

Allenia Lottway

Backstory

Species: Unicorn (anthro); hybrid between a female horse and a male deer

Sex: ♀

Age: 24

Height: 5ft 6in

Weight: 154lbs

Siblings: None

Profession: Baker, healer



Worldbuilding Notes

Unicorns in this universe are believed to have existed once upon a time, but to be extinct in the current day. The legends of this universe say that they were magical and sensitive to nature. In the 'current' day, a unicorn's horn is seen as a disfigurement.

Allenia's powers of healing are wound-based: she can heal flesh-wounds but cannot banish diseases. Neither can she prevent a person from dying of old age. She can use her powers on herself, with somewhat limited results. She is capable of withholding her powers. However, she remains in conscious control of her powers so if a person threatens her effectively, she will still perform healing on demand.

During the earlier years of Allenia's life, the country of Irder is at war.

Allenia is an original character who appears in an unnamed story. She was born as a magical creature in a politically unstable land, which meant that her powers - and later her looks - made her a target, but she is a country girl at heart and only wants to be close to nature.

Trust & Confidence

(newborn)

Alleniea was born to a horse and a deer. Although she was a unicorn by birth, nobody had any idea about this as she hadn't begun to grow her horn yet, so it was assumed that she was a hybrid who just happened to look entirely like a horse.

Both of her parents were bakers. They rented their home from a landlord rather than owning their own space, so had to work every day to pay their rent and provide for themselves and Alleniea. They had regular work, but were not rich. That meant that they had to often leave their daughter with a neighbour. They loved Alleniea very much and she sensed that, but as an infant who couldn't understand why they kept disappearing, she experienced difficulties with her attachment to them.

Regardless of how busy they were, Alleniea's parents adored her and were happy to be reunited with her when their workdays were done. Because of this, Alleniea's parents, and Alleniea herself, experienced a disconnect in how resolved they felt their daily separation to be: the parents were happy and satisfied that they had provided for their daughter and delighted in seeing that she was happy to see them, while Alleniea felt relief that they had returned, but remained confused about why they kept disappearing.

However, the neighbour, an ageing cow named Yama, happily took care of her during the days, and she became Alleniea's primary attachment object. Yama was able to give Alleniea her undivided attention as she had several sons who supported her.

Yama believed in magic. When Alleniea was a few months old and had started to babble, Yama began to notice a few little details that led her to believe that Alleniea had magical abilities. These details were mainly an affinity for plants: Alleniea absolutely loved her greens and ate them all up enthusiastically, and constantly looked at, and touched, the plants that Yama kept in her house.

Freedom & Self-Determination

(toddlerhood)

Yama was experienced enough with raising children, and attentive enough to Alleniea, that she spotted Alleniea's upset at having to see her parents leave to go to work every day, and did what she could to make it easy for both parties.

As it happened, there was quite a lot she could do. She talked with Alleniea during those daily departures and, whether Alleniea understood Yama's words or not, the infant recognised the kind and fearless way Yama talked about it. Yama played with Alleniea

and brushed her hair so that she got used to the idea that being with Yama was a pleasant experience in and of itself. She reminded Alleniea of the pleasures of being around her parents - an evening meal, mum-and-dad time, a bath or an extra hair-brushing, and a bedtime story. She created a boundaried environment that felt safe and secure. She also spoke with Alleniea's parents to make sure they didn't feel guilty about the separation, especially given how necessary it was, and to encourage them to feel that they could trust her with their daughter. Some of this was arguably superfluous, but Yama believed in doing a job well, and she considered Alleniea's care an important job, to which she had been entrusted.

All together this helped Alleniea to overcome the anxieties of constantly switching between her parents and neighbour as caregivers, and went most of the way to healing the rupture she'd experienced in her early bond with her mother in infancy. As a result of all of this nurturing work from Yama, Alleniea became an outgoing child, happy to meet new people and figure out what they were about, safe in the knowledge that Yama was always there for her.

It was during her toddlerhood that her coat began to change. It didn't look like either of her parents' fur. This struck everyone as odd, but they weren't concerned.

Alleniea's fascination for plants persisted. The home that her parents rented included a garden, and Alleniea took great interest in it. She loved going outside and finding whatever natural wonders she could. She loved anything natural, but flowers were her favourites. Aside from the garden behind her parents' house, the Lottways' landlord had a private garden of his own, and Alleniea's parents and Yama had to keep an eye on her to make sure she didn't go in there. They also had to watch carefully to make sure Alleniea didn't try to play with any poisonous vegetation.

Being cared for by her mother and Yama, each on a part-time basis, meant that Alleniea had learned to relax and give herself over to whatever might happen next. She had also learned the philosophy that no matter how bad things might be (and for an infant, being handed away by their mother is pretty harrowing), things would turn out okay in the end. This gave her a soft, gentle personality that stayed with her for the rest of her life. As a little one full of exuberance, it made for a strange combination of enthusiasm and gentleness.

She also developed a mostly healthy attitude towards choice. Yama encouraged her to make small choices: did she want carrots, or parsnips for dinner? Did she want to play with the ragdoll or play hide-and-seek with Yama? These were safe choices, and Yama

was attentive enough to make sure Alleniea didn't make any dangerous ones - or if she did, that she was diverted from them before any harm came of it, such as when she took an interest in something poisonous in the garden. As a result of this attentive care from Yama, Alleniea would grow up to have a belief in her own autonomy, although her sense of autonomy was not particularly marked: it was supported but not challenged enough for her to develop a particularly strong sense of it, only a passive assumption of it.

The fact that Alleniea had to fit in with the grown-ups by living according to their time-table meant that she was a cooperative child. Bakers work hard and start early in the day, so they needed her to allow herself to be handed over to Yama in the mornings without fuss. Alleniea sensed and complied with this.

Overall, Alleniea felt as if she was being controlled by the adults around her, but that that control was benign. As a result of this, Alleniea tended to be lackluster about being possessive over things. As she understood it, whatever happened would happen, and as much as she might like a certain blanket or toy, if it was the will of the grown-ups to take it from her, she would surrender it.

Ambition

(young childhood)

Alleniea grew a little bolder as she aged, and more energetic. She wanted to explore a bit further than her and Yama's houses and the Lottway garden, and became more of a handful as she became less inclined to stay in one place. Yama handled this by redirecting her to help around hers and Alleniea's parents' houses.

Alleniea had observed other people cleaning and tidying up, so she found it easy to learn how to do the same, but however much Yama tried encouraging her, Alleniea wished that she could run around in the town or the woods to the north instead. Like many small children, the town looked like a playground to her in ways that such a place never does to adults, and green spaces always offered some new treasure to enjoy, if only she could go there. The desire to explore and to be with nature wasn't all-consuming and didn't make her truly miserable, and she certainly didn't consider escaping the house to do it, but it did leave her with a wistful sense that there was something else she would rather be doing. It made her quite daydreamy.

Her horn started to grow, and her parents became concerned about this, and what it would mean for public perception of Alleniea. Between this and Alleniea's tendency to

seek out plants both safe and poisonous, Yama and her parents started to keep her indoors for as much of the time as they could.

This was around the time that Yama noticed something that confirmed her initial beliefs about Alleniea's magical heritage. She had a few plants around her house that she had neglected, and which were withered. Sometimes, after Alleniea had been to her home, she would look at those plants and see that they were perfectly healthy, but she knew that she hadn't nursed them back to health herself. For the following few years after this, Yama would tell Alleniea stories about how she had revived her plants.

Alleniea grew enough to become more graceful and articulate, and it dawned on her that she was capable of something quite unique and special. She got excited about her magical abilities and told her parents, but they never took her seriously and thought she was playing make-believe.

This made uncomfortable listening for Alleniea. As a small child who had started looking at the world and imagining herself as an active participant in it, seeing her parents simply disbelieve that she had a magical gift was disheartening. But at the same time, she was used to the fact that they were busy, often distracted with customers or the latest batch of bread and pastries, and couldn't entertain make-believe. So rather than be too crushed by their dismissiveness, she stopped trying to tell them and continued to practice her magic quietly, and only discussed it with Yama instead.

Alleniea sensed in Yama's words and tone that there was something 'big' about her ability to perform magic, and that it could have consequences for her. She found this confusing, as Yama seemed neither fully positive nor fully negative about it, as if it was a good thing, but that bad things could come of it. This left Alleniea feeling somewhat doubtful about how other people would react to her magic. Indeed, even her own parents brushed the idea off.

Despite all of this, Yama made sure to stress to Alleniea that her power was benign, and that she should feel proud of it. Having to keep quiet about something she was so proud of was quite confusing for her, as was the need to keep her horn hidden on the rare occasion she went outside.

One day, while being taken to Yama's house by her parents, somebody from the village spotted her horn. They asked if she was a unicorn and said that that could "lead to troublesome places". From then on Alleniea felt a certain fear about her powers and

shame about her horn. She started actively wanting to hide it, but it was starting to get too big to hide properly under a scarf.

Alleniea's ambitions were kept under tight control by Yama. This wasn't intentional: Alleniea's power generally required her to be outside, to use it - where the flora and fauna were - and her parents were reluctant to let their daughter venture outside. Yama honoured this so as a result, Alleniea found herself unable to exercise her powers fully. Having free rein to experiment with her powers would have allowed her to dream big, but that couldn't happen. Yama helped her out with this as best she could by bringing plants and animals into the house for Alleniea to heal, and Yama's sons would talk with her whenever they returned from their travels, but in practice Alleniea only used a fraction of the power she was capable of, and came to believe that that was the limit of her abilities. Her scope for ambition remained small as a result.

All of this prevented Alleniea from fully experiencing life for herself, and this, plus the anxieties that she had started to feel about what her horn represented, meant that she began to actively want to stay out of peoples' way.

Productivity

(older childhood)

Alleniea had her first bereavement after she reached the age of six: Yama died. The Lottways brought Alleniea to Yama's death-bed to say goodbye, and Yama told Alleniea's parents that Alleniea had magical powers.

This was when Alleniea's parents finally took the idea of Alleniea being magical seriously, and from then on, they watched their daughter far more closely for confirmation of it.

Alleniea's parents faced a difficult choice: to take her to the funeral or not attend at all. They no longer had anyone available to babysit their daughter, and it would have been considered callous by the other villagers for them not to be seen at the funeral, so they decided to risk bringing Alleniea along.

At the time Alleniea was still just about able to keep her horn hidden under a head-scarf so she wore one to the funeral. It wasn't the easiest fit and anybody who looked at her for more than a few seconds would notice that the scarf fell in such a way that it was obscuring something, but for the sake of respect towards Yama, nobody brought it up. Alleniea was aware of the situation, however, and she spent the time feeling

hyper-aware of the way the villagers glanced at her and reluctant to turn her attention to the ceremony itself.

The funeral had a strong and lasting impact on Alleniea. She had spent longer with Yama than she had with her birth-parents, so to her this was like attending her own mother's funeral. It gave her as much closure as was possible under the circumstances, but she wondered for a long time afterwards whether she would have been able to use her powers to heal Yama and prevent her death. She would not, but her uncertainty about this left her aware of her ignorance about the scope of her own powers.

Alleniea found her own way to honour Yama after the funeral: by planting a Star Jasmine on her grave. This particular plant seemed suitable to Alleniea for its beauty, and, as a vine-plant, its tendency to cover things. Honouring Yama like this helped Alleniea to find closure in Yama's death on her own terms rather than those of the community. Being the sole person by the graveside also meant that Alleniea didn't have to worry about her horn being seen, and she could sob loudly if she needed.

With the culture of Sunglow being what it was, it was considered appropriate for Alleniea to start helping her parents to support the family. As such, this cut Alleniea's grieving time short. She would have loved to have spent more time by Yama's grave, but her parents needed her at the bakery.

Alleniea's tasks involved setting up the display areas, bagging up orders, and helping her dad in the back room. Occasionally she would leave the shop but she never ventured far. When she did, some people would stare at her and make comments about her to their children. Thankfully however, her parents' regulars were used to the sight of her horn and didn't do this.

If Alleniea were asked at this time in her life what she wanted to do as an adult, she would have said, "to be a gardener or florist". However, her parents wanted her to bake and she was happy enough with this. She was familiar with it and that helped her to feel safe and that she had a valued and helpful place in society. Yama had been an expert in medicine, but Alleniea did not feel a need to follow in her footsteps over this.

Occasionally a visitor from one of the bigger cities in Sunglow would come to Alleniea's town. She didn't like that; these visitors were spiteful towards the locals, which was mostly made up of hoofed citizens. While Alleniea sometimes fantasized about going to see what was beyond her home town, she also loved her home, disliked the idea of visiting the major cities, and preferred the idea of exploring nature - indeed, there was a

whole world of that beyond her home. Indeed, she was aware that the feeling was mutual and that if she were to visit a city, she would be treated as unwelcome, as those in smaller cities generally were.

Allenia was not the only child in her town, but she had become reclusive enough that she didn't make friends with any of them. Instead she focused on working in the bakery.

Child to Adult Transition

(adolescence)

As Allenia got more confident with her baking she added to her repertoire, including making sweets that the townsfolk enjoyed. Despite the fact that she had a magical affinity for plants, and that her job involved working with plant matter such as flour and herbs, she didn't use her magic in her baking. However, she had a natural aesthetic bias towards lush, healthy foliage and this played a role in how she decorated the sweets she made.

By the time she had become a teenager Allenia had practically forgotten about the idea of being sociable, beyond being polite and friendly to her parents' customers. She idolised her parents and felt no desire to get to know the townsfolk in her own age bracket.

Allenia's powers had become stronger, and it had become impossible for her to hide her horn. Her parents had come to accept that she was indeed a unicorn and that she had healing powers.

One day a customer came into the bakery with a poorly-bandaged wound. She kept quiet at first but felt guilty about doing so, as she believed that she would be able to heal it with her powers. She eventually gave into the guilt and offered to help. He was skeptical but allowed her to see what she could do. He was amazed when she succeeded in healing him, and he promptly spread word about it.

The town's elders got to hear about this, and asked her to start helping townsfolk who had become injured in hunting accidents or anyone who was attacked by wildlife. She complied, and this became a regular fixture of her life for a few years.

She was offered payment for this. At first she rejected it, but she was secretly pleased that they valued her services enough to consider them worth paying for. Enough people

insisted that she accept payment that she began to, and when she did, she was delighted to be able to present her extra earnings to her parents. This, plus the fact that it made her interact with others more than she had done for the past few years, gave her a much-needed confidence boost.

With that said, the elders were concerned that Alleniea may draw the nation's attention, so they did all they could to keep their healer a secret from outsiders. A professional healer could easily be drawn into national or international conflicts.

One of the side-effects to all of this was that she got compliments from the townsfolk, especially as they became more familiar, and comfortable, with her. The one she got the most often was that she was cute and pretty. She came to embrace this, and it became an important source of her identity, especially after so many years of believing that she was disfigured.

People began to visit the bakery purely for healing. The Lottways didn't mind this one bit - it brought in more much-needed revenue, indicated that Alleniea would be able to support herself as an adult, and opened up the potential that she would be able to support them when they grew old.

Closeness in Relationships

(young adulthood)

Despite the elders' best efforts, word did indeed travel beyond the town about their magical healer. The king, Caden Oris, heard of her powers and ordered for her to be brought to him.

This was not a request - he sent a raid, a squad of his royal knights stormed the town, found Alleniea, and took her to him.

He kept her prisoner in his castle, with the plan that she could heal him so that he would never have to lose his place on the throne. It also became clear that he considered her beautiful: he treated her like a trophy, to be kept securely by his side but shown off like some inanimate trinket.

His appreciation of her appearance went further than that, though: he found her beautiful, but not cute - he thought of her as sexy. This, in itself, was jarring to Alleniea, and between this and her dislike of him, she rejected the sentiment. He tried to seduce

her, and she refused. It was her soft and gentle passivity, learned in childhood, that stopped him from forcing himself on her. Without realising it, she convinced him that she was too gentle for that kind of force. For a while at least, he relented and instead, congratulated himself on rescuing her from her 'back end of nowhere' home town.

There were times when she refused to use her powers to heal Caden or other important Sun glow figures. When this happened Caden threatened her, sometimes assaulting her, and sometimes threatening the well-being of her family. Alleniea always felt in the end that she must capitulate.

Over time the impression of her as 'too soft to force' wore off, and Caden became more forceful with her. Standing up to him and refusing to heal the people he brought to her contributed to this, and one day he forcefully took her virginity.

This was the beginning of the end of Alleniea's tolerance for the situation, and she began to watch carefully for a way out.

Despite her generally very restricted life, Alleniea slowly managed to build some relationships in the castle, including with one of the two remaining griffons alive, named Erebus. This griffon arranged for her to escape in the dead of night and boarded a ship to Blisswell as a stowaway.

When she got there she found that she wasn't able to sell any of the few items she had managed to take with her for as much as she had hoped, and after a few days of struggling to make ends meet enough to keep a roof over her head and food in her stomach, she was forced to live on the streets.

This was a severe wake-up call to Alleniea. She had more than enough time to think during this time - perhaps too much - and she came to second-guess many of the decisions she'd made - including leaving the castle in the first place. She knew however that she would still not be happy there.

This was when she met a new friend: a polar bear. The bear was stuck in a bear trap. Alleniea freed her, but the bear was badly injured. Alleniea had never healed such a serious injury before but did her best, and partially healed the bear to the point where she was able to help her to hobble back home. Once there she continued the work of healing her. Having this much responsibility over the well-being of another person frightened Alleniea and she felt unworthy to take on the responsibility, but she also saw that it was unethical for her to refuse, and that was why she kept working at it.

The bear revealed her name as Lyn Eval. She was thankful to Alleniea for the healing and vowed never to tell of Alleniea's secret. In return for her kindness, Lyn allowed her to stay in her home for a while.

Alleniea stayed there for a while, unsure of what to do next, and helping around the house. After two months of this Lyn bought Alleniea a ticket to Irder, where she believed that Alleniea would be safe. On the day that they said their goodbyes, Lyn promised to write to Alleniea when she settled in Irder.

Such was Alleniea's passage to Irder that she found herself in the middle of a major city. She was distinctly uncomfortable about this and kept herself hidden to avoid being seen - and more to the point, prevent her horn from being seen, as she was certain that no good could come of that. She saw an opportunity to stow away in a cart so hid there to wait for the cart to be driven out of the city, but was discovered.

The cart's owner was a horse. He wasn't at all pleased at having a stowaway, but obliged Alleniea's plea for him to take her out of the city. They reached his destination, which was his cottage, and discussed her situation further. He told her his name: Tallisan Mardrik. As a result of that discussion, he agreed to let her stay.

Alleniea was surprised to see that his house was covered with Star Jasmine.

She stayed for a long time and over that time, the two fell in love. She cleaned and maintained the house to the point that Tallisan came to feel the warmth of her spirit there, and this served to strengthen their bond. During this time Irder lost its war, and as a result of this, King Caden traced Alleniea to the approximate area of Tallisan's home, but he protected her and they never found her.

Passing on Responsibilities

(older adulthood)

Alleniea and Tallisan spend as much time together as they can. He works as a metalworker and does his forging in the forest, and because of this he has a reputation as a wildman. Alleniea set herself up as a baker and visits her and Tallisan's village three times a week to sell bread. The locals love her. As they reached later middle age, Tallisan began to visit the town with Alleniea and they sold bread together.

End of Life

(old age)

The pair spent the rest of their days living in the cottage. Alleniea never quite lost her fear of kidnapping, and she felt sorrow at never being able to return to her home village, but she was as content as she could be in her new village - all the more so with Tallisan at her side.

They passed away at the same time one day, during a nap in their cottage garden. She felt, in her sleep, Tallisan slipping away, and let herself go too.

Credits

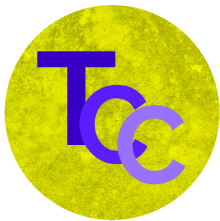
Based on theory by:

Erikson, E., (1951) 'Childhood and Society', W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. chapter 7.

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~ Hayley, Founder of The Character Consultancy

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