

The Hunters

By Kimaya Satavalekar

Reana walked across the lumpy and uneven stone floor. The chasm was going deeper into the earth, and she didn't know where it was directing her. Suddenly, she heard fast footsteps echoing down the cave in front of her, and she froze in shock. A million thoughts rushed through her head, finding a way to escape the situation. Then, she saw a group of girls dressed in pitch black, faces covered with weird midnight blue masks, dashing down the cavern straight to her, swinging their bows and arrows to get ready for the perfect shot. Reana held her hands up, as if they were sheathing her face. The girls stopped themselves about two meters away from Reana's face.

"Hello, Reana. I am the leader of "The Hunters."

The girl at the front murmured into Reana's ears. "You have a very treasured object, and we're going to take it back right now at this moment."

Just before Reana could blink, a swarm of arrows rapidly bolted straight to her.

It was a harsh morning. Reana woke up at six, she barely had more than half a bowl of cereal, and she couldn't find her binder, books or backpack anywhere. During these troubles, she kept thinking about her nightmarish dream. It wasn't a coincidence that her society's political party leaders were "The Hunters," and they were also in her dream. It wasn't so pleasant since it showed "The Hunters" wanting to hurt Reana, because in real life, they have a lot of power, but she wouldn't stop thinking about the young lady that was talking to her. Reana could tell just by her hair that she was so pretty, anyone could fall in love with her! She had a dazzling and glossy gold flower in her long, neat braid. It was a light shade of brown, with tiny flakes of real gold on it. The most intimidating factor was that all the girls had a tattoo on their shoulders. The tattoos said "The Hunters" in dark bold letters. She tried to recall more details about the tattoos, and if she might have seen their faces, but the memories were already fading away.

As Reana walked to school, her friend, Addison came rushing towards her.

"Hey, Reana! Did you finish your homework for school today?" Addison questioned crossing her arms.

“Well.... Yeah, I did, but I had trouble on number four, five, and seven. What about you? Do you know the answers to them?” Reana asked, smiling and trying to persuade Addison to tell her.

As Addison answered, Reana got impelled back into her dream and realized that Addison had the same sparkly, and glistening flower on the top of her light brown hair. She also had the identical hair color and braid. That’s when Reana realized that Addison might be the main leader of “The Hunters” group.

Reana couldn’t believe her eyes! Addison might be the director of the “The Hunters!” She can be that person who wants to take this one treasured object away from her! Reana knew that it was all just a dream, but she still had that tingling feeling inside her, that Addison was up to something and something was not quite right. As they talked, Reana realized that Addison was hiding something. She kept clutching the top of her shoulder. Reana kept asking Addison why she was clenching her shoulder and if she was hurt. Finally, she hauled Addison’s hand off her shoulder and didn’t expect to see something that awful.

On her shoulder, there was a “The Hunters” tattoo right up there. It was astonishing that she was the main leader! Reana felt her heart pounding as fast as a cheetah’s footsteps. She felt like she was backstabbed by the person she trusted the most! Addison hung her head in shame, eyeballing Reana.

Reana nudged past Addison, hoping that Addison wouldn’t continue following her. She blinked back tears, realizing that her whole dream was true. It wasn’t a dream; it was a flash of the truth. Reana felt horrible that the person she was friends with since grade two was just always against her, trying to take this somewhat valuable object away from her. Addison was just a trick! She was a true lie! She still didn’t know what this precious item was but was bad-tempered by how Addison was a traitor. Reana forced herself away from Addison's disgraceful face, trying not to turn back. She jogged down the pavement, escaping from her tears. Finally, she reached school. Reana sank into her seat, wiping the last tear from her eyes.

It was recess and Reana was putting her lunch back into her locker when suddenly, she felt somebody tap her back. As she turned around, she realized it was her bestie, Chloe.

“Hey girlfriend!” Chloe said, revealing her precious smile to Reana. “I’m really cheerful today! What about you, Rea?” Chloe asked eagerly.

“I am actually... well..... why do you care? I didn’t have an awesome day, all right? You don’t need to know everything!” Reana screamed bitterly, while heated fumes busted out of her ears. “I had an unbearable day, so don’t ask anymore!”

Reana stormed through the hallway, opening the doors to going outside, and taking off the glittery necklace that Addison had given her when they first became friends.

Once Reana’s was outside, she traced her eyes around the places that she and Addison always hung out, and Addison wasn’t anywhere nearby. After many moments of searching, she saw Addison at the corner of the school, on her phone. As Reana sneaked up to her, she caught a glimpse of her phone and realized that she was talking to Chloe. Reana snatched the phone and placed the sparkly silver necklace in her hand.

“You really changed my whole perspective of school, you know.” Reana muttered as she leaned against the brick building. “I really am not interested in arguing. But really, I don’t care if you want my precious gold ring that I got from my grandmother, because I.... I just want you to just stop being after me!” Reana’s soft voice faltered and she coughed softly into her forearm. She turned around, trudged past Addison’s surprised look and dropped the gold ring down in front of Addison.

Reana walked home, this time without anybody. When she got home, she got in her bed, and dove deep into her ocean blue covers. She fell fast asleep and didn’t notice “The Hunters” approaching the house.

Meanwhile, while Reana was dozing off and was at the bottom of the piles of blankets, The Hunters searched the house of the treasurable item. “Lady Addison will be delighted at how I found the gold and diamond ring, you know. I will be the next empress! Yay!” a “Hunter” named Brooklyn whispered posing. The other “Hunters” just rolled their eyes and continued searching. After a while, they were tired and exhausted from foraging for the valuable treasure. “The Hunters” stumbled out the house, walked all the way to the “The Hunters Secret Hideout” and knocked on Lady Addison’s cave door.

“The Hunters shook the doorknob and patiently waited for Lady Addison to open it up. “Come in! Come in!” Addison’s voice thundered making the cave

rattle severely. Suddenly, the door blasted open and gave “The Hunters” a chance to come inside. “The Hunters” politely strolled inside and bowed to Lady Addison with perfection. Brooklyn turned to Addison’s kind, and soft face.

“Forgive me, Lady Addison,” Brooklyn peacefully said. “We searched everywhere, all of us! We will try again tomorrow once she’s not at home. Please understand, my lady.” Brooklyn bowed again, hanging her head in shame.

“My dear Hunters,” Addison politely said. “Please don’t feel ashamed! We have the item! I got it! You guys can rest now, but first see how it works!” Addison gestured to come closer and she took out the shiny gold ring and pressed the jewel.

At first, there was no effect. After a few seconds, the whole floor started rumbling greatly and many artifacts and potions fell and cracked. All “The Hunters” surrounded Addison and readied their bows and arrows. Suddenly, everything stopped. Even “The Hunters” dropped their bows. But the ring had designed its own features. It was still the same, but now, it was covered in smoke, and Reana was standing right beside it.

“Addison?” Reana walked backwards. “Oh no! what is this place! I don’t want to see you again, either!”

Reana bumped into the rusty wall and dropped to the ground hastily. Her hair was over her face and she spotted the gold ring which glistened in the moonlight from the window. Addison saw her eyes and lunged at the ring. Reana was still quicker. She kicked Addison and drove her into an emerald green vase on a bedside table, and Reana got to the ring and clasped it tightly in her hands so you could only see the glint of the jewel by the moon. Suddenly, “The Hunters” grabbed their bows and bolted towards Reana, securing her onto the wall. Reana squirmed and struggled to get out. As Reana twisted and turned, Addison got up sluggishly and sauntered all the way to Reana. She wiped away her sweat and got her diamond bow, while “The Hunters” held Reana completely still and tight. She aimed the bow directly at Reana’s face and looked down at Reana with pride.

“You have annoyed me for too long. You have to get going now, and now is the time.”

Just before Addison shot, Chloe swung open the cave door, dashing into the cave, and foot swept Addison onto her face. Chloe punched, jumped, kicked,

and slammed people into walls and did it with the right amount of perfection! Later, while all of them were face down, onto the floor, Chloe put her hand down and offered a hand to help Reana up.

“Chloe? You... you here?” Reana was stunned and hugged Chloe so hard that she couldn’t even breathe. “Hey Rea, I... I’m sorry about before, and I knew Addison’s plans.” Chloe gazed down refusing to look at Reana’s face. “I... I didn’t know she was going to hurt you, though I did know she was after you. I’m. I am sorry.” Chloe brushed away a tiny tear away from her cheek.

“Chloe, it doesn’t matter! You are my friend, and you will always be! Everybody makes some mistakes at one point. You made your mistake, but I forgive you! That’s what friends are for right?” Reana hugged Chloe once more, comforting her until Addison’s voice was back.

“Chloe.... Chl...Chloe?” Addison pushed herself off the ground making her muscles tighten. “You ruined everything! You now get your punishment that I should’ve given you years, and years ago! I gave you a chance, but you pushed it too far.” Addison called all “The Hunters” and made them firmly hold Reana, and Chloe onto the wall.

“There! Time for you to leave our world and go into the Portal of Mesphonoious! You interfered, now you both can suffer together! How wonderful! Bye Chloe! Have fun in the place you belonged to!” Addison completed her sentence as the Portal of Mesphonoious opened revealing a dark black chasm, the same one in Reana’s dream.

“Chloe! Don’t go! Why do you have to le-”?

“Rea, it’s time for me to go now. You continue your life, and someday, just wipe Addison away from this world! I will miss you, Rea. Just remember that I am sorry.”

Just as Chloe was pushed into the portal by Addison, Reana grasped Chloe’s sleeve and Reana also disappeared into the Portal of Mesphonoious with Chloe.

“Ughhhh! I don’t feel well! Wait. Where am I?” Reana got off the ground, surrounded in complete pitch darkness, and walked a little forward, looking for a source of light. The chasm was the same as she’d seen in her dream. The stone

floor was lumpy and was unevenly tilted to one side, and it seemed like it had a force, pulling you deeper and deeper into the chasm. "Chloe? Are you here?" Reana asked, realizing that she was staggering, and she needed sleep. Restlessly, Reana decided to crawl onto the side of the chasm and have a nap until she was able to go search for Chloe more.

Reana didn't think that she had a nap. It seemed like she had a week of straight sleep! As she got up and started her very dark journey, she realized that Chloe was snoring off, and she was sleeping right beside her!

"Chloe?" Reana was shocked and surprised, and she elbowed Chloe onto her face, waking her up. "You.... you found me?" Reana flopped down beside Chloe's head, Leaning on the curvy wall.

"Yep. I found you...." Chloe muttered, slapping her cheek, to get out of hypersomnia, and to stop getting tired. "I found you sleeping, so I came....." Once again, Chloe's voice faded away in the distance, and she sat right up, and stared into the dark, and black cave.

"Chloe, are you ok? We can get out of this! Together!" Reana looked at Chloe's disappointed face and put her arm on her shoulder. "We can do this!"

"No, we can't!" This is my home, and I have tried to get out of this place for years, and years, ok? I was trapped here by a man that Addison trusted, and after a few years, she found me, and helped me out, and used me as a servant! Now she trapped me here again!" Chloe yelled, banging against the hard rock, and cement, and making her voice echo badly. "We can't get out!" Chloe collapsed back onto the hard, and rocky ground, spilling her tears all over it.

Reana got up, and sauntered away, and paced front, and back, over, and over, and finally thought of a solution to get out of the chasm.

"We can take my ring and use it! That's what Addison wanted! I think it's magic!" Reana exclaimed, while searching for the ring in her back jeans pocket. "Here! I think it only works if I use it!" Reana clapped her hands together and strode towards Chloe. Reana took her hand and held it tight. "We can do this, Chloe. We can." Just as Reana boldly said the last word, they both were gone in a cloud of smoke.

“Where... where am I?” Chloe murmured softly, squinting her eyes, because of the extreme brightness of the daylight.

“He, he! You are in the place you said we couldn’t get to anymore. You are at home, Chloe!

“What? You did it?” Chloe instantly shot up, and tightly squeezed Reana, and sniffed, trying not to let herself start exploding with tears.

“I didn’t do it,” Reana said looking down at Chloe. “We did it.”