

Andrea Rains Waggener Fiction Excerpt focused on Dialogue

“The Trollers want me dead?” Kali asked. She rolled her eyes skyward. Was she really having this conversation?

“Of course. You’re the champion. But you are not easy to remove. They have, of course, been trying.”

“They have?”

“Do you truly believe all the attacks and near misses you’ve experienced are coincidences? Do you honestly think finding the symbol of the Kali Yantra at the first murder scene was simply a fluke? All of it has been aimed at you.”

“How do you know what was at the murder scenes unless you were there?”

Ananda sighed. “I accessed the vastness of supreme knowledge.”

The Zero Point Field? Kali wondered. She frowned. “Okay, for the sake of argument, if these Trollers...,” she snorted. “I have a hard time saying that. I keep thinking of big hairy creatures under bridges.”

“Those are trolls,” Ananda said. “An entirely different breed.”

Kali looked at the woman to see if she was making a joke. Ananda’s face remained expressionless.

Kali cleared her throat. “Okay, so if these Trollers want me dead, why don’t they just kill me?”

“I have explained that. It is against their moral code. Their society does not allow direct violence against another.”

“But it’s okay for them to use their minds to get other people to do violence for them?”

“Some of them believe so, yes.”

“That’s crazy. But then, so is everything you say.”

“It is crazy,” Ananda agreed. “But not in the way you mean. Trollers have become crazy because fear has created disharmony within them. They are like diseased cells that have lost reference to the whole.”

“What?”

Ananda took a deep breath. “Diseased cells are cells with an absence of ease, *dis*-eased. Such cells lack internal harmony, or if you prefer, love. Without harmony or love, the cell disconnects from the whole and destroys everything in its way because it won’t cooperate with adjacent cells. This goes on until the whole is destroyed.”

“You’re talking about our body’s cells?”

“Yes. Cancer—I’m sure you’ve heard of it. Or do you not believe in it either, since you cannot see it.”

Kali scowled.

Ananda waved the air in front of her. “You were unable to see me sitting here because your perceptions weren’t able to expand to accept the shift of my energy. I was here. But to you, I wasn’t. So, in effect, I wasn’t here. Nothing exists outside our perceptions. The universe is endless possibility until we perceive it. We actualize the universe. We make it what it is. This is why what the Trollers are doing is going to destroy the universe. If you mess with people, you mess with the universe.”

Kali groaned.

“It’s up to you to save reality as we know it,” Ananda said, “and yet you are running around chasing shadows.”

“What I do is my business,” Kali said.

Ananda shook her head so vigorously her braids entwined themselves even more intricately on her head. “That is not true,” she snapped. “What you do and don’t do is the universe’s business, just as what I do and don’t do is the universe’s business. So your business is mine and mine is yours. And our business is to save the universe.”

“So you said.”

Ananda clasped her hands, and her bracelets clattered. “It starts with defeating the Trollers, but that is only a part of it, a stepping stone. As you battle the Trollers, you will claim your power, fulfill your purpose. In doing so, you will affect others around you, spurring them to claim their power and fulfill their purpose. As the war progresses—if we are successful in winning our battles—, this power and purpose, this energy, will cascade through the human race, lifting every single person to a spiritually enlightened state.” Ananda’s eyes were brighter than the sun over their heads.

Kali laughed. “Oh, that’s your best story yet. You make it sound like I’m the Messiah.”

Ananda sighed. “No, not the Messiah. Just the champion. Still, you must understand—what you do is *not* just your business. Either you will save us all or you will let us all be destroyed. It is in your hands.”

Kali pushed off the grass and stood. She brushed her hair out of her face. “What you’re saying is beyond out there. People who control others with their minds. People who cause disasters with their minds. People wanting to kill me but not directly. Me, one person, being the cause of either the destruction or the enlightenment of the whole human race. You’re insane. It’s all senseless.”

“Imagine looking at a ballroom full of dancing couples from a great distance, a distance so great that you cannot hear the music,” Ananda said. “What they are doing, all the twirling and dipping and shuffling, would appear totally senseless to you. Life appears senseless when you don’t have the complete picture. You are like a gnat on a TV screen. You see only a bunch of dots because you cannot see the whole screen. Right now, you are looking at the murders, at what one group of people are doing to a few other people, instead of looking at the big picture.”

“I am so tired of your fucking metaphors,” Kali said. “Come on, Agni.”

Agni stood, touched his nose to Ananda’s cheek, then trotted toward Kali. Kali strode toward the car. She wondered what the hell she’d thought she’d accomplish by coming here again. Witch with no legs, ha. Witch with no mind was more like it.

“At least put up a protective shield,” Ananda called.

Kali stopped and turned. “What?”

“A psychic shield,” Ananda said. Visualize yourself surrounded by light. It will shield you from other minds.”