

AMBER GUARDIANS

City of Secrets



Story by Clair Baker and Drew Wilson
Illustrated by Drew Wilson



He gestured at the hooded figure, slumped on the floor. "Make haste before this dark spy wakes up," he urged. "Please, never return here. This is the last time I will help you. I have carried the weight of a terrible secret for many years. It is your turn now to take it on."

With no time for discussion, they ran from the shop and raced along the streets. Monk clung silently to Finn's shoulder. Izzy knew this part of town well. She led them down a maze of dark alleyways. The other two soon had no idea where they were heading. The three of them looked nervously behind them as they ran. They were terrified of seeing the hooded figure following them.



"He's coming!" gasped Izzy suddenly, in panic. "There, beside those crates. He's looking for us!" They pressed themselves into a darkened doorway.



The statue's stone arm crumbled and collapsed. Kit was thrown off the statue in an explosion of rubble.

"Kit" yelled Izzy, in panic. The purple orb tumbled to the ground. Izzy raced to grab it.

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The Bones of Ruin



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Chapter 2: Where is the Map?

They set off in search of the map, following a snaking pathway down the rocky hillside. "Some of these rocks look almost man-made," said Izzy thoughtfully.

"You're right, Iz!" said Kit. "These aren't rocks at all - they're ruins. I think we're in the remains of an ancient town!" They came across bigger and bigger ruins, looming out of the mist from both sides of the path.





Surely this was the image the orb had been showing them!

Izzy tried to tug the jewel loose. It pulsed gently against her fingers, almost like a heartbeat. It would not budge. She needed air so badly that she nearly blocked out. She swam back upwards, quickly gasping huge gulps of air into her aching lungs as she surfaced.

As the dazzling light around the fountain cleared, the creature stepped proudly forward. "It's a Unicorn," whispered Finn in awe. "This adventure gets better and better!"

The Unicorn tossed his mane powerfully. He sent splashes of water over them all. He flicked the controlling device from the spy's hand with the tip of his horn. It fell into the swirling waters of the fountain.



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Into the Unknown



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"Put the torch out now," whispered Izzy. "We stand a better chance if we are invisible." They put the torch out and began to run faster. They felt their way along the walls as they raced towards the water at the bottom of the mine.

The unnerving hissing noise increased. It was accompanied by a strange dragging sound. Finn felt more and more uncomfortable. Whatever was chasing them was gaining ground.



In the last seconds of his consciousness, he felt slender arms slip under his armpits. They held him securely and pulled his head above water. Izzy had swum down to him. She was steadily pulling him up, out of the stagnant water.

They clambered out of the water onto a sandy shore. "Never set out on an underwater adventure without me, Finn," gasped Izzy. Finn hugged her gratefully. She had just saved his life.



rope furiously towards it, flying through the air. He was trying to catch the amber jewel as it fell.

At that moment, the serpent's mighty head burst through the crack in the ceiling. Its huge jaws were wide open. Finn and Izzy could only watch in horror as the mighty serpent dropped from the ceiling. It coiled like a hideous living scarf around Kit's hanging body. Kit was being crushed like dry twigs inside the coils of the viperator.

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Roots of Corruption



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It seemed their troubles were not yet over.

The three friends gazed down fearfully from the top of the obelisk. The whole forest seemed to be shuddering below them. A wave of destruction rippled through the trees.



"Come on, plant monster!" he yelled.

The monster roared down at him. It swung its huge wooden fist. It was trying to knock Finn off the ledge.



sitting quietly, in the middle of a family of tiny monkeys just like him. "I think perhaps Monk has made a different decision," she said gently.

Finn's heart flipped in his chest. After all they had gone through, had Monk decided to leave them?

"Monk probably comes from a forest like this one," explained Refolia gently. "He is welcome to make his home here with us if he chooses to."

Finn was shaking with sadness at the thought of saying goodbye to his friend. He knew in his heart that he must let Monk go if he chose it. He bent down to face the little monkey.

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Trials and Trickery



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them aimed a controlling device at the rocks.

The rocks shuddered and then began to move! They rose up out of the splitting earth and joined together. The two spies giggled wildly.

A massive stone monster rose up from the earth. His clumsy body of rocks was cemented together with mud. The circle of strange stones had really been the limbs of a giant stone golem!



Finn knew reading had always been a battle for Kit. "I think it's a riddle, Kit," he said. "If I read it, I bet you'll be able to solve it."

The writing had been carved into the ancient tree trunk. Finn traced it gently with his fingers as he read. "I am tall when I am young and short when I am old," he said to Kit. "Can you work out what it means?"



It felt as if that moment was frozen in time. She saw the greedy glint in the eye of the taller spy as he reached the top step. Next she saw him stumble. As he fell, he lost control of the orb held tightly in his hand. It circled slowly in the air above his head. Izzy leapt forward and grabbed it. She caught it just seconds before it disappeared into the mist forever. She had saved the orb!

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Impossible Transformation



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It was a long way down. At last they arrived at the beach and stepped onto soft sand.

"Race you to the water!" yelled Kit. He and Finn were soon at the edge of the sea. Kit bent down and splashed Finn.

"I'll get you back for that!" yelled Finn. "Help me out, Izzy!"

Izzy was standing silently at the edge of the sea. She was gazing with wide eyes out at the water.



collapsing island.

Finn had a different idea. Throwing himself off the serpent's back, he plunged into the water. He was desperately searching for the orb in the churning water.



The serpent was very close now. It opened its huge jaws and lunged towards Finn. Izzy sped up through the water. She pulled Finn's body out of the way. Kit swam directly in front of the serpent's glistening eye. The serpent could not watch everything at once. It twisted in the water, trying to keep track of all three of the swimmers. Its powerful tail thrashed against the mosaic. It dislodged the amber jewel. Finn grabbed the jewel and slammed it into the orb.

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Facing Fears



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made her fear of heights worse than usual.

"Where are we?" she yelled after the Sea Dragon. "Are you just going to abandon us on this mountain?"

The Sea Dragon did not look back. She flew away from them, her magnificent wings spread wide. Soon she was just a microscopic dot on the horizon. They were on their own.



Finn turned to Izzy. "Stay close to Kit and me," he told her gently. "I promise we won't let you fall."

The three friends clung to the rope. They began to clamber across the weather-beaten surface of the statue's face. Monk had recovered after a good night's sleep. He scrambled around them, chattering excitedly.



began to attack!

Above them, a fresh horde of snarling creatures launched themselves at Kit. He ducked his head to avoid them as he tried desperately to reach out to Finn.

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Bounty in the Lagoon



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Shumi led them quickly through the forest. She was excited to hear about their quest.

"I'm sure the next jewel will be hidden somewhere inside the Merman," she told them. "He has always stood guard over our village." She rubbed her face, with a puzzled expression. "The kraken has lived in an old sunken ship for years," she explained, "but it has never been to the village before. I don't understand why it would have suddenly decided to take the statue."



"You stay on deck with Monk," she told him. "It's safest if we have two of us above and two of us below water." She and Kit exchanged grins and leapt into the lagoon.



His huge grin was lit up by the amber jewel, now gripped in his hand! They began to swim towards each other.

The kraken's slippery tentacles snaked across the water towards Finn and Kit. They were closing in all around them. Eager tentacles began to curl around both boys. It was too late! They were going to be captured! A faint blue light was shining now from an opening in the orb. Finn and Kit locked eyes. They thrust their outstretched arms towards each other. Kit jammed the amber jewel into the orb!

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Sounds of the Sirens



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Finn followed Izzy and Kit up some stairs into a shadowy courtyard. He gasped in horror: flying above his head were three enormously tall women. They had huge feathery wings sprouting from their backs. Their huge wings began to beat with excitement as they spotted Kit and Izzy.





Kit peered into the face of the statue. "I hope you can help us find a safe way out of this mess," he muttered. He swung his grapple at the amber jewel. It was time to release the next Guardian.



Foe's next words brought them quickly back to reality.

"There is a great conflict ahead," she told them. "We must all prepare for it. The Guardians are a mighty force, but you three are also going to have a huge part to play. The sorcerer has stolen three things from the Guardians. We will need to retrieve them. Their powers will be the vital key in the final battle."

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Guardians Unite



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Chapter 2: Wasteland Walk



The three exhausted friends stopped to rest, slumped against each other on the sand.

Finn was anxious to keep moving. "We need to reach that cluster of rocks before nightfall," he urged the others. "We have no protection out here. We are a sitting target."



They were almost through the doorway, when a massive winged creature landed behind them. Its huge wings knocked Finn to the ground. "One of the stone sentries has come to life!" Finn gasped. "We need to get inside that tower: RUN!"

The sentry was ready to attack. Finn was aware of a sudden flash of white. What was it? Had another sentry come to life?

Chapter 6: Power of the Guardians

A door at the back of the hall suddenly burst open and three massive dark spies crashed into the room. "The sorcerer's bodyguards," whispered Finn. "Take care, Kit. These three are likely to have been chosen for their physical strength."



The spy nearest them leered maliciously. "Good bye, small children," he mocked, as he held up a strange metal object. A terrifying red light shot from it, hot as fire and hissing like molten lava.

Finn thrust the silver shield up into the air, creating a barrier against the red light.