

THIRTY DAYS

by

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(for NaNoWriMo 2010)

I am writing 'Thirty Days' for National Novel Writing Month 2010. I am also writing it to raise money for charity. The specific charity that I want to help is St Luke's Hospice (Harrow and Brent). They provide care and support to terminally ill patients and their families from the Harrow and Brent areas of north London, regardless of their background. In May 2009 my father sadly passed away, but his final days were made more comfortable by St Luke's, and I'm grateful for the care that they gave him and the support that they gave to my family. And so I would like to raise some money for them as my way of saying thanks. You can find out more about St Luke's via their website at www.stlukes-hospice.org

If you would like to sponsor me you can do so via my Just Giving page at www.justgiving.com/karlsgreen I and St Luke's will be grateful for anything that you're able to give.

And finally, I've also set up a page on Facebook about the novel where I'll be posting any news about what I'm doing, and you can find it at <http://bit.ly/9OfC6p>

This file, and all other chapters, will be made available on my website at <http://www.karlsgreen.co.uk/thirtydays> You may freely distribute this file subject to the following two conditions:

1. You do not alter the file in any way, shape, or form.
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DAY SEVENTEEN

WELT AND THE DRAGON KEEPER

The philosopher found that he was able to go inside of his own mind, and there he found that he was able to build his own universe with its own worlds and people. In what seemed like only minutes to him, millions of years passed by in his universe. It took very little time before there were populated worlds within his universe.

His universe was fairly small, for he was not a powerful being. But he found that he was in complete control of it. Nothing happened without his making it so. The peoples of his worlds did not become self aware like he had done, again, for he was not a powerful being.

He came out of his mind, and back into what was his real world, but was really a part of her mind. He had only been in his universe for one short evening of his reality. He felt that with dedication and practice he would be able to develop his universe further, making it larger and more complex. He also felt that he could increase his own mental power so that the people of his universe may one day achieve self awareness.

But he felt that he had no desire to do this. He didn't know how deep it would go. If he created beings who were self aware, would one of them realise the truth about their universe? And would they then try to create their own universe in their mind? Would this cycle go on forever?

How far had it gone on already? What was her reality like? Was she part of a universe that existed in someone else's mind?

He felt that the answer to that question was by far the most important...

The Apocolynium – XVII

Welt and the Dragon Keeper stayed inside of Claire's house throughout the whole of the sixteenth day, as did their visitor. He simply sat down in one of the chairs in the living room, and rested his hands on his chest. He stared out into space, and just sat there. He didn't move. He didn't even blink. He just sat there for the entire day.

Even the Dragon Keeper herself felt uneasy about this. She didn't know what it was that he was planning to do. But just seeing him sitting there, looking like he did, was unnerving. She therefore spent most of the day in Claire's bedroom. Much of it she spent lying down, waiting for something to happen, and much of it she spent by the window, looking out onto the world.

She spent a little time watching the news, to see what was happening in the world she sought to destroy. Now that she had lost her powers she had to resort to more basic methods to obtain this information. She saw the news about Prince William getting engaged to Kate Middleton, but thought little of it. Let these humans have a little bit of happiness for now if they must. If all went to plan soon the Earth would be destroyed, and she would at least have some of the Earth's power.

Welt was feeling tired all day. He was now constantly feeling tired. He was deeply regretting ever having come to the Earth. Instead of gaining its power in order to build up the strength of Triceria, all he had got since he came to the Earth was misery piled on after misery. He didn't understand this world or its ways, and he had no allies here. He had thought that the Dragon Keeper may have been an ally, but she had just intended to use him. He felt certain that if she had been successful in obtaining the Earth's power then she wouldn't have shared any of it with him. She would have just disposed of him in some manner. She had no interest in Triceria whatsoever.

But now a third person had arrived, the mysterious man now sitting in the living room. Welt was far more afraid of him than the Dragon Keeper was. Whilst he didn't know what it was he was planning on doing, Welt felt that he was going to have little place in his plans. He felt that this man might kill him if he wasn't able to find some use for him.

All Welt wanted now was to get away from this place, to forget all about the Earth. He didn't even want to go back to Triceria. He would have been quite content to just live a comfortable existence somewhere. A place where he understood the people, was well fed, and could keep warm. Maybe even have a few friends with which he could spend time with. In his pursuit of power in Triceria he had long since lost any friends that he might have once had.

He thought back to the brief moment that he had encountered Claire, before they had come into contact and she had transformed back into her true form of the Dragon Keeper. He had actually considered the idea of living a life with this girl, a girl that had been showing him kindness, when she had no reason to do so. It was something that he had never experienced before in his life. He thought that if she hadn't had turned out to be the Dragon Keeper then they really could have had a comfortable, happy, satisfactory life together. He now found that he sought such a life more than he sought any power. His pursuit of power hadn't brought him any happiness, only misery and despair. He now dreamed of just having a simple, happy life, which he now desired more than ever. He had learnt the errors of his ways, that power wasn't the answer to any of the problems in his life.

But he also feared that he may already be too far from redemption. That there would be no hope for him. He didn't know what exactly his future would hold for him, but he didn't feel that any of it was going to be good.

He spent the sixteenth day creeping around the house, not knowing what to do with himself. But, all the time, he avoided going anywhere near the man in the living room. He didn't feel comfortable around him. He didn't feel safe.

He thought about just escaping from the house. Just walking out the front door, and then running away, as far and as fast as he could. No one was actually keeping him a prisoner here. He wasn't locked up, or bound here by any power like what he had first used on Steve. The man was silent, and the Dragon Keeper mainly just ignored him. He didn't think that they would notice if he did just disappear. But he found that he couldn't face the outside world alone. He wouldn't know where to go or what to do. The time that he spent alone in Westminster shortly after Naomi had taken Steve away from him had been bad enough. He couldn't face going through that again. What he really wanted was to be back on Pyna, a world that he at least understood. But he had no means of getting back there, and he felt that he would never again get to see it.

And so he stayed, for he had nowhere else to go. At least here he had a roof over his head, was warm, and had food to eat. But he had a feeling that he wouldn't be able to enjoy these simple comforts for too much longer.

He spent the night of the sixteenth day sleeping in what had been Claire's spare bedroom. He was terrified about what tomorrow might bring.

On the morning of the seventeenth day Lisa decided that now was the time to deal with Welt and the Dragon Keeper, she couldn't keep putting it off.

Steve and Natasha continued to spend most of their time in cafes working on their respective novels. They had both now managed to catch up on their word counts, and Natasha was now even ahead of where she needed to be. Lisa felt that they were doing well in their new lives. Soon they would formally give up their jobs as they would be able to provide for themselves without having to go out and earn money. The powers that they now had were able to provide them with the vital sustenance that they needed – they now only ate and drank for pleasure. And they would also be able to create any money that they may need, much in the same way that Lisa was able to.

They had recently asked her why, when they looked back in time, some things were blank to them, such as the man that had come to see them when they were babies, and the fact that there was something odd about the writer that they had seen at the write-in. Lisa wasn't able to provide an explanation for this, it did seem most odd. They were meant to be able to see everything. She wasn't sure what was going on with the writer, although she didn't think that it was anything to be too worried about. As for the man that had come to see them when they were babies, she believed she knew who he was, but she wasn't certain. Despite that, she just told them that she didn't know.

They also asked her why the Dragon Keeper was called the 'Dragon Keeper', particularly when they couldn't see any dragon's being kept. Again, Lisa dodged the question. She didn't want to alarm them as to what the origin of that name was, and so she just said that no one knew her real name and so she had effectively been given that one because of her fiery nature. And, dear reader, I'm afraid that I will be no more forthcoming on the origin on her name, and I hope that you never have to find out for yourself why it is that she truly has that name.

Lisa felt that she had to go and deal with Welt and the Dragon Keeper, and then make sure that Steve and Natasha would be fine without her. Then she felt she had best leave the Earth, at least for a while. She would probably go back to Pyna and see how Prion, Sarna, Parto, and Gramshaw were getting along. She was completely unaware that at that moment they were making their way to Nilona, believing, correctly, that the Earth was still in danger.

Rather than teleporting over to Queensbury, which was now something that she could do quite easily, she decided that she would walk there. There was no rush for her to do what it was that she needed to do.

It was a cold November day, but, as ever, Lisa didn't feel the cold. She was therefore able to simply enjoy the beauty of the world around her. She had a good feeling about her. Yesterday she had been following the news about Prince William's engagement to Kate Middleton, and she couldn't have been happier for them. She felt that they made a lovely couple, and that they had a bright future ahead of them. She thought that, even though she'd be breaking her own guidelines again, she might go and pay William another visit before she left the Earth.

Along the way to Queensbury she passed by Park High School, the same school that Claire had walked by on her last morning before the Dragon Keeper returned. Lisa smiled as she looked at the school. She remembered the boy that she had once met there back in 1993, and who she saw on and off during his time at the school. Whilst she wondered what it was he may have been doing now, she felt that it was probably better if she didn't try to locate him. She was still having to deal with the effects of meeting up with Tom once more. She knew that he had feelings for her once more, and she wanted to find a way to let him down gently. He was a good man and deserved to be happy, it was just that there was no possibility of him being happy with her.

Before long she was in Queensbury. She could sense where the Dragon Keeper and Welt were, but she was completely unable to detect the man that was with them.

She started to walk towards Claire's house.

The Dragon Keeper was hovering near the door to the living room. The man was still sitting there, still completely unmoving, still with the blank, unblinking stare on his face. But then, suddenly, he stood up. The Dragon Keeper got a shock when she saw this, and took a step back. He looked at her and said, 'Go upstairs and stay there. Make sure the worm stays there with you.' She turned around and went up the stairs. She was now fearful. Something was about to happen, and she was afraid as to what it might be.

Welt was standing outside of the guest bedroom, having heard the man speak from downstairs. 'What's happening?' he asked.

'I don't know, but get in your room and stay there!'

Welt did as he was told, closing the door behind him. He then slid down the door and sat on the floor next to it. He thought that this could be it, this could really be the start of the end for him. He thought that he might have only hours, maybe even just minutes, left to live. He started to rock back and forth. Whilst he did want to get away from this place, he didn't want to die. But he felt that he was now destined to die, alone and afraid, on an alien world.

Downstairs, the man stood by the door to the living room, looking out into the hall. And waited.

Lisa walked up to the front door, and placed her hand over the lock. The door opened, and she stepped inside. She felt that she should do this quickly, simply grab the Dragon Keeper and take her to a safe world, and that come back and grab Welt and take him back to Triceria.

Once inside she started to make her way towards the stairs. She could sense that both the Dragon Keeper and Welt were upstairs. However, she was unable to sense the man that was also in the house. Which is why she was especially shocked when he stepped out into the hallway and stood in front of her.

Normally Lisa was able to detect all of the people around her, and in a much wider radius. And so she was instantly terrified when she saw someone standing in front of her who she hadn't been able to detect. In that instant horrifying thoughts came to her. For this man to have been here and yet be undetected by her meant that he must have a great power of some description. The fact that he appeared to be associated with the Dragon Keeper implied that he wasn't planning on using that power for good. The fact that he was on the Earth meant that he, too, might be planning to obtain the Earth's power. And that meant that Steve and Natasha weren't safe after all.

And Lisa felt that she herself may not have been safe, and that terrified her more than anything. She had only managed to come back to this reality two and a half weeks earlier. She

found it hard to take in that she might now be facing another defeat, and this time one that would doom the Earth.

The man raised his left arm, and Lisa felt herself being jerked up by an unknown force. She tried to open her mouth to say something, but found that she couldn't. The man then drew his arm towards him and, as he did so, Lisa found herself involuntarily walking towards him. She was made to stop when she was standing right in front of him.

He looked down into her eyes. She found his stare unbearably uncomfortable. He looked deep down into her, deep into her mind. He looked right through her long, long history. He saw everywhere that she had been and at everything that she had done. He looked at everything right up until the present day. He looked at Lisa's involvement with Steve and Natasha. How she had helped to save them from the clutches of the Dragon Keeper. How she had until just now believed that they and the Earth were safe. He then saw her fear, and this seemed to please him. Yes, he was happy that she was afraid, that he could make her afraid.

After what seemed like an age he broke off the stare. He started to make her walk again, this time in front of him. He made her open a door, and then walk down some stairs into a cellar. It was cold, damp, and dark in the cellar. In the centre of the cellar was a concrete support. He made Lisa stand next to it, her back towards it, her arms raised above her head.

Lisa then saw that he had some rope in his hands, although she didn't see where he could have got it from. She surmised that he may have simply created it, just like she was sometimes able to simply create things. He proceeded to use the rope to tie her hands together, and then to the concrete support. In doing so he lifted her hands and arms up so high that her feet were now barely touching the floor. He tied the knots up extremely tightly.

He then looked at his work, and he felt pleased. Without saying a word, he walked up the stairs, out of the cellar, and closed the door.

Lisa tried to free herself from the rope. Normally something like this would have been no problem, but she found that she couldn't move her hands at all. She then tried to see if she could simply teleport out of them, but found that she was unable to, not that she was surprised at this. There was something in the rope that was dampening her powers.

She was trapped, and with no means of escape. She now felt utterly powerless. She still didn't know who this man was. But she was terrified at the prospect that there was now nothing stopping him from getting to Steve and Natasha, and then, through them, at the Earth's power.

Yes, dear reader, this is indeed a very grave turn of events. I do not know who this man is either, but I believe that there is only evil in his heart. If he does get to Steve and Natasha then I fear that it will be the end for all of us...