



Hannah



Avril



Diya



Cupid

BRAND NEW ACTION-ADVENTURE FANTASY SERIES

A shop that sells every antique and artifact from this world, and many more from the ones beyond

Welcome to Avril's Emporium, the greatest store on Earth and a cabinet of curiosities that just happens to be a portal between the human world and spirit realm.

When Hannah stumbles across Avril's Emporium, she discovers a secret that has been hidden for centuries. The shopkeeper, Avril, is the Spirit of April Fool's Day and is part of an immortal race of guardian spirits that protects human festivals. Hannah becomes his apprentice and meets the Spirits who visit the shop — including Diya, Cupid, the Leprechaun and the Grim Reaper.

When the Grim Reaper discovers that Hannah is a human apprentice, he wreaks havoc on the Emporium. Can Hannah save the store with the help of the spirits of Deepavali and Valentine's Day?

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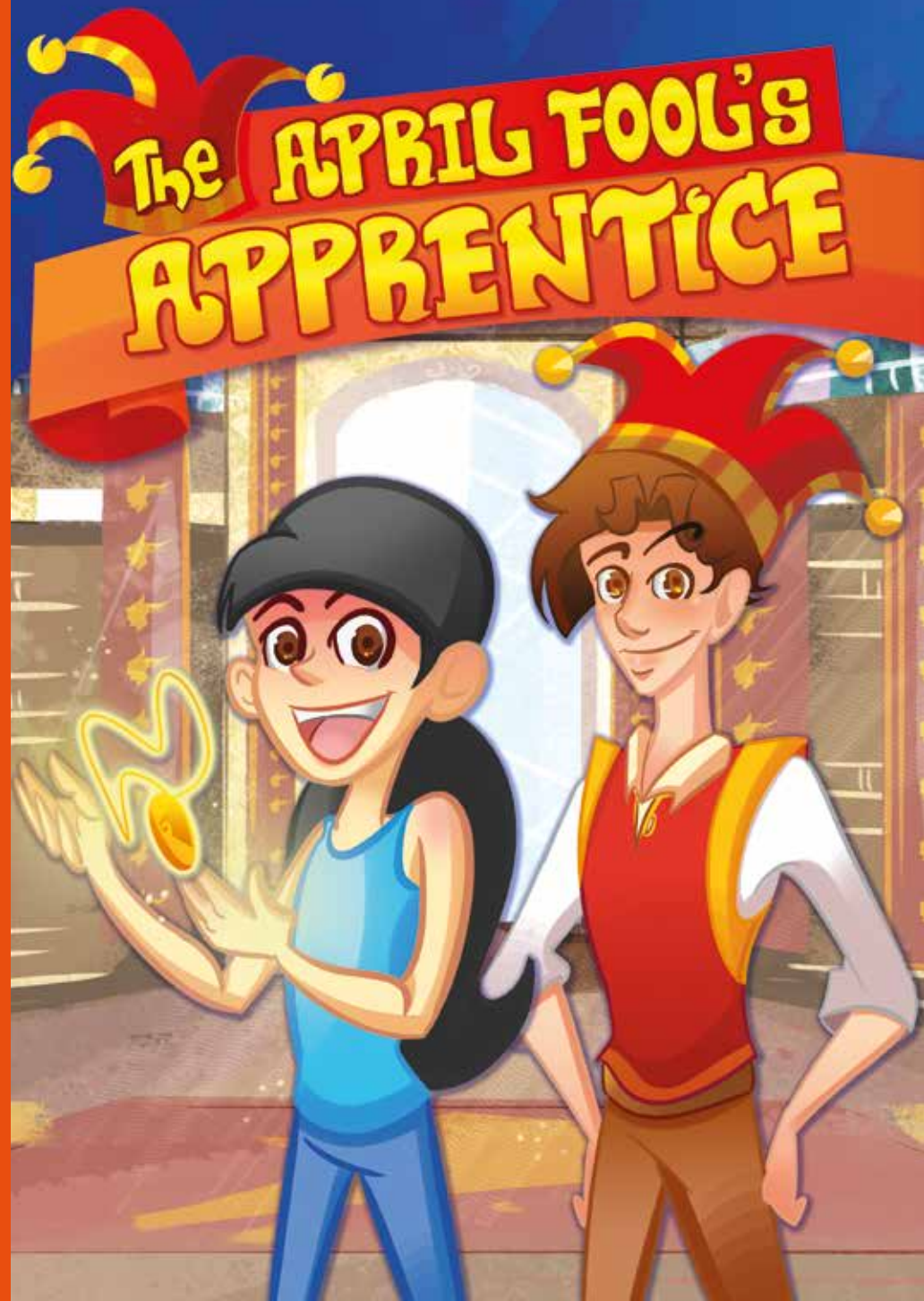
THE APRIL FOOL'S APPRENTICE

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

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THE ADVENTURE BEGINS





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MEET OUR HEROES



Hannah

Hannah is the youngest human to have visited the Spirit Realm, and she is the April Fool's first Apprentice.

Despite her youth, Hannah is brave, creative and intelligent. Her strong belief in magic will guide her on her magical adventures.



Avril

Avril is the Spirit of April Fool's Day. He guards a festival that is filled with fun and laughter.

He runs Avril's Emporium, a mystical shop that sells artifacts from our world, and many more from the ones beyond.

Although Avril may be mischievous at times, he truly cares for both humans and the Spirits, and is loyal towards his friends.



Diya

Diya is the Spirit of Deepavali's Apprentice, and is destined to protect a festival that celebrates the triumph of good over evil.

As a guardian of Deepavali, Diya is filled with life and enthusiasm, and constantly strives to do what is right.



Cupid

Cupid is the Spirit of Valentine's Day. He guards a festival that commemorates love and romance.

Aside from being a great friend, Cupid is also a skilled archer, and a terrific aviator. His powerful wings allow him to fly all over the world, and his enchanted arrows have helped humans find true love.

Chapter 1

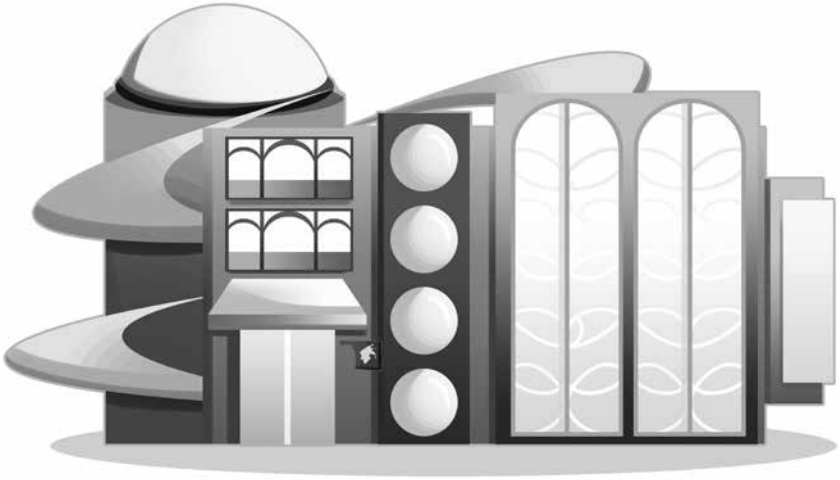
THE EMPORIUM

For as long as Hannah could remember, empty alleyways were the only things that sat across the street where she lived.

However, on the day that this story begins, Hannah noticed that these alleyways had disappeared, and a massive building had appeared in their place.

At first, Hannah assumed that the building had come from another world. Its walls were painted with the colours of the rainbow, and the tiles on its roof shimmered like diamonds. It stretched halfway across the street, and towered miles above the ground.

Hannah stared at the building and thought:
How did something so large appear overnight?



That wasn't the only thing that puzzled Hannah. One signboard – a wooden panel with a painted jester – hung above the building's entrance. Other than that, nothing told her what lay behind its walls.

Nonetheless, Hannah was determined to find out.

The next evening, while Hannah's parents were still at work, she decided to enter the peculiar building.

When Hannah stepped through its giant doors, she was swept off her feet.

Golden walls stretched towards a lofty

ceiling, and the evening sun shone through a series of giant windows. Crimson banners hung from wooden balconies, and spiralled stairways linked the building's floors.

Several display cases were scattered across the room, and they were all filled with antiques. Tiny Chinese trishaws, African *Koto* masks and dolls that were dressed in Indonesian *kebayas* sat upon their shelves.



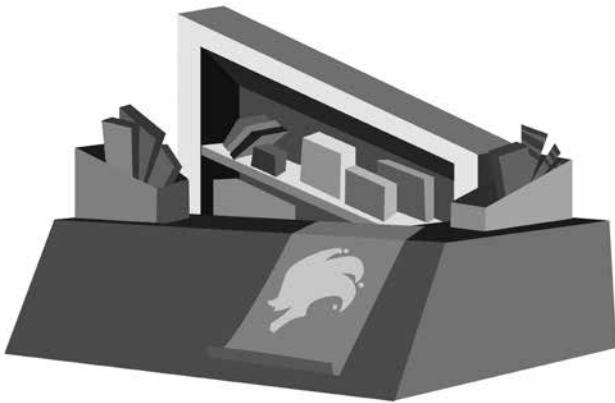
For Review Only



The summer heat must have been making Hannah's head spin, because she thought that she saw a doll *waving* at her.

A loud thud echoed from behind Hannah. Startled, she turned around to face the source of the noise.

Oddly enough, the only thing that sat behind her was a wooden counter. Other than that, it didn't seem like anyone was there.



THUD!

Something hit the bottom of the counter.

"OW!" a voice exclaimed. "I hate these hidden entrances!"

To Hannah's surprise, a teenage boy emerged from beneath the table. Oddly enough, the boy was wearing a jester's hat, and he looked just like the painted fool on the building's wooden signboard.

The boy's odd attire wasn't the only thing that caught Hannah's attention. The boy cradled a cardboard box in his arms and Hannah could have sworn that it was *glowing*.

Suddenly, the boy's eyes fell on Hannah.

"Oh, man," he stammered.

The boy ran his fingers through his tangled hair, trying (and failing) to neaten it. He straightened his clothes, adjusted his hat and placed his box on the counter.

Hannah gasped as a series of sparks sprung from within the box. The sparks crackled in the air, and dissolved as quickly as they had appeared.

"I didn't expect to have company," the boy murmured to himself. "I don't see many

customers during the day.”

Hannah raised an eyebrow. What did he mean by *that*?

“Is this place a shop?” Hannah asked.

“A *shop*?” The boy winced, almost as if Hannah had insulted him. “Ah – no. This isn’t just *a* shop. It’s *the* shop.”

The boy raised his eyebrows and waited for a reaction. Hannah simply gave him a blank stare.

“You have no idea where you are, do you?”

The boy burst into laughter.

Hannah shook her head.

“Little lady, you’re standing in Avril’s Emporium!” the boy proclaimed. “This is a store that sells every antique and artifact from your world, and many more from the ones beyond. Let me show you my collection.”

“Oh, you don’t have to do that,” Hannah raised her hands, “I’m not here to buy anything –”

“Perhaps I can interest you in one of these,” the boy said.

He ducked beneath the counter, and emerged with a tiny hourglass. The sand within it shimmered with light.

"This hourglass was once used to hold the Sands of Time," the boy explained. "Father Time gave it to me after he got a larger one. It's still in good condition."

"That's really cool," Hannah praised. "But I'm just –"



“Not interested?” the boy interrupted. “Okay, I’ll find you something else.”

Before Hannah could react, the boy disappeared behind the counter. Clearly, he wasn’t listening to her.

Seconds later, he emerged with a small, leather pouch. The boy reached into it, and pulled out a gold coin.

“Perhaps you’re more interested in this?” he asked. “This coin belonged to the Leprechaun. It was taken straight from his pot at the end of the rainbow.”

The boy ducked his head, and whispered, “That was right before too many humans started following the rainbow, and the Leprechaun had to find a better hiding place.”

Hannah tried again, “No, really. Thank you, but I –”

“Okay, okay,” the boy laughed. “I can see that you’re a tough customer. Let me show you something *really* special.”

The boy reached into the cardboard box that sat upon the counter and pulled out a tiny rocket. 火 – the Chinese character for “fire” – was etched across the explosive.

Instead of insisting that she did not want to buy anything, Hannah was transfixed by the object.

Hannah leaned towards the rocket and whispered, “What is that?”

“This is an Enchanted Firework,” the boy smiled. “The Spirit of Chinese New Year uses it for her festival.”

The boy gently shook the rocket in his hands, and its symbol pulsed with golden light.

Suddenly, sparks of fire sprouted from the symbol, and trailed across the boy’s fingertips. The rocket shot into the air, and exploded into a series of tiny fireworks.

“Wow!” Hannah exclaimed. She was enchanted.

“If you’re careful with this, you can create



beautiful fireworks,” he explained. “But if you aren’t, you could cause deadly explosions.”

As the fireworks display came to an end, the boy gave Hannah a mischievous smile.

“I don’t usually give firearms to little girls,” he said. “However, if you’re interested in buying them, I’d sell them to you for a special price.”

“That’s what I was trying to tell you. I don’t want to buy anything,” Hannah replied. She felt awful for taking up his time.

"You don't?" the boy asked. He slouched in disappointment.

"I just wanted to know what was in this building," Hannah admitted. "So, I walked across the street to see your shop."

The boy blinked. "Wait, let me get this straight. You *walked* across the street?"

"Um," Hannah gulped. "Yes, I did."

"You *walked* across the street?" he repeated.

"Yes." Hannah replied. Her cheeks flushed in annoyance.

"Are you sure that you ... I don't know. You didn't fly here, or anything?" he asked. "You didn't levitate through the Spirit Realms on a shooting star, or fly through the clouds on a magic carpet?"

Hannah stared at him through narrowed eyes. This boy was *obviously* messing with her, and she didn't like it at all.

"Look, I'm not trying to make you mad,"

the boy reassured, sensing her anger. "I just wanted to know ... "

With a trembling voice, he asked, "Are you ... are you *human*?"

The boy watched Hannah with a worried frown. Although his question seemed ridiculous, Hannah didn't think that it was meant to be a joke.

"Yes, I am," Hannah told him. "What else would I be?"

The boy didn't respond. Instead, he gave Hannah a bewildered look – almost as if she had grown an extra head.

CLANG!

Suddenly, a metallic chime echoed through the room.

It wasn't long before a second chime filled the room, and a third one followed soon after. Soon enough, a chorus of clangs echoed through the Emporium.

"Sorry, kiddo. The Emporium's closed for

the day." The boy gave Hannah an apologetic smile. "At least, it's closed to mortal visitors like yourself."

Before Hannah could ask him what he meant, the boy continued, "You should hurry out. I don't think that you'd want to be in here after the sun sets."

Why not? Hannah wondered.

The boy smiled, almost as if he anticipated her question.

"Let's just say that this shop gets *really* interesting after nightfall," he replied.

He held out his hand. "My name's Avril."

"Avril?" Hannah enquired. That was an unusual name.

"It's French for April," he grinned, as if he was hiding a secret.

"I'm Hannah," Hannah shook his hand. "It's English for ... well ... Hannah."

Suddenly, another loud clang echoed through the shop.

Avril cringed, and forced a smile. "Look, kid. I'm really sorry, but I have to kick you out."

"Can I come back this weekend?" Hannah asked. There was so much more that she wanted to see.

"I ... uh ... " Avril hesitated.

CLANG! Avril flinched as a louder series of chimes echoed through the building.

"Okay! Sure!" he blurted. "Now, get outta my shop! Go, go, go!"

Avril hopped across the counter. He placed his hands on Hannah's shoulders and pushed her towards the Emporium's exit.

Before Hannah could react, Avril pulled the exit open, pushed Hannah out into the street, and slammed the Emporium's doors in her face.

Hannah blinked in confusion. *What was that all about?*

Hannah looked up at the sky. The evening sun had finally set, and the moon hung high above her head.

When did it get so dark? Hannah wondered, as she walked across the street.

Just as Hannah was halfway across the street, she heard a faint “*woosh*” coming from within Avril’s Emporium.

Seconds later, she heard several muffled voices coming from behind its walls.

Hannah turned around to face the store. Oddly enough, its windows glowed with technicolored light, and strange shadows were seen through the glass.

Hannah rubbed her eyes in disbelief. It was almost like ... well ...

Like there were *other people* inside.

When she opened her eyes, and looked back at the Emporium, she realised that the shadows and voices had disappeared. Moreover, the Emporium’s lights were turned off, and the building seemed empty.

“I’m losing my mind,” Hannah blinked and muttered to herself.

Turning around, she continued across the street. She reassured herself that the Emporium was closed, and that there were no people inside it.

Of course, she didn't know then how right she was. The things inside the Emporium weren't people.

They were much *more* magical.