

"RAYHA'S POEM"

By

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4/20/2018

FADE IN:

TRAILER

A flyover shot of riverine valleys, dark forests and mystical ruins. A young girl runs along sandy banks, up green hills, and then dives into a deep dark pit. She isn't running away from her past - she's running to her future.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

Beyond this river, beyond this forest,
beyond these broken halls lies the land of
fairies.

Red fairies. Blue fairies. And even yellow
fairies!

They drink the sweetest nectar from
flowers, and feast on sweets all day and
night!

They never get sick - they never age. No
one ever yells at them, or pulls their
hair, or hurts them for laughing too
loudly or reading too much.

Nope. No one ever hurts another soul in
Fairyland - not one. That's why you went
there isn't it, mother? And that's why I
am going there too.

4/20/2018

FADE IN:

INTRO CUTSCENE

Heavy breathing. A little girl is running deeper and deeper into the woods - the sound of the pursuing mob getting fainter as the tree line gets thicker. She trips - falling into the mud that stains her golden wedding jewelry. Through tears, she stares up at the heavens and mouths a silent prayer. All is quiet except for her sobbing. Hope fades.

And then a ball of light flashes across the heavens. It lands with rumble. Wiping the dirt away from her face, the little girl (Rayha) gets back up to her feet.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

I wish I could tell you I was happy. I wish I could tell you I was well. I wish I could tell you none of this ever happened - to me or anyone else. But I can't. I hope you still listen though.

FIRST LEVEL: RIVERBEND

Ext. A wooded hilly valley, bisected by a serpentine river. The setting sun has bathed the trees in ephemeral orange flames. Two ends of a broken bridge reach out across the pristine waters. A series of broken boats lie scattered on the beach below, victims of treacherous currents and uncaring stone. Across the water from the player a plume of unearthly smoke rises into the heavens. Somehow Rayha knows that her destiny lies amidst those flames.

After reaching the first check point before the bridge. Rayha stares across it - for a minute the warm embrace of happy memories envelops her mind. She's at peace. But peace, just like brighter days, is short lived. 'Ere long the memory vanishes leaving behind a deeper hollow than the one it had filled.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

[fondly reminiscing]

Mother, do you remember that river - the huge one we saw when visiting auntie?

[growing sadder]

Do you remember how blue the water was?

[on the verge of tears]

Can you see it from up there?

After reaching the second check point within a cave. The darkness within scares Rayha. But she can spy the faintest glimmer of light at the end of it - and beyond that the hint of miracle. She recites a lullaby to calm her nerves.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

"Secret tunnels under our feet
Strangers there you'll surely meet
From cities of glass and molten sand
From the hallowed shores of Fairyland"

4/20/2018

FIRST LEVEL: RIVERBEND (CONT 2)

Rayha reaches the beach at long last. The sand below her feet is surprisingly cold. A shiver runs down her spine. For the briefest moment she considers turning around. A life of servitude and misery awaited her back home. But at least it would be warm. But no sooner had the thought formed within her mind than a warm western breeze blew it away. Going back wasn't a choice - it never was.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

I'd ask you to sing that to me every night
before you tucked me in. And every night
you'd listen. I'd fall asleep thinking
about magic and secret places - and
kingdoms where the sun never set!

There'd a great bonfire at the center of
it all and around it the fairy folk would
never stop dancing!

Beyond a cemetery of forgotten boats Rayha spies a single standing skiff tied to the shore line. The river is terrifying, yet something about the boat seems to call to Rayha. Maybe it's the call of destiny; maybe it's the hum of freedom - or maybe it's just exhaustion playing tricks on a desperate child's mind.

Whatever the case, Rayha's path was clear. This boat would take her across the river - and fate would be her ferryman.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

A river of lights separating the magical
from the mundane - a river as wide as a
sea and as deep as an ocean. I used to
dream of sailing across it with you by my
side, smiling.

Now, I just dream of your smile.

4/20/2018

FIRST LEVEL: RIVERBEND (CONT 3)

Across the river, a sandy trail leads up to the wooded hills. The forest is denser here - the trees much, much older. Rayha can feel the ancient power that lies deeper within the woods - but it's strangely comforting, almost familiar. A warm breeze blows from deep within the woods.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

Do you think they'd let me in - to
Fairyland that is? Father said I wasn't
good enough for school - that all the
teachers hated me and the kids all laughed
at me.

[tearful]

Do you think they'd let someone like me
in?

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FADE IN:

SECOND LEVEL: WHISPERING WOODS

Ext. A full moon hangs above forested grasslands. Yet very little of its light makes it past the thick canopy of leaves. Unseasonably cold mist hangs just below the ancient boughs - the wind blowing through them sounds eerily like distant whispers.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

"Never go into the woods at night" you used to say. "Monsters hide in the night-mist" you told me. I just wish that's the only place they hid.

Further into the forest. The entrance Rayha took has all but vanished into the thickets. There's no going back. But then again, there never was. The mist grows thicker. The whispering grows louder.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

You told me I was too old to cry, so I didn't. No. Not when father hurt me for talking back, not when he took away all my toys. No. Not even when he burnt all the books you left me.

Am I a strong girl now, mother?

[holding back tears]

Are you proud of me?

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SECOND LEVEL: WHISPERING WOODS (CONT 2)

An open clearing in the middle of the woods - a valley amidst sprawling spires of green. Something about this place reminds takes Rayha far away from these cold, dark woods. The sky is a pale indigo just like the flowers in her hair. A cool breeze heralds the arrival of dawn over the distant hills. Despite it, Rayha feels warm. She isn't alone.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

I never got to ask you about your wedding.
Did you love father? When you first saw
him were you swept off your feet like in
the stories? Did he say that you were his
eternal stars - his undying moon?

Were you happy?

I bet you looked beautiful, though.

A single pathway leads up to an opening in the cliff-face. The gentle breathing of the wind through it whispered promises to Rayha - promises of the wonders that lay beyond. It was dark, yes, but not like the forest. It reminded her of the soothing darkness under blankets on a cold winter's night - or the obscuring shadow that hid Rayha from the wrathful gaze of her inebriated father.

RAYHA (SINGING)

"Fear not the dark that lay beyond the
moon
Fear not the wind, the cold will pass too
soon.
Eat, drink, and be merry for even shadows
here are bright
Under starlit skies - in the unending
Fairy Night."

4/20/2018

SECOND LEVEL: WHISPERING WOODS (CONT 3)

At the end of the caverns, Rayha found ruins - remnants of a people long gone. Yet the empty halls still held memories. Every creaking wood plank, every timeworn stone-slab - every piece of this structure told a story. When she closed her eyes the language of the long-dead seemed to become clearer. Their arcane scrawls and mystic carvings revealed their history and sang a timeless song of a mystical land under an unchanging starry sky.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

The people who built this place, do you think they made it - to Fairyland that is. Do you think that's why they're gone?

[optimistic]

I want to believe they left it all behind for us, mother - so that we could reach Fairyland too!

[desperate]

That's why you left, right? That has to be...that has to...

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THIRD LEVEL: STARLIT CITADEL

INT. A stone hallway, deep within the enchanted forest. The stones are old - very old. Yet the ravages of nature have curiously done little to them.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

"Halls of stone, hewn by hands
Reaching out for Fairyland
Travelers, walk with hands unclasped
For the end of your Dream lies within your grasp"

[almost tearfully]
I am almost there, mother.

[with grim determination]
I am almost there.

EXT. An ancient courtyard - its purpose long since lost to living memory. The sky above is lit by the light of a thousand stars - glimmering in a beautiful asynchrony.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

Where did they go, mother? The people who lived her, that is.

Did they run away too?

[hesitatingly]
Did they do the right thing?

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THIRD LEVEL: STARLIT CITADEL (CONT 2)

INT. A misty room, filled with pillars. Marks of construction litter the area - it was clear that this vault was to have a grander purpose, but its builders abandoned it before it could achieve it.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

A week after you left, father started bringing strangers in.

They'd ask me to walk around, sit, fetch things, and talk - to make sure I wasn't "defective".

I didn't like it. I didn't like any of it.

Father said it'd all stop - as soon as I...

[growing disgusted]
As soon as I got married

I... liked that even less.

INT. Further into the ruins. The air was thin, but not musky. A primal energy seemed to resonate from further in. The moonbeams drifting in through the cracks painted everything with a soft ephemeral glow.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

So I ran, mother.

I ran. *[sadder]*

I ran. *[close to tears]*

I ran. *[whimpering]*

I ran after you. I ran to be with you again. I did the right thing, right mother?

[pleading with tears] Please tell me I did the right thing...please...

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THIRD LEVEL: STARLIT CITADEL (CONT 3)

INT. Deep within the ancient structure, a golden orb resonates with energy. Its shape seems to weave in and out of the real world - a dream made manifest. This is it - the heart of Fairyland in the awakened world. Rayha hesitates for a minute. And then she reaches out and touches the orb

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

Do you remember that great storm we had
two years ago?

The wind was so strong - father was afraid
our hut would get blown over.

But you weren't afraid. While he hid under
the bed you walked up the windows and
barred them all shut.

That was when I stopped crying.

You were always brave.

Now, I'll have to be brave to.

4/20/2018

OUTRO CUTSCENE

EXT. A magical woodland with a glowing orb at the center. Creatures of all shapes and colors gather around the little girl who's just been transported here. Rayha looks around - afraid at first. But then she sees a familiar face in the crowd. And then she sees more - faces that look like her, faces that have overcome similar trials. Here, in this land - they're finally safe and free. And from here they'll guide others trapped in the darkest period of their lives.

RAYHA (VOICE OVER)

[Overwhelmed with emotion]

Thank you, mother. I am home.

FADE OUT:

THE END