

WISE ONES

by Keren Green

It's dark. That pitch black kind of darkness. Agent Saunders can barely see her own hand as she reaches for the handle to pull herself up into the chopper.

She leans forward as the chopper rises into the air and heads straight toward the target. "Jesus Christ," she whispers, catching herself off guard.

Agent Monroe's always steady hand shakes, as he steers them toward the hovering light.

"You think that's really it this time?" Saunders asks.

Agent Beaumont pipes up from the seat next to hers. "Not a chance. The light we're looking for don't exist."

"It exists," replies Monroe.

Beaumont let's out one of his cocky, bullshit laughs. "Look where that thing is! Guarantee you, ain't no one alive down there. I don't believe in no prophecy and I sure as hell don't believe in any chosen one." He pulls a slip of paper from his jacket. "Looky here, ten down for a civilian drone. Five say it's a small plane that got itself lost. Three went in for --"

Saunders snatches the paper from him. "You took bets?"

"Damn straight. And I can tell you, not one person said the light was going to lead us to any

kind of salvation.”

“Shut-up, both of you. I can’t see anything. I’m putting her down here,” Monroe says lowering the chopper.

Saunders and Beaumont stare out the window. The light, that first appeared to be the size of a golf ball, now sits before them as big as a football field. Blinding light pours in. Saunders yanks open the side door. Rock and dirt kick up below them as the ground grows closer. The chopper touches down and Saunders jumps out. She spins slowly surveying the area. “Holy fucking crap!” she exclaims, instinctually drawing her weapon.

Dirt clings to Phil’s sweaty, exhausted face. “You have to help us. Please.”

Saunders takes an unconscious step back from Phil, as Monroe climbs down from the chopper. She turns toward him, mouth agape, in her usual dramatic way. “Civilian spotted, Sir.”

“It’s my wife. She’s... something’s wrong with her,” Phil says as he scurries off. “She’s over here.”

The three agents exchange looks, then follow Phil across the rocks and deeper into the light’s center. As they climb down into a ravine, a woman cries out in the distance. Saunders shoots Beaumont a look. He gives her the finger.

When they reach Monica, she is down on all fours. She moans and cries out in pain. Phil hurries to her side. She grabs hold of him as another contraction takes over. “What the fuck took you so long?”

“I came back as fast as I could,” Phil says as he wipes the hair from her eyes.

“How far along are you?” Monroe asks as he kneels beside Monica.

“I’m not pregnant.” Another contraction hits. Monica bangs her head on the ground and cries. She looks up at Saunders with pleading eyes. “Make it stop.”

Saunders rubs Monica's back. "We're going to do everything we can." She gently feels around Monica's stomach, then nods to Monroe.

Monroe takes Phil by the arm and pulls him aside. "What are you doing out here? Do you have a car nearby?"

Phil shakes his head. "I don't know."

"What do you mean, you don't know?" Beaumont asks.

"We were at our wedding reception. We headed for the airport. I don't know what happened. That light appeared, out of nowhere. It was in the middle of the road. I tried to get around it. If I went left, so did it. I thought we were going to die. I closed my eyes right before impact. When I opened them, we were here. Monica dropped to the ground screaming. Then I heard your helicopter."

Monroe looks up to the light, then back to Phil. "When did you say your wedding was?"

"Earlier today."

"I mean the date."

Phil raises his brow.

"Humor me," Monroe says.

"March 21st."

"Dude, it's December 24th. Nine months, bro." Beaumont says as he slaps Phil on the back. "You're gonna be a daddy."

Monica lets out a guttural cry.

"Sir," says Saunders.

The light vanishes. Through the darkness they hear a baby's cry.

Monroe shines his flashlight on Monica and Saunders.

“It’s a girl,” says Saunders. “Just as the prophecy promised.”

Monroe turns to the newlyweds. “We’re going to need you to come with us.”

Monica chews her nail, and Phil looks as if he has stopped breathing entirely.