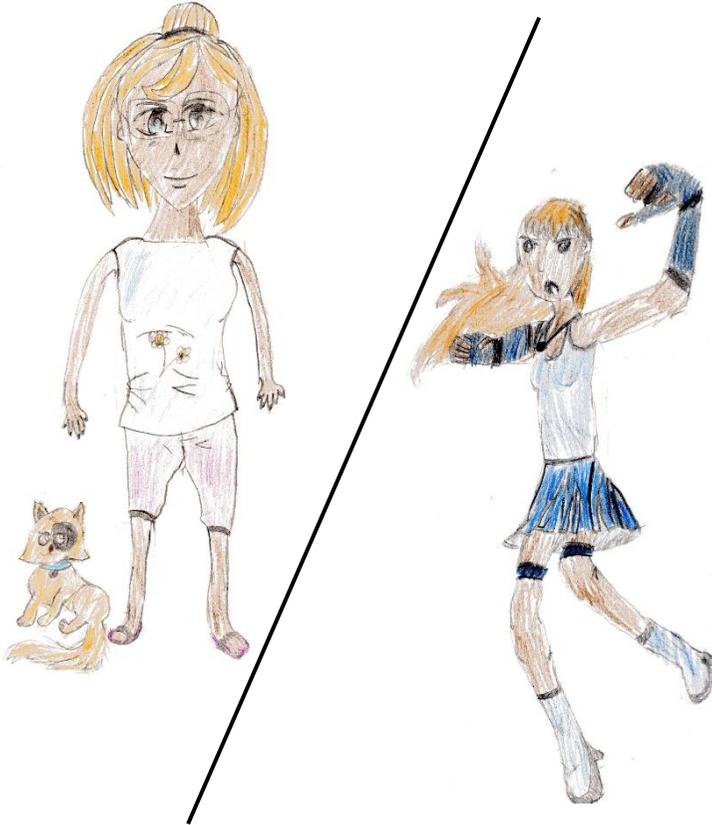


The Blade of the Temple



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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!

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 swung his 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 didn't 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 up you, and Jasmine!”

And they left to sleep in the temple, and Jasmine was quick to fall asleep. Seeing this, Tom went back to the fireplace, and Quimm was there too.

“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 don’t tell her, for she is the Blade, who is the only person who can stop these monsters destroying the world.”

They left.

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 kicks, 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 that 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, lets 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, the Ogre!” said Tom.

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 were 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?

“Its 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 rumour 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...

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