

One Destiny

Bionicle

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Kapitel 32: Chapter 32: Old new friends

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A little Ga Aronan girl was running over the market place. She still had a lot of time but this was her first day at Turaga Tarja's school and she didn't want to miss a single thing. Only a few meters away from school something suddenly caught her eyes. She slowed down a bit and went closer. There was another little Matoran, a black one, about her age. He was sitting on a stone and stared at the building as if he was afraid of entering. "Uhm ... hello, are you new here too?" the little sapphire girl asked.

The boy winced and shot her a look. His crimson eyes held scepticism and fear as if he was awaiting an attack.

She now remembered something her parents told her before she left. In her grade there would be a boy she shouldn't speak to. A strange mix form with red eyes and black body. But they didn't want to tell her why she should avoid him. She was only able to go to this school because her parents trusted in the Turaga.

Could this be the one?

They were staring at each other. The boy now looked a bit unsure but after she did nothing to attack him he at least had lost his fear.

But why should she stay away from him? This was just a little boy, a child like her.

She reached out a hand. "Shall we go in there together? My name is Gali. What are you called?"

He looked at her a little bit longer with his unsure gaze then he slowly took her hand and answered, "Tupua."

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Gali's thoughts slowly returned to the swamp and the Toa in front of her.

"Tupua ... is that really you?"

He slowly nodded but before he could say anything something else came flying over Gali's head. A Toa of golden and white crashed against Tupua.

The dark Toa was trying to get the attacker off him while trying to push away the sword held close to his neck the same time.

"Get away from her and back where you came from", the golden one growled.

"Stop it! Both of you!" Gali was surprised by the strength of her own voice. Both Toa looked at her with astonishment too.

"He is not an enemy. He's a Toa who saved me from ... from an attacker before. And besides I know him for a very long time. So get off him, whoever you are."

The golden Toa got up again. "It's me, Takua. Sorry for that attack, pal." He reached out a hand to help Tupua up but he ignored it and got up without assistance.

"So you are Takanuva, the new Toa of light", Gali said, "We had not time to get to know you. But why are you here?"

"Vakama said that you might need my help down there so I tried to find you. The swamp looked more appealing to me than that gorge with its darkness. Not even my light got through it very far and I didn't want to go there all alone without knowing if I would even find one of you." He looked over to Tupua. "But it seems like I'm not the only new Toa."

"I'm Tupua, just Tupua. Don't get the idea of calling me Tupunuva or something cheesy like that. I was chosen to be a Toa of shadow."

"So you're a rookie too, huh?" Takua said and pointed at his Kanohi, "Have you found out how to use it yet? I only know how to use my other powers."

Tupua shook his head.

"It often takes a long time to find out the Kanohi's power", Gali said, "Often it reveals it the first time in case of danger. But you can also try to train it."

Both new Toa looked at her waiting if she knew something more should tell them.

The Toa of water now suddenly noticed how tired she actually was. Her limbs were hurting and without the supporting root in her back she would have fallen down into the water. Tupua noticed it and rushed over to her or at least it looked as if he was trying to rush but was blocked by mud.

"Are you alright? I hope this creep hasn't hurt you too much."

He picked her up even if he sank deeper into the mud now and waded back to Takua.

"What creep? What actually happened here?" the Toa of light asked with a gaze at Gali. He had noticed her wounds for the first time now.

"I tell you later", Tupua said, "First we need to find a place where she can rest."

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Gali woke up to the sound of a voice. It had been there for a longer time but she still had been in a half-sleep and not really noticed it. Although it still sounded a bit rough it was now more recognizable as Tupua's voice.

"It can bring light to even the darkest places. Mine is not a Kanohi of shadow because that can't be used as storage for a god of light so it's ... let me take a look ... here, this looks much like it, a Kanohi Manawa, the Kanohi of heart. It's said that it can make you look behind the façade and directly into people's hearts. Wondering why I got that."

Tupua and Takua were sitting close to her. The dark Toa was holding something that looked like a very old book. Gali now noticed that the floor under her didn't feel wet. Around her there was a kind of wall or more a ruin of a wall. The others now saw that she had woken up.

"I hope you feel a bit better now", Tupua said, "You still shouldn't move too much though you've healed fast during the past few ... hours? ... days? I can't tell. It seemed to be so long but still so short since we brought you here. Down here I've completely lost my sense for time." He looked around. "I have found those ruins earlier. They are on a kind of hill and much drier than the rest of this place. Matoran used to live here."

Matoran of shadow." He lifted up the book. "I was trying to find out some more about those lands and have started to translate some of the old texts. Had to be very careful because this looks like it could fall into pieces every second. But at least we now know a bit more about our masks. And I know what the people here would have looked like. It says that the Matoran of light were very colourful while the Matoran of shadow were more like Makuta himself in Matoran form. Now I finally know it. I'm not a mix form. I'm one of the last remaining Matoran of shadow if not the last. And Taka seemed to be a Matoran of light."

Gali sat up a bit. She still felt weary but at least her limbs didn't hurt as much as before.

"There had been other Matoran too? But where are they now?"

"I don't know. I haven't gotten that far by now but I don't think I would know it after finishing because the last few sentences of it tell about a war between the gods and that Mata Nui is trying to get the Matoran out of Karda Nui. That's all and we won't find anything more about it in Karda. I now want to find out more about the land. Maybe there's something that can help us find Mata Nui or defeat Makuta. I know that we don't have much time and should find the others and that I can't take this book with me, but Taka can copy most of the pages into his Book of Chronicles. Then I can read it again later."

Gali now looked into the book too. She was able to read the letters but she didn't understand the words. On the page Tupua had stopped now she could see a kind of drawing that looked like a beautiful garden in a cave.

"What is that?" she asked. "Does the text say something about it?"

"This once was part of the light village. It was surrounded by gardens like the shadow village always was surrounded by forest. It used to be where now that gorge is Taka had seen. The land once was flat with just a few hills." He turned a few pages as if he was searching for something. "I think I've read that during the war between the gods Mata Nui took away part of the land and created an island, a kind of sanctuary where he wanted to get the people to and then lift it up that high that only flying enemies would be able to get up to it. But flying evil creatures were rare back then. That could explain that gorge. But this book ends before the Matoran started to move on that island. It isn't even known if it started floating after all."

"Could it be ...", the sapphire Toa started. She and Tupua shared a gaze and it was obvious they had the same thought.

"Aro Nui...", the dark one said, "It is Mata Nui's sanctuary."

"Wait a minute", Takua suddenly said, "You said the village of light was where now the gorge is. What if Mata Nui never left this place? I mean when I was looking down there I just saw darkness. Not even the light of my sword could get through it. This is like Makuta has taken this place as his new home. And I don't think he wanted to move away too far from his brother."

"And that means", Gali continued, "we will have to go down. The swamps are the wrong place to search."

Takua stood up. "I will go and look for the others. I think some of them are down in the canyon right now. They shall stay where they are. As soon I've found them I'll get back and lead you to them."

"But how will you find them?" the Toa of water asked, "Have you looked around you? This is a giant place."

"Whenever a Toa needs to find the others he will find them. Otherwise I wouldn't

have found you so fast. You two should better search for the others who are somewhere in the swamps too. If you want to, try following me into the darkness afterwards. We will meet again. "He smiled. "Do you still remember Gali? 'Look for me in your dreams.' Maybe today this strange connection will work again."

"Good luck, chronicler", Gali said.

He just nodded, then turned and left the ruins.

"We should still stay here for a bit longer", Tupua suggested, "At least until you feel fit enough to walk longer distances."

The sapphire Toa laid back again. She still felt tired. So tired.

Had she slept for a few hours or just minutes, she didn't know but she felt much better now. Tupua was standing beside her, his bow glowing in his hand.

"What's the matter?"

"Something fiery shot out of the trees just a few seconds ago. I didn't seem to be very far from here."

"Fiery? This could be Tahu's sign. I'm wondering if he's in danger again or just wanted to tell us where he is right now."

"If he's in danger he has brought it up here too. But this didn't look as if he needed help."

The Toa of darkness reached out a hand and helped his friend up.

"If you're already strong enough we can get to them."

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"It never seems to rain on those hills", Tahu said. He was sitting on a stone not far from the ruins and tried to get some wet plants off his body. "Do you have any clue how long we have already been in Karda?" he asked Onua who was sitting next to him and observing the landscape, "I meant, it feels like many days and just a couple of hours the same time."

"I know as much as you. Even if I used to live under the earth and never had suns, moon or stars as help to count the time. But under the earth an hour at least just feels like an hour and a day feels like a day. Whenever we have stopped to sleep a bit I couldn't even tell how long we slept. Seconds? Minutes? Hours? Maybe days? Sometimes I felt like I've slept a day and still felt tired, sometimes I thought just a few seconds have passed but I felt fit like I've never felt before."

Tahu lifted up his head. "I hear someone coming." His hand wandered over to his sword then he relaxed again. "They are Toa."

Gali waved them as soon as she saw them but she didn't dare to call in case enemies were around. But the shadows hadn't been seen for a very long time now.

When they finally reached Tahu and Onua the sapphire Toa started speaking again. "Holy gosh, Tahu, what have you thought running away like that? You could have led us into even greater danger. You are lucky that you're still alive."

But Tahu's and Onua's eyes now wandered over to Tupua.

"Who the Makuta is that?" the ruby Toa asked.

"Sorry fire-spitter that I've forgotten to put my name tag on", he got as answer.

"You? That pesky Matoran?" he asked surprised but it didn't sound as if he wanted to start and attack with it.

"Pesky Toa, if you wouldn't mind." The Toa of shadow grinned.

"But why ..."

"Like you I was born to be a Toa but I needed some extra kick in the ass to change. Just like Takanuva."

"Oh, yes, Takanuva is down here too. He is out to inform the others", Gali said, "And we should meet them because in this swamp we won't find anything."

Tahu lifted up his hands. "Whoa, slow down. My head is overloading. Tell us from the beginning on, not somewhere in the middle so that we can follow you too."

The Toa of water sighed. She would have wanted to break up to the gorge immediately but then again the others should be informed about the plans that have been made before too so she sat down and told from the time on she and Onua had been separated. And this time she said Lewa's name when she came to the part with his attack. "He was controlled somehow that's obvious and when Tupua came and attacked him he fled into the direction where the gorge is. But that's not the only reason why we should go into the darkness."

When it came to Lewa Tahu wanted to know so many more things but he didn't interrupt Gali because he wanted to know the whole story first before getting into details. His thoughts were drifting away more and more although he tried his best to listen to every detail Gali had to tell. He was asking himself if his little green angel was alright.

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Lewa was stumbling through dark caves. His whole body was hurting but it wasn't from the fight. It felt like he was ripped apart from inside. He just wanted to get to his master fast. For sure he could heal him.

The Rahkshi hissed at him somewhere in the dark but he didn't care. Right now he had more important things to do than starting an open fight with a colleague.

Makuta was standing in front of one of the strange windows staring into the darkness but he turned around when he heard Lewa coming.

"You are back already? What has happened?"

"I attacked one of the Toa like planned", the green Toa pressed out. The pain inside was getting stronger again and he didn't know why. "But then another Toa I've never seen before come out of nowhere."

"There you see how tricky a Toa can be. You can never trust them because then they will attack you from behind."

Lewa didn't say anything. He thought about the fact that the other Toa hadn't even tried to attack him and he didn't believe that she had called the other one for help. His thoughts were torn back to Makuta's words. No, the last thing he should do now was thinking good things about other Toa. His loyalty belonged to his master.

"The darkness can heal your wounds", he heard Makuta say. "Just wait a bit then you will be able to go out again. You have strength, I know it." He looked out of his window again. "There are a few Toa very close to my lair. I don't think there's another one who can attack you from behind again. Rest a bit, then you can take care of them."

Lewa nodded then turned and disappeared into the darkness.

"Why are you so nice to him?" Lerahk's hiss came out of nowhere, "All your other creatures you treat like a Hikaki in your flower bed."

"He's strong willed. If I make a mistake I'll lose control over him again. I'm just giving him what he's longing for. Someone who's treating him good, someone who doesn't think he's a child or weakling, someone he sees as a 'friend'. I just can keep him as long as I show him how cruel the others can be to him and how nice I am."

"But it's still risky. What if the others try to concern him that they are his friends?"

"If they don't do it right now they won't have a chance later on. The word 'friend' for a Toa vanishes more and more the longer he stays in darkness until it's erased completely. And where will the Toa get light from to stop this process?"

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In which direction do we have to go?" Kopaka turned around and tried to look through the darkness.

"I don't know. Everything looks so similar. It seems like we're lost."

"We are lost if we both say so. For now we should not lose hope."

But also the ivory Toa didn't know how they would get out of the gorge. They didn't know where they came from or in which direction they wanted to go before.

"I-I think there's something coming towards us but I don't know what it is. It doesn't look much like a shadow because I don't think shadows would use light." Pohatu pointed at something a few hundred meters away. Indeed it looked like a little flying light ball. The closer it was coming the better they could see that it was someone who was flying into their direction, holding a glowing sword like a torch in his hand.

"Should we make him know that we are here?" the auburn Toa asked.

"I don't know. We should stay cautious but on the other side someone who uses light can never be Makuta's friend."

The glowing sword was useless if Takua would have wanted to see more but it was keeping harm away from him. More or less. A single shadow would think about it twice if he really should attack. The Toa of light just hoped that not more than two shadows were around. In groups they would have been tougher and even might have attacked someone with light.

Suddenly he heard a familiar voice under him not very far away.

"You with the light, whoever you are, can you help us? We're Toa, Makuta's enemies. We're lost and could need some help."

Takua slowly glided down until he saw two figures.

"Pohatu, Kopaka, thank goodness I've found you so fast."

He landed close to them.

"Do we know you?" Kopaka asked, "Wait, can it be that you are one of the new Toa?"

"Yes, Takanuva, Toa of light", the golden one answered.

"But ... what are you doing here?" Pohatu asked surprised, "I thought only we six were supposed to go to Karda."

"I can explain later while we're waiting. First of all you have to know that we mustn't leave this gorge. The swamp would lead us nowhere but I have the feeling our destiny is lying here."

Before he could get any further with his explanations a voice was calling out of the darkness, "Your destiny lies in your death, Toa."

The three startled and looked around.

"No, not again", Pohatu whispered. "There's something coming through the rocks. I can feel it under my feet."

This time the floor wasn't breaking apart and no rocks were flying around. The shadows around them just came out of the floor like they were standing in invisible elevators but now it were four of them.

"Who has spoken? That voice sounded too bright for one of them", Kopaka meant.

And now someone different was stepping out of the darkness. A very familiar looking young Toa with lime green eyes. But his body was in the darkest shades of green they had ever seen.

"L-Lewa? What ... what the hell are you doing?" Pohatu sputtered in surprise.

"What I am doing?" Lewa tilted his head, "Helping my friends, defeating my enemies. Too bad for you that you're on the wrong side."

"But ... but why? We are your friends, remember?"

"Friends? No Toa could ever be my friend. They are just treacherous creatures that have to be eliminated." He was speaking with a coldness that could have been Makuta's.

"Boy, be reasonable", Kopaka tried to convince him, "We have fought against Makuta for years together. He is not a friend. Destruction and death is following him."

"Lies! Nothing but lies!" the Toa of air shouted, "Shadows, attack!"

It wasn't that the shadows would have ever listened to a Toa's command; they just did it because it was their plan anyway but they avoided it to attack Takua for now. His sword didn't have much light energy but still enough to weaken them.

Kopaka and Pohatu had learned to know the shadows' way of attacks as quick and able to knock a Toa out within a second but now they were fighting with something that looked like swords made of shadow but still were able to leave deep cuts if they hit their target.

"Why the Makuta are they fighting that way?" Pohatu asked and blocked a strike with his claws.

"Wondered about that too but I think the first attack was just a warning. Something that could just weaken but not kill. Now they seem to go for all or nothing", was Kopaka's answer.

The two were fighting back on back to minimize the risk of an attack from behind.

Meanwhile Takua had to face Lewa. The two Toa were circling around each other, one not wanting to attack at all the other just waiting for the perfect timing.

"Listen, Lewa, I don't want to attack you. I can't say we're friends, for that we haven't met often enough but you're a Toa like me. I can't fight with someone who should be on my side."

"Why do all Toa I meet just want to talk? I *am* on the right side, on the side where my master is. You are a new Toa, aren't you? There's still hope you will learn what's right and wrong."

"And right can never be *Makuta's* side." He said the god's name as if he wanted to spit it out. Therefore he earned a slash over his face.

"But my hopes won't come true. I can't teach you a better thing. You Toa are spoiled from the beginning."

Takua avoided a few other strikes but wasn't sure how long he could keep that on. Lewa was fast and even if the Toa of light had tried to attack him the other one had more experience in fights and it would have been a short battle.

The longer they were fighting them back the more hopeless Kopaka felt. They never had fought enemies as fast as they were. They nearly never missed and avoided most of the Toa's attacks. Just a bit longer and the Toa could be history.

'Wait', Kopaka suddenly thought, 'Are those really your thoughts? You have been in many tricky situations but never thought about it so negative.' He tried to ban the negative feelings, tried to think about something worth fighting for, the people on the islands, his former home, the Mount Ihu, his fellow Toa and friends – the feeling of hopelessness seemed to grow weaker, he possibly had found a weak spot. He tried to fight while concentrating on each of his Toa friends, Tahu, Pohatu, Onua, Lewa – although he had gone insane right now, Gali – mostly about Gali. The fire of hope was burning stronger. He now knew they could make it out there alive – somehow – they just hadn't found the right way for now.

"I – I can't hold on any longer", he heard Pohatu's weak voice. "We don't have any chance." The Toa of stone had sunken to the floor. He still tried to fight but more attacks were hitting him now than before. Kopaka lifted his shield for defence and quickly looked over to his friend. He didn't have more wounds than the Toa of ice, not enough to bring him down.

"Try to think about something positive, about your friends", the ivory Toa shouted. He knew that this was too general and he needed something more specific to get the auburn Toa to start thinking.

"Remember your last Koli training with your Matoran. Think about the time when you still were able to visit Onua in his own village ... and his useless try to teach you to dig through the rocks with you hands and not to kick them around like big Koli balls."

For a short time Pohatu stopped in his moves and slightly smiled. It seemed to work. He jumped up again and helped Kopaka who had done the fighting for a few minutes against four shadows he couldn't even freeze after Pohatu's breakdown. But with that fire burning inside of him right now he felt as if he could have fought eight of them at the same time, half-godly or not.

The shadows suddenly stopped the fight and looked at each other.

"Uh-oh, I don't think I like that", Pohatu whispered.

"Whatever they are planning, we've found a weak spot. As long as we stick together and hold on to the thought what we're fighting for they're not stronger than we are." Suddenly the shadows were gone and they just saw a big black energy ball shooting into their direction. Without thinking about it Kopaka lifted his shield with the call, "For the sake of friendship!"

The shadows had gone through his armour and his body. How would his shield alone withstand them? But he had no doubt in it. The energy ball hit the shield ... and was thrown back.

Takua already had several wounds but he wasn't giving up. The next strike he could block again. Steel was slamming against steel. At least Lewa hadn't used any of his elemental attacks. They seemed to be too Toa-like for him. A sudden kick in his stomach made the Toa of light stumble and fall to his knees. A second kick against his arm and his sword was flying into the darkness. Takua lifted his head panting heavily. Lewa was standing above him, Katana ready for the final strike. The golden Toa never felt so helpless. His sword was out of reach. He didn't see Kopaka or Pohatu but he presumed they were still fighting against four enemies, half-godly enemies. But even

if everything seemed so hopeless he knew he had to do something. He had never given up fight before in his life.

And suddenly his Kanohi started glowing. A light spread out of him brighter than everything he had ever seen, flooding the whole area and made him think that even the suns had to hide away from him otherwise they would have been burned or blinded or whatever by it. For a few seconds he saw nothing but white even when he closed his eyes, then it slowly faded again but still a bit remained. It was like someone had turned on a lamp in a dark room. He now could see a desert made of rocks and sand around him. In the distance something was glowing but it seemed to be very far away. The shadows and Lewa were gone.

The others were looking around too.

"What was that?" Pohatu asked, "And where are those creeps and Lewa?"

"It seems like my Kanohi has activated for the first time. Maybe that killed the shadows. I don't think it harmed Lewa much but after he's on Makuta's side now he probably fled the light." Takua looked at his fellow Toa. "We now have a good reason to stay where we are. We have to heal up before we can go any further. And now I can finally tell you what had happened before I met you."

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The dark spirit never had felt so much pain in all his existence before. It felt like someone had killed a part of him from inside. He knelt on the floor, surrounded by his healing darkness but somehow he knew that the pain might go away but not the wound inside of him.

The same time Lewa was lying on the floor somewhere in the tunnels coiled up and screaming in pain. It felt like he was ripped apart again but he was afraid to go to his master because of his repeated failure. The light hadn't reached the tunnels but still he didn't feel as safe there as before. Right now he felt as if he belonged nowhere, not to the light and not to the darkness, not to the Toa and not to Makuta. The pain slowly faded but still it felt a bit as if something inside of him tried to burst out. He turned on his back and breathed heavily. Desperation filled his heart again while he was staring into the darkness.

'What should he fight for? What should he even believe in?'