracted by Claire’s presence, whose penetrating gaze felt electrical, but Claire must have noticed, because she said, “Just keep focusing on Mandy as if you are two souls in one body. Feel the playful energy between your souls and ask her to help you draw.”

Suddenly her senses began to heighten, and she felt a warm vibration running through her forearms and into her hands. Her perception of colors began to shift as well, and then images started to flow into her mind.

“Claire, are you doing this, or am I?” Roya asked.

“Between every two souls is a place of balance where you cannot tell where one soul ends and the other begins. My people call it *betweenenergy*. It’s part of a hidden universal structure that connects all souls together into a single matrix of being, but friends and soulmates tend to develop that connection into a resonance of shared personality. All I am doing is focusing on the betweenenergy you share with Mandy and seeing you both as reflections of each other. Because of your need, all her abilities are tilting into alignment with you.”

How did you learn to do this? Roya wondered. She thought about asking the question out loud, but then her hand felt the impulse to draw. She couldn’t remember the last time she had attempted to draw anything. That was why it was so surprising to see the image of a bird coming to life before her. The image was present in her mind as she translated it right onto the page without

thinking, and before she could finish, she felt the bird as if it was flying somewhere. Then, her hand drifted down and began to draw the outline of a single, large egg, resting in a nest below the bird. Next, her hand was guided over to another blank part of the page where she sketched a baseball cap. Somehow, she just knew to label it 'red.'

Within minutes, she had drawn a set of swords that were clashing, a large flowing creek with rocks and trees nearby, and the mouth of a cave. The placement of each object appeared random. Discerning how they were connected did not seem important yet. As she practiced clearing her mind to create a blank slate, the images kept coming, and Mandy's presence continued to help her translate the images into drawing. There were moments when Roya became so excited about what was happening that she nearly broke her alignment with this unique convergence of creative energy, but with Claire's help, she quickly found the alignment again and continued drawing.

The next object was a large old oak tree, and then out in front of it, she was guided to draw the symbol of the three interlocking circles that were on the front of *The Circle and the Stars* book. Almost as soon as she finished drawing this symbol, she knew intuitively that this represented her, Ami, and Mandy, so she wrote 'US' beneath the symbol. Then she went back to the egg and was guided to draw rays of light coming out of it.

"Does any of this mean anything to you in terms of location?" asked Claire.

"No...not yet, but I feel there's still something missing." Roya relaxed her mind even more, trying to feel what wanted to happen next. She was guided to imagine standing in front of the creek, and then, she immediately thought of crossing it.

"A foot bridge. That's it!" Roya began to draw again until a simple image of a wooden bridge arched over the creek. There were no rails, only the pathway over the water. "I know where this is! It's part of a nature trail that I know. My parents took us there a few times when we were kids. But, what do I do once I get there?"

"It's clear to me that your friends have a role to play. What you must begin to do now is invest your focus on the outcome of a shared discovery. Holding this intention will energize each of you to discover what is yours to do."

Claire's words contained a contagious wisdom that spoke to a place inside Roya that was ready to listen and act on the guidance. She was excited to realize that this journey was more than a physical journey, but a journey to expand her understanding of reality. Up until now, she had felt unable to do anything about what was missing in her life. She had known for a long time that there was a greater truth worth seeking. But for the first time, she felt like she was gaining access to real tools she could use to create the breakthroughs she longed for, and she knew that intuition was one of them.

"So, how do I use this map?" Roya asked, wanting to know still more about it.

"When you see how this map works, you will understand something more about the design of the book. Just stay alert and watch for the signs. The key to navigating intuitive signals is not to be too attached to the form in which you first received them. The map is just there to help confirm your intuition, but ultimately, intuition will be your guide."

Claire smiled warmly at her, and Roya felt something energetic exchanging between them. Roya had a sense that Claire had been transferring some of her awareness into her, and for Roya's part, her feeling of gratitude was fueling the exchange.

"And now, I must get back to my duties," said Claire as she reached over and wrote her phone number on the edge of the map. "Feel free to call me. I am very confident that you will find what you are looking for."

"I can't thank you enough," expressed Roya. "I don't know what you did, but I feel like you've removed some kind of obstacle from my path."

"If you only knew, Roya, it feels like you have done the same for me. We'll talk more soon," Claire assured her as she stood up. "Good luck."

"Thanks again," said Roya, bidding her farewell as she headed for the door.

ROYA SANDS AND THE BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS

Roya decided to sit in the sun on the library's front steps while thinking over everything that just happened. With her notebook out, she scribbled a few notes, including the word 'betweenenergy', and then she jotted down the two quotes from between the trees on the library walls. She could not help noticing that the intuitive map she had drawn contained some of the same components as the "tongues in trees" quote. *Trees, brooks and stones*, she thought. It was as if the message had been perfectly planned to help nudge her toward the right memory. Allowing her mind to enter a daydreaming state, she began to play with the words and letters of the message until something leaped out at her.

A LITTLE LEARNING IS
A DANGEROUS THING DRINK DEEP OR
TASTE NOT THE PIERIAN SPRING

The 'K' in 'DRINK' connected with the 'EEP' in 'DEEP' as if speaking to her mind the word 'KEEP'. Looking at that same line, all of the letters for 'ARRANGING' leaped out, followed by the word 'LIT', which seemed to light up from within the word 'LITTLE'. Her mind intuitively completed the first hidden message as she crossed out the remaining letters that she needed...and there it was.

KEEP ARRANGING LIT UP LETTERS

Out of all the possible word combinations, incredibly, this first message was speaking of exactly what she was experiencing and encouraging her at the same time. When she first saw the word 'KEEP' she could not have imagined where the process was leading. The next words came more slowly, and were also unexpected, but within a few minutes of feeling the letters lighting up in her mind, she spelled out two new statements:

ONENESS TRAINING
ONE EARTH

This felt right, but incomplete at the same time, and there were many letters left over that she did not know how to use. Then she recalled the previous decoded message: *To receive path instructions, stand under dome of winding words to receive*. From the middle of the room beneath the dome, both messages on both walls were equidistant, and so they might be equally connected to the same process of instruction.

TONGUES IN TREES BOOKS IN THE
RUNNING BROOKS SERMONS IN STONES
AND GOOD IN EVERYTHING

She began to play with the arrangement of the words and letters again, this time seeing a perfect use for the remaining letters of the first quote. Gradually, a new series of messages came together with a surprising energetic theme. The process did not feel forced at all, and she felt an exciting presence behind the messages, like the source of the guidance was beaming at the opportunity to communicate with her. After using every last letter, a perfect sequence of messages and ideas had come together, combining the decoded statements from both quotes. The encoded instructions read:

KEEP ARRANGING LIT UP LETTERS
ONENESS TRAINING
DRINK STRONG ONENESS VIBRATIONS IN LUNGS

TAKE DOOR UNITING DIMENSIONS
GO ON THE TONED BRIDGE
SHAPE HISTORY
ONE EARTH

Roya was stunned. Something about these words made her heart beat faster. The potentials they seemed to describe were breathtaking, even though she did not fully understand them. She had never faced such high expectations, and consequently, a terrible feeling of doubt was growing that she might not be able to fulfill such grand potentials. Finding the hidden object now felt even more intimidating, but she was committed. This was not just a mystery to solve. It was a calling, and somehow, she had to make this happen.

It occurred to her that this encoded message might have to do with the book, and in that very moment she felt the energy of the book vibrating in her backpack. The book begged to be read, and so she set her notebook aside and reached inside her pack for it. Flipping it open, she began to read the text of the final recipe for change:

The light of the future is a calling that aligns you with the dimension of love. But when that calling comes, it takes courage, patience, and a commitment to face your fears in order to overcome the resistance to your potential. Doubt is not a sign that your greatest potential is merely an unrealistic dream. Dare to dream the impossible. When you feel doubt in the face of your calling, it's actually a sign of how great your potential really is. It is an invitation to let go of your limiting assumptions, as well as the way the world has taught you to underestimate your value.

Embracing more of your potential involves continually learning to value yourself more than you did before. Step by step, you are entering a new kind of human experience, one in which you are being led intuitively by your potential. The calling of your potential will align you with opportunities to build confidence in your capacity to lead. They will be small at first but will always challenge you to rise to the occasion.

Believe in yourself. Believe in your ability to make a difference. Take the initiative. The invisible world will help you. Before you can balance the world from within yourself, you must first start with a smaller circle of influence. In time, your influence will grow, and so will your trust in your ability to lead.

Roya put down the book and closed her eyes for a moment, feeling the sun on her face and a gentle summer breeze. The strange mix of both doubt and the calling of her potential were beginning to come into balance as she considered that her value was greater than she had ever imagined. If the light of the future was showing up to guide her, then her intuition could read the signals and align with the highest potential outcome of events—an outcome that would feel joyful for all involved.

In that very moment, she could have sworn she heard the voice of the book repeat: *Take the initiative*. The fact that this passage was presented as another recipe told her that this was an opportunity. This was not just about letting go of resistance and surrendering to change. This was about being willing to try something completely new and trusting in the power of her influence.

A sense of strength was arising within her, inviting her to take ownership of her full potential. Suddenly, she had an inspiration that began to make her feel visible in a whole new way. She became willing to consider something that surprised even her—a little test of leadership that

made her smile, and somehow felt empowering. Tonight, she would flip the script and offer to prepare dinner for the whole family.



Having successfully manifested the potential of balance and synergy within her family, Roya was feeling a powerful new energy inside that heightened her intuition. Ami, too, was sensing that something had shifted with the appearance of the book in her room. Unbeknownst to them, an invisible field of connection was beginning to tilt both of their families into a deeper alignment with each other.

The presence of the new energy was even beginning to synchronize their lives with people in faraway places, opening doors and illuminating possibilities that contained a powerful calling for all involved. And because of this, in a dark corner of Chicago, two brave souls, named Zack and Echo, were about to make an incredible discovery.

In the spirit of adventure and curiosity, they had entered an abandoned building in an old industrial part of the city, hoping to have a paranormal encounter. It was almost midnight when they began their survey of the dark and eerie shell of a factory. Most of the windows were boarded up, making it impossible to see without their lights. Just inside the expansive structure, they stopped to listen to their new surroundings.

"This place is huge. Hey, Zack. Check this out," whispered Echo, while snapping his fingers to create an echo.

"Kinda reminds me of when I gave you your nickname," said Zack, remembering how they first met in an abandoned warehouse.

Echo was fond of the nickname Zack had given him. He had always wanted a cool nickname, and after Zack used it at a party, everyone just adopted it as if that had always been his name.

"It's creepy how quiet this place is. Ya feel me?" prompted Echo.

"Yeah, it's like the building knows we're here."

Zack and Echo had explored abandoned buildings before, but not usually in the middle of the night. The two nineteen-year-olds wore jeans and T-shirts, along with LED headlamps strapped to their heads. Both of them carried backpacks with just about everything they could think of to bring on such an excursion.

"Hey, it looks like there's a lower level," pointed out Zack as he headed for a ramp that went downward.

Echo was right behind him, feeling glad that Zack was going first, for once. The silence created a sense of safety, like they were truly alone, and yet the darkness had an ominous feel to it.

"So, do ya think there are really any ghosts in here?" asked Echo.

"I don't know. That homeless guy we talked to was certain of it, but I wouldn't think you'd find ghosts in an old factory like this. I'd expect 'em in places like an old hotel, or a mansion, ya know? Didn't you say you thought there were ghosts at Edgewater?"

"Yeah, maybe," replied Echo. "I didn't see anything for certain. It was just a feeling."

"Well, it used to be a medical facility, so there were probably people that died there," speculated Zack as he walked down the dark hallway, poking his head in a number of doorways that led to empty rooms. "You might expect to see a ghost in a place like that. But this just doesn't seem like the place."

"People die in factories," stated Echo. "Freak accidents with machinery?"

"I suppose," said Zack as he walked back toward Echo who was still examining a room near the bottom of the ramp. "Hey, look at this," he noticed as he walked past Echo, pointing his light at an old door with a padlock that was somewhat hidden behind the ramp they had just walked down.

"Where do you think it goes?"

"Let's find out," said Zack, as he produced a bolt cutter from his backpack.

Once again, Echo was impressed that Zack wasn't hesitating. After a moment of working with the cutter, the metal gave way, and the lock came off. Zack swung the door back to reveal an exposed metal staircase that went down two flights into a large open room below.

"No way!" exclaimed Echo. "This must be the boiler room or something. Man, this place is old. Just look at this. I bet we could pull off a killer party down here."

"I don't know. It looks like there's only one way in or out," observed Zack as he descended the steps to the basement floor. "What if the cops came?"

"There's no other way out from down *here*," admitted Echo, "but on the main floor upstairs, there's more than one exit. We would just have to have enough lookouts."

As they reached the bottom, Echo walked over to a huge pile of cinder blocks in one of the corners of the room.

"Check this out. We could totally use these cinder blocks to build a DJ booth," suggested Echo as he began to pull some of the blocks off the pile. "Come on man, just humor me."

For a few minutes, both Zack and Echo pulled blocks from the bottom of the pile and began stacking them to create Echo's DJ booth, until suddenly, one of the blocks Zack removed caused the whole pile to shift.

"Whoa, look out," Zack warned as several of the blocks toppled from the pile, kicking up dust. Both of them stepped back for a couple of minutes as the dust began to settle, until something interesting caught their attention.

"Hey, look. There's a door," said Echo. "Help me clear these out."

Block by block, they removed almost all of them, neatly stacking them up against a wall, leaving the large metal door exposed. Zack produced the bolt cutters again and cut away another padlock. And with a little pull, he swung the door wide open.

"OK, this is getting really weird," expressed Echo.

There, before them, just beyond the metal door, was a wall made of the same kind of cinder blocks. Echo could not help his curiosity and began pushing on the wall, testing it for weaknesses.

"Hey, it just moved," Echo noticed. "It's loose. Help me push on it."

Both Zack and Echo placed their hands on the wall, leaning into it.

"On the count of three," said Zack. "One, two, three!"

With surprisingly little effort, several of the blocks slid inward until the whole wall began to collapse. Zack almost lost his balance, but Echo braced him just as several of the blocks fell dangerously close to his head.

"Whoa! That was close," said Echo as a cloud of dust billowed up from beyond the door.

"Thanks," Zack coughed. "I didn't think it was going to be that loose."

They both stepped back for another minute or two, letting the dust settle once again, until they both stared in disbelief with their lights fixated on the far-left corner of the hidden room.

"Dude. Is this crazy or what?" Zack was stunned.

"Yo, I'm trippin'," replied Echo. "You seeing what I'm seeing?"

"Yeah. It looks like..."

"It *looks* like someone wanted to keep this a secret," continued Echo.

"I don't think anyone's been down here for a really long time."

"Yeah, maybe decades."

"OK, don't tell anyone I said this," confided Zack, "but I kinda wish there were more of us. I mean, I don't ever worry if it's just you and me on the street, cause I know you've got my back, and you're just as strong as I am."

"Word," agreed Echo. "So, what if we told the others?"

"You mean like Mel and Dominic?"

"Yeah, and your brother," Echo added. "What do ya think?"

ROYA SANDS AND THE BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS

For a moment, they both continued to stare at what they knew was a powerful mystery, waiting to be explored, until Zack broke the silence.

“I think I just had a brilliant idea for my film.”

End of Excerpt for Roya Sands and the Bridge Between Worlds

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