

Azuroa

Azuroa. Only Maggie knew of this place lost in the stitches of time. She would visit it only in her dreams, of course. It was the place she could go to escape the torments of the snobby, rich, stuck-up girls and their (as Maggie saw it) leader Ashley.

Ashley was not the kind of person anyone wanted to be around, but because she was so popular everyone followed her and treated her like a queen.

Maggie was a very nice girl, smart, but subtle. She had quite a few friends, but they were all in other classes. Ashley picked on her most, jealous of her smartness. So Maggie, when she was feeling hurt from Ashley's taunting, would close her eyes and go to Azuroa.

On the particular day we will begin this story, Ashley had just picked on Maggie. Maggie ran as fast as she could to her locker, got her books, and ran to her next class. Nobody was there but Maggie. She folded her arms and put her head down, and began to cry. After she calmed down some, she began yet another adventure in Azuroa.

Suddenly, Ashley and her "gang" of other snotty girls came in the door, gossiping and spreading false rumors like crazy.

"Oh yeah? I hear Max likes you Ashley," said one girl.

"Nice hair Ashley. Who's your stylist?" said another.

"Where'd you get the money for those rings, Ashley? They were \$10,000? I only get a \$5,000 daily allowance," whined another.

This went on for a short time, when Ashley lifted her diamond-decorated hand. All the girls immediately fell silent.

"Hey, look. Like, it's baby Maggie crying again. Wah wah wah." Mocked Ashley.

All the girls laughed, and Ashley held up her hand, this time the one with her twenty-carat gold-and-emerald-set rings. Silence returned very quickly.

"Look. The baby's getting upset," sneered Ashley when she saw Maggie's face turn red.

Maggie heard everything. She heard the laughter. She heard Ashley's whining voice. And she cracked. Her mind was so full of hatred for Ashley, time and space opened.

First, the very air in front of Ashley stretched and distorted. Then the air popped open, revealing a hole full of nothing and yet everything. It was colored with all colors, and yet no colors at all. It swirled around in front of Ashley for a moment, then sucked her in. Then another portal formed by Maggie, and she too was sucked in. Maggie felt numb as she swirled and swirled through time and

space, and finally went out cold and into a deep sleep as she was dumped into another dimension.

The girls back in the classroom ran for help, not knowing what had just happened.

Maggie awoke to find herself in the middle of a forest. The sky was a dark reddish color. She could sense fear all around her.

“Where am I?” she said aloud to herself.

She looked around, and saw that the trees extended far around her. Small bushes surrounded her, and she felt as though she had just awoke from a long sleep. Maggie stood up and felt her feet touch hard stone. She was standing on a large circular pedestal, with stairs around it and a small inscription on the bed she had been lying on. Maggie read it aloud to herself:

“Here is the Pedestal of Hope. Hope shall come forth from here when appears Doom from the Pedestal of Doom. What is this, a joke? Ashley must’ve hit me over the head and had one of her butlers drop me off here. That little brat,” she said through gritted teeth.

Yet somehow Maggie didn’t think that was the case. After all, Ashley, no matter how rich, couldn’t turn the sky red. Neither could she write what she had just read. Ashley wasn’t clever enough with words.

Maggie lay back down on the pedestal, and looked up at the fierce red sun. The sun began to glow a bluer hue, and grew slowly brighter. Maggie shielded her eyes with her hand.

Suddenly, the sun shot out a blue bolt of forked lightning. It struck only about a half-mile away. An explosion rose up from the spot, belching smoke and debris. Screams rolled across the forest, as did a large shock wave. The shock wave reached Maggie, sending her flying into one of the bushes surrounding the pedestal.

Maggie climbed back onto the pedestal, panting for breath. Another bolt of lightning shot from the sun, and looked as though it was going to hit the pedestal Maggie was on! Maggie ducked in cover, but the bolt never reached the pedestal. An invisible shield protecting the pedestal stopped the lightning bolt from getting to Maggie.

“Now I’m sure Ashley didn’t do that!” said Maggie. She couldn’t know how wrong she was.

In the distance, Maggie heard a faint rumbling sound. It slowly grew, and before long, Maggie saw a large bunch of 3-foot tall rabbits hopping towards her. They were coming from the spot where the first lightning bolt had hit. Leading the rabbits was one that was 4-foot tall and wearing a crown.

“Huh? Trabbitts? But I made those up! They lived in the forests of Azuroa! Wait a minute... That means...” Maggie trailed off as the Trabbitts hopped over to her. The largest one with the crown spoke to her.

“What is one of the Girl Race doing way out here? Do you not know that the Evil One Who Shall Not Be Named is making us Trabbitts an example? She plans to kill us all so she may lay a (what she calls) ‘super mall’ on our forest,”

“Huh?” replied Maggie.

“Oh! Pardon me. I forgot to introduce myself. I am King Trabbitt. Who are you?”

“I’m Maggie. I just woke up from that pedestal over there,” said Maggie, pointing towards the pedestal.

King Trabbit gasped. “The Pedestal of Hope? That means that you are the Hope of Azuroa?”

“So I *am* in Azuroa! I thought so. Who is this Evil One Who Shall Not Be Named? I don’t remember anyone like that in Azuroa.”

“She is one who appeared 600 years ago on the Pedestal of Doom. She is named...oh! Her name is horrible! I do not wish to speak it! But if you must know, her name is...Ashley.”

Maggie stared at the green-and-white-haired rabbit for a while, then said: “Ashley! What is she doing here?”

“She awoke from the Pedestal of Hope and soon discovered the most powerful object in Azuroa: the Band-Aid. It was forged by the two twins of the Boy Race, Johnson and Johnson. It is said to contain a powerful evil that may only be wielded by the Doom of Azuroa.”

“How do I stop her?”

“She lives deep in the Fortress Tower 3,000 miles south of here. Only you can stop her, as it was prophesized. How I do not know.”

“3,000 miles! How am I supposed to get there in time to save Azuroa?”

“Well, there is one way...you can simply place your hand on the Pedestal of Hope. You will immediately go to The Fortress Tower.”

Before the Trabbitt King even finished speaking, Maggie had placed her hand on the Pedestal of Hope. She felt her hand stick to the pedestal, and she was soon engulfed once more in space and time.

Maggie appeared in the middle of a large, yellow-gold room of stone. A large stairway with black carpeting sat in the back of the room, and a large red throne sat at the top of them. There was Ashley, dressed in black with black diamonds set in rings of silver on her fingers. She wore a dark hood, and the legendary Band-Aid stuck to her forearm.

“So, the little crybaby has come to save her little fantasy world. Like, don’t you know I, like, rule the universe?” said Ashley.

“You’re such a brat,” replied Maggie.

“Like, your insults are *so* lame,”

“Why are you doing this Ashley? Haven’t you done enough in ruining my real life?”

“This place is so stupid. I have to wear this *totally* fashion-clashing Band-Aid just to get, like, all-powerful.”

Maggie stood there, stunned by Ashley’s selfishness.

“This Band-Aid is stupid. I hate it.” Sniffed Ashley.

The Band-Aid glowed red, as though it was offended by the insult.

“I wish it would just go away and let me be ruler of the universe by myself.”

The Band-Aid suddenly became very angry. It sucked Ashley into a ball of black energy. Ashley was spat back out, and the Band-Aid fell to the floor. It disintegrated.

Suddenly, portals opened beside Ashley and Maggie. They were sucked in and dumped back into our world. It was only one minute since they had left. Neither of them remembered anything.

“Ashley’s gang” came back with a teacher. They tried to explain how Ashley and Maggie had gotten sucked into holes in space and time, but the teacher was left confused. Maggie and Ashley were still enemies, but for some reason, after that day, it didn’t really bother Maggie anymore.