

# 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](http://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](http://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 THIRTEEN**

**STEVE AND NATASHA**

*The universe that existed within her mind was as vast and as complex as the universe that was outside of her mind. There were a great many worlds with a great many inhabitants.*

*In the early days when her mind was building up this universe, she knew that it wasn't real, that it was all just something that she was creating in her head that would help her to stay sane. But as the days turned into years, and the years turned into decades, and the decades turned into centuries, things started to change. Things started to be different.*

*At first things only happened in this universe when she made them happen. She was in complete control of everything. But then things started to happen of their own accord.*

*The inhabitants of the worlds within her mind started to think and act for themselves...*

### The Apocolynium – XIII

On the morning of the thirteenth day Steve and Natasha woke up simultaneously side by side in Steve's bed. At first they felt a slight shock at the fact that, for Natasha, she was waking up in unfamiliar surroundings, and, for Steve, he was not waking up alone. Then they looked at each other and, as everything came back to them, they smiled. Everything felt new today. Everything felt right.

'Morning,' said Steve.

'Morning,' replied Natasha, smiling once more.

They then hugged. There were no more words that they needed to say to each other.

Tom had returned to his flat late last night. Before he had gone Lisa had sat him down and did her best to explain everything to him. She told him that she was not of this world, that she travelled to other worlds to help people, just as she had helped him. She went on to say that this time she had come to help Steve and Natasha, who were being pursued by the Dragon Keeper, the woman that had tried to break into his flat. She didn't tell him that the Dragon Keeper had come to take the Earth's power, and she didn't tell him anything about Welt. She felt that there was little to be gained by telling him of these things.

He was utterly shell-shocked by it all. He could barely believe that the girl that he had fallen in love with was from another world. When he woke up on the thirteenth day he had a feeling of emptiness. Just two days before Lisa had been staying with him, and he had been harbouring fantasies of starting a relationship with her. Now she wasn't here, and he felt that there was no possibility of any sort of relationship with her. She had said last night that she travelled to other worlds to help people. There was clearly no room for him in that.

Naomi had stayed over at Steve's flat, sleeping on the sofa. She was happy with a job well done. She had been sent here to assist Steve and Natasha, and she had succeeded in this. They were now together, the Dragon Keeper was defeated, the Earth was now safe.

She was starting to wonder what she was going to do next. She felt that she should go and see Ian once more. But after that, she didn't know. There was no other pressing work for her. She felt that she might stay on the Earth for a while. After all, her human life still existed here, and it wasn't a bad life at all. And the Earth did have a lot to offer.

But she was still worried about those words, 'Destiny Will Fall', and who it was that might have sent them...

Lisa had also stayed at Steve's flat. She was indeed relieved that the Dragon Keeper had been defeated and that Steve and Natasha had been brought together. But she knew that her work here was not yet complete. Whilst the Dragon Keeper was now powerless, she was still here on the Earth. Lisa didn't feel that it would be a good idea for her to stay here, and so she would need to find a new home for her, one where she wouldn't be able to cause any more trouble.

There was also the question of Welt. Whilst he was nowhere near as strong as the Dragon Keeper had been, he still had a few powers of his own. He, too, couldn't be allowed to stay on the Earth, and so he would have to be returned to Pyna. But once he was there he couldn't be permitted to return to his life as it was as an advisor to the Council of Three in Triceria. If he were he would just look to find a new way to topple the council so that he could wage war on Allana. He had to be returned to Pyna because of the nature of his being – he wasn't like herself, Naomi, and the Dragon Keeper, and so he couldn't be permitted to live on a world other than his own. She would decide what to do with him specifically at a later date, although it would most likely involve making him live life as a farm worker on the other side of Pyna to Triceria.

But for now she didn't want to think about the Dragon Keeper and Welt. She just wanted to rejoice that the Earth had been saved.

But she still had a bad feeling in her heart. As though something wasn't quite right, As if something was missing. As if there was still something still left here for her to do.

Those words that both Steve and Natasha had both encountered, 'Destiny Will Fall', still worried her greatly.

After they had washed and dressed Steve and Natasha came into the kitchen together, where Lisa and Naomi were waiting for them. Naomi asked, 'And how are you two this morning?'

Natasha replied, 'We're good.'

Steve looked at Natasha and asked her, 'What would you like for breakfast?'

'Oh, just some cereal will be fine.'

'You sure?'

'Yes.'

'OK.' He smiled at her and then went to prepare their breakfast.

Natasha sat down, and then asked, 'So, what happens now?'

Lisa replied, 'Well, I'm not sure. The Dragon Keeper no longer poses a threat, and you can leave it to me to sort out what needs to be done with her. There's nothing else that should be posing a threat to you or Steve, and so you and the Earth's power should be safe. You're both free to do as you wish. You're more than welcome to return to your old lives. There's no reason why any of that has to change.'

'But how can we possibly go back to our lives as they were before, after what has happened to us, and knowing what we know?'

'I understand. There is so much more that you can do now, with what you know and the powers that you have. But you don't have to rush into anything. You are free to do what you want. Take things slowly, take time to explore your new life. Don't try to change things too quickly. Just take each day as it comes.'

Steve came over to the table with his and Natasha's breakfast. He asked Lisa and Naomi, 'Can I get you two anything?'

Naomi replied, 'No, we're fine, thanks.'

'So, this is different!'

Lisa said, 'Indeed it is. Do you know what you want to do next?'

'Well, one thing's for certain, I'm not going back to that bloody office! It was doing my head in. I might use the time that I have to carry on with my novel.'

'Oh yes, what novel is that?'

He then told her about his NaNoWriMo novel.

Natasha then said, 'I'm also doing that. I've fallen a little behind after everything that's happened, but I'd like to go back to it and finish it.'

Steve then said, 'Yeah, I don't know about you, but I don't feel like going back to it today. Whilst I do enjoy the writing and all, I don't think I could quite face sitting down at a computer to write a load of words after what we've just been through. I need a bit of a break to get over it all.'

'Yeah, same here.'

'You feel like going for a walk later?'

'OK, sure. Where to?'

'I don't know, the woods beyond Harrow Weald? Maybe make our way over to Bentley Priory and Stanmore?'

'Sounds good.'

They finished their breakfast, and then set out for their walk. Once they were gone Naomi asked Lisa, 'Is it really all over? Is the Earth safe?'

'I think so. Certainly from the Dragon Keeper.'

'But those words, "Destiny Will Fall". They were sent to both of them. They were also sent to me. I'm really worried about them, Lisa. Do you have any idea who might have sent them?'

'No, I don't.' This was also causing Lisa a great deal of concern. It would appear that whoever had sent them was on their side, as in doing so they had got Naomi to leave Steve's side, allowing Lisa to locate them, which she wouldn't have been able to do otherwise. But the fact that she didn't know who they were was a cause for concern...

Steve and Natasha walked hand in hand all the way from Belmont Circle to the end of Harrow Weald, and both were happy as they did so. 'So,' said Steve, 'How far through your novel are you?'

'Oh, I'm a couple of days behind now. It'd be nice to get to 50k by the end of the month though, I think I can still do it. How about you?'

'I'm a long way behind. I haven't written anything in about a week because of, well, you know...'

'Are you going to carry on with it?'

'Yeah, I think so. Like you say, it'd be nice to have it finished by the end of the month, although it's going to be a bit of an uphill struggle. You were at the kick-off party at the start of the month, weren't you?'

'Yeah, I saw you there. The London wrimos are a really nice bunch, aren't they?'

'Yeah. Did you hear about that guy who's aiming for 150,000 words this year?'

'Yeah, he must be completely mad! I mean, why would anyone want to put themselves through that? Isn't 50,000 words hard enough?'

'Absolutely, although, apparently he's an old hand. This is his fourth year doing it, he did a little over 100,000 words last year, and so he's trying to beat that this year. I wonder how he's doing?'

'Yeah. Although, you know we could just find out, using the skills that we now have.'

‘Shall we?’

‘Yes, why not?’

As they continued walking they shifted part of their awareness to where the person attempting to write 150,000 words was. They found him in his flat, still lying in bed, even though it was now nearly 11am. They were able to see that he had been up very, very late the night before, not having gone to bed until 5.30am. He’s been uploading a chapter of his novel each night to his website, and it had taken him a while to finish the latest one, although it was one that was quite pivotal to his story.

But he was a long way behind where he had wanted to be at this stage. He had taken the last two weeks off of work, the intention being that he would use them to get ahead of his word count so that he wouldn’t have to write as much on the days when he was at work. But that hadn’t worked out so well. He was averaging about 5,000 words per day, which was fine if he didn’t have to go back to work, but he knew that it wasn’t going to be possible for him to do a full day at work, and then come home and write 5,000 words. As such he was tiring himself out, and the stress of his undertaking was starting to get at him.

Steve and Natasha left him and returned to where they were physically. Natasha then said, ‘Why doesn’t he just give up? Or at least set his sights lower than 150k. Pushing himself like that isn’t going to be doing him any good at all, especially when he goes back to work next week. He’s going to end up dead by the end of the month at this rate!’

‘I don’t think he can give up. He’s determined to try and get to 150k, no matter what. But I agree with you, what he’s doing isn’t healthy. If only he could see that. Anyway, let’s not worry anymore about him for the time being, let’s get back to us. I heard that the London wrimos arrange a lot of write-ins during the month?’ For those of you who don’t know, a write-in is where a group of writers who are taking part in NaNoWriMo gather together and write together. These gatherings prove to be useful for many of them as they actually get them to write rather than getting distracted by things such as the internet.

Natasha then said, ‘Yeah, I think there’s going to be one tomorrow. Do you think we should go to it?’

‘Yeah, why not? It might be fun.’

They continued on their walk, beyond Harrow Weald, and into the woodland beyond. Natasha said, ‘I’ve seen you on the train into work a few times, haven’t I?’

‘Yeah, and I’ve seen you. Just imagine, if we’d actually gone and spoken to each other on the train, we could have formed this bond sooner, and none of the bad stuff that’s happened this week would have happened.’

‘Well, why didn’t you come and speak to me on the train?’

‘I’d have liked to. I thought – think – that you’re really pretty, and you seemed – are – really nice. It’s just that I wouldn’t have known what to say! It’s always hard going up to a girl you don’t know and then just start talking to them.’

‘Well, you wouldn’t have had anything to worry about if you had.’

‘Yeah, I know that now!’

‘I think I’ve seen you in other places as well. You know, like at the cinema, at the shops...’

‘In restaurants, visiting relatives at the hospital. I know, our paths have crossed so many times before.’

‘It was like we were always meant to meet like this...’

‘When did our paths first cross?’ They shifted part of their awareness again, only this time it was into their own pasts, back, and back, and back, going through each and every one of the occasions when they had come close to each other. There were numerous shopping trips and cinema visits. But there were also times much further away from home. There were occasions when they had both gone to the same part of London at the same time for one reason or another. They had had close encounters in Trafalgar Square, the Greenwich Meridian. They were once in the same pod on the London Eye. And there were occasions even further than that. One summer both of their families took them on holiday in Norfolk. Another year and they had both gone on a long weekend to New York, flying out on the same airplane, staying at the same hotel around the corner from Times Square.

They went back, and back, and back, right until their first encounter. And they were both surprised when they saw where it was.

It was the maternity ward at the local hospital, and they were both only a few hours old. They were in cots that were right next to each other.

As they saw this moment, there then became part of it that was a blur, part of it that they couldn’t quite see. A figure had entered the room that they were in. They couldn’t make out who it was, only that they weren’t a parent or a member of the hospital’s staff. The figure approached their infant selves – and they saw no more of what happened next.

Their awareness came back to the present and their current location. ‘Oh my word,’ said Natasha. ‘Right from the start. We were together right from the start.’

‘And that figure, do you think that was the one that gave us this power, that made us different?’

‘I think so, but I couldn’t see who they were. I couldn’t even see if they were a man or a woman.’

‘Why us? Why did they do this to us?’

Natasha had no answer for that.

They continued on their walk until they found themselves on Bentley Priory. In fact, they went to the very same spot that Lisa had taken Tom, back when she needed to try and restore some of her lost power. They linked their arms, and looked out over the city.

Steve said, ‘I can’t believe everything’s that happened.’ He then looked at Natasha, ‘And I can’t believe that I’ve finally found you. Where have you been all of my life?’

‘I’ve been right here.’ They kissed once more.

Both of them had an overwhelming sense of well being. Ever since the moment when they had first come into contact yesterday they have felt no stress, no worry, no fear. They were as happy as it was ever possible to be.

They now thought about their future together. With the powers that they now had, a whole new set of possibilities opened up before them. They were free to go and do whatever it is that they wanted to do, as long as they stayed on the Earth. Whilst they were now aware of the vastness of existence, the powers that they had tied them to the Earth. In order to preserve the Earth’s power they had to remain here. But they were both more than happy to do so.

Yes, everything was well and good in their lives, and they had nothing to worry about.

Oh, how I wish that were true. You see, over in Queensbury, the Dragon Keeper had made her way back to Claire’s house. She had gone very slowly as she was now very weak. It had taken her the whole of the previous night and much of the following morning. Even though it wasn’t a great distance that she had to travel, the draining of her power had left her confused, and she kept getting lost. However, she did make her way back eventually.

When she returned Welt asked her, ‘Is all well?’

‘No, all is not very bloody well!’ She slowly made her way to one of the spare rooms in the house. There she picked up an object that even I can’t quite ascertain what its full purpose is. It was a long black cylinder, with a sphere at one end. She held the cylinder in her hand, and a light started to glow within it. She then spoke into the sphere, saying just three words, ‘Come here, now.’

Dear reader, needless to say, this worries me. It is possible that Steve and Natasha may not be as safe as they believe themselves to be...