

# The Fate of One Planet

by Ian Dow

## Chapter 19

Tuppence

The press and other idiots were trampling Jay's lawn. The story had gotten out about Jay's brief abduction, and the world wanted to know. The light police presence was struggling with a large crowd. It did not help when the public found out that nearly all Governments of the world knew about the encounter and had not told.

Jay told everyone in the video conference that he had to deal with matters at home today. The press and media outlets were getting very little out of Jay; in fact, most had pissed him off at some time or another. When they reported on subjects Jay knew about and did so in a lousy and inaccurate manner, he soon realised that a lot of the time, the public are being served a load of old baloney.

Like the times the media created hysteria, claiming that there would be a shortage of a particular item in local shops. They would show a few images of some empty shelves, then show someone with a shopping trolley at a bulk-buy outlet with a massive packet of the scarce commodity and accuse them of panic buying. Jay regularly used bulk buy outlets and knew the items that could be bought from there, and in one size only: huge.

He was well aware of the media creating panic from nothing, and now was not the time for panic. He knew the Earth was in danger, but he still did not know the how or the why. The world needed someone to step forward. A bold leader who would unite the planet. Someone with the power to galvanise all the peoples of Earth to help them beat the threat that was coming. A brave new...

"Oh shit!" Jay said out loud. The penny dropped. "FUCK! FUCK! FUCK! FUCK! NO! NO! NO! NO!"

He walked around his house with one hand on his head in agitation. Jay argued within himself. "Not me, please! Someone else. I don't want the power; I don't

want the responsibility! I know enough to know that I am not the right man for the job. I know enough to know that my will and wants are not the right thing for everyone. I don't have the strength of will, like some murderous dictator who would do anything to remain in power. I don't want to do it, but with the limited knowledge I have, I know I would have to con the whole Earth into uniting and being focused on an unknown threat to the entire planet. I don't even know when! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! If I don't step up, what happens? They keep squabbling and grabbing and pushing for advantage. The Conquistadors, among others, used divide and conquer to use a small force to overpower a larger adversary. We must be united, or we will fail. I will fail; I am bluffing with a pair of twos in a professional poker match. I am entirely in the dark until I know what and how to deal with this threat."

Exhausted from his monologue, he collapsed onto his sofa.

"Not completely," A voice in his head said.

"Well, that takes the biscuit! The, 'Am I going mad?' reality check.

One. Wants to rule the world. Check.

Two. Hears voices in his head. Check.

Three. Cannot base the reason for his actions on any tangible facts. Check.

Four. Does not know what the fuck, he is going to do. Check.

Five. Paranoid about some undefinable threat. Check.

I'm barking mad. Go to the nearest padded cell.

Six. Abducted by aliens. Check.

Seven. The military saw it. Check.

Eight. Recorded by the police doing 249 miles an hour on a vintage motorbike. Check.

Nine. No technology on this planet could move me that fast without inertia being a major problem. Check.

Ten. I now know most of the major languages on this planet. Check."

Jay's head fell into his hands.

"Well, they were on the tablet in your holdall," added a voice in his head.

"Bollocks, I will have to do this, and it will mess up my life."

Something hard like a rock hit the front of Jay's house.

"This will be a significant threat to the things and people I love most." Jay started phoning around. Bea was still pissed at him and was ghosting him. Good. Gea was leaving the country for work, so he would be out of the way. The Landlord was very busy with all the new customers coming to Jay's local. This, he said, was a double-edged sword. He was wise enough to see the future problems and would be aware of why Jay would not be around for a while. Jay told his friends and loved ones to stay away, not because he did not love them, but because he was worried about their safety. Jay had already worked out that when someone has power, others try to influence them for their own ends. If they cannot succeed by direct access, then indirect access by any means was used.

Friends and loved ones now all had the same story. Jay was a jerk; they had not seen him for years. They didn't want to see him or, the more colourful, 'Would not piss in his ear if his brain was on fire'.

Another hard object was heard hitting the house. "I cannot save the house but I might be able to save a few things..."

It was time. Jay went to work on his preparation.

The video conferencing crowd were getting impatient with Jay. "Look, while he is distracted by the Press and rent-a-mob, we don't have access. Get your people to deal with it," said one.

Another said, "That is in hand. Jay has been working in his garage for some reason, concreting a new floor. Sorry, I'm corrected, and I'm told that he is screeding a new floor, whatever that is."

Someone tried to explain but it was brushed off. "The thing is, he is distracted, and I want the distractions removed," added another.

Jay had a shower and changed, and then, he was ready. Before he walked out to give a seminar at work or talk in public, Jay played the Carly Simon song, 'You're So Vain,' in his head. It put a slight self-mocking smile on his face, lifted his head and helped boost his self-confidence, which a shy person needed. The song also gave a rhythm to his walk, which, with a little help, could help him look super confident.

Jay walked into the video conference on the balls of his feet; all business.

"Right," he said, "This is how it is going to be!"

"I don't care how many years you have been fighting over this land; you will withdraw now! Also, if you both would like to check, I have had a word with the superpowers backing you, and you will discover they have had a change of heart."

Jay had been very busy, wading into the world's problems, one at a time. He always strived for unity and, to be fair, the world's problems are far from black and white.

The technician leaned into the representative of one of the video conferences and said, "Ma'am, the subject was getting a bit flaky to the end of last week, but he is off the scale sincere on all our instruments and parameters. He believes with a passion in everything he has been saying."

The representative nodded, as was the standard reply when they were on air.

Where do you start to fire-fight the world's problems? You don't. You wait until they hit you in the face, and then you use your best judgement and listen to everyone first. This took time, because everyone wanted their tuppence worth.