

DRAGON GUARDIAN ACADEMY

BEYOND THE SOUTHERN GATE

BOOK ONE

*Some maps are drawn.
Others are hidden.*



A DRAGON GUARDIAN ADVENTURE

BY BATYAH HA MELEK

DRAGON GUARDIAN ACADEMY

BEYOND THE SOUTHERN GATE

BOOK ONE

CURIOSITY
COURAGE
A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW

SOME DOORS
LEAD TO A
BIGGER WORLD

FREE CHAPTER 1 SAMPLE

CHAPTER 1

THE DOOR BENEATH THE MOUNTAIN



*Read it, listen to it, follow along, or take turns.
Reading speed is never a measure of intelligence.*

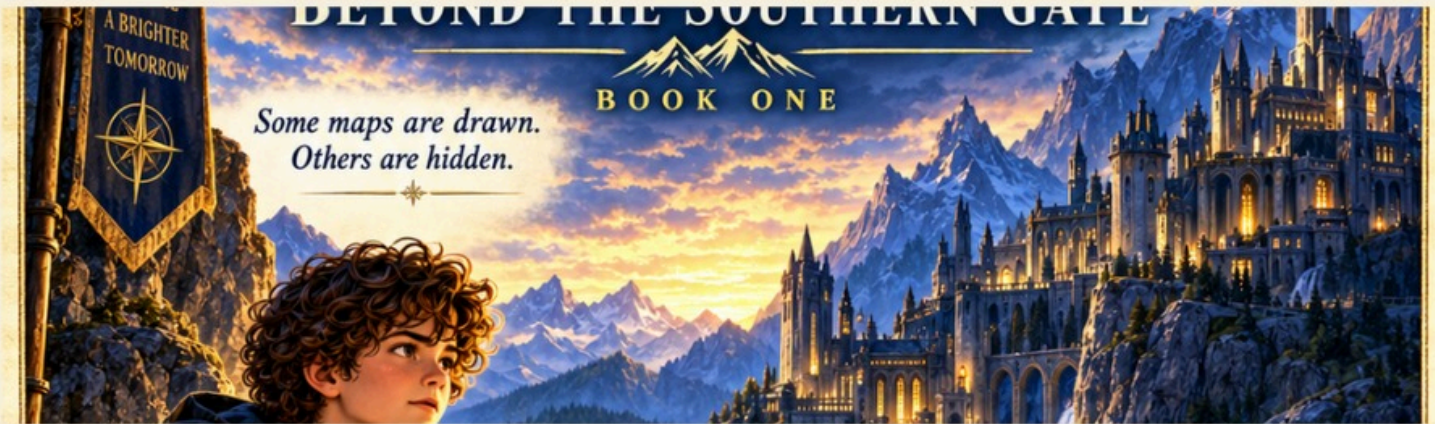
"Read first. Think second. Decide last."

— Commander Mara

By Batyah Ha Melek

BIGGER
QUESTIONS
BRAVER
HEARTS
KINDER
WORLDS

EXPLORATION • CURIOSITY • COURAGE • A BRIGHTER TOMORROW



Publication & Reading Notes

Written by	Batyah Ha Melek
Published by	Father of Lights Wisdom • Pleroma Legacy Group
Website	fatheroflightswisdom.com

GUARDIAN READING PROMISE

Read it, listen to it, follow along, or take turns. The story and the thinking stay the same. Reading speed is never a measure of intelligence. Oral answers, dictation and scribing are welcome when writing is the barrier.

© 2026 Batyah Ha Melek. All rights reserved.

This free Chapter 1 sample may be downloaded and printed for personal family or homeschool use.

It may not be resold, repackaged, or redistributed as a separate commercial product.

Adventure fiction. Story events are fictional. Real-world claims are investigated separately in Dragon Guardian Academy case files.

Batyah Ha Melek

Daughter of Yahuah, The King • Lover of Yahusha

“Read first. Think second. Decide last.” — Commander Mara

CHAPTER 1

A STORM BEFORE DINNER

The storm hit hard just before dinner. Wind slammed against Dragon Guardian Academy, and the tall windows rattled. Lightning flashed across the mountains, and thunder rolled through the stone halls.

Inside the library tower, Micah was bent over a brass mechanism built into the table. It was a round panel with a carved dragon symbol and a thick screw in the center.

"Eleven," Micah said, turning the screw again. Ari leaned closer. "You've turned it twelve times. The map said twelve."



Just then, Lumen lifted his head, his golden-blue glow brightening. He looked toward the western wall.



The lights flickered once. Then twice. Then everything went black.



A scratching sound came from under the floor.



Micah pulled out a hand torch and lit it, casting a warm circle of light. "Nobody should rush into a dark corridor just because a mysterious dragon starts glowing."



THE SOUND UNDER THE FLOOR

With the mystery only growing, the three guardians and Lumen followed the sound toward the old western corridor, ready to see what they would find next.



"Read first. Think second. Decide last."
— Commander Mara





The Old Wing

The western corridor was older than the rest of the Academy. The air felt colder, and the stones were darker. Most students preferred the bright halls, but the western wing was quiet and often forgotten.

Lumen led the way, his faint golden glow lighting the path. Ari carried a lantern, and the three guardians followed, drawn by a soft sound echoing through the corridor. They were not looking for a destination, only following curiosity.

Lumen stopped suddenly near an old bookcase. He scratched at the floor, chirping softly. Behind the bookcase, the lantern light revealed a pattern in the stone wall.

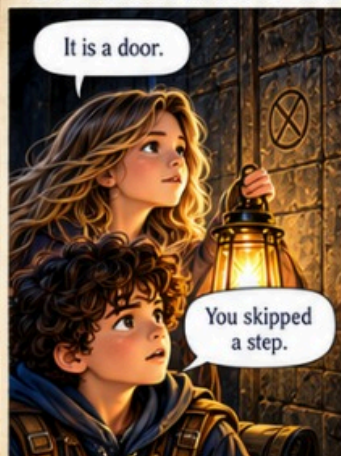


Older places tell quieter stories.

Sometimes curiosity leads to discovery.

OBSERVATION FIRST.

LOOK CLOSER. ASK BETTER QUESTIONS.



GUARDIAN CHECKPOINT

Observation = what you directly notice.

Inference = what you think the observation might mean.

Ari's first idea may be right, but Micah wants evidence before certainty.

FIVE CLUES

One doorway



Wave
A journey ahead.

Crossed Circle
A choice to make.

Mountain
A greater challenge.

Compass
Many places. One purpose.

The Unknown
Something more.

Symbols invite questions.



The more we notice, the more we understand.

The symbols glowed softly in the lantern light. Ari was sure it was a door. Micah wanted to look closer. Lumen's scratch had revealed something important, but they still needed more clues.

The team decided to take a careful look at the wall and the space around it.

What else could they discover?

Better questions lead to bigger adventures.



CHAPTER 1

The Wall That Rang Hollow

Micah ran his fingers along the carved stone, then tapped gently with a metal tool from his pack.

Tap. Tap. Tap.

Most of the wall sounded solid. But inside the outline of the dragon, the sound changed. It was deeper, like a hollow space behind the stone.

"Hollow," Ari said quietly.

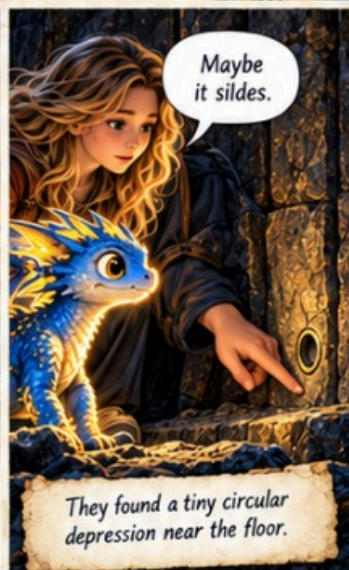
"Probably," Micah replied.

They searched the carving, looking for seams or hinges, but found none. Near the floor, Micah noticed a tiny circular depression. It was almost the same size as the old compass-piece hanging from his satchel.

Lumen's scales brightened, as if he sensed something.



Inside the outline, the sound was deeper. Something was behind the stone.



They found a tiny circular depression near the floor.



Micah pressed it in. Nothing happened. Then he turned it.



With a soft grinding sound, a narrow brass plate slid out of the stone. Micah read the words aloud.

THE BRASS PLATE

SOME ANSWERS ARE FOR THOSE WHO KEEP LOOKING.

A narrow brass plate slid out of the wall, revealing an inscription.

The old engraved letters were harder to read in the uneven light. Ari held the lantern steady, careful not to block Micah's view.

Micah traced the letters with his eyes, taking his time.

"To those who look beyond the first

Below the words were five small symbols
—the same five from the wall.

Lumen's glow cast a warm light across the brass. The mechanism was working.

This was only the beginning.



Reading Support

Ari waits.
He helps without
taking the reading
away from Micah.

Good team members
make space for each other.

Graphic-Novel Moment

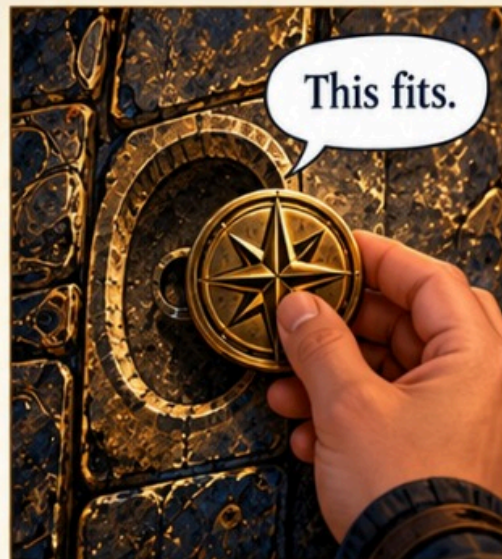
The hidden wall begins to answer.

Micah taps the wall. The deeper sound means the space behind the stone may be hollow.

So it really could be a door.

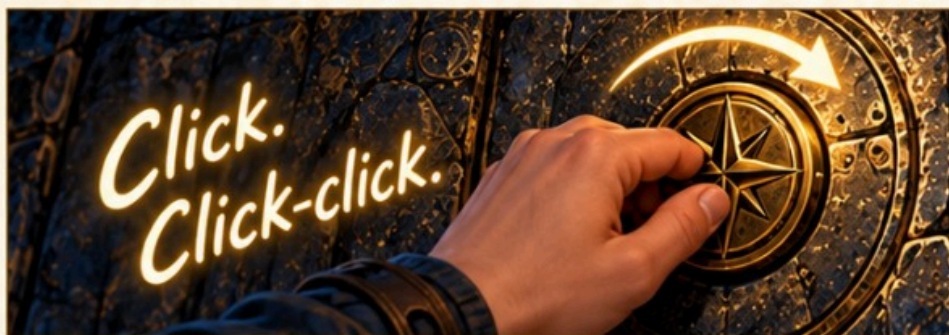


This fits.



Click.
Click-click.

A hidden mechanism wakes inside the wall.



TO THOSE WHO LOOK
BEYOND THE FIRST ANSWER



It's moving!

Stand back.



Pictures are part of the reading. Notice sound, light, symbols, and movement.

Five Symbols



Ari ran a finger just above the plate without touching it.

"They must be a code."

"Maybe."

"At some point you are allowed to be excited."

"I am excited."

"Your face forgot."

Lumen suddenly placed one claw on the compass-shaped symbol.

One by one, faint golden lines spread through the carvings.

The last symbol flared brighter than the others.

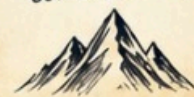
Then the wall gave a low grinding rumble.

And the stone wall began to move.



The Door Beneath the Mountain

*Some doors are hidden
until the right people
come looking.*



It did not swing open.

It slid sideways into the mountain.

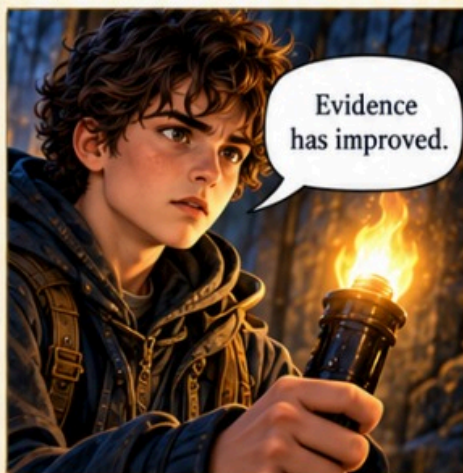
Cold air breathed out of the darkness
beyond.

Ari's mouth fell open.

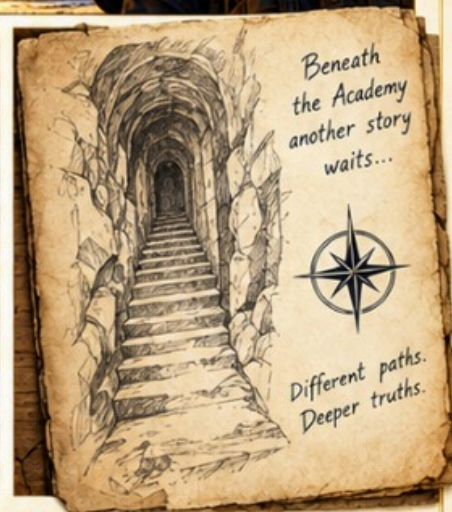
Behind the wall was a narrow staircase
descending steeply beneath the Academy.

The steps were worn in the centre, as though
many feet had once used them.

Micah shone his torch down. The beam
reached only a little way before darkness
swallowed it.



*The steps were worn
in the centre, as though
many feet had once
used them.*



*Beneath
the Academy
another story
waits...*

*Different paths.
Deeper truths.*



Commander Mara

For once, Micah is entirely correct.

Both boys spun around. Commander Mara stood at the far end of the corridor holding a storm lantern. She was not smiling, but she was not surprised either.

Her eyes moved from the open wall to the brass plate, then to Lumen.

"You know about this," Ari said.

Mara stopped beside the opening.

"I know the Academy has more rooms than the plans admit."

Micah looked back at the staircase.

"Where does it go?"

For a moment the storm seemed far away.

"I hoped," Mara said quietly, "that I would never have to find out."



The Hidden Archive

The staircase curved down through the rock. At the bottom stood another door—this one ordinary wood, swollen with age.

Commander Mara pushed it open. A small room waited beyond.

Shelves covered every wall. Boxes. Rolled maps. Brass instruments. Leather folders. A broken sextant. Old glass bottles. Dust lay thick over almost everything. Almost.

Ari saw it first.

“Someone has been here.”

On the centre table, a clean rectangle cut through the dust. Something had recently been moved.



E. V.

Its cover was cracked with age.

A compass rose had been stamped into the leather.

Under it were two faded letters.

E. V.

Micah stopped breathing for a moment.

They both knew those initials.

Professor Elias Vale. Their missing great-uncle.

Commander Mara went very still.

Micah reached toward the journal.

Don't, she said.



Some discoveries change everything.



Before Mara could answer, thunder rolled through the mountain.

The lantern flame bent sideways.

Somewhere deeper beneath the hidden archive, something answered with a single metallic knock.

KNOCK.



E. V.

Wedged behind two rolled charts was a leather-bound journal. Its cover was cracked with age. A compass rose had been stamped into the leather.

Under it were two faded letters: E. V.

Micah stopped breathing for a moment. They both knew those initials.

Professor Elias Vale. Their missing great-uncle.

Commander Mara went very still.

Micah reached toward the journal.

"Don't," she said.

Before Mara could answer, thunder rolled through the mountain. The lantern flame bent sideways. And somewhere deeper beneath the hidden archive, something answered with a single metallic knock.



Before Mara could answer, thunder rolled through the mountain.



The lantern flame bent sideways.



And somewhere deeper beneath the hidden archive, something answered with a single metallic knock.



Chapter 1 Complete

Next: Chapter 2 — The Journal That Should Not Exist



Curiosity
leads to discovery.
Bravery leads
to what's next.



WORD POWER

New words. A stronger you.

observation [ob-ser-va-tion]

— something you directly notice

inference [in-fer-ence]

— an idea you form from clues

archive [ar-kive]

— a place where old records are kept

mechanism [mech-a-nism]

— a set of parts that make something work



GUARDIAN REFLECTION

Think deeper. Go further.

1. What clues showed the wall was a hidden door?
2. Why did Micah want evidence before certainty?
3. What do you think is hidden deeper beneath the archive?



GUARDIAN SKILL

Observation first.

Inference second.

Courage with wisdom.



More secrets.
New challenges.
The adventure
continues.

"Some mysteries
are invitations."



SAME QUESTIONS.
BIGGER WORLDS.



Keep looking.
Keep wondering.
Keep going.

DRAGON GUARDIAN ACADEMY

BEYOND THE SOUTHERN GATE

At Dragon Guardian Academy, every storm hides a clue. When Micah, Ari, Sophie, and the blue-gold dragon Lumen discover a hidden door beneath the mountain, they uncover a forgotten staircase, a missing explorer's journal, and a mystery that reaches far beyond the Academy walls.

Inside this free sample:

- Atmospheric story pages
- Graphic-novel moments
- Word Power support
- Reflection questions

Read it. Listen to it. Follow along. Take turns.

SOME PLACES
WAIT FOR THE
RIGHT PEOPLE
TO COME LOOKING.

Coming Soon: Beyond the Southern Gate — Book One

By Batyah Ha Melek · fatheroflightswisdom.com