

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:

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DAY TWENTY-ONE

THE MAKING OF PLANS

As soon as member of the All Seeing that had helped her arrived in the new universe he was amazed and astounded. Everywhere he went, everywhere he looked, he could see her. The entire universe was made of her essence. Everything in it was a facet of her.

And, if that were the case, then did that mean that she was here as well? Did she somehow create this universe herself? This would not have surprised him in the slightest. What she was capable of doing never ceased to amaze him.

But, if she created this universe, where precisely was she? Where in this universe was the centre of her consciousness manifesting itself? He set out in search of it...

The Apocolynium – XXI

Things were very crowded at Steve's flat. He and Natasha had slept in his room. Their experience with the man and the Dragon Keeper had weakened them and they needed to rest. Lisa told them to go to sleep, and they should hopefully feel fine again by the morning. Welt had slept on the floor in the kitchen. Prion, Sarna, Parto, and Gramshaw had stayed up all night in the living room talking to Lisa. They had told her all about the Drydonians and the crystal cave, and the instructions that they had been given. Lisa informed them all about what had taken place on Earth.

The party were also amazed at everything that they saw in this world. They were impressed with the ease that the people here were able to store and cook their food. But it was the TV that impressed them the most. Before they saw it they didn't think that there was much magic in this world. But that all changed when they first saw the changing, moving images that could talk. Lisa had explained to them that there was no magic involved in this, it was just that the people of the Earth were very technologically advanced. Nevertheless, they were still very impressed.

Lisa said that there was little more that they could do that day, as they should wait for Stephen and Natasha to recover, and so she found herself watching some TV programmes with the party. Although she wasn't really concentrating on them. She was just thinking about the implications of all that had happened.

She was convinced that the man, whoever he was, had intended to have her killed. For obvious reasons she was relieved that they had been able to thwart his plans. She wouldn't have expected Welt to be the one to save her though. She could see that his time on the Earth had changed him. He was a different man now.

But if the man had succeeded in killing her she knew that would have had grave consequences. The Dragon Keeper would have had her strength fully restored. And if they were

then able to capture Steve's and Natasha's essences there would be nothing to stop them from acquiring the Earth's power.

Only, in the end, he hadn't killed her, but he had done something else instead. He had taken some of the power from the crystals, passing it through Steve and Natasha, weakening them in the process. This worried her. She didn't know what it was for and what it meant. She knew that he didn't have their essence – that would require blood. But she didn't know what it was that he did have, or what he was intending it for.

She attempted to use her powers to try and identify what the Dragon Keeper was doing (Lisa already knew that trying to use them to sense anything about the man was useless). However, she could only get a vague sense. All she could detect was that she was inside of Claire's house in Queensbury, but she couldn't get any more detail than that. She just supposed that the man was blocking her somehow.

In the afternoon of the twenty-first day, Steve and Natasha finally woke up to find that their strength had returned. But both of them were worried. When they had found each other, defeating the Dragon Keeper in the process, they had thought that they were safe. That everything was over. They now knew that that wasn't the case, that they could still be attacked, that their world was still in danger.

They got up and went into the living room, where Prion, Sarna, Parto, Gramshaw, and Lisa still were, and then Welt came in to join them. He found that he wanted all of this to be over as soon as possible. Seeing the party from Pyna here on Earth, and also having Lisa here, gave him hope that he would be able to return to Pyna, and right now that was all that he cared about.

Once everyone was settled Lisa said, 'We need to try and work out what to do next. I don't know who that man is, but it is pretty clear that he means this world harm. If he is working with the Dragon Keeper then he is most likely trying to obtain the Earth's power. Which means that he will surely come after Steve and Natasha again.'

'Excuse me,' said Welt. 'But you can teleport off this world, can't you?' Lisa nodded. Welt continued, 'Then, why don't you just take Steve and Natasha far away from here, as far away as possible. Surely if they're away from the Earth then he won't be able to get to them to get the Earth's power.'

Lisa shook her head. 'Unfortunately it's most likely that he could just follow us. Plus, it's not safe to take Steve and Natasha away from the Earth. Between them they hold the key to the Earth's power. They are bound to this world. Take them away from it and that bond weakens. And if it weakens too much and breaks, then the Earth's power could be unleashed.'

Prion then said, 'So, we will need to keep them here and protect them.'

'Yes, we must. But we need to do more than just that. We have to find a way to stop that man. I'm intrigued by the crystals that you're wearing.' Lisa could tell that they each contained a phenomenal amount of power, but she couldn't ascertain to what purpose that power was intended for.

Gramshaw then said, 'It took a long time for the crystals needed to form these crystals to be mined and turned into these. We were given them and told that you needed them to save the Earth. We were rather hoping that you would know what to do with them.'

Lisa was concerned by these crystals. Whoever it was who created the crystal cave, and the portal in Mount Holayner, seemed to know a great deal about what it was that was going to happen, and had made preparations for it. But the man also seemed to know what was going to happen. Instead of these crystals saving the Earth he had started to drain them of energy. He was only stopped when Welt had come to save her, something that he hadn't been expecting. Was this all an elaborate trap? Were those crystals intended to help him rather than her? She couldn't see any use for them that might assist her. She said, 'I really wish I knew what those crystals were intended for, but I don't.'

She then turned her attention to Steve and Natasha. They had told her yesterday that they had seen words on their laptop screens instructing them that they were required in Queensbury. But, again, rather than their presence there helping her, it was the man that had gained an advantage to them being there, he had been able to use them somehow, although for what she wasn't sure. She said, 'I'm concerned about those words you were sent, sending you to Queensbury. It was like whoever sent you those words wanted you to be attacked by that man.'

Steve asked, 'Do you think that it might have been him who had been sending us those words all along in the first place?'

Lisa thought for a moment, but she didn't think that it was likely. Whilst it may have made sense for him to tell them to come to Queensbury so that he could take advantage of them, it didn't make sense for him to tell them, and Naomi, the words 'Destiny Will Fall'. She was certain that whoever it was that had sent Steve and Natasha the messages yesterday was the same person that had also sent the earlier ones – including the one that got Naomi to leave Steve's side when he was attacked by the Dragon Keeper's artefact, resulting in Lisa being able to find them and eventually bringing Steve and Natasha together. No, it can't have been the man that had sent them, and Lisa shook her head to indicate this.

Natasha then asked, 'Do you even know what they mean, the "Destiny Will Fall" bit? What destiny, and when will it fall, and what will happen when it does?'

'I'm sorry, I really don't know what they mean...' Lisa lied. She knew all too well what they meant. She knew what it would mean if destiny did indeed fall.

After a pause, Parto then said, 'Wait a minute... Whilst it may look like us bringing the crystals with us to where that man was, and then Steve and Natasha arriving there as well, was all intended to help that man, what else was it that happened as a direct result of us being there?'

There was a pause whilst everyone thought about this, and then Welt said, 'The man and the Dragon Keeper were out of the house, which meant that I was free to go to the basement to free Lisa!'

'Exactly! And what would have happened if we hadn't have been there to distract him?'

Lisa then realised and said, 'I would still be trapped there, and I would have ended up...' She didn't want to say the word, but they all knew what she meant.

'Right,' said Parto. 'So, whilst it seems that we were somehow inadvertently helping that man, we were in fact helping you, but in such a way that the man didn't realise it.'

Lisa could see the logic in this. In order for her to be set free they first had to distract the man that was holding her. But it came at a price – he had gained some of the power from the crystals. Just how much and what he would use it for she was unsure about.

She said, 'OK, so it does appear that someone, somewhere, is guiding and helping us. But we can't just sit around here and wait and see what sign they give us next. We need to decide what it is that we are going to do.'

There was a pause, and then Steve said, 'We need to find a way to take on this man. We can't wait for him to make the next move. We need to take the fight to him.'

'Yes,' said Parto, 'But how can we take him on? We've see how powerful he is. We were only able to get away from him before because he was taking power from these crystals around our necks which distracted him from what Welt was doing. But we don't even know how to use these crystals ourselves.'

'What we need,' said Welt, 'is another source of power that we can draw on. One that we do know how to use. One that will give us an advantage over this man. Lisa, do you know of any such source of power?'

Lisa thought for a moment. Then, she concluded, that, yes, there was another source. A source that they could harness and control. And, yes, it would give them an advantage over the man. But, dear reader, I don't feel that I can tell you what the exact nature of this power source is, because it is so terrible. I hope against hope that they are able to find an alternative.

Lisa said, 'Yes, there is something that we can do. Tomorrow, we'll go and see Naomi...'

Meanwhile, over in Queensbury, the man and the Dragon Keeper were also making plans. He had been severely weakened after his encounter with Lisa, and so had spent the previous night recovering. On the twenty-first day he was back in his chair, staring into space.

The Dragon Keeper was feeling a little strange that day. She was feeling nauseous, but she felt that some of her old strength had returned. She was also sitting in the living room, and was looking at the man. She still wasn't sure what exactly he was planning to do.

Eventually, the man said, 'You now have some of your old power back, but it is not enough. Lisa is back with them, the Crystal Bearers. We can not go and face them again until we have some more power of our own. Tomorrow, we will go to see Mr Ian Woon. Then you will have your full power back, and we will go and form the key to the Earth's power.' He then fell silent again.

The Dragon Keeper was pleased when she heard this. She now felt that it wouldn't be too much longer until she could finally unleash the Earth's power...