

The Blade of the Temple

Complete collection



By Mark Scott

Illustrations by Amy Scott

Contents

Prologue.....	5
PART 1: THE MONSTERS	7
Chapter 1: The Ambush	8
Chapter 2: The Blade	10
Chapter 3: Spying.....	12
Chapter 4: The Sacrifice	15
Chapter 5: The Hole to Darkness	18
Chapter 6: The Ghost	21
PART 2: THE CAPTURES.....	23
Chapter 7: The Monster Realm	24
Chapter 8: The Aquius Tribe	28
Chapter 9: Round 1 of the Test	35
Chapter 10: Round 2 of the Test	38
Chapter 11: The Final Round of the Test.....	42
Chapter 12: Around the Fireplace	48
PART 3: THE HEART	52
Chapter 13: Whispers	53
Chapter 14: The Gloves of Glow	56
Chapter 15: To Centre Point	60
Chapter 16: The Final Battle	65
Chapter 17: Back into the Light.....	68
Chapter 16: The Final Battle	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Chapter 17: Back into the Light..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Prologue

“What is that I see?” asked a Guard.

“It appears to be an army!”

“What? The world is in peace! The monsters are extinct!
How could they return?”

“I don’t know; the beasts were last seen two thousand
years ago!”

“I think...”

A small, blood-stained arrow flew across the room and
sank deep into one of the soldier’s shoulders.

“No! don’t do this to me! Please spare my life!”

The other died the same way.

Charging in were the ancient monsters, some centuries
old, and this was their chance to wreak havoc across the
world. How could this small village be saved?

Our hero, Jasmine, will find a way!



A hand-drawn shield with a double border. The outer border is a rectangle with a pointed bottom, and the inner border is a smaller rectangle with a pointed bottom. There are 18 small circles, resembling rivets, placed along the outer border: 5 on the top horizontal edge, 4 on each of the vertical edges, and 4 on each of the diagonal edges. The text "PART 1: THE MONSTERS" is centered within the shield.

PART 1: THE MONSTERS

Chapter 1: The Ambush

“Jasmine come here now! You must look at this!”
shouted her mother.

Suddenly the door winced open and behind it stood a
bloodthirsty, grim-faced ogre.

“I know the child they speak of is here! I can smell her
blood nearby! Where could you be, little one? You can’t
hide from me!”

Jasmine, who was only 8 years old, suppressed a shriek
which nearly came out of her.

“Ah! There you are!”

Spotting Jasmine, the ogre swing his almighty axe at
her. She dodged, although confused and scared.

“Ha, I have you now!” and the Ogre swung his axe
again. This time it hit Jasmine’s foot as she tried to
dodge again. The cut was painful, and Jasmine fell to
the floor. The beast raised its axe again and aimed at
the girl’s head. Half a second later, Jasmine would have
been lying on the floor without her head, but what
seemed like a flash swooped and blocked the Ogre’s
blow.

“Wha...”

“Run now!” shouted the person who just saved
Jasmine’s life.

Jasmine did not think twice. Fleeing to the room her mother was in, she saw the corpse of her mother on the floor.

“Mother!”

“Time is running out!” said the person.

Jasmine ran out of the house in tears. The boy ran out too, and they fled far from the flaming village.

“Who are you?” asked Jasmine.

“I am Tom. Who are you?”

“I am called Jasmine.”

“Wait, Jasmine?”

“Yes...”

“Oh! Follow me then, I know where we should go.”

They turned right at a fork, into a damp forest.

“So how did you block so well? Where have you learnt such a skill?” asked Jasmine.

“You are about to find out”

The path curved left, but Tom led straight, away from the path. After a minute of walking, Tom pulled away some leaves to reveal a small, ancient temple.

Chapter 2: The Blade

"Here is the temple where I trained."

"All alone?"

"Oh, certainly not..."

A small, strong man walked out the temple, wearing a robe and smiled when he saw Jasmine. He walked up to her, looking mature and clever.

"You must be Jasmine." said the man

"What? How do you..."

"I will say a little later. For now, you must learn what is happening to your village and others, too."

"Who are you?"

"I am called Quimm. I will be your teacher and guide. You are the Blade, the only person who can stop these attacks."

A few minutes later, the three were sitting next to a fire, at around 8 o'clock. They had gathered to discuss what was happening. Quimm leaned in and whispered, "We believe that the monsters are behind this attack, but we have no evidence other than we found a dead monster body outside the village. Jasmine, did you see a monster attacking the village?"

"Yes, they were many."

“Well, we need to find out who the leader of these attacks are and warn other villages that they could be attacked.”

“Yes, that sounds like a good idea. But first I think that we need more training!” replied Tom.

“Yes, Tom, we need to train you up, and Jasmine!”

And on that note they left to sleep in the temple. Jasmine was quick to fall asleep. Tom waited until she was asleep, and crept back to the fireplace, where Quimm was waiting there keeping the fire alight and warm.

“Can we not tell her of the choices that she will face?” asked Tom.

“No, I must train her, and you must be her companion, and other than that there is nothing else that we can do. If we were to interfere, the world would be doomed.”

“I don’t understand.”

“You don’t have to. Just do not tell her, for she is the Blade, who is the only person who can stop these monsters destroying the world.”

Tom nodded, though still confused. They were both asleep soon after the secret chat that they had about Jasmine.

Chapter 3: Spying

As the sun raised its weary head the next day, Jasmine was already up and ready to start training. Tom was up ten minutes later, and Quimm was waiting outside.

“Time to learn the basics: punch this bag.”

Jasmine punched the bag.

“Harder!”

Jasmine punched the bag.

“Even harder!”

Jasmine punched the bag.

Every time, it was the same, and there was just something that was missing.

“To learn to punch the bag well, you must believe that you want to punch it. You must learn that it has no feelings, and that you must punch it no matter what.”

Jasmine understood. This time, she knocked the bag over and out of Quimm’s hand.

Tom leant forward and whispered to Quimm, “She really is the Blade!”

Training like this continued to kick, and then it was dark.

“Why did you drag us out of bed?” asked Jasmine.

“One of the most important lessons in fighting is that you must learn to fight in the dark!”

When they got up the next morning, they were exhausted.

“Look, one day of training and you are already tired out!”

There was silence whilst the teacher thought of what to do.

“Right!” he said, “We are going to spy on the monsters, and find out about what is happening and who is the leader of their group.”

So, the three went to sneak up to the monsters.



“So, we are attacking dat village den?” said one of the clumsy monsters.

“Yeah, and dey will not know dat we exist!”

“Who ordered dis attack?”

“The general Ogre of course!”

“Oops, silly me! I dink I got a headache!”

“Right den, let’s go in camp den.”

And the two monsters left.

“Let’s go back to the temple then!” said Jasmine.

“Yes, we have collected useful information about who is leading these attacks, an Ogre!” said Tom as he turned around.

They ran back to the temple, pushing past leaves as they went. When they came back, everyone was even more tired, and Quimm let them have an early night.

Chapter 4: The Sacrifice

Their training continued for many weeks, some days being easier and some being harder, but Jasmine could now fight, and she and Tom thought that they should attack. Quimm told them not to, but at night, they crept out of the temple and to the village.

“Right, you go tackle those monsters, I’ll go punch these ones.” said Tom. Soon, the monsters were slayed, but others noticed, and attacked. Tom and Jasmine fought bravely, but more kept coming! They began to get tired, and the Monsters where still coming. One crept around their backs and knocked them over...



Suddenly, Quimm stepped out from behind a tree. Light shredded everywhere, and the monsters nearby fell to the ground and disintegrated. Even more were alerted; the monsters came from everywhere, trying to have a shot at Quimm, instead of fighting Jasmine and Tom.

“Go!” shouted Quimm, “Go!”

Jasmine and Tom ran back to the temple.

The Ogre stepped out to attack Quimm.

“I shall be your doom!” he cried.

The mighty Ogre swung his axe here and there, missing, but Quimm was too concentrated on the Ogre. One of the monsters finally attacked with their sword and it sank deep in. Quimm fell to the floor, dying. But there was no-one left to help him...

No teacher! No guidance! No help! How would Jasmine and Tom win this war? And how is Jasmine the living Blade?

They were puzzled the next morning and knew that the monsters knew the vague location of the temple.

“What if they attack the temple?” questioned Jasmine.

“Well, we would just have to do our best.” replied Tom.

“We must still train without a teacher!”

“I agree, so let’s do high kicking.”

They trained together for a week, getting even more scared that the monsters would attack. Finally, an arrow

flew across Jasmine, and she luckily dodged it. Monsters flooded in from all directions at Jasmine and Tom. Leading them, was the Ogre, still muscular and was ready to fight.

“I’ll take on the Ogre, you kill those monsters!” said Jasmine.

“Sounds like a good plan!” replied Tom.

Jasmine jumped at the Ogre. She dived, kicked, and punched all she could, but the Ogre was barely wounded.

Tom was fighting the Monsters, who had surrounded him. How would they get out of this mess?

Tom spun and killed all the monsters around him and turned to the Ogre. He jumped and kicked him in the head, and the Ogre fell over onto the ground face-planting.

Jasmine, who was fighting the Ogre, now helped Tom defeat the Monsters. They had each other’s backs, so the job was done with a few scratches. They did it! They won! But from the ground arose the Ogre, ready to try again...

Chapter 5: The Hole to Darkness

The Ogre swung its axe at Jasmine.

“You really think that you are worthy to be the Blade?
Ha! You are just a little girl!”

Tom punched the giant.

“I have got an idea!” he said.

“Ok, we’ll drive him back and buy ourselves time!”



Jasmine and Tom forced the Ogre to inch back and pushed him into a lake.

"I'll get you!"

Tom and Jasmine ran back to the temple and discussed what to do.

"So, we push him into the temple, and destroy the pillars holding it up so it crushes him? But that would destroy the temple!"

"You got a better idea?"

The Ogre had recovered, and he ran, soaking wet, to confront the pair. They dodged, and he ran into the temple.

"NOW!" cried Tom, and the pillars were destroyed. The temple fell to the ground and the Ogre was dead. But what is this? A hole underneath the Temple?

"It's sucking us in!" cried Jasmine.



The two fell down the deep hole. Air rushed past Jasmine's cheeks, getting hotter and hotter. Down, down, down they went, until they greeted the ground with a thump! Jasmine got up.

"Where are we?" said Jasmine, "and who is that?"

Chapter 6: The Ghost

“A ghost!” said Tom.

“Of Quimm?”

“I am the ghost of Quimm. I will explain. A very long time ago, the humans and the monsters lived in peace. The humans lived above, and the monsters lived below. There was one hole that allowed to pass between the two places.

“One day a human accidentally killed a monster, and the rumor spread around the monsters that humans were actually murderers. They came flooding out of the hole, trying to destroy the humans. The humans fought and realized that the monsters’ weakness was peace. Anything that embodied peace was lethal to all monsters, and any weapon they fought with. So, the humans pushed the monsters back into the hole, and built the temple in which you trained. Many people trained there, all to go off when they finished training.

“But the monsters did not stop. They, under the command of the Ogre, dug new holes, and overwhelmed the heroes like they overwhelmed me. Now, the monsters have taken control of most villages. But I have a plan. We need to destroy them from behind. They will never guess that we would be here, in their home.

“Now I must go. The Blade must restore peace!”

“Wait, but...” started Jasmine, but Quimm was gone...

A black and white illustration of a person's back, viewed from behind. The back is covered in dark, textured hair or fur. There are three vertical stripes of a lighter, smoother material running down the back. At the bottom of the image, two hands are visible, one on each side, holding the edges of the lighter material. The hands are simple line drawings with visible fingers.

PART 2: THE CAPTURES

Chapter 7: The Monster Realm

Jasmine sighed and looked around the place they had landed in. It seemed to be a valley with two mountains either side of it. The ground was dark red, and it was hotter than on the surface of the Earth. They decided to walk up one of the mountains to have a look for any place they could get food or water. Jasmine already felt hungry, but she did not let that stop her. As they climbed the mountain, they noticed that the ground was more grippy than on the surface. *Weird* Jasmine thought. From the top of the mountain, they were disappointed to see only more mountains, and figured that they were low down for the Monster Realm. They walked down to the foot of one of the taller mountains and saw a small entrance in the mountain. Tom stopped Jasmine from going any further.

“Let’s watch,” he said. They lay down there to rest, while watching if anyone went into the mountain. Soon enough, a cross between a human and a fish strode in, wearing a suit, tie, and blazer. It was different from a mermaid because it was fish head, body human, rather than head human body fish. One step away from entering the mountain, something pounced on it, and then quickly retreated into the cave it was hiding in.

“I am going to investigate,” said Tom, but this time it was Jasmine who stopped Tom.

“It is probably a scavenger. It will kill you if you go.”

“That is a risk I will have to take,” said Tom, “If we want to get out of here, we need to take risks.”

“Not unnecessary ones though.”

“This risk is necessary,” said Tom, and, brushing her arm off him he crept down to the cave. It was dimly lit with torches on both sides. Red spikes hung from the ceiling, and they looked like they were about to fall down and impale anyone who was not careful enough. As he crept forward, he heard voices. They sounded human, but Tom could not tell for sure.

“WHERE IS THE HEART?” shouted someone.

“T...t...this is the e...e...east point. i...i...it is w...w...west of here.” and then it sounded like the speaker was thrown onto the floor. Tom peeked his head around, and, unfortunately, made eye contact with the prisoner after a few seconds. In these seconds he scanned the room. There was a back exit, and three swords hung up on the wall. The scavengers were human, as it sounded like and they were sitting around a circular table. Once the prisoner made eye contact, it was hard to look away. He tried to mouth something, but Tom did not understand what he was trying to say. He guessed he would say get me out of here! Tom wondered if these scavengers could help them. They probably shared a lot in common. As the prisoner mouthed, one of the scavengers looked down and saw him. They took a moment to follow the prisoner’s eye line, before spotting Tom.

“Hey you! Come here!” Tom scrambled away from the room.

“Hey! We’ve got an eavesdropper!” the scavenger said to the others and led out of the room.

As the group came, one of them turned around and pressed a button on the wall. Suddenly, the main exit shut, leaving Tom cornered! He turned around and heard from the room that the fish mutant grabbed a sword and killed the scavenger who stayed back. Then Tom heard him run out of the back exit.

“Wait, you’re a human as well,” said the scavenger, “I thought we were the only ones dumb enough to accept the challenge.”

“What challenge?” asked Tom.

“What did you do then? Fall in?” the scavengers laughed, but their laugh was interrupted by the news that the prisoner had escaped.

“You’re working with them, aren’t you!”

“What? The Monsters? No!”

“Well why did you act as a distraction” she said.

“I..I didn’t mean to!” protested the boy.

“Lock him up,” she said, and turned around and strolled off. The other scavengers came closer to him, and Tom did not think it was worth a fight now. He was forced down a corridor labelled “Cells” and got pushed in one of the cells.

“Traitor” the scavenger said, and walked away, locking the room.

Tom sat there unsure of what to do next. Its OK. He thought to himself. I can explain this to them. I will be fine. But as he stayed in the dirty cell for longer, his hopes started diminishing...

Chapter 8: The Aquius Tribe

Jasmine was getting worried. She had been waiting for half an hour, and around ten more fish mutants had entered the mountain. There was no day or night here, as the Sun never rose. There was no weather here too, other than the temperature, and apparently the mistiness. Over the past half hour, the mistiness had risen dramatically. Maybe Tom's left. She thought. She crept up to the cave, but the entrance was blocked. As she came up to the blocked entrance, a fish mutant appeared from the mist. Jasmine drew her sword, and the fish mutant drew his two daggers. They had blood on them, but that did not intimidate Jasmine. She ran forward and swiped with her sword. He blocked, forcing her to stumble backwards. He ran to her and stabbed down, but Jasmine rolled away and got up. She swiped again, this time at his back, but he dodged and looked back at her. He charged with his daggers and Jasmine blocked one of them, but the other caused her to step back again. The fish mutant threw one of his daggers at her and charged again. She stopped the flying dagger but let her guard down and felt the tip of the knife find a place in her leg. The pain stung for a second, and then she was knocked unconscious.

When she woke up, she was in a big room, with many other humans in it. On the floor a grid had been marked so that each person had a square. The door was locked and bolted, but from behind it you could hear footsteps of fish mutants walking around. It sounded like they were marching, and soon Jasmine heard,

“We are going into battle for the future generations of the Aquius people. We are going into battle for all monsters. We are going into battle to wipe out the human horrors. We are going into battle because we are forced to. We have no other choice. To battle we go!” and the army of fish mutants marched out of the mountain. As the sound of the footsteps died down, there was a thud against the door and a fish mutant guard cried out in pain. After a few seconds, the door gave way to four armed humans burst in.

“Everyone, you are freed!” the cried. And as they said it, around a dozen more guards rushed in to stop anyone from escaping. They looked like they had already done it before, because they were battered but still obeyed the commander, who was behind the group. The scavengers quickly passed around a few weapons that they had, but Jasmine was not near the front, so she did not get passed a weapon.

“We filled our pockets up with weapons, but only a fraction of you can we supply. The rest must fight with no weapon. You may think that we have got you killed, but you would rather die in glorious battle than being sacrificed to the Aquius Gods! With that knowledge, stand with us!”

Some people tried to run, but most were slaughtered. Some people tried to fight, but the 30 people who fought only killed 2 fish guards. Most people stayed with the scavengers, the people with weapons at the front. Both forces kept their defense for a bit before the guards saw a weak spot in their line and attacked it. Unfortunately, Jasmine was behind that weak spot, so she had to fight with no weapon. As the humans fought, reinforcements arrived, around 25 more fish. One of the mutants swiped at Jasmine. She dodged and kicked the guard in the face. He staggered backwards but was only angered by her. He swiped again but this time let his guard down. Like a tiger pouncing on its prey, she seized this opportunity and kicked the guard in the face again, and then tripped him up by kicking him hard on the ankles. As he fell, he revealed behind him another guard, this one stronger and more fit than the other. His face was grim and look as if he had killed many like this, and he snarled before strolling up to Jasmine. She realized that this species was only men, before she saw him draw a silver sword. He swiped and Jasmine seized this opportunity to thrust her hands out and it tore apart her ropes. She was surprised by this reckless move and thought that the guard wanted a fair fight. The fish drew another silver sword and focused his eyes on Jasmine.

“You will pay for what you have done!” and he crossed his two swords and started charging. Jasmine blocked with her iron sword, but it didn’t stop him. He kept charging, pushing her back, his momentum too much for Jasmine. She let go and dodged out of the way

which sent the fish flying off. He stopped and turned around, obviously surprised by Jasmine's quick feet, but he tried not to show this.

"You..." and with that he came back up to her and swiped at her head. She crouched but the mutant's other blade came down. She tried to leap away but it caught her foot, and the pain came to her foot immediately. The guard raised its two swords, smiling for the first time Jasmine had seen. Down came the swords and... Clang! They met with what looked like a metal pole. Jasmine could hear more swipes and grunts before a shriek came from the human that had saved her with the pole, and he flopped to the floor.

The fish turned back around towards Jasmine. He raised his swords again. As he came down, it felt like time went in slow motion. *I cannot die here, someone just sacrificed themselves for me!* And, with all the strength she had left, rolled away and got up. She swiped clumsily at the mutant, and he backed away. Then he made a cross with his swords again and charged. *The same trick never works twice.* Jasmine thought. She fell backwards deliberately just as he was about to run her over and raised her sword and sliced one of his legs clean off. The fish fell forwards, groaned, and died. Jasmine picked up one of his silver swords, examined it, and then put it in its sheath. Soon, the fight died down and the prisoners had won the battle. For many, this was the first time they had fought, so there was a brief moment of cheering, before more guards rushed out of the doors.

“Come on, let’s get out of here!” shouted a scavenger, and lead the way out. Ignoring the pain in her foot, Jasmine ran past all the dead bodies and followed the stream of people out of the mountain and back into the open air. She was a quick runner and made it to the front of the group. As the group flowed out, the doors closed, trapping half of the prisoners inside. Then more fighting broke out in the mountain and it was very one-sided to the Aquius tribe. Jasmine looked around. There used to be around 100 prisoners, and now there were less than 20.

“We can’t leave them!” shouted Jasmine.

“Well how do we free them?” her nearest rescuer replied. “There is no way now. They are trapped. If you want to survive, you have to leave them.”

“But...” but it was no use. The group did not wait to hear her out.

Jasmine sighed and followed the group, now starting to dislike the scavengers. They had left the back exit and walked around the mountain in an uneventful hour. Jasmine would have liked a bit of fresh air, but the air even outside of the monster realm was not exactly fresh. Jasmine plodded onwards and followed the group into a curious hole in a hill.

Inside the hole were three corridors. The one on the left was labelled Cells, the one on the right was labelled Watch, and the one in the center was labelled Rooms. The scavenger turned right, though the “Watch”

corridor. They came into a big room lit better than all the others.

“We have saved you from the horrible Aquius tribe,” said a scavenger who was standing up on her chair, “and so you owe us your lives. You will fight to destroy the Monsters, and we will help you. We need an army, and you are now part of it. We will strike at the center point and will share the prize money. Does anyone object?” Silence spread across the room. No one disagreed, but Jasmine was confused. She decided not to speak up about it. Maybe ask someone some other time.

“Then we are ready.” she continued, “in a weeks’ time we will attack. For now, rest. And good luck.” She signaled to the scavenger who brought them there and he led them back and through the “Rooms” corridor.

“I forgot to introduce myself.” The scavenger said as they walked, “I am Sinn, the second in command. These are the rooms that you will be sleeping in. Each room has 10 beds.” A few minutes later, Jasmine was assigned to room 2 bed 4.

“For now, these beds are randomly allocated, but after the first day, there will be 3 squads: squad 1 will be room 1 beds 1-4. Squad 2 will be beds 5-1, overlapping with room 2, and squad 3 will be the others.”

Jasmine got into her bed and leaned back on the wall. The room was stuffy, and squashed, but it was better than being in that massive mountain. She was very confused by everything because it had all happened so

quickly. What prize money? What is the center point? Now she had found people who shared a common goal with, and so the only problem she had, which was finding Tom. How was she ever going to find him if she is here? Stuck in a training camp with some monster killers who want lots of money? She didn't know that Tom was actually leaning back on the wall on the other side, and wanting to know exactly the same things...

Chapter 9: Round 1 of the Test

When Jasmine got up the next day, she looked up to see the sun rising, but then she remembered that they were stuck in the monster realm and the sun never rose.

“Right, everyone! Today we put you in squads, tomorrow to six days’ time we train you, and on the final day you will go into battle. To find out who is the best and who is the worst” he did not stop to think about who he might be offending in the future, “we will be doing a test. There are three rounds, first place gets 5 points, seconds gets 3, third gets 2, fourth gets 1 and last gets nothing. You have been split in into groups of 4.

“Round one- get me a prisoner. Go!” Jasmine looked around. There was a Aquian walking to the mountain. Many other people saw them too, so that would have to be plan B. Plan A is to find a different Aquian. Jasmine discussed her ideas with her team, team blue, and 2 other people liked her plan. But the other was already pouncing on the Aquian in sight. He was struggling and looked like he needed help.

“I will help him.” Jasmine said, “you go and find another Aquian.”

Jasmine ran out of the cave and did a mid-air kick on the Aquian’s head. He fell over but got up again before Jasmine or her team member could react.

“What are you doing? I got this!”

“No, what are *you* doing?” asked Jasmine, “you left the team!”

Jasmine’s team member pushed her back into the cave, but Jasmine grabbed hold of him, bringing him back as well. He got a dagger out of his belt and threw it at the Aquian, who did not expect it.

“He saw the cave.” Jasmine’s team member said, “and I am called Samuel.”

They came back with the Aquian, surprised that they had no competition, and saw one of their team members in a net trying to get out. The other member was trying to cut the net, but she was being held off by two people of a different team.

“Team Red are the Winners, they have brought a member of the Blue team, Team Yellow are second, Team Blue are third, Team Green are fourth, and Team Orange are fifth.” Sinn wrote the scores on the wall. They looked like this:

Team Colour	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Red	5			
Orange	0			
Yellow	3			
Green	1			
Blue	2			

“You can’t bring a member from a different team and call them a prisoner!”

“Well, you can because Team Red just did, and that’s why they are in the lead. From behind him, a member from the Red Team smirked at her. She thought about going back up to Sinn, but it was no use, he had made his decision. Jasmine disliked these monster-murderers even more now. She sighed and went back to the rooms.

“Cheaters” Jasmine muttered.

Chapter 10: Round 2 of the Test

“Round two- everyone put on a helmet. Last team standing. A team is out if there is only one person who has a helmet in the team. You will also be using Iron poles. No killing each other, but other than that there are no rules. Fight!” immediately, half of the people lost their helmets, which meant that team Green was Fifth.

“Team Green: Zero points!”

After that, Teams Orange and Red teamed up to defeat Team Yellow, whilst Jasmine and the Blue Team snuck away from the cave. They soon heard Sinn say:

“Team Yellow: One point!”

As Sinn said it, a sneaky Orange Team member tried to get Jasmine’s helmet off. She tilted her head one way, but a Red Team member jumped down and caught it. Jasmine stomped her foot and joined the group of people who lost the helmet too. She saw the Blue Team running further away from the cave, standing no chance against 8 people, when they only had 3. The Blue Team didn’t have good chances, but they were quick. They got past the two teams and stole one of the Orange teams helmets. 3 v 7. They ran away, but soon got cornered in the cave. Watching her team fail wasn’t a great experience, but then she realized something. The two teams were now bunched up, guarding the entrance to the cave. Jasmine snuck behind them and took a Red Team Member’s helmet. She snuck away before they

saw her. *The rules did not say that people with no helmet couldn't fight!* she thought to herself.

"Hey! Betrayal!" said the Red Team Member, who thought that the Orange Team had turned against them, and suddenly civil war broke out. For a few seconds, there was a swarm of angry Red and Orange people raging at each other, before it died down with two Red members and the Orange team had been defeated.

"Team Orange: 2 points!" said Sinn, now enjoying the fight.

Jasmine was back with the now massive group of people who lost their helmets. She saw one of the Red Team members chuck their pole at Samuel. His helmet flew off and he sat down next to Jasmine. Jasmine explained her idea. This time, Samuel understood and they both waited patiently until the Red Team were close enough.

It was 2 v 2 but the Blue Team were still edging back, not knowing what to do next. They were still trapped in the cave.

Jasmine shouted "NOW!" and she and Samuel leaped up and snatched the Red Member's helmets off their heads.

"Hey, that's not fair!" shouted the Red Team.

"Yeah, they haven't got their helmets!"

"It didn't say in the rules that a person without a helmet couldn't fight!" said Sinn.

"So, we could have been fighting for this whole time?" said a member of the Yellow Team.

"No, because once your Team is out you can't play.

Team Red: 3 points. Team Blue: 5 points!"

Sinn wrote updated the table on the wall. It now looked like this:

Team Colour	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Red	5	3		
Orange	0	2		
Yellow	3	0		
Green	1	1		
Blue	2	5		

This meant that they were 1 point behind the Red team.

"The Final Round, round three- there are 4 paths ahead. You can go far right, right, left, or far left. Far left you will get the gold gem. Bring it back and you will get 5 points. Left you will get the Silver gem. Bring it back and you will get 3 points. Right there is the Bronze gem. Bring it back and you will get 2 points. On the far right there is the Copper gem. Bring it back and you will get 1 point. You have over Lunch to decide which path you will take.

They ate at their bed, and each team had two people on each room. Jasmine was with Samuel.

“We should go big. If we do not, the Red Team will win. If we do, then at least we have a chance of winning.”

“I thought I was the reckless one!” Samuel smiled took a bite out of his sandwich.

“So, you agree?”

“Of course I agree! We just have to get that point across to the other two though.”

“What? Risk it all?” said the other team members, “no way! I am happy with second.”

“They caught me in a net like I was some kind of animal said the other, “We have to beat them.”

“He is right, we have to risk it.”

“I can’t believe I am doing this,” she said, “But fine. We will go gold.”

“Thanks!” said Jasmine. And so after lunch they had their path chosen.

Chapter 11: The Final Round of the Test

With their plan decided, the only thing they could do wrong now was not get the gem. They lined up and the start on the far left, all ready to run.

“Each path is around 500 meters. Make sure you stick to your plan. The race will begin in 3...2...1...GO!”

Jasmine pushed off. Samuel was slower than her, but she suspected that there would be multiple traps along the way, so she stayed with him and the group. The Red Team wanted to secure their lead, and so they also went for gold. The gold path lead them down, underground. The slowest Red Team member was far behind already. Underground there where holes on the floor everywhere. The group spotted them and stayed away. The Red Team lost its quickest runner, who was now far behind the Blue Team. As the second slowest runner of the Red Team slowed down, Jasmine sprinted up to him, jumped off the wall on the right, and kicked her in the side of the head. The Team went past her too. The path came back up to the surface (of the Monster Realm) but did not stop there. It continued upwards up a mountain. It was very tiring, and the group stopped once to catch their breath. Then the path curved back down again, and one of the members of the team sprinted up to it, happy that the climb upwards was over. Unfortunately, the other side was a drop to a

river. They fell off the end and ended up in the river. The water in the Monster realm was not exactly *fresh*. It was more purple than blue, and had black spots flouting around in it. From where Jasmine stood, you could not see any creatures in the river, probably because it was so murky, but there could be other monster lurking at the bottom.

“We can’t touch the black bits,” Samuel said, “they give you a horrible disease called Aquanotia. It heals Aquians but has a 90% death rate for humans.”

“When did you find that out?”

“Well I was just reminding you. Anyone who accepts the challenge knows it.”

Samuel saying this reminded Jasmine.

“Err... What is the challenge?”

Samuel looked around.

“You’re not here for the prize?” he asked.

“What is the prize?”

“The prize is ruling the Surface Realm, or the overworld. Same thing. That leader, whoever she is, she promises us a high rank if we help.”

The other Team Member interrupted their conversation, “Err... sorry to interrupt, but may I remind you that we are in a race? The finish line is over there. The only other Red Team member is running over the

bridge, but it is a long way away. The only chance of winning is if we cross the river."

Immediately after hearing this, Samuel dived off the cliff.

"Err... I guess that leaves us with no choice then," said Jasmine and dived off the cliff with Samuel.

The final member sighed and followed along. *Does Samuel not remember what he said himself?* They thought to themselves as they jumped off the cliff with the group. As the team crossed the river, the number of black spots multiplied, and soon there was no way through.

"We're doomed. Look, the Red person has crossed the bridge, and now he just needs to get to the gem. Unless we can magic away these black spots, and we can swim faster than he can run, we've ..." said Samuel, but before he could finish what he was saying, Jasmine was underwater, swimming underneath the spots. Samuel sighed and followed. The other two followed, though unsure about what might happen if they ran out of air.

As Jasmine continued swimming, the spots started to fill the whole river. She would have to make it to the end of the river without breathing...

Far away, locked up in a cell, was Tom, worrying if he would ever get out, or if he would be killed. He was bored already, even though he had only been trapped here for a day. Now he understood Jasmine's warning, and regretted spying on these scavengers, or even just entering the cave they lived in. As he sat, motionless and hopeless, a light seemed to shine in his head. It got brighter and brighter, and suddenly he was no longer seeing through his eyes, but saw Jasmine struggling to cross a river. Tom wanted to help, but he was overwhelmed by his new sense that he took some time to stop himself trembling. He felt himself changing the landscape, making the river shorter. He knew what Jasmine's task was. He had heard it from the cell. In his head he stretched the path for the Red team and



pushed them back. Once he had done this, the image faded in his head, and his sight returned to normal, through his own eyes, in the damp cell. He collapsed to the floor, out of energy.

Jasmine was going faster than she expected. The sand kept getting closer, until she slumped out of the water. Her team followed, and the Red person was just behind them. Jasmine stopped running and kicked the last member of the Red Team in the face. Samuel claimed the gem and held it high! But emerging from the water was the three other members of the Red Team. They were red-eyed and enraged.

“We are the only people who deserve to win.” said a Red Team member, who was called Jacob.

“Well we have won,” replied Samuel.

“No you haven’t. You still have to bring it back. And to bring it back, you will have to go through us. This is no silly game now; you can’t cheat reality.” and with that Jacob jumped up and mid-air kicked Samuel in the face. He fell backwards, unconscious. Jasmine took the gem from him and said, “If I give you it will you stop bothering us?”

“Oh, sure!” replied the smiling Jacob. Jasmine threw Jacob the gem, and he caught it and grinned the same grin again.

“What are you doing?” whispered her teammates. She ignored them and turned back to Jacob.

“Now leave us al...” but Jasmine was interrupted by a loud bong on her head...

Chapter 12: Around the Fireplace

Tom had regained his strength.

"I have to get out of here," he muttered to himself,
"let's see if I can change things around me."

So he put his mind in the same state as he did for Jasmine, and, using his mind, he shifted the bars slightly to the left, unnoticeable to the guard that just walked by, but just big enough for Tom to squeeze out of. He had little training at the temple for sneaking out of prison, but he was a quick learner and soon enough he was at the exit.

"Hey! Who are you?"

Tom looked around. He saw a boy in wet clothes and long hair. He remembered him to be Jacob, who was part of the Red Team. Knowing that in a few seconds he would alarm the guards, Tom kept Jacob distracted.

"I'm err... from the Green Team." he blurted out.

"What's your name?"

"Err... Tim" said Tom.

"Tell me if you see Jasmine come back. I've got a little surprise for her!"

"Jasmine?" he said, but instantly regretted saying it.

"Yeah. You know that cheat from the Blue Team."

“Yeah. She is a total cheat. Bye!” and Tom turned around and walked off quickly. Jacob frowned, but went into the cave. The mountains flattened out, and trees grew to make a forest. The trees in the Monster Realm were not green. Some were red, some were purple, and some were a mix of both. Running through the forest was a river, and Samuel guessed that it was the same one that he saved Jasmine from. It was half as wide and there was a bridge across it. *I just need to follow the river, and Jasmine should be there* he thought to himself. Walking by the river was not as nice as it would be in the Human Realm, but it was still more pleasant than the cells in the cave. As he continued, the river widened, and he could see in the distance another bridge, the one the Red Team crossed. A few steps after that he saw a fireplace. *I must be close.* As he scanned the area for Jasmine, three people jumped out of a hedge and thrust spears at his neck.

“Who are you?” said a boy.

Tom stepped back and said, “I am looking for Jasmine.”

The boy lowered his spear.

“We can’t get her to wake up, and she is too heavy to carry back to the cave. Which team are you in?”

“Oh, I am not in a team.”

The boy raised his spear again.

“If you aren’t with us, then you are our enemy.” and the boy jabbed. Tom avoided the jab and kicked his spear out of his hands. The other two circled around him

menacingly. Tom tried to kick their spears too, but they saw it coming and jabbed at his foot. Tom fell over backwards and failed to get up.

“Stop!” said a voice that came from the bush.

“Jasmine?” Tom wondered.

Jasmine stood up and walked over.

“Tom?”

Jasmine smiled and greeted him. In no time they were gathered around a fire.

“This is Tom. We fell in this horrible place together and found the cave. Tom, what happened?”

“I went into the cave, and I heard the group of you scavengers talk. They were interrogating a prisoner and when they saw me, I ran. They were distracted, and the prisoner escaped. They accused me of being a distraction when actually I just did not understand. They threw me in prison, and I managed to escape the next day. Then I found you. What happened to you?”

Jasmine explained what she had been through in the best detail she could.

“I would like to stay here and listen to people’s life stories, but me and the others need to get back to the cave.”

“OK. See you at center point.”

The others raised an eyebrow.

“The place where you will attack in a few days.”

Once the three had left, Tom asked, “so you are leaving them.”

“Well yeah duh! So the plan is to help them kill the monsters by meeting them at this ‘center point’?”

“Yes. But there is something else I have to tell you.”

“What it?”

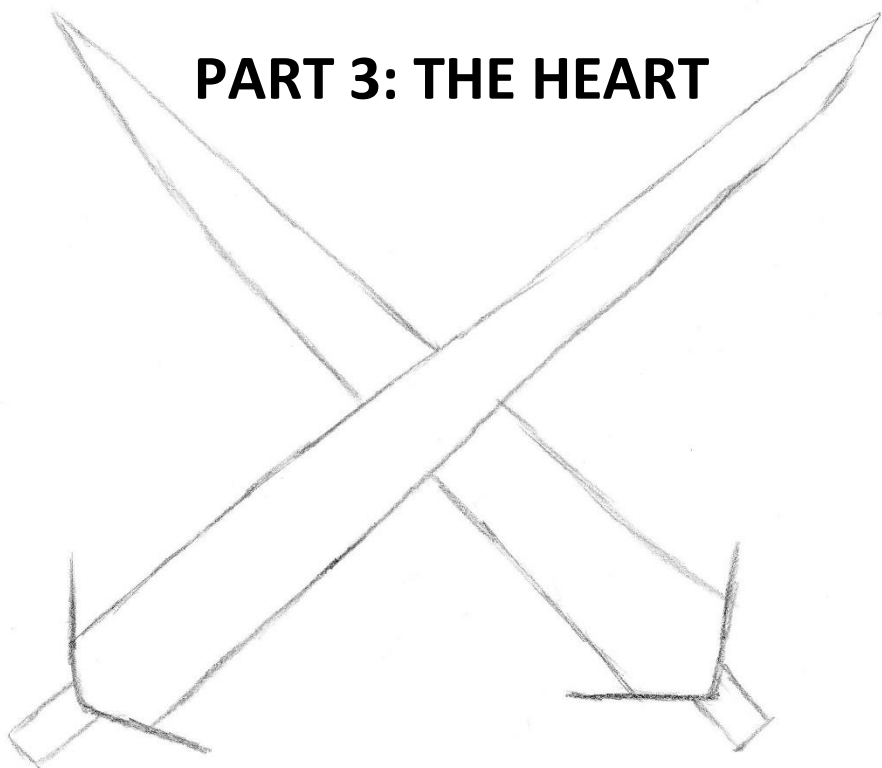
Tom sighed.

“I’ll tell you in the morning. It’s getting dark”

So that evening the pair slept around the fireplace.



PART 3: THE HEART



Chapter 13: Whispers

The pair was up early the next morning and Tom lit the fire again. He woke up earlier than Jasmine because he thought that he heard movement in the bushes, but he could not find anything.

“So what did you want to tell me then?” asked Jasmine.

“I think there is a power within me,” said Tom, “and when I was locked up in a cell, it awakened. I no longer saw through my eyes, but where I wanted to see, and I could change the landscape, stretch it, or squeeze it. It is quite tiring right now, but I think with practice I can make it easier.”

Any normal person would have laughed at Tom, but Jasmine had fallen into the Realm of Monsters two days ago, so she decided to believe him.

“Ok, so what have you done with this power?”

“I escaped from prison. That’s it.”

Jasmine noticed something strange about Tom as he said it but nodded and stood up.

“Come on. We need to find out more about monsters in the 5 days we have before we aid the scavengers in their attack.”

Then there was a pause before Jasmine said, “did you hear that?”

“Hear what?”

“Nothing,” replied Jasmine.

And then she heard the sound again. It sounded like people moaning and whispering at the same time, but she could not quite make out what they were trying to tell her.

“Did you hear that?” said Jasmine and looked around, worried that something would attack.

“I still can’t hear anything.”

Then the noise came again, and Jasmine could understand what they were saying:

You are the blade...

But the Blade is too strong to be wielded by just hands...

You must find the gloves of glow...

They will allow you to use the powers of the Blade...

to its fullest potential...

the gloves are hidden...

at north point...

the two realm’s fates...

are in your hands...

“Jasmine? Jasmine!”

“Wha..?”

“You froze on the spot there.”

“Did I? Anyway, I think I know where to go next...”

Chapter 14: The Gloves of Glow

"Where are we going?" asked Tom as Jasmine started to walk off.

"You won't believe me, but we are off to get some gloves."

"Gloves? Why?"

"That sound, it told me I had to find 'The Gloves of Glow' which would allow me to use the power of the Blade to its fullest potential."

"Well you believed in my power, so I will believe in your gloves. Anyway, how do you know which way to go?"

"Don't know. After the voices spoke to me, I felt where the gloves were."

"Weird. Even more weird than my power."

They kept walking through the jungle for a few hours before Jasmine spoke up.

"Stop. The gloves are meant to be here..." and she began to look around."

"Err... what are you doing?"

"Got it!" Jasmine pulled the lever that she just found, and the ground in front of the pair opened up a hole, around 5 metres from top to bottom.

"I will jump first." said Tom.

"No. Every time you go first you get captured."

"It's not like you don't get captured too though is it?"

"We will jump together." so the pair jumped together into the hole. They kept falling for at least 10 seconds, getting increasingly worried that at the bottom it would be the end of them. Fortunately, they landed in some slimy substance. Unfortunately, the slimy substance was alive.

"I AM THE GUARDIAN OF THE GLOVES, FROM THE SLEQUE TRIBE OF THE NORTH. HOW DARE YOU ATTEMPT TO TAKE THE..." it was interrupted by Jasmine kicking it in the face.

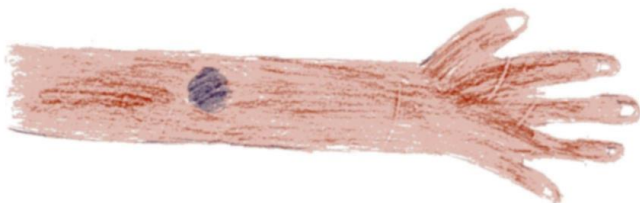
"Run!" said Jasmine and they managed to escape to a path which was solid.

"So there are many types of monsters. The Aquians, the Sleques, and who knows what else." said Tom.

"Ouch!"

"What?"

"That Sleque, it infected me with something."



There was a black spot on Tom's arm.

"That's Aquanotia! We have got to find those gloves quick and get out of here!"

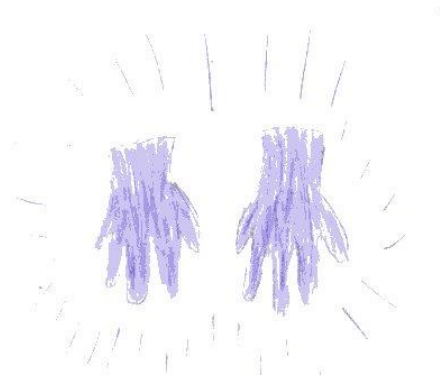
Just as Jasmine said it, the path opened out into a room. In the middle were four stone pillars, and in the middle of those was a glass pillar with the gloves resting on a posh cushion. The pair walked up to get it, but Tom hit an invisible wall that run between the four pillars. Jasmine, however, could walk through the invisible walls.

"Why can't I come in?" asked Tom.

"I think only I can come in because I am the Blade." replied Jasmine, and she opened a little hatch on the glass pillar and put on the gloves of glow.

"Do you feel more powerful?" asked Tom.

"No not really. Hopefully, that will change soon though."



The two went back the way they came, and Tom exclaimed, “the spot has vanished!”

“I think it is the power of the gloves.”

“HOW DARE YOU STEAL THE...” another kick came its way and knocked it out.

“Slight problem. How do we get up? The walls of the hole are straight, you can’t climb back up.” said Jasmine.

“I have an idea!” said Tom, and using his power, he shifted the sides of the wall to make it easy to climb up. Jasmine climbed it and Tom followed. When they got to the top, Tom said, “my power is a lot easier now I have done it many times.”

“Twice,” said Jasmine.

“Uh... yeah. Twice.”

So Jasmine and Tom walked back to the spot which they slept last night because they knew that area better than the northern area and lay down to rest.

Chapter 15: To Centre Point

Three days passed sitting at the campfire. There was nothing to do because they had not brought anything. They managed to get some food from Samuel and the rest of the Blue Team. When they did, Samuel also told them more information.

“Our scouts have seen the target,” said Samuel, “and it is a massive heart. Apparently if we destroy the heart, then we destroy all the monsters.”

He did not have long to talk, because Sinn came over to him. Tom and Jasmine only had half a second to hide.

The next day, Tom and Jasmine awoke knowing that this was the day of the attack. Tom said that they had to walk west, and Jasmine knew which way was west because at training there was a compass written on the floor of the cave.

They arrived before the scavengers did, but a few minutes later they could see the scavengers. Centre point was a big circle, a drop to the centre of the earth, and in the middle of the circle was a floating sphere. There was a bridge that led to the sphere, and another bridge that circled around it. On these bridges were uncountable amounts of monsters. Guarding the first bridge was the Aquians. Sleques guarded the rest of that bridge and another monster, like a big insect, guarded the bridge that went around the sphere. Jasmine wondered if the heart that Samuel mentioned

was hidden in there. The pair decided to let the scavengers make the first move. They did not know whether or not the scavengers had seen them, and they hoped if they did, they would not see them as an enemy.

“Squad 3, cause a distraction on my signal.”

“Yes sir!” said the members of Squad 3.

“Squad 2, see if anyone else is here.”

“Yes sir!” said the members of Squad 2. Jasmine could just about make out Samuel leading Squad 2.

“Squad 1, wait here with me. You will ambush them on my signal”

“Yes sir!” said Squad 1. Again, Jasmine recognised one of those faces... *Jacob. Brilliant. He must be so happy to be in the top squad* thought Jasmine.

The Squads did as they were told, and Jasmine said to Tom, “Do you think they will see us as a threat?”

“Well when I tried to sneak up on them last time, they locked me up in a cell, and some of them will probably recognise me. What do you think, you trained with them for a day?”

“Well they would probably be angry at me for leaving them.”

“So what do we do then if they don’t like us?” asked Tom.

“The only people who trust us there are the Blue Team, so we will try and grab their attention without anyone else seeing us.”

“We will find the highest ground to get a better view,” said Samuel. So Squad 2 went up to the opposite side from where Jasmine and Tom were. They scanned the area, and, sure enough, they spotted the pair.

“I can see two people. They look human but I can’t tell.”

“I know who they are. They are here to help us,” said Samuel.

“Who are they?”

“They are Jasmine and Tom, remember?”

“What are they doing? I thought that they were trying to escape the Monster Realm!”

“No, they are helping us. But only we know and everyone else will think that they are enemies, because Jasmine ran away, and Tom escaped from prison.”

Meanwhile, the other squads prepared to attack.

“Squad 3 make a distraction NOW!” and squad 3 charged down the bridge. Although the monsters were surprised, there were twice the amount of them.

“Squad 1, get a rope onto the middle!” and the first squad attempted to throw ropes and catch them onto small spikes on the bridge. None of them could manage, the bridge was too far away.

“Look! They have started the attack! We haven’t told them about Tom and Jasmine!”

“Don’t tell them!” said Tom trying to block the signal.

“It is the signal!” said Sinn, “everyone, prepare to be ambushed!”

The already scared fighters retreated, and the monsters ran after them. From their hiding spot, Jasmine and Tom knew that they had to do something.

“I will go help Squad 3, you make the gap between the bridge smaller so Squad 1 can sneak on,” said Jasmine, and she jumped out into the battle, in front of lots of monsters. There was a second where the fleeing scavengers looked back to see that the battle was not over, and the monsters stared in disbelief at the Blade with the Gloves of Glow. Jasmine fought like she never had before, slashing at any monster who approached

her. The battle continued and the humans fought, taking back the ground that they lost from fleeing.

Tom was focusing on the gap between the bridge and the platform squad 1 was standing on. He felt the moment come when he pulled them closer to each other.

“Yes! Got it!” he heard Jacob say. Tom never thought that he would be helping Jacob the minute he saw him.

Everything was going smoothly after Jasmine and Tom helped out, but Sinn did not like traitors even if they helped him out...

Chapter 16: The Final Battle

“Why are the traitors helping us! I bet you once we win, they will betray us. Attack them!” Sinn commanded.

“What are you doing?” shouted Tom.

“Winning,” said Sinn and he jumped down to fight him.

Jasmine cut through the monsters and ran across the bridge to the sphere. There Jacob and his team were hacking away at the sphere. They had not managed to even get a crack.

“Squad 2, attack Jasmine!” shouted Sinn as he fought Tom.

Jasmine tried to make a dent in the sphere, but it was no good. Then she realized what the gloves were for. She put her weapons back in their sheaths and punched the sphere. She remembered the first day of the training, when Quimm told her to punch a bag. This was just like it. The first punch she made did not even make a mark. The second made a crack and the third broke through. Inside was a massive translucent heart, beating quite loudly, but not enough to be able to hear it from outside. She punched the heart, knowing that she could end all the monsters and make peace. As she punched the heart Jacob pounced on her. She fell to the dusty floor. Jacob slashed at her and she put her hands up to protect her. Shing! Jacob was blown out of the

opening that Jasmine had made and was clinging on to the edge of the bridge.

Whilst Jasmine continued punching the heart, Sinn and Tom fought. Sinn was quick but Tom made his attacks take a lot longer. Finally, Sinn got fed up and charged recklessly. Tom felt a surge of power and a pit opened up at Sinn's feet. He fell down, and Tom sealed the pit up. He looked over to see Jacob clinging on to the bridge. Why should he help him? But he found himself helping Jacob anyway, he knew that the monsters were the real enemy, and so Jacob was surprised to get up so quickly. As Jasmine threw her fist and the beating red sphere one last time the bridge shook and the heart rolled out of its resting position, crashed through the bridge, and fell into the void. From all around them, the monsters shrieked in pain and flopped to the floor. Jasmine turned around and ran over to the hole in the metal. Over the void, Samuel was saying "you have to jump! There is no other way! The bridge has fallen!

"Are you crazy? We aren't jumping 50 metres!"

"I can help you," said Tom from the other side, and he closed his eyes.

"Look, we don't have time, jump!"

Jasmine jumped first, and Tom propelled her though the air, and she landed on her feet next to Samuel.

"Ok, Jacob!"

"I am not trusting that idiot with my life!" he said pointing to Tom.

"Then you trust no one with your life, and so you will die!"

"He isn't going to save me!"

"You know a minute ago when you were dangling of the bridge? Wonder who saved you from that?" said Tom.

"I got up by myself!"

"Centre point is going to crumble! Jump!"

But Jacob fell away with the crumbs that were left of Centre point, and in a second he fell out of sight.

Chapter 17: Back into the Light

The group now headed back to the Surface. Tom concentrated and made the tunnel easier to climb, and he followed the others out of the dark, gloomy depths. When he came out into the light, it overwhelmed his eyes with white. It almost made him fall back into the hole, and he put his arm out to shield his eyes. He blinked a few times, as if there was something in his eyes. He had to squint to see the remains of the Temple he was trained in. He was happy to be home.



It had been a day traveling back to the hole, and people were still shocked about the sudden disappearance of the monsters. Jasmine, Tom, and Samuel still had a lot to sort out.

Out struck a hand. It felt around, before below it the rocky surface of the Monster Realm crumbled beneath it, and Sinn emerged, red-eyed and angry.

“I will have my revenge...”

Jasmine is a normal Girl who lives in a peaceful village. Peaceful, that is, before Monsters erupt from the ground. They have come to seek her and all of humanities death. A prophecy states that she will restore peace, but how could she and why her?

For more stories like this, visit

<https://oatcake.club/>

Have you read the Island of Light
or the Smaller Forest series?