

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.
2. You do not charge anyone for access to the file.

DAY TWENTY-SIX

THE DRAGON KEEPER PREPARES

When she saw the Other fear rose up within her. She knew that this was to be a crucial moment, a watershed. The outcome of this encounter would change the shape of this universe forever.

And so the battle began. She exerted all of her energy on the Other, and it fought back just as hard. They appeared to be evenly matched.

The battle raged across the Earth. Throughout all of its continents, to its north and south poles, to the bottom of the deepest ocean, and to the top of the highest mountain.

The one of the All Seeing was watching this battle take place. He could see that she was starting to tire, but that the Other was not. He could see that she was going to require help, and a sort of help that had never been used before or since.

He delved into the very core of the Earth to acquire the help that she required...

The Apocolynium – XXVI

After she had obtained the combined powers of Mr Ian Woon and his son, the Dragon Keeper was overjoyed. She had never felt so much power before in all of her life, and now it was hers, all hers, and no one could take it from her. Not even Lisa. Lisa was now no match for her. The Dragon Keeper resolved to hunt her down, kill her, and take her power too. Strictly speaking she didn't need Lisa's power in order to achieve her dreams – once she had the key and acquired the Earth's power she would have all of the power that she had ever dreamed of. No, she just wanted vengeance against Lisa for all of the trouble that she had caused her.

But all of that could wait. There was no need for her to rush things. She didn't want to make any more mistakes, not that there was much that Lisa could now do if she did make any more mistakes.

Once Lisa and her companions had all disappeared the Dragon Keeper used her powers to try and locate where they were, but she found no trace of them, which of course she wouldn't because they technically didn't actually exist at that time as the crystals had moved them forward in time. The Dragon Keeper was slightly concerned that she couldn't locate them. She could live without being able to find Naomi or the Pynarians. It wasn't ideal but she didn't strictly need to know where Lisa was either. But it was the whereabouts of Steve and Natasha that most concerned her. Those two she did need if she were to fulfil her dreams.

But she tried not to worry too much about them. She knew that they can't have gone far. Their bond to this world was now too strong, and if they strayed too far from it that bond would break, and she would have another means with which to obtain the Earth's power. Wherever it

was that they had gone she knew that it wouldn't be too far, and so they could be found again in due course.

She returned to Claire's house and she spent the rest of the twenty-fourth day and the whole of the twenty-fifth day in contemplation. She was thinking about what was to come. She couldn't quite believe that everything that she had wished for was about to come true. All of her years of planning and scheming, and soon everything was going to pay off. She was going to gain the power of the Earth, a power that had been much spoken of, a power like no other in this or any other universe. And it was going to be hers and hers alone. She wasn't going to have to share it with anyone.

She was relieved to be rid of the man. She had been reluctant to summon him in the first place, but back then she had no option but to, as she had no power left. But thanks to him she was now the most powerful person on this planet, and she felt that there wasn't anyone or anything that could stop her.

In the early hours of the twenty-fifth day the Dragon Keeper perked up, as she suddenly detected that Lisa and all of her companions, including Steve and Natasha, had now returned. They were located in Harrow Weald, in the flat that belonged to one of the two halves. This pleased her. She now knew exactly where they were, and there was nowhere for them to run or to hide. As the hours passed by she saw that they were not moving anywhere. She did not understand this, but it was of no consequence to her. As long as she knew where they were she could go and collect the key when the time was right.

On the twenty-sixth day she started to make her final preparations. Ideally she would have liked to have both halves of the key her in her house so that she could form the key there, but she decided that it might be too risky to bring them back here. Whilst she was confident that there was no one left who could stop her she didn't want to take any more chances. She would get them together, and form the key at whatever location that happened to be. And she would have to do it quickly. They both had to be alive whilst the key was formed, and she had to be undisturbed, which would mean killing anyone else in the vicinity that might cause her any trouble.

She then thought that it might prove too difficult to form the key in the exact location where she finally caught the two halves. There might be too many other people around, and killing all of them might only bring more people in to distract her whilst she was trying to form the key. And so, as a contingency, she would need to make preparations to bring them back to Claire's house where she could form the key if she needed to.

She went into the basement of the house, where Lisa had been tied up and held captive by the man. The rope that he had used to do so was still here, although it now had no power left in it. There were two concrete pillars in here, including the one that Lisa had been tied to. They would suffice for Steve and Natasha.

She used her powers to clear the basement of everything else, and made the room as sterile as possible. Strictly speaking, this wasn't necessary for the key to be formed, but it should help to ease the process.

Satisfied that this room was suitable she then sat down on the floor with her legs crossed. She rested her arms on her legs, with the palms of her hands facing upwards. She then closed her eyes and concentrated. She moved her consciousness into a plain that is separate to this one. She was trying to locate the one that could help her with forming the key. The one known as Marloki.

Eventually, after many hours of searching, she found Marloki and called out to it. Marloki heard her call, and came to her. 'Why do you seek me here?' it said.

'I wish to acquire the power of the Earth, and I require your assistance in acquiring the key.'

'Why do you wish to have this power?'

'I wish to overcome the All Seeing's intentions to keep the inhabited worlds separate. Using the Earth's power I will unite these worlds, but under my rule. Together I will form the perfect society.'

'How much destruction will there be in this?'

'There will be much destruction, starting with the Earth, which you may have as your own.'

'I will accept the Earth, and I require Pyna as well.'

'It is yours.'

'What of the one known as Lisa? Where is she?'

'She is here on Earth. She has regained much of her strength, but I have now obtained more power than she has. She will be no match for me.'

'How did you obtain this power?'

'Ian's son was here. He killed his father and took his power. I then killed him and took both of their power.'

Marloki then laughed. 'So, the great Mr Ian Woon is dead! This is good, this is very good indeed! Where are the two halves to the key to the Earth's power? Have they yet met each other?'

'Unfortunately they have, which is why I am calling for your help. Their bond is strong, but it is not unbreakable. I know where they are, and they can be caught easily. I will either form the

key at the point where I overpower them, or, if I am likely to be easily disturbed there, I have a place prepared where I can take them and not be disturbed by anyone.'

'It is not good that they have met each other. This will make forming the key most difficult. But it is not impossible. Yes, this can be done. I hereby grant you my assistance. Remember, the Earth and Pyna will be mine to destroy. And I also want Lisa killed once and for all. Do you agree to my terms?'

'I do so agree.'

'Very well. Once you have unleashed the Earth's power the fissure in the plains of reality will be wide enough for me to pass through. Expect my arrival, and remember this agreement. Now go!'

The Dragon Keeper opened her eyes. In each hand a dagger had now appeared. The blades were black and incredibly sharp. The handles were made of platinum and encrusted with diamonds. They would be considered beautiful if they were not to be used for such a terrible purpose.

The Dragon Keeper smiled when she saw these. She was most pleased with herself. Now, finally, everything was going to plan for her. Everything was now in place for her to be able to acquire the key to the Earth's power.

She decided that tomorrow would be the day when she would do this. Contacting Marloki had tired her somewhat, and she needed a little time to recover. She therefore went to Claire's bedroom and went to sleep, believing that the Earth's days were numbered, and that number was now very small indeed.

Yes, dear reader, things are indeed looking very bad for us. The Dragon Keeper has all that she needs. There appears to be very little that can get in the way of her forming the key to the Earth's power, and then using that power for the destruction of the Earth and Pyna, with the assistance of Marloki.

We have to hope that whoever it is that is guiding Lisa and her companions is confident in what they are doing, and that they do indeed know of a way to stop the Dragon Keeper from fulfilling her plans. Although, to be perfectly honest with you, I can't think what it could possibly be. The Dragon Keeper is now stronger than Lisa is. There is now only limited power left in the crystals, certainly not enough to take on the Dragon Keeper with. I fear that Lisa and her companions will make their way over to Old Redding tomorrow, and the Dragon Keeper will meet them there, but that there will be nothing that they can do to stop her. That the Dragon Keeper will simply kill our beloved Lisa, and then kill all of the others apart from Steve and Natasha, and then she will use the Marloki Daggers to spill their blood and collect their essence

so that she can form the key to the Earth's power. I can't see how there can be any other course of events.

But I hope that I am wrong. Oh, I hope very much so that I am wrong...