



Summary notes on Book 1
The Dark Hills Divide



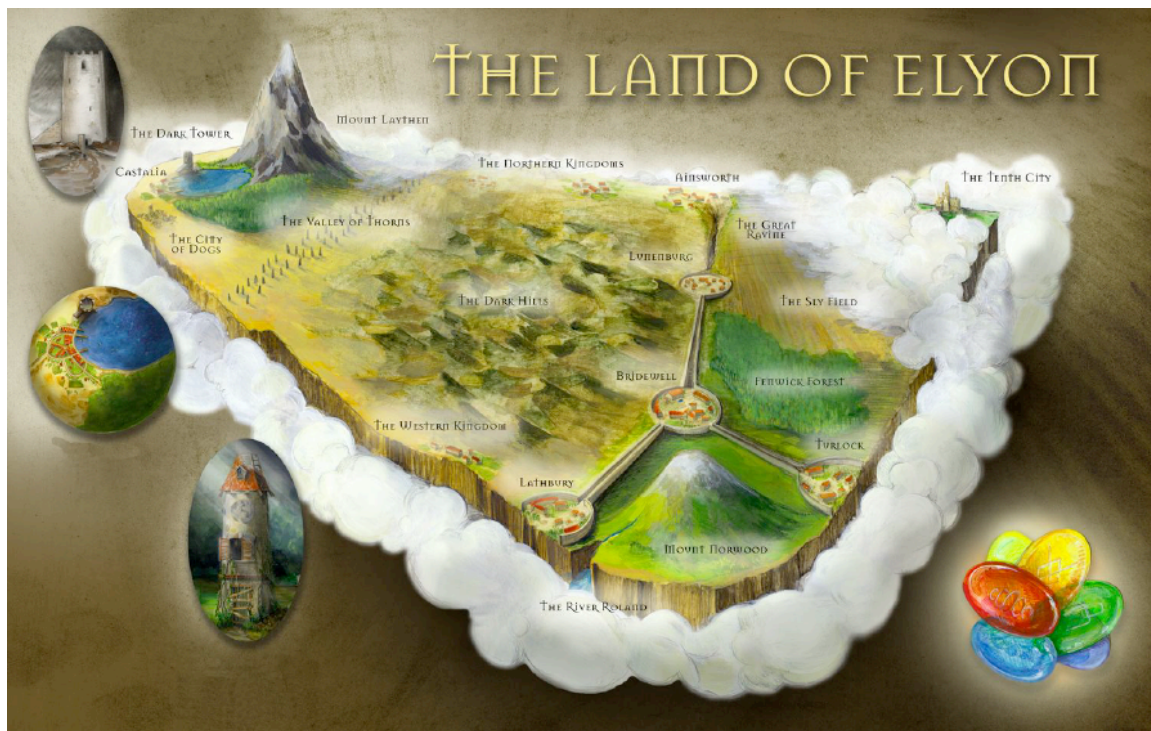
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– Story Summary: The Dark Hills Divide –

Every year, 12-year-old Alexa Daley spent her summers in Bridewell with her father, the mayor of Lathbury. She always looked forward to exploring the cozy library and maze of passages and rooms at the old Renny Lodge where they always stayed. One day, while traveling back to Bridewell by coach from their hometown of Lathbury, she insisted that her father, James Daley, tell her the story about the 40-foot walls that surrounded Bridewell and the cities around it.

Her father told her the walls were built to protect the city from the evil forces that dwelled in the forest and The Dark Hills. It all began when an orphan named Thomas Warvold had wandered off from his hometown on his 13th birthday. For years no one even knew or really cared where he had gone, but after about 20 years had gone by, he reappeared. And managed to persuade others to join him at a place that everyone once widely believed was dark, dangerous and haunted. Over time, however, so many people came to accept the Lunenburg Valley as a safe place to live, it became overcrowded and congested. At the other end of the valley was the bustling town called Ainsworth. Well, Warvold decided to extend a 40-foot walled road into the unknown territory and build a new town called Lunenburg at the end of their road. Warvold borrowed convicts from the prison in the nearby town of Ainsworth to do the hard labor, then returned them after the walled roads between Bridewell, Turlock, Lathbury and Lunenburg were finished, locking in the kingdom.



Upon arriving at the Renny Lodge (named after Warvold's wife Renny Warvold), Alexa was greeted by Ganesh, the mayor of Turlock and Warvold himself. After going up to her room, Alexa used a telescope that she had stolen from her mother to peek over the

city walls from her window. That afternoon Worvold took Alexa for a walk around the Bridewell. Just as he was finishing a story he had heard on one of his far away travels, he had dropped dead. But before calling for help, Alexa took a silver key from the locket he always wore around his neck.

Later, Alexa learned from Warvold's son, Nicolas, that his father had collected rare gems from his travels and that his mother, Renny Warvold, had etched hidden images onto the them to create Jocastas. Alexa later discovered that the medallions worn by the library cats, Sam and Pepper, at Renny Lodge also had Jocastas etched on them. Sam's Jocasta was etched with a detailed map of scattered pathways and "a miniature sparkling mountain at the end of one dotted pathway"; and Pepper's Jocasta had a map of the library and a "symbol of a mountain" that marked the spot where her favorite reading chair sat.

Being curious, Alexa pulled her favorite reading chair aside one day and discovered a crevice that was shaped like the silver key she had taken from Warvold. It opened to a hidden passageway that led to a seemingly endless tunnel outside the wall. At the end of the tunnel, a hatch sprung open where she met a small man named Yipes who lived in the wilderness and seemed to have been waiting for her. Alexa followed Yipes up a mountain to a pond where she found a glowing, lime-green, jacosta stone that gave her the ability to talk to animals in the forest. With the help of Yipes and her animal friends (especially Murphy, the squirrel) and she learned that Ganesh was actually a former convict named Sebastian, who was going to lead a rebellion against the townspeople.

Yipes and Darius (The Wolf) killed Sebastian and Alexa was rescued by her father and his faithful ally, Pervis. They took her back above ground which caused her green Jocasta stone's power to fade away completely. When Alexa returned to the Lodge, she told her father about the plot against Bridewell and her father called for a meeting to come up with a way to defend their city. As planned, the convicts attacked Bridewell in the middle of the night but failed, because Alexa, her father and the townspeople built a stone wall around the town square that trapped the convicts where their secret tunnel entered the city. Their brilliant plan had allowed them to crush the deadly rebellion without engaging in a bloody battle.

With all the underground convicts captured, the townspeople tore down all the walls except for the wall around Bridewell.

– The main characters and locations in The Dark Hills Divide –

Alexa Daley –

The spirited, curious and courageous 12-year-old heroine of the Land of Elyon series, Alexa embarks on an adventure beyond the walls that have always confined her. She discovers a gemstone of great power that allows her to communicate with the forest animals and confront an evil secret threatening all she holds dear.

James Daley –

Alexa's adoptive father, Mayor of Lathbury.

Thomas Warvold –

A great explorer of The Land of Elyon and the visionary leader and architect who designed the walled kingdom on the edge of the Dark Hills Divide. Regretting past mistakes, Warvold orchestrates his own death to escape the walls and save his kingdom.

Renny Warvold/Catherine –

Thomas Warvold's wife, mother of Nicholas Warvold and Alexa. (Originally named Catherine, had changed her name to Renny).

Yipes –

This mysterious mountain man is Alexa's loyal companion on her journey beyond the Bridewell walls. His connection to the magic of Elyon guides Alexa through her amazing adventure.

Murphy –

This hyper, chatty squirrel proves himself a heroic messenger between his endangered friend Alexa and her forest compatriots. His small size gets him through tight spaces, and his zany speed saves him from even tighter corners.

Pervis Kotcher –

The head guard of the Turlock gate.

Grayson –

The librarian.

Ganesh –

Mayor of Turlock.

Sebastian –

Escaped convict posing as a citizen of Bridewell.

Silas Hardy –

The mailman whom James races to Bridewell.

Other Characters:

Sam & Pepper (the library cats) • Murphy (squirrel) • Squire (red hawk) • Darius (wolf) •

Odessa (Darius' wife) • Sherwin (Darius' son) • Beaker (raccoon) • Picardy (female black bear) • Boone (bobcat) • Henry (badger)

Locations:

Bridewell / Ainsworth / Turlock / Lathbury / Renny Lodge / the Tunnel / The Dark Hills / Fenwick Forest / Mt. Norwood / Lunenberg Valley / Library / The glowing-green pond /