

Chapter 8

Thorn did not even notice the sweat dripping from his forehead as he was concentrating on the contents of the test tube. As was True, but she concentrated more on making sure not to drop the test tube itself. In the test tube an interesting sequence took place. Both looked disappointed as nothing happened at first, but after thirty seconds the fluid saturated the cotton so the material itself changed colour from white to purple. Thorn gave a sigh as if to ask 'Was that it?' to himself. But True hinted to her brother with her face mimic to keep watching.

Then as if the hint gave the fluid the signal to go ahead, it consumed or more sucked the mass of the cotton; and left behind the outer layer formed in a tiny ball. The fluid grew in quantity.

True provided commentary on what had just happened "Note the speed at which the fluid carried out this predatory act."

Although Thorn took in everything True had said, he could not speak at first.

As he looked away from the test tube, he added "True do you realise that without a glass quarantine, the outbreak of this monstrous virus might devastate our world? Does this fluid just destroy materials or living things too?"

"Keep this confidential. We know too little at present. Maybe I'll learn more tomorrow at work. Thorn, I'm scared, believe me, scared for everyone I know and the rest of mankind." True confided.

As she used the side of the bath tub as a seat, True added "How this will turn when the military get involved is anybody's guess. Most likely they'll take over the quarantine control and as for trying to stop or cure this virus, no department will be responsible."

Thorn pondered for a few minutes in silence before suggesting "I reckon it's best we take things into our own hands. We should start now to make a plan of action. Whatever we plan though, it's important to remember we must make sure not to attract attention to ourselves."

True looked up at her brother and said "Okay. First I'll store this stuff in a safe place. I'll make us a quick snack afterwards. If you want you can go ahead into the living room."

She placed the test tube in her bathroom cupboard on the wall and proceeded through to the kitchen.

"Do you have any news on Leo? I mean what came of his court case?" she asked as she arrived at the kitchen work-top.

From the living room, having made himself comfortable again on the couch, Thorn called back to his sister "Um, no not yet. I hope he can find a way of getting in touch with us."

With the mixer blending a fruit shake from a variety of fruitflavoured powders, she caught that he had said something; but did not catch what.

So she asked "What was that?" raising her voice over the sound of the mixer.

Thorn was sure by the sounds coming from the kitchen, that she may not of heard him and so was ready to repeat his last answer when she asked. At whizzing up snacks True was amazing, considering that most of the delivered shopping was meals to be heated in the microwave oven. Within what had to have been just a few minutes, True arrived with a tray of snacks and drinks; and spread the items on offer over the table top within arm's reach. Although True had ideas, she first wanted to listen to Thorn. She still needed to attend her hospital shifts for now. She looked at Thorn to prompt the initiative from him.

"True, we need to tackle this with different approaches." Thorn suggested.

True added "I'm up for that – and what do you reckon they should be?" Thorn leaned forward and continued "Okay, one angle to consider is that we might have over reacted, and that everything is under control at the hospital and the virus stopped. The other is to assume that matters are far worse, in which case we need to gain more information on the wrist chips; even consider evacuation and our own safety."

True now raised the ideas she had and said "Yes and I thought it could be useful if I searched for procedures at the hospital for such emergencies. If such a procedure entails notifying the Administration Force, I suggest that we should drop everything and stick to the second approach. And I'll try to get a message to mum and dad out at the pension dome."

The seriousness of the predicament hit home with Thorn as soon as she mentioned the parents.

Assuming it was now his turn to comment he said “You do that True. I'll contact one of my old breed mates to find out more information on these wrist chips.”

He felt over the skin which covered his chip, then looked at True and continued “I'll find out too if we can get rid of ours without sounding alarms.”

Although not with his full approval at first, they had agreed to meet up at Thorn's apartment at seven the next evening. Due to the state of his place True's flat was his choice of location, but she made a good point of not creating a visiting pattern.