

Hema P. King

You are the award-winning author of the critically acclaimed *Shadowverse* novels as HP King. Your fans are eagerly awaiting your next novel and keep asking when it's coming out. And asking. And asking. And they won't go away, really.

Argh! You're a fraud, who's hit writer's block. The original book ideas weren't even yours really. The whole series is based on the make-believe adventures of a local kid, Noshi Sutherland, who used to come by and talk to you all the time.

They told you about a world called Shady Springs, where some magical Power of Shadows was real. However, shadow mages had to abide by the rules, or the Order of the Shadowy Text would hunt them down. There, the kid claimed they got apprenticed to a mage named Quinn Anthony, and had a series of adventures hunting down rogue mages who didn't abide by those rules.

Well, it wasn't too hard to file off the serial numbers and publish those stories as books. Noshi Sutherland became Shion Northlander. Quinn Anthony became Mark Harley. The Order of the Shadowy Text became the Association of Insubstantial Tomes.

You even threw in some stuff about the tall tales told about the Brehm family -- locals who were supposedly descended from invading soldiers. You dressed it all up as part of an invasion from Shady Springs, though.

Not to mention that it takes a lot of work to take a rough plot outline and turn it into a book. Ideas are easy. Turning them into novels is work. You do have talent at writing. Only you're not so good with the ideas part.

You felt a bit bad exploiting a kid like that (you even still have a shard of glass that the kid thought was part of a magical artifact), so you made sure to look out for them. You gave the kid some odd jobs from time to time. Now, with the kid's dad sick, your guilt has encouraged you to help support the family.

But the stories have stopped. You're glad the kid isn't so obsessed anymore, but without the stories, your books have stopped too, and your fans are getting impatient. They're even writing hate mail and posting conspiracy theories as to why you stopped writing - it's a mess. You hate to admit it, but a part of you is secretly hoping that the kid will go back to the way they were before and start spouting stories again.

It's an ugly world you live in, but an author's got to eat.

People You Know

- Noshi Sutherland -- the kid. You renamed them as Shion Northlander for the books, though.
- Rudra Brehm -- youngest member of the Brehm family. Their family is reclusive and not well-liked by the other locals. You felt bad for them when they were a kid and gave them books to read. Left town a few years ago to go save the world or something.
- Meher Madoff -- head of the local hunting lodge, which owns most of the wilder areas around town.
- Kanak Dorking -- another lodge member. They're the one who got drunk one night and told you that the Brehm family was descended from invaders. That tidbit also made it into your books.
- Quinn Anthony -- the mage from the kid's stories. You renamed them as Mark Harley for the books.

Goals

- Get inspired! Your fans are waiting for the next book, and it's getting ugly. But you need a source of inspiration.
- Be a know-it-all about the Shadowverse. You authored it, so you know it best. Sure, you took some poetic license and changed or made up details as you saw fit, but it's all fiction anyway. And if you don't remember, make it up!
- Help the kid out -- you do feel some obligations towards Noshi, so make sure they end up okay.

Items and Sheets

- A shard of glass that might have once been part of a mirror. Noshi gave this to you once to prove that their stories were real.
- Some runes.
- "Sleepy Valley" bluesheet.

Sleepy Valley

Sleepy Valley is a calm, ordinary town, nestled among forested hills in a remote part of the country. It's a nice peaceful place to live away from the noise and stress of the big city.

It doesn't have much that makes it stand out from other towns, so it doesn't have much of a tourist presence, but it does draw some hunters and hikers in the warmer months who appreciate the untouched old-growth forest. The rest of the townsfolk live here year-round, working at shops and restaurants, farming, and making handicrafts.

The one distinction Sleepy Valley has, perhaps, is that over a hundred years ago, strange invaders came out of the forests and took over the town, using it as a base to expand into other areas before eventually being driven out. Some strange tales of the invasion have been passed down from people's grandparents and great grandparents, but no one alive today remembers it, and the details have passed into legend. There's a war memorial in the town square, but no one pays it much attention.

It's not that Sleepy Valley has been completely left behind by time. The highway makes it easier to visit the city than it was in the past, and supplies the market with fresh fruit and vegetables even in the winter. Snow plows and heating oil certainly make the winters easier than they were for previous generations.

All in all, it's an idyllic town, one that provides a nice, safe environment for children to grow up in. It may not look impressive, but to residents, it's home.

Familiar Faces

- Noshi Sutherland: local high schooler who grew up here.
- Rudra Brehm: only child of a local family, grew up here before going off to join the Peace Corps.
- Kanak Dorking: well-dressed local who's away on business a lot but frequents the bars when in-town.
- Meher Madoff: wealthy stockbroker who summers in a nearby hunting lodge.
- Hema P. King: well-known fantasy author who calls the town home.