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Doorwalker

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For my two children, the constant inspiration.

Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born...

Thanks to all my proof readers, especially my mum.

*“If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, Infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.”*

- William Blake

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Leon stared intently at the door. He then looked at his father, Dan, who was sitting on a chair directly in front of the door. Leon returned his eyes, once again, towards the door. Dan's friend, Carl, standing on the other side of the room, also shifted his intent gaze between Leon's father and the door. Dan's eyes didn't move at all. He took deep, calming breaths and concentrated solely on what he was about to attempt.

"You can do it dad," said Leon. "Just think about the other door."

Dan rose slowly from the chair. Leon held his breath. Carl lifted his hand to his mouth and began chewing on one of his fingernails. Leon's father took more deep breaths. Filling his lungs with one final preparatory intake of air, Dan stepped forward and placed his hand on the door handle in front of him.

Silence filled the room. The only thing that could be heard was the ticking clock, which hung above the fireplace. Carl paused the gnawing Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... of his nails, mid-bite. Leon didn't move or breathe. Dan pulled open the door and stepped through it. Through it, and beyond it...

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## CHAPTER ONE

The car journey back from 'the cave' was the point when things, for Leon, had really begun to change. The tension was thick and Leon knew that things were never going to be the same again.

The atmosphere in the car on the journey Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... to 'the cave' was a totally different one. Having made the decision to leave, they were all in agreement that it was the right one to make. They laughed, joked, listened to music and sang along to songs. Leon's mum, Louise, periodically handed out boiled sweets. She always had a good supply of what she called 'travel sweets' for car journeys. Louise would pass them, one at a time, back to Leon. She also would unwrap the sweets and put them into Leon's dad's mouth as he drove. Dan would obediently open his mouth in preparation for the sweet, like Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... a pet being fed treats. This silly act his parents played out always made Leon smile. He loved Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... it when his parents acted daft. The car was packed to maximum capacity, meaning space within was at a minimum, but this didn't alter their good mood. They travelled in a small convoy and would occasionally pass the other two cars they were with and wave enthusiastically. Optimism Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... was all around them and they all felt that they were doing the right thing by making their journey of escape. Leon was very happy in his cramped space in the back of the car.

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The journey back from the isolation of 'the cave' and to civilisation was entirely Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... different. No one talked, no music played, no one laughed and no sweets were handed out. Louise snapped at everything Dan dared to say, tears standing permanently in her eyes. Leon sat unhappily in his cramped space in the back of the car and watched Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... his parents as they drove. He knew things had changed and would never Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... be the same again. He felt like the world he knew was coming to an end and big changes were on the horizon. Changes, that didn't at all feel like good ones. He had no idea how massive these changes were going to be. No one did.

Leon Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... lay on his back, staring at the Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... ceiling above him. Sleep, as usual, was eluding him and, instead, he lay there wide Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... awake with troubled thoughts running through his mind. Thoughts, no fifteen year

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old should really have to deal with.

The dormitory was in darkness and the only sounds were those of heavy breathing, snoring and the occasional cough. Periodically light flooded through the windows, lighting up the whole dormitory. The light came from the rotating lookout towers that stood tall on the corners of the fences surrounding the camp. Periodically, the sound of mechanical footsteps could be heard walking past the hut. These came from the robotic machines that patrolled the camp. They were officially called 'Centurion Guards', but the inmates of the Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... camp simply called them 'drones'. As Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... usual, in an effort to quieten his troubled mind and fall asleep, Leon began to count the seconds between the passing lights of the guard towers.

"Leon," came a whisper from out of the darkness of the dormitory.

Leon continued to count in his head.

"Leon." The voice Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... was coming from the bunk below him. "Leon, are you awake?"

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“If I wasn’t, I am now,” said Leon. “What is it Jack?”

“I can’t sleep,” said Jack from beneath Leon’s bunk.

“So you thought you’d wake me up too,” said Leon.

Leon looked up and down the dormitory. No one was moving. Light flooded into Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... the room, and then disappeared once more. The bunkhouse was sparse. Beds lined the long room with only a small walkway down the centre. No sleeping area was any different. They were all uniformly matched, even down to the itchy grey blankets Doorwalker: In times of chaos, unlikely heroes are born... used as covers. A small wardrobe stood next to each set of bunks, which the occupants had to share. At one end of the room was a door that led to the toilets and washrooms. Beyond that was the counsellor’s room. Any noise and he’d be in the dark dormitory like a shot. He loved catching people awake in the dormitory, it seemed to be his one pleasure in life. If he caught anyone awake, they were soon persuaded to go straight back to sleep. One noisy camp member discovered this on the first night and, for a full week after, had the bruises as proof. After that, the inmates slept soundly every single night.

“Was it you Leon?”

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“Was what me?” whispered Leon.

“The computer thing? With the book on there?” asked Jack. “How did you get it on all the computers?”

“I never said it was me.”

## **Doorwalker In Times Of Chaos Unlikely Heroes Are Born**

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