

## CHAPTER 46

For reasons of her own, Eenah decided to go back to Dragonshead, and even took up an offer to appear in the newly revived Disneyland in Tokyo.

'We be watching that television thing, and those little Japan people, they were saying, Eenah, we love you. So, we go to this Disneyland place, and you know what Empora, it be a very exciting place.'

'And they want us to come back again.'

'That is so amazing,' Emphora says.

'But it not all good news, some very bad men are saying not-so-nice things about you Addric.'

'Who were they and what did they say?'

'That be them Hateful Army types, and they even be saying awful things about Him Holy Person too.'

'Ah,' Felicity says, 'they are alive and well and getting a little too big for their boots.'

'The fact that they have the nerve to speak their mind so openly is a bit of a worry,' Yusef says.

'Well, we did warn them that we are coming to get them,' Addric said. 'Unfortunately, we have to work out a way to identify them first.'

'Has anyone got any ideas on what we could do?'

'Strategies,' Felicity says, 'we play a game of cat and mouse and draw them into our net?'

'And how do we do that?'

'We tell them a barefaced lie, obviously, that we now have the names of over five million recalcitrants, all of whom have been identified by the implants.'

'That could work,' Reuben says. 'We just remind them of the three chances thing, that there's a deadline. And if they refuse to comply, everyone on an alphabetical list will receive a midnight visit from a portal with a red light.'

'Ah the pathway to the penal colony routine,' Felicity says.

'That would be enough to scare the pants off anyone,' Connor says. 'However, it would be even more effective if the message was delivered as a sixty second commercial, a community announcement, so to speak.'

'With special effects thrown in for good measure,' Felicity says.

'We could create a graphically horrible video showing a Krugwah portal visiting someone in the dead of night. It plucks them from their bed and drops them off at the hell-hole penal colony on Jupiter.'

'That's sort of unethical, isn't it?' Addric says.

'It's either that boyo, or good-bye Planet Earth. Take your pick.'

'Okay, let's do it,' he says. 'We have nothing to lose, but they do.'

The campaign to save the Earth is gathering in momentum but it's a race against time. The global media has gone out of their way to keep it in the public gaze, and are even presenting the statistics from the implants in a similar fashion to the daily weather report.

But Milton and Connor have the most tedious job of all. They have to itemise the ever-changing results from the Zilmo Tag and transfer them to a spreadsheet program.

'You may not believe this,' Emphora says, 'but Disneyland has invited Eenah and the Krugwah to perform at a special one-off spectacular.'

'Why?' Addric says.

'To celebrate Earth Day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, no less.'

'We could use that to our advantage, couldn't we?'

'Earth Day is an international day of peace and celebration and the one day of the year dedicated to Planet Earth.'

According to the news report, Eenah has won hearts all over the world. But it obviously didn't go un-noticed by Disney executives that she resembles the star of an animated movie called, *Escape from Planet Earth*.

'Lena the Astro Diva is a space adventure in which a little astronaut responds to a mysterious message to save Earthlings from a tyrannical alien,' a news reporter says.

'Eenah is now a world-famous celebrity, but it would not be a spectacular unless Addric and the Extra-Terrestrials agree to make an appearance as well.'

'Why not,' Addric says, 'it will be the perfect way to send a message to the Hateful Army as well.'

'They are not a collective,' Felicity says. 'They are people from all walks of life, but they all have one thing in common; they have a long and recognisable history.'

'They are the ruthless, the desperate and the dangerous, social outcasts in other words. And most are as mean-spirited as you can get.'

'They're the sort that would steal a hand-bag from an old lady or abuse a passing stranger for no reason at all.'

'They have been with us since the beginning of time,' Yusef says. 'Life in ages past wasn't just difficult. It was deplorable in every way. And it wasn't just poverty that people had to endure.'

'People lived in filth and squalor, there was no such thing as sanitation or medical facilities, and hygiene was virtually unknown.'

'For some people this is a dog-eat-dog world, and everyone is a potential enemy.'

'Today, they are not as visible, but in the past, the Hateful Army was everywhere, and anything could set them off.'

‘Women were constantly being abused and had absolutely no recourse to justice. For some people, nothing has changed at all.’

‘Which means that the Hateful Army are not just the mean spirited,’ Emphora says, ‘but those for whom life has been one horrible experience after another.’

‘I never really understood who they were,’ Connor says, ‘but it would be heartless to hunt them down and terrorise them just because of that.’

‘I have spent years battling the generals of the Hateful Army,’ Felicity says.

‘And how did you do that?’

‘I figured out a way to travel back in time, so that I could explore the history of the Earth.’

‘The so-called leaders of past ages, the, kings, generals and military crusaders were the Hateful Army in disguise.’

‘Felicity is a collector, not of precious objects,’ Addric says, ‘but of battles she has fought with the likes of Zeus.’

‘And wasn’t he a treat and a half, but most of his family was just as bad in one way or another. I soon learnt that strategy meant psyching out the enemy, but what those monsters got away with was abominable.’

‘A modern woman would not tolerate the way they treated women in those days. So, when I felt like a little diversion, Connor, I would pop back to a period in Earth’s history and play a few little games of my own.’

‘You will be interested to know, that Felicity’s house is decorated with the trophies of her conquests,’ Addric says.

‘What do you mean, like the private parts of Attila the Hun or something like that.’

‘Not likely Connor, my house is a gallery of paintings and murals, scenes frozen in time, starting with that lecherous old trickster Zeus.’

‘I made a hit list, The Top Ten Tyrants of the Ancient World and decided to visit them one by one.’

‘My sole purpose was to see if they could out-smart me at one thing or another. My exploits were never recorded, but they should have been.’

‘Twisted creatures like Vlad the Impaler found out what it was like to be on the receiving end of his own medicine.’

‘His claim to fame was that he disposed of his enemies by impaling them through the heart with a pointed stake.’

‘So, I decided to give him a taste of what that was like.’

‘One day, I invited him to go horse-riding. Unfortunately, Vlad’s horse stumbled, and he ended up dangling over the edge of a cliff, below which was an artful arrangement of greased and sharpened spikes.’

‘And, did he fall into the pit?’ Connor says.

'I didn't wait around to find out, but when he was found two days later, he was a babbling mess.'

'Then there was that deranged idiot Caligula, whose favourite pastime was torturing innocent people while he entertained friends at a banquet.'

'That was the very same Roman Emperor who promoted his horse to a Consul of Rome.'

'And what did you do to him?'

'I lured him to my villa on the outskirts of Rome and suspended him over a vat full of snakes. Not the poisonous variety, of course, but he didn't know that.'

'I was hoping to re-educate the little ratbag.'

'And did it work?'

'Of course not, but after that I realised that most tyrants had mental issues of one sort or another. And according to modern scholars, Caligula probably had schizophrenia or something like that.'

'That's an insight to the mindset of the people we are dealing with,' she says. 'The Hateful Army has been with us in one form or another, and they're still here, hiding away in the shadows. Unfortunately, they have never changed.'

'Some are patently obvious while others manage to fly under the radar. But as we now know, they can also be the managing director of an international conglomerate.'

'But Connor, you will be pleased to hear that the Countess of Farago is actually a humanitarian at heart,' Addric says.

'You are a dear and beloved friend Addric, but I pale into insignificance compared to you.'

'You are a great asset to this campaign, Felicity, and the people of planet Earth will one day thank you for that.'