

The Tymorean Trust

Book One

Power Rising

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This book is a work of fiction and any resemblance to persons, living or dead, or places, events or locales are purely coincidental. The characters are productions of the author's imagination and used fictitiously.

PLEASE NOTE

I use Australian spelling throughout. You will see ou's (colour) and 'ise' not 'ize' (realise) as well as a few other differences to American spelling.

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Prologue

Death Prophecy of the Tymorean Elder Dakven
As told to Professor Governor Xyron

Year 985 of the Seventh Great Age – Tymorean calendar
Chaos is increasing –
the Age of the Great Ones Lorno, Joshe and Tormel is coming to an end.
Dire times are coming to worlds in all parts of the universe.
Treachery is rife – even on our world.
Those who are to come...are but seeds of peace on a distant world.
We must find them...before they become our enemy...before hope is lost.

Chapter 1 - Power Erupts

Tim Ward strode down the crowded corridor from near the staff offices to his locker with a scowl on his face. He ignored the occasional 'hello' from friends, and shoved against anyone that got in his way. That earned him a few curses from ones who stumbled into other people.

At his locker, one of many that lined both sides of passage, he fetched his pencil case and science books, then slammed the locker door shut. His classmates stayed tactfully quiet. The few that knew that Ted Rogers had cited him for a breach of rules, understood his anger.

Swirling around in Tim's mind was the injustice of the affair. "So I took Marco's ball off him! So what? He has been needling me for weeks, ever since he was put off the basketball team. That wasn't my fault," he was thinking. "I just threw it away from him, for heavens sake, so he'd leave me alone.

I could have punched him, but I didn't."

The memory of the confrontation was still vivid, the memory of the anger still simmering. "Marco didn't have to go and tell lies about me. I wasn't trying to get him into trouble. I never thought I could throw a ball that far, didn't think it could possibly break a window and get it stuck on the roof. It was an accident. So why did Rogers come down on me like I did it on purpose?"

The crowds in the corridor thinned out as students went to their mid-session classes. Tim, realised he was still staring at his locker, and jerked around. Rogers had him for science and if he were late, the bastard would have another go at him. Then he probably wouldn't have just one lunchtime detention, but a week of it. With a renewal of his scowl, Tim headed for the science lab – dreading the next hour and a half of being under Rogers' eye.

Tim trailed in with the last of the class, keeping his classmates between him and his teacher, and moving past the trolley of glassware to get to the back row of benches. He made an effort to calm himself. Rogers was too much of a martinet to take the slightest misbehaviour in his class. You didn't want to get on his bad side, and since he already was, Tim didn't want to make it worse. He put his books on the bench and pulled out the stool.

"Ward, I want you up the front," Rogers announced, without looking his way. "Is your sister here?"

Tim glanced around, surprised by the question. “No. Why?”

“I want you both where I can see you,” Rogers said, coming to stand near where Tim had intended to sit, and looking like staying there until he moved.

Tim tried to outstare him, but Rogers stayed where he was. The tableau was broken when the hanging screen for the projector suddenly retracted with explosive force. Rogers glanced away, and Tim picked up his things, and released some anger by kicking the stool out of his way. He hadn’t meant to kick it hard, but it fell over. Rogers glared at him until he picked it up.

Meeting the teacher’s implacable gaze triggered a wild uncontrollable fury in Tim’s mind. He spun around, free arm flying out. The sound of breaking glass and the abrupt silence of all other noise snapped him back to awareness. He stared at the tray of glassware now on the green tile floor at his feet, and his books dropped from his grasp. All the energy drained from him as if he had been drenched with icy water.

“Mr Ward, put your books on the front table, and clean up that mess. We will discuss this at the end of class.” Rogers waited to see if Tim obeyed his instruction.

The teacher’s voice had been tightly controlled, had sounded almost matter of fact, but Tim looked at his teacher, and saw the tight lips and flushed face. He bent down and collected his books and pencil case, rose and walked rigidly to the front where he put his stuff with deliberate neatness on the front bench. When he turned to walk to get the broom, Rogers began the lesson, and all but one or two of the students stopped watching him and settled uncomfortably to listen.

Cindy Ward slammed her locker door shut, rattling the entire row of similar, gunmetal gray painted metal doors. The sound echoed down the deserted corridor. She did not consider that it might disturb the lessons that had started ten minutes ago.

In fact, the familiar row of alternating book and coat lockers now seemed like something alien and strange. She rested her head against the metal and felt it cool against her skin, for a moment tried to recall what she had been doing, and where she was.

Behind and above the lockers were windows and through them, Cindy could see sunshine and a blue sky and the trees in the yard next to the school bending in a strong breeze.

“I don’t belong here,” Cindy muttered to herself, feeling trapped, but not knowing why. She began to back away from the lockers towards the glass doors leading outside. Her eyes were on the trees, her mind wanted to feel the breeze cooling her flushed face. Her ears only heard a buzzing noise.

In an unconscious gesture, she ran her fingers through her long brown hair. The result was no improvement to the original unbrushed light brown tangle and a strand fell back over her face. She turned and headed for the door, saw movement in the corner of her eye and hurried her pace. The door didn’t seem to want to open; she rattled it and tried again. Then she kicked it angrily.

“Cindy! Why aren’t you in class?”

The voice of the school’s Deputy Principal, Dan Ward, made her turn around. Some of the alien feeling went away and she remembered where she was.

“Don’t stress, Dad! I just need to go outside.”

“You were told to come to the office,” Dan Ward told her harshly, walking closer. He was a tall man, in his early forties with tidy brown hair, and dressed on the formal side of casual.

Cindy moved her focus to a stain on the roof a short distance beyond her father. She knew it would irritate him.

“Who said so?” she asked rudely, as she realised she could even see the fine texture of the roof tiles.

“Ted Rogers told you to get down from the roof of ‘C’ block,” Dan Ward told her sternly. Cindy interrupted him with a quick glance back to his face.

“I was just getting the basketball down. Someone had to do it.”

Cindy looked down and hid her smirk. She was still simmering with anger at Roger's very public dressing down. Instead of listening to it, she had walked off, and made sure he couldn't find her for the rest of recess.

Ward's face tightened. "Students are not allowed to climb onto the roof. And you disobeyed a direct instruction given to you by a teacher – and you were extremely rude to him."

"I was doing it – getting down," Cindy told her father.

"Just because I teach here," Ward began warningly. "It does not mean that you and Tim have a right to disregard the behaviour standards expected of all students."

Cindy jerked her head up and glared at her father. "He had no right to yell at me in front of everyone."

Dan Ward's expression became cold. "Get to your class!" he told her coldly. "Consider this an official warning!"

With a dismissive stare, Cindy jammed her fists into the pockets of her school jacket and turned her back on her father. She walked at a deliberately unhurried pace down the deserted corridor and into the passage leading to Science Lab One.

She slipped through the partly opened doorway and slid into her normal seat at the nearest bench. As she shrugged out of her jacket, she noticed her brother was sweeping up a pile of broken glassware. For an instant, their eyes met. Cindy glanced at Rogers and back. Tim scowled and copied her gesture.

Mr. Rogers, the Science teacher, was writing on the whiteboard. An overhead projector reflected carefully drawn molecular structures onto the wall.

"It is nice of you to join us, Miss Ward!" Rogers said loudly as he turned from the whiteboard to face his class. "Come up to the front table please. Your brother will be joining you when he has finished cleaning up his act of vandalism!"

As she stood, grabbing her jacket, she said audibly, "I won't have missed much."

Roger's expression tightened as Cindy strolled to the indicated place. The front seats were usually left vacant because no one liked being right underneath his eye. She settled herself on the seat next to where her brother's books were placed on the bench. She was aware that he had finished sweeping and was about to join her.

"Step out of line one more time today, Mr Ward, Miss Ward, and you will both be back here for an hour after school." Rogers warned them. "And it appears that you will need to share your book and working materials, Mr Ward, as your sister doesn't consider it necessary to provide her own."

Tim eyed the teacher warily. The intense irritation that had caused him to send the tray of glassware crashing to the floor had waned. He made an effort to concentrate on the lesson even though his mind now felt sluggish. He knew he could not afford detention today – he had a scout meeting after school.

"Mr. Avery, would you tell Miss Ward the question I put to the class before she deigned to join us?"

Paul Avery, sitting at the table next to Tim's, looked up in panic. "I...er..."

"Mr. Jacobs?" Rogers turned his attention to the next student along.

"What sort of compound is formed by an acid-base reaction?" Ed Jacobs rattled off in a not too subtle imitation of Roger's pedantic tone.

"Well, you do listen occasionally, Mister Jacobs. Please open your books at Chapter Seven."

Tim opened his book without checking the place and pushed it nearer his twin, and passed two sheets of paper to her. When Rogers began to dictate notes, Tim opened his notebook and wrote in his usual neat script but he could not have said what he was writing.

Cindy stared at Mr. Rogers as he moved about the room. Her hand fiddled with the borrowed pen but she was not writing. Her eyes seemed to be making the teacher's face change

from long and narrow to round like a ball. The voice of Mr Rogers was merely a buzzing in her head and the information she was hearing was going into memory without her mind processing it.

Tim Ward was only vaguely aware that Rogers had already given two students detention for messy work. He was relieved that Rogers found nothing wrong with his own.

“Miss Ward!”

Both of the twins looked up and Rogers saw a blank expression on each face. The resemblance between them was strong.

“What have I been saying?”

“When an acid is neutralized by a base, you get water and a salt. Thus when sodium hydroxide is mixed ...” Cindy repeated verbatim the half page of notes that Rogers had dictated.

Several students snickered, but they stopped abruptly when Rogers glared in their direction.

“I will have your company back here after last lesson, Miss Ward. It will be interesting to see if you can still remember everything then.”

Cindy gave no reaction, except to stare at Rogers until he turned to resume dictating.

“Is your sister’s lack of attention contagious Mr. Ward?” Rogers asked, noticing that Tim had stopped writing.

Tim looked at his hand as if it belonged to a stranger, and said nothing. He forgot the question as his mind tried to understand why his hands looked mauve. He didn’t seem to hear the instruction about joining his sister for detention.

“Someone should go and punch him in the face,” Paul Avery muttered darkly, glaring at Rogers after he had moved away. He too had detention after school.

After a moment, Tim stood up and followed the teacher to the front of the room. Rogers turned, hearing footsteps and only had time to say “What...” before a hard punch landed in his face and knocked him backwards.

Rogers regained his balance quickly. In a fluid movement, he grabbed Tim with one hand, pulled him to the door that he opened it with his other hand. He pushed Tim out into the corridor with enough force to send him stumbling into the far wall. He followed his student out.

“You will go – to Mr. Howard’s office – and wait for me!” he said with emphasis, pulling a neatly pressed handkerchief from his jacket pocket to wipe blood from his nose. As he turned to return to the classroom, he noticed the lights were flickering as Cindy erupted from the room.

“Leave my brother alone,” she screamed coming at him.

Rogers had no chance to react before Cindy began hitting him. He was, for a moment, so angry he was unable to speak. Without a further word, he grasped Cindy’s arm and propelled her across the corridor to join her brother.

“Both of you – up to the Office – now!” Rogers finally articulated. In his state of suppressed rage, he noticed that both Tim and Cindy looked frightened. He told himself that they ought to be scared. They were in serious trouble. Their father might be the deputy principal, but that would not protect them from being suspended or expelled. He watched as they backed away from him towards the door leading outside.

His class greeted his return with whispers and stunned, frightened looks.

“I will return shortly,” Rogers told his class in a tightly controlled voice. “In my absence you will proceed to answer the questions at the end of Chapter Seven. When I come back, if I hear talking, whispering or any noise at all – the whole class will have detention every night until the end of term!”

Mouths snapped shut, heads bent over work as Rogers stalked from the room. The scratching of pens and the ticking of the clock seemed very loud.

Tim only walked as far as the concrete steps outside the door. The reality of his actions finally hit him and he grabbed the handrail and slumped onto the top step. Cindy, with the instinctive empathy she shared with her twin, sat down beside him.

“Why did I do it, Sis? How could I have done it?” Tim asked aloud, but his mind was blank. He was oblivious to the strong breeze blowing in his face and the scudding clouds that were racing overhead. He had even forgotten he should be going to the Principal’s Office as he absently rubbed the elbow that had hit the corridor wall.

“You shouldn’t have started yelling at him, Cindy.”

“I couldn’t help it, Tim,” Cindy said in a smaller voice than usual. “I felt as if he was touching me! I was so angry...”

Cindy swallowed convulsively, trying not to be sick. The incredible fury that had erupted within her as Rogers pushed Tim from the room had cooled, but the memory made her nauseous.

She and Tim had gone past merely rude. What was happening to them, to make them do such a thing as attacking a teacher? Why was every little commonplace thing making them irritated? Why were they reacting so violently? The buzzing in her head made it difficult to think.

Chapter 2 - The Children of Prophecy

“Tim! Cindy!”

The sharp voice visibly startled the twins. They sprang to their feet and as if responding to a threat, twirled to face the voice. Their eyes took in the school blazer and the school captain’s badge and finally recognition dawned. Keith Rasmussen, the school’s senior student leader had come, unheard, out of the door behind them.

The breeze now blowing from behind them gusted strongly. Both Tim and Cindy grabbed the nearest stair rail and began to back down the stairs.

“Mr. Howard is expecting you!” he told them grimly. “Come on! It is no use dawdling any more. Ted Rogers is livid. What the hell did you do?”

“I ...hit him,” Tim said in a voice devoid of emotion. His eyes were blank of expression.

Keith, about to move down the steps, stopped. The admission appalled him. Tim and his sister were two of the school’s top students in both sport and academics...

He stopped the thought, admitting to himself that Tim and his sister had been acting disagreeably for several weeks. They were his friends though, and seeing the extreme pallor of their faces, he knew that his sympathy was not with the outraged teacher.

“Come on,” he repeated more gently. “You have to come to the Office.”

“F--- off! We’ll get there,” Tim swore, as he turned to descend the steps.

“Okay, no stress,” Keith said in as calm a voice as he could manage. He held his hands up in an ‘I don’t intend to hurt you’ gesture.

Cindy stared at him blankly for a moment and then turned to follow her brother. The blankness in both sets of blue-green eyes gave Keith shivers. “Are you guys on something?” he asked as he began to follow them.

“No!” Cindy shouted over her shoulder as she ambled after her brother who showed no inclination to go fast.

Keith followed them with impatience. If they didn’t hurry, Principal Howard was going to be angry with them. He moved forward and nudged them both. Tim snarled, sounding like a feral animal; Cindy turned and struck his arm with hers. It hurt him so much he was sure he’d get a bruise, but she seemed to feel nothing and her blank expression had not changed.

Talk about a strange mood, Keith thought to himself. I wouldn’t like to have Ted Rogers appear just now. Whatever had the teacher had done to provoke these two into attacking him? Though the way Tim and Cindy were now, it may not have taken much at all. Rogers could be irritating, Keith knew that all too well, but even so, there was no excuse for hitting a teacher.

From dawdling, Tim and Cindy were now walking very fast. Keith realised that he needed to speed up and thought to himself that their behaviour made no sense. They had to be on drugs – maybe a mixture.

He saw Cindy stumble. Tim seemed not to notice that his sister was lying on the ground. Keith came up and offered Cindy his hand, “Here let me help you up.”

Cindy rolled onto her back, and reached up for his hand. Keith gripped it and almost lost his balance when she yanked on it. Her eyes still seemed blank and cold.

Without seeming to hurry, Cindy caught up to her brother. Keith followed closely, and saw them stop suddenly outside the principal’s office.

Keith reached around them and knocked on the wood panelled door. There was no sound within, so he guessed that Ted Rogers had been calmed down enough to return to his class. Certainly, his shouting had been audible down the corridor to the library. A soft voice from within bade them to enter but neither Tim nor Cindy moved. Keith reached around them to open the door then nudged them. He feared another violent response, but they both stumbled

slightly and moved forward. He pushed them gently towards the two chairs that faced the headmaster.

Tony Howard was sitting behind his modern brown wood desk, which contained only a neat pile of the day's correspondence. Keith had never seen the Headmaster's expression so severe. He normally had a pleasant smile that put people at ease.

He wondered if he should tell Howard about the twins' odd behaviour on the way to the office, but he did not know what to say.

"I'll have a word with you later, Keith," Howard remarked quietly. "But you can leave things in my hands for now."

Keith obeyed Howard's tacit dismissal and walked back to his interrupted study in a very thoughtful mood. He knew the headmaster was a fair man but...damn it, Tim and Cindy weren't their normal selves at the moment.

Howard studied the twins. Shock was probably an apt description for what he observed in the two children now slumped in the chairs. Neither Tim nor Cindy had ever been in serious trouble and, until now, he had been satisfied to let their father handle their recent misbehaviour. However, it was not petty mischief or mere rudeness anymore.

Ted Rogers had been in a righteous fury, but he had been scrupulously truthful as he reported on the incident. He even admitted he had begun to dislike both students, who lately seemed to think they knew everything, and could learn nothing more in his science class.

It had taken a lot of diplomacy on Howard's part to dissipate the fury enough to allow Rogers to return to his class.

Howard continued to study the two students. There was no evidence of the false bravado that the few habitual troublemakers exuded or even of the defiance that Rogers had mentioned. Tim and Cindy Ward kept their eyes downcast.

"I would like to know what happened!" Howard said sternly. Something in his voice drew their eyes to meet his, but their gaze was blank.

"Tim?" he prompted when neither spoke.

"I punched Mr. Rogers, Sir," Tim sounded honestly bewildered, his voice hoarse. "I know I was angry earlier but I don't know why I hit him."

Howard frowned slightly.

"Cindy?"

"When Mr. Rogers began to get rough with Tim, it felt like he was handling me. I was so angry then but now I think I want to be sick. I have been feeling strange all morning - angry and fidgety. My head seems to be buzzing; my eyes keep going in and out of focus and my hands look kind of mauve."

Tony Howard was so startled at her unexpected words that he had begun to stand up before he realized what he was doing. He continued the movement as it enabled him to see Cindy's hands and Tim's also. His eyes narrowed cutting out some of the brightness coming in from the window behind him. Yes, there was indeed a mauve glow about the hands.

"I will need to talk to you both some more," Howard told them sternly. "I want you to wait here quietly."

Howard calmed his mind as he left his office. He needed to keep his reactions under control. It was imperative, because if his guess was correct, the two children in his office would react to ambient emotions.

He stopped for a moment after closing his office door. What he had just seen, added to how the children had been behaving...the signs were unmistakable, but difficult for him to believe.

"Why?" he asked himself. "Why were these two students, now showing signs of a kind of power that belonged to his kinfolk on Tymorea, a planet halfway across the inhabited universe?"

Howard began to cross the common area thinking, "It shouldn't be possible. Dan Ward wasn't a Tymorean, nor was either of his parents. Moreover, as far as Howard knew, Dan's late wife had not been either. Even if one or other had been Tymorean, the children still should not be showing signs of this power. Admittedly, Tim and Cindy were intelligent, and physically more adept than others their age but this shouldn't be happening.

Then a fragment of memory surfaced. He recalled mention that some rare Tymoreans were catalysts, people able to activate latent power in others. Could some humans have the same effect? An idea for later. Right now, he needed help to deal with the children. Fortunately, there was another Tymorean nearby who was even more powerful than he was.

Knowing that his deputy had just left to go to a seminar in the city, Howard went to use the phone in Dan Ward's office. As he lifted the receiver and dialed, he stared at the small framed photo of Janelle Ward who had died six years ago. Dan had left a high paid research position to become a teacher when he had become a single parent.

His first call was answered quickly. All he said was, "I need you at my school, Vincent."

His fellow Tymorean, who was also a psychologist, merely answered, "Coming right away."

Howard's second call was to Dan Ward's mobile phone. He heard traffic noise in the background as Dan answered.

"Daniel, sorry to recall you, but I have a serious situation here and need you back."

After a pause, Dan answered, tensely, "Right, Tony, on my way."

For a few moments, Howard sat staring at the neat book-filled shelves next to the door, which were mostly bound journals and science texts. He rose abruptly to return to the children in his office. He shouldn't leave them alone for long.

Tim and Cindy tensed when the door behind them re-opened, but they did not look around. They watched him as he walked back to and around his desk.

His young looking face wore a serious expression.

"Your father is on his way back. I expect that you realize what a difficult position you have put him in!"

"Yes, Sir," Tim answered he had the look of a cornered animal, wanting to flee but too scared to move. "Are we going to be expelled?"

"That will depend on a number of factors," Howard admitted truthfully. "A two week suspension is the least of it."

Howard tried to question them further. "Are you taking any medication or food supplements?" Neither Tim nor Cindy seemed inclined to answer him. Both seemed to want to vanish into their seats. Instead of pressing more questions on them, he sat observing them until the reception office called to say the psychologist had arrived.

Tony Howard went to the schools reception desk to greet Vincent, who was both a friend and a distant cousin. The psychologist wasted no time on greetings, knowing that the reason for being summoned must be serious. He strode down the passage with Howard giving him a low voiced summary of the two children in his office. Vincent increased his pace, hearing noises coming from the room ahead that boded ill.

Vincent entered the room first, moving aside to let Howard follow and close the door. Neither

commented as Tim systematically swiped books from Howard's shelves and Cindy was kicked papers around the carpeted floor that had once been neat piles of correspondence on the desk.

"Have you a dampening field on in here?" Vincent asked quietly.

"Yes. I needed it earlier to calm one of my teachers. These two were quiet enough when I went to meet you."

"Well, they are getting energy from somewhere. Are the lights normally this dim in here?"

Howard glanced up. With the sun coming in from outside being so bright, he hadn't noticed the room lights.

"No." Then he changed the volume and tone of his voice and commanded. "Tim, Cindy, you will both sit down!"

Both Tim and Cindy stopped moving and then, like automatons, they returned to the chairs and began to stare straight ahead.

Vincent said quietly to Howard, "Their higher cognitive functions are not operating, and they are reacting to the sense of needing to do something. The glow has spread from their hands up to their shoulders. Would you turn the electric lights off in here?"

He gently touched the face of each child in turn. Some colour came back into their faces and the glow around their arms faded.

"Your observations and conclusions are right on the mark, Tony," Vincent told his friend after a few more minutes of observation. "They are indeed showing classic symptoms of Delayed Onset Syndrome. Leave them with me for a while. When Daniel returns, bring him in."

Dan Ward walked into his office feeling as tense as a coiled spring. He looked as if he had prepared himself for bad news. He sat stiffly in a spare chair so he could face his superior who had usurped his office.

Howard rose from behind Dan's desk and walked to close the door. He returned to the seat behind the desk and as gently as possible, related the recent events. Dan Ward betrayed nothing of his feelings.

"I feared something like this," Dan told his superior with a degree of resignation.

"How long has such behaviour been going on?" Howard asked. "I know you've been dealing with some of it here."

"The rudeness, the disobedience, the thoughtlessness, the rebelliousness ... probably close to a month," Dan said distractedly. "It's been getting worse. Last weekend when they were out with an orienteering group, they decided to free climb up a sheer cliff face. They were half way up before the group leader realised it."

"Maybe I should have intervened sooner," Tony Howard murmured. "However, I believe I know the cause of their problem..." he held up his hand to forestall interruptions "I have heard of such situations before. I took the liberty of calling in an excellent psychologist, who knows how to treat this type of behaviour. He is with your children now and will be able to explain all this better than I can."

Dan rose abruptly. "I want to talk to him."

Vincent rose from Howard's chair as Dan Ward entered.

"Daniel, I am Vincent. I expect Tony has explained that I am a psychologist?"

Dan nodded and shook hands with the doctor. He felt the same instinctive trust for this stranger as he had for his friend, Tony Howard.

Then Dan looked at his children. Neither seemed aware of him.

Howard moved another chair near his desk. He himself elected to stand beside the dark haired Vincent. The resemblance between them was noticeable even though Howard's hair was blond and Vincent's was black.

"What is all this about? What is the matter with them? What aren't you telling me?" Dan was beginning to feel very odd himself – somewhat light headed. He needed to sit down.

"I am going to tell you something that is not generally known," Vincent began, watching Dan carefully. "And I am doing so because I must have your permission to treat these children. I

am not just a psychologist; I am also a Tymorean missionary. I was born on Tymorea a planet that is a long way from here.”

“What do you mean? You’re an alien? Is this a joke?”

“No, Daniel, this is not a joke. Please listen to me as I explain. On my world, the rulers are born with a special kind of power, a gift they use for the good of our people. I have some of it; so does my friend Tony Howard. Your children – for reasons unknown, have inherited the same power. They do not know how to handle it and that is the underlying cause of today’s events. The sooner we start to teach them, the better.”

In fact, Vincent knew it was imperative to begin at once but he could not rush his explanation. Dan Ward had to agree and the light trance he had imposed on the man was slowing his thinking.

“Why is this happening to my children?” Dan asked, bewildered. “Is it something I did wrong?”

“Daniel, I don’t know why this has happened. Maybe my brother, Governor Xyron, could tell you. All I know is that your grandfather and mother-in-law were missionaries of ours. You would not know this because normally, the progeny of mixed marriages do not inherit Tymorean powers and we do not need to tell our children of our origins.”

“In this case we had to reveal ourselves to you, because your children must go to Tymorea. We can’t train them here,” Tony Howard explained.

Dan nodded, and looked thoughtfully at Howard and Vincent. They didn’t look alien; couldn’t be too different if they could breed with Earth people. He shook his head to try to think more clearly. “They can’t go on as they are. I don’t recognise them any more.”

“I don’t want to go anywhere!” Cindy blurted. She tried to rise from the chair, but fell back. “I don’t.”

Vincent stood up again and came around the desk. He walked to where Cindy sat and gently touched her cheek. “It is necessary young one,” he said quietly and Cindy subsided. “If your illness goes untreated it will cause you to harm the people you care for.”

Dan saw Cindy shudder at the thought.

“If you resume those calming exercises that I taught you – you will begin to feel a lot better.”

Vincent watched Cindy for a moment, and then turned his attention back to Dan.

Dan Ward heard himself say, “Something has to be done and nothing I have tried has worked. I cannot help them. Tony recommended you and I trust his judgement. Do what is necessary.”

“Thank you, Daniel. Please stay with your children until I return. I have a few more matters to attend to before I leave.”

Vincent waited until after the lunch break before calling up his driver to bring his van closer to the administration entrance. The children were docile now that he had grounded out their excess energy and blocked their access to more. He had no illusions about what might happen once they emerged from Howard’s shielded office. If they had been able to draw energy from the school’s electrical system, they might be able to draw it from sunlight or even the wind. There had been some very odd gusts of wind earlier.

The only way to prevent that was to knock them out, but he didn’t want them to be seen leaving the school on stretchers. Better it just seem that they were being sent home. Having Dan Ward walking out with them would aid that idea.

Tony, warned to be ready if Tim began to resist going outside, increased his grip on the boy’s arm. Dan wasn’t expecting trouble from Cindy however, and she wrenched herself free from his gentle grip. Vincent was watching her and caught her arm before she got more than two

steps away. In that moment of touching, he felt a jolt of energy. Cindy only seemed to stumble slightly, and Dan was unaware of a problem.

Vincent didn't have to voice the urgency of getting these children into his van. Just looking at Tony, it was apparent he was feeling the steady trickle of excess power grounding through him.

Without seeming to hurry, Vincent directed Tim and Cindy to couches slung down each side of the rear of his van. Howard caught his glance that was a suggestion of getting Dan Ward out of the way.

As soon as the other men had gone, Vincent closed the doors from inside and took a palm-sized device from a small locker near the door. In moments, he had touched the device to each child's arm and injected a fast acting sedative.

Once it had taken effect, he covered and secured the children onto the couches. He rapped on the partition backing the driver's cabin and a sliding panel opened.

"Back to the clinic, please John."

Dan Ward was aware that Howard waited with him as the van drove away. It had looked like a large ambulance inside, but the outside was plain white and the only windows were in the rear door. He had only glimpsed the driver through the driver's window, and he had seemed to be in normal clothes. Any observers would not learn much from the vehicle's appearance.

When the van had passed out of the school gate, Dan began to shiver, and his mind to fill with misgivings. Then he recalled how Vincent had merely had to touch his children gently to induce calm in them. Had he done something similar to him? He must have, for while part of his mind was relieved that the psychologist could indeed manage his children the other part was telling him that he was a fool to be calmly handing his children over to a complete stranger.

Howard walked with his friend and deputy until Dan re-entered his office. He intended to follow but detoured to his own office first.

He knew that some reaction to the morning's events would be inevitable, so he collected a small bottle of strong spirits and two small tumblers. Drinking alcohol at the school was strictly against the rules but Howard felt it was justified at this time. He walked uninvited into Dan's office and closed the door for privacy. Then he poured two small drinks. Dan Ward appeared to be staring out the window to where two classes were now involved in a football match.

Howard watched the play of emotions crossing his deputy's face as he pressed the tumbler into his hand. Dan acknowledged the drink with a brief nod and downed it quickly. He handed the glass back but made no move for a refill, nor made any effort to speak. He returned to staring out of the window. The headmaster sat quietly in the spare chair and waited. The sun shone in through the window and Dan was oblivious to it. Fortunately, Dan's afternoon lessons were covered since he should have been at a seminar.

"Dan?" Howard spoke quietly.

"I appreciate your presence, Tony," Dan answered at once, though he didn't turn around. "My mind is going in circles - I cannot understand how I can be so accepting of the fantastic story you told me, but something inside me knows it is true. It is like I have remembered something I had forgotten."

"I appreciate your continued trust, my friend." Howard admitted. "I was surprised when Vincent mentioned that you were related to us. Your Grandfather, was he the one who raised you?"

"Yes, but I never had much to do with my mother-in-law. Janelle was never her mother's idea of a dutiful daughter. Tell me about your home world Tony."

"It is a lot like Earth. We have a high level of technology, but most people do not make use of it. The gravity is slightly higher than here. Did Vincent invite you around to his clinic?"

"He said he would call me. Why?" Dan asked.

“You must have many questions, Dan. I’ll answer them if I can but I am only a headmaster. Vincent is the scientist, so save the highly technical questions for him. Ask me simple ones.”

“Simple, hmm!” Dan had begun to relax. “Okay, why are your people interested in this world?”

Howard took a moment to organize his thoughts. Dan deserved the best answer he could give him.

“My people, Tymoreans, revere the Guardians of Peace. In our history, they made our world a guardian planet. We live by the principle that, ‘When there is peace on Tymorea, there is peace in the universe’.”

Dan turned and leant his back against the windowsill. “So, you come to other worlds?” he said, “As missionaries, Vincent said.”

“Observers really,” Tony explained. “We come and blend into the population, sometimes marry. In times of war, we often choose to help the cause of peace.”

“Where does this power you mentioned come into it?” Dan asked. He still didn’t understand about that. “Your rulers have it and my children do. But where does it come from?”

“At the dawn of our history, when the Guardians of Peace gave us the Trust, they bestowed gifts of power on three great leaders,” Howard explained, trying to be clear. “These three formed the first Triumvirate, and the power was inherited by their children and by each successive generation.”

“And you have some of it too,” Dan recalled.

“Yes, but not very much. I am a minor member of Governor Reslic’s family. I have enough of the Governor’s power to be able to serve as a missionary. That is why I could recognise it in Tim and Cindy.”

Dan nodded thoughtfully. “So since both Janelle and I had Tymorean ancestors, and therefore I assume traces of this power... then it must be some quirk of genetics that brought this on if that heritage is normally recessive.”

“Vincent considered that, that’s why he spoke to Ted Rogers and some of the students. As far as we know, the power should have stayed only as a potential. He was checking to see if someone here might have been a catalyst.”

“Are you saying there might be other students here that are part alien, I mean, part Tymorean?” Dan asked.

“Vincent only keeps records of the first generation of mixed liaisons, so I can’t answer that,” Tony admitted. “It has never been necessary before.”

“Fair enough, perhaps you can tell me why Vincent was in such a hurry to get them away?”

Howard sighed. “Their power is very, very strong. Once Vincent arrived, he was controlling it – keeping it at a very low level.” He decided not to mention the damping field in his office – that technology was unknown on Earth. “I think they were fighting that control and that is dangerous.”

Dan Ward finally moved to his chair and collapsed into it. “You are saying they would become worse than they have been...”

“Yes,” Howard said simply.

After a period of silence, Daniel spoke again. “You said that he needs to take them to your world...”

He paused and Howard waited for him to finish. “Will I ever see them again? Could I visit them? Might they return here as missionaries?”

Howard knew that Tymoreans usually never took aliens back to Tymorea, but maybe this was a time to make an exception – Dan’s children were exceptions.

“Speak to Vincent,” Howard suggested, relieved to be able to pass the responsibility onto one with higher rank. He hoped Dan didn’t ask how they were to get there. That was a technology way above anything available on Earth.

“What will happen when they get there?” Dan asked.

“I think, once they get to Tymorea, one of the Governor’s or someone in their immediate family will foster them.”

Dan echoed, “One of the Governors? Are they that important?”

Howard chose to shrug rather than refer to the prophecy that foretold of the day’s events.

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