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Trilogy's End
A Prequel

In March and April of 1994, the monthly feature I author, "The Poets Corner", ran a series of poems that became the direct lead in for "Trilogy's End".

The characters presented here originally appeared in two plays in the early 1970's. Delineni and Kaswan appeared in the 1974 production of "Awakings". Nebulzar first appeared in the 1975 production of "The Mystery Of HIM".

These characters, combined, have played a part in forming an interesting, pseudo-mythology. One of science, romance, fantasy, and just plain weirdness!

Here are the poems that lead directly to "Trilogy's End"....

Delineni

She is the daughter of the great wizard, Taslasness. She is mother to the child of the universe.

Yarns and years have passed her by since the light bent into prism rings and blew through the clouds of Earth.

Guided by these focusing thoughts, she climbs upon a light beam and rides it.

Light beam bends, to the alchemist's dream of gold.

Gold light leaves the land of wonder and folds inwards to the outside of Earth.

Gold light sweetly touches cobblestone road, she is Earthbound once more.

Her robes of satin and gold blow in the wind as the lake crashes in to the rocks where I sit....

Kaswan

Lake Michigan waves roll swiftly in to these cracked rocks I sit upon.

Flash of a golden light comes from behind, followed by a gentle breeze.

I know she, the wizard's daughter, has returned.

Returned to this plain, this dimension, this Earth.

Our minds touch, I turn, she smiles.

She is next to me now, sitting on the rocks by the now still lake.

Much like the way she was the last time we saw each other, her strawberry blonde hair still blowing in a gentle breeze.

"He has returned." She said with a shutter. "Nebulzar, the evil one, he has returned."

"I know he has, I have seen the signs." Said I. "Signs of *Me before they*, of few before many."
"Signs of hate, war, pain, and the bleeding of love."

Her hand brushes upon my cheek. "Tis a time for battle, Kaswan. A time for the end of this all and for the circle to start stopped curves."

We both know the time is at hand as the red lightning bolt hits the lake causing it to boil and turn red.....

Nebulzar

It is almost like sticky red ink, this substance that covers his hands as he wipes clean the heart lances just returned from Earth.

The pig squeals with terror as he pets it. "Soon, soon my pet! I have them now!" His hands raise up and shoot downward a red lightning bolt.

"I need these hearts, these souls, and their foolish, foolish love. This third from Sol is ripe with sadness, and longing. Perfect for our needs"

The red orb hangs in the air as he speaks to all Earth:

"I bring you your answer! I bring you all your material wants and needs. All I ask is you no longer love, anyone or anything!" "Is this such a high price to ask for all the wealth and comfort you can endure?!"

"I bring you gluttony!" He says as the pig of death is slaughtered and spread upon the Earth. His love collectors, already filling.

His orb is violently rocked as Delineni and I board it with our weapons. Delineni with her shield of faith and I with my sword of words.....

The Battle

"You!" Screams Nebulzar. "I knew you two would show up. You think you can fight me, fight me here?!"

"This is a place in a-waiting, waiting for me! There is no Triad now, no hope, and no love!"

I jump upon the red rock. "You are wrong, Nebulzar! You should of never returned here..."

Red flash of light from his red hands, my sword is drawn...

Bolt of red light hits Delineni's shield, knocking her backwards....

Sword hits love collector, smashing it, releasing the love, imprisoned, back to those he stole it from.

He projects images in to our minds, images of despair, images of hate....

I take out my Triad, the symbol for love. It's golden light shining in Nebulzar's eyes...

The images are weakening Delineni's shield of faith...

Another blast of red lightning from Nebulzar's hands hits Delineni's weakened shield. She falls off red orb in to the lake, a hundred feet below!

There is a roar, an angered roar from the sky.

I thrust the Triad in his evil face.

Image last; The orb exploding over lake, me falling in to water....

Aura's

I know this place. This is not the land of wonder, nor is this Earth. This is the place between waking and sleep, the place between life and death.

She is here with me, laying on this surface, this mist, cloud, thing.

Her shield is gone, her aura, her energy of life, is low.

Help her I must, but how?

I know Taslasness is near, I heard him roar before I fell. Somehow, I know he can not intervene.

This is now, this place is time's pivot point. Past, present, and future here intersect. This is my time. My time to act, my time to lose, my time to win. It is up to me, Delineni's life is in my hands.

She is a creature, not of flesh, but of spirit. A creature of the universe. Created by the very will of humankind. After all, is the land of wonder not the dimension created and maintained by human thought?

There is no human medicine that can help her, except that medicine of the will, medicine of the aura, medicine of touch.

Her hand is in mine, I try and reach her with my thoughts....

"Remember the first time met we in the haunted house? When you took me to see your father through vortex, to the river of life? When you explained the triad to me? Do you remember our adventures? The songs we would sing as Pan played his pipe?"

"Oh, Delineni, do you know that in times dark, thoughts of you were the only thing that would bring me through?"

Our aura's merge as she awakes....

The Now, The Will, and The Us

We walk down this, now familiar, cobblestone path by the lake.

Nebulzar is gone. We only dispersed him, diluted his power. He may some day return, but not now.

"There must be a reason my father has left me here for so very long." Delineni, with the strawberry blonde hair, says. "There is some plan he is working on, I am certain of it!"

Her hand is in mine. It is real, not spirit. Her aura and mine are mixed up, jumbled, real, and forever.

"There is a plan." I say, knowing full and well that it is already underway.....

To C.S. Lewis

Trilogy's End

A Short Story By Kevin Keyser

1995

Part 1
Wizard's Eve

The city is cold, but that is to be expected on New Year's Eve. The man is dressed up in a heavy coat, with gold hat and half empty bottle of whisky. He walks down State street much like a penguin, wobbling and swaying.

If he could see clearly, he would then be blinded by the flash of golden light before him. If he could be frightened, he would be...

To his eyes Father Time just materialized before him.

"You're early!" He shouts to the man dressed in golden robe, carrying a staff, and sporting a long, grey, beard. "You're two freaking hours early!"

The wizard, Taslasness, smiles.

"No, I'm almost late! Here, a parting gift..."

The man glances at his now full whiskey bottle, looks up to find no trace of Taslasness, and takes a swig...."

Part 2
Lonely Heart Beats

These flowers she picked, these herbs and other elemental things lay in the cellar, drying. A gown made out of pure gold thread hangs on a hook in the closet. A handle, all that is left of a great shield, lays on a shelf.

In the den she sits, dressed in clothes no one would find extraordinary or different. Looking like any other woman in the world, few know that she is not from this place, this dimension. All someone might notice is the faint glimmer of sadness in her eyes.

Her sketch pad is like a diary. In it there are months of sketches, many of this man she knows as "Kaswan". Of course, that is not his real name. It is the name he was given in the Land Of Wonder, her home.

"Kaswan" has a meaning, a purpose. She knows it alludes to the fable of the ugly duckling. It means that within all of us there is a wonderful, beautiful, swan waiting to emerge.

Is this feeling, what she believes, or is it more? The rules are different here. There is no magic, only physics and physics can't help the anguish within her heart.

Is this forbidden? Or is she lost here, never to return home anyway?? In that case forbidden it is not, otherwise...

Otherwise it is the end of everything.....

Part 3
Parting Of The Realities

Kaswan knew that Delineni was convinced that if the new year came without her father materializing to bring her back home, she never would return there. The year only had minutes left to itself, Taslasness had better arrive soon!

Little did he know that Taslasness HAD arrived and, in fact, was outside floating on a snowflake. Taslasness did not appear to be in a hurry. After all, if he was, why did he not materialize in Kaswan's house almost two hours ago??

Kaswan was right several months ago. When, after the battle with Nebulzar, he said there was a plan. Now it was unfolding before his un-seeing eyes!

She makes up her mind as the clock starts chiming out the first of twelve rings, their lips meet.

The chiming echos, reverberates, the last ring keeps playing back, stuck in a loop.

All time is stopped as love is assured. Reality shatters in to ten billion pieces, like a mirror dropped from the cosmos....

Part 4
The Land Of Wonder

It is that gold light that Kaswan first sees, this time a foggy golden light. Before long, he realizes that he is standing on a small island within the river of life and he is alone.

Somewhere else in this Land Of Wonder lays Delineni in a bed of grass. Her vision clears as she lifts her head and looks around. Standing next to her is Taslasness and next to him is Lightener, the gate keeper.

She is aware of something else, too. The light, it's color, it's hue. It is a darker hue, like twilight on Earth, but there never is a twilight here. She looks to the sky, expecting to find it clear, blue, and light, instead she finds it almost dark and with storm clouds! Delineni gets up, and runs to hug her father, but passes straight through him, like he was only a smokey vapor!

Back on the island, Kaswan is passing through the barren bushes which make up a mile long circle. Upon entering the circle's interior he is greeted by a stone representation of the Triad. Looking like a great stone top hat, Kaswan wonders how this, obviously top heavy, structure had survived for thousands of years.

A voice reminds him of the obvious answer: "Magick!" Kaswan, turns wildly around upon hearing the familiar voice. Floating in back of him is the translucent face that could only belong to Toetro!

"Thought you would never see me again, did you?" Said the translucent, floating, creature as it dashed round and about, fading in and out like a hyper Cheshire cat!

"It's not often one comes face to face with his imaginary friend!" Kaswan blurted out. "True!" Said Toetro. "But this is the second time we have met, er, face to face! A flash back to years ago runs through Kaswan's mind: A place, like a dream, looking like the valley and a place working with the peacock...."

"Toetro! You know that what we last talked about, never happened!"

He smiles, "You mean YET, don't you Ke...."

Taslasness breaks off Toetro's words as he materializes: "Don't use his Earth name here, Toetro!!"

If the creature, Toetro, wasn't translucent he probably would of blushed! "Sorry there, Mr Wizard, Sir!!, Not like it makes any difference, in what is to come or the ending of it all!!!"

"Enough! Yells, Taslasness as points his staff at Toetro. The translucent creature looks as if he is about to say something else, and thinks better of it before he does.

Delineni rush's over to Kaswan's side, grabs his hand and is happy to find that it "IS" real and not some smokey forgery of a shape.

"Taslasness!" Kaswan finds himself saying. " What is going on here?! One moment I am home ready to ring in the new year, the next moment I am on some deserted island surrounded by dead bushes and having a conversation with Toetro!

The wizard sighs, "Kaswan, I think you know, don't you?"

"It's Delineni, isn't it?" Kaswan says as he grips her hand, even harder. "We are in love, and that can't be because she is not of my dimension?"

The wizard smiles, "That's part of it, but that is solvable! There is another force at work here, an evil force, a force you thought destroyed, when in fact he was only forced backwards in time.

Both Kaswan and Delineni shiver as they realize that Nebulzar is still alive!!

"Yes, yes, the monster, Nebulzar, still lives and is in the past destroying everything that MUST happen if today is ever to exist!"

"Where is he now?" Says Kaswan.

The wizard looks at them with eyes they had never seen before, fearful eyes....

"Eastern High School, April 1974"

Delineni looks an Kaswan in terror, "Ke... that's when it all started!"

"We've got to go back there, to catch him before he destroys everything!" Kaswan says, Delineni agrees, quickly!

"You will need help" The wizard says.

"Oh, Mr. Wizard, sir!" Says Toetro in his most sarcastic of tones. "If your latest experiment is done, can I take my butt off the Bunsen burner and go along?"

The wizard glances down at the translucent creature with both a look of disdain and amusement!
"Only if you go right away!"

Once again, Toetro looks as if he is to say something, but thinks the better of it.

Taslasness looks at all three of them: "Remember, no one can see any of you when you are in the past. You CAN do things that manipulate matter and people, but how this is done is unique to each person. You will have to discover how to do these things yourselves'. You will know that you have succeeded when you return here to a restored Land Of Wonder!

Delineni tries to give her father a good bye hug, and once again moves through his smokey image.

Lightener, the gate keeper, opens the gate to the past and they walk through the gate and vanish.

Taslasness sits down on a stump near the now dry river of life, a single tear trickles down his cheek....

Part 5
The Past Is Now

Kaswan remembers this place. This is his freshman history class, where he first met Delineni! He remembers the man talking in front of the chalk board, it is Mr. Clayborn, the vice principal.

"Mr. Studerbaker won't be here today..." Started Mr. Clayborn as he was drowned out by a shout of approval. All that was needed was that cold look of his and things settled down..."As I was saying, Mr. Studerbaker won't be in today. Before I go any farther, I want you all to welcome a new student here at Eastern. Everybody say a big hello to...uh..DE-LINE-NI Wilson. Is that the right way to pronounce your name?"

A girl stood up in the middle of the room. She was a blonde and she wore her hair in long braids. Kaswan looked at her, the younger Delineni, and then to his side to the present day Delineni. The present day Delineni just shook her head in amazement....

"Yes sir, Delineni, you got it right." Mr. Clayborn looks at her. "Interesting name, Delineni, some day you must tell us what, if anything it means." Without letting her respond he changed subjects and continued: "...Ok, now Mr. Studerbaker wants you all to watch President Nixon's address tonight and write a essay on it.." The class moaned....

"It's like watching an old video tape of yourself!" Said Kaswan as he watched the younger version of himself scribble down notes in to a spiral bound notebook.

It was then Kaswan heard Toetro say "Oh No!" He turned and looked at the shadowy figure of Nebulzar moving, with haste, through the wall away from them.

Kaswan reacts and wants to rush towards this anti-creature and pursue it, he is filled with utter hatred! A desk flies up and slams in to the wall Nebulzar just past through.

The three time travelers jump back with a start as they realize that Kaswan had found his way to manipulate matter.....

Somehow the three time travelers now find themselves several days later. The young Kaswan is walking home from school during a thunder storm. He is about a block from home when he turns to find the young Delineni behind him. She makes a short dash and comes up to him and they walk together.

The present day Kaswan snickers and gently says "It's a set- up, dude!" The present day Delineni whacks him and laughs!

Toetro looks at the upcoming tree, a big old oak tree that is still standing at the present time. "That's odd" the translucent creature says. "Why is that tree glowing?"

"I would think it has a negative ion charge." Kaswan said. "Perhaps it is about to be... Oh My God!..." Delineni picks up on Kaswan's thought: "Struck by lightning!" Toetro looks thoughtful; "I don't remember the tree getting hit by lightning!" Kaswan and Delineni yell back at Toetro at the same time: "It Didn't!!"

The present day Delineni spread's her arms wide and stares at the tree, her hands glow. The lightning bolt starts it's trip UP from the tree, but stops and turns backwards upon it self and stay's there, frozen in time.

Toetro laugh's "So YOU are the one? I knew someone must of been stopping time at all those damn lectures I would attend with Mr "K" here!

"Toetro, shutup and see if you can get the other Delineni and Kaswan out of harm's way!!! I can't keep this up for long!!!!"

"Oh JOY!" Cries the translucent creature as he zips towards the frozen, younger couple, pushing them out of way.

Delineni lowers her right hand. The orange lightning bolt destroys the tree, but the couple are still frozen in time.

"Kaswan! Move them back!! Kaswan does this with the help of Toetro. Delineni lowers her hand. The younger couple jump in unison at the sight of the smoldering tree, both wondering why they hadn't seen what caused it to smolder?!

The present day Delineni collapses, exhausted....

"That was a close one." Kaswan tells her as he strokes her hair, arm around her. Delineni is out of breath, but recovering. "We both almost died Kas..., and no one would of ever known that it wasn't anything but a terrible accident!"

Kaswan looks at her, "Yeah, Nebulzar almost got us there. We got to find HIM first, next time or we may not be so lucky!

The three time travelers feel a rush, almost like vertigo, then their surroundings blur, dissolve, and they find themselves in the school auditorium, several weeks later.

The young Kaswan is wiring up some stage lights and the younger Delineni is painting the set. Both Delineni's love to draw and paint.

The present day Delineni looks at her fellow time travelers with a look of amazement. "You realize that this is the day you first went to the Land Of Wonder, don't you, Kas...??"

Kaswan, nods and looks intently at the younger couple as the younger Delineni shows off her sketch book. Her book showed a wizard standing on a river bank. He was casting a spell and great bolts of colored lightning were coming out of his staff. This staff had this funny symbol on it, looking much like a top hat.

The present day Kaswan knows that the symbol is the Triad and the wizard is Taslasness. He remembers, though that at the time he thought they were pure fantasy.

"Guys...." The present day Kaswan and Delineni turn to see Toetro being dragged towards a vortex of red light!

The last thought to run through Kaswan's mind before they were all drawn in to the vortex was of Nebulzar, it must be his doing, this red vortex, thing. He thought that they must resist this thing, he tried, Delineni tried, they all tried as the darkness enveloped them.....

Part 6
Hells Fury

This is the anti-place, this is the place at the end of time, where no mercy is called upon no soul!!
This is the Lost Place.

The three time travelers wake up to find themselves imbedded in the volcanic rock that surrounds this place. Just their arm's legs, and heads dangle out of this wall, several hundred feet above the fiery bottom.

Floating in front of them is Nebulzar and he is laughing, laughing very hard!

"Well, well, well, isn't it the three "defenders" of Wonder?! Let's see, an imaginary creature, a human, and a conjurer. I'm impressed, Haaaaa!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

"Oh, you will be impressed, as soon as I can get out of this trap!" Delineni shakes as she tries to free herself.

Nebulzar laughs. "Try you imp, try! And while you try, I will be back in time stopping you two from making your first journey to that "Wonder" place. Soon everything you have done this past twenty years will un-ravel and cease to of ever existed and I will rule the Earth!"

The vampire of the soul, the evil one, Nebulzar fades out and they know he will fade in to the past to destroy it!

"Toetro, do you have any ideas?" Delineni pleads. "Me? You are asking ME for an idea?? I'm honored!" Both Delineni and Kaswan yell at the creature: "Toetro!!!"

"I suppose I could just move out this rock..." Toetro dematerializes and re-materializes in front of the dangling and amazed couple! "Something like this??" he says with a smile that really DID make him look like the Cheshire cat!!

"Can you get US out?" Delineni asks.

"I can help, but because of drop off here you will have to catch a light beam and ride it back to where we were as soon as you are free or you will fall in to the pit of fire below!"

Kaswan looks at Delineni: "Catch a light beam? Is he serious??" She laughs, "How do you think I always got to Earth? Via space shuttle??"

"Well, I... ok, how do I do that?" Delineni laughs again, "The same way you always did, I'll grab you!"

Kaswan looks down towards the pit of fire, he only nods his head in agreement.

Toetro somehow turns the whole rockface translucent, Kaswan is falling towards the pit of fire!! Delineni grabs him and the next thing he knows they are standing right where they were before the red vortex grabbed them, Kaswan still in Delineni's arms.

"Break it up, you guys!" Toetro yells. "Nebulzar is after them!!"

They see the dark form of Nebulzar pursuing the younger couple as they walk out the door, coats on to go home. They give chase, Toetro flying and Kaswan and Delineni running. They know that the younger Delineni is taking Kaswan to the haunted house where they will enter the gateway to the Land Of Wonder, they know that this can NOT be tampered with, if it is Nebulzar wins!

Nebulzar materializes in front of the younger couple in the form of an old man, they walk past him, he raises his hand to let loose a bolt of hate, a bolt of black, evil magic to strike them down!

Toetro materializes in between the bolt and the younger couple, there is a terrible flash and an angry roar from Nebulzar, the younger couple turn to see what is going on and see nothing, they turn back and continue on. Nebulzar dematerializes and the present day Kaswan and Delineni rush over to the dieing Toetro's side.

"Not bad for an imaginary creature." He says faintly. "My time is up, your time is only beginning!"

Toetro fades in to nothingness leaving behind only a dusty outline....

Part 7
Reprise Of The Triad

"He's Gone, Ke...." Delineni says as they both kneel on the ground, besides a dusty outline, the only physical reminder of their friend. "We've got to go, got to catch up with Nebulzar!"

Kaswan gets up, looks down at the outline: "We'll stop him, Toetro. You haven't died in vain!" The couple look back at the outline as they continue on towards the younger couple, who are now entering the haunted house.

They see the dark shadow of Nebulzar following the younger couple and they pick up their pace.

In the house the gate opens up, the younger couple pass through it's golden light, followed by Nebulzar! The present day couple rush in to see the gate closing and jump in to it just before it folds upon itself and closes.

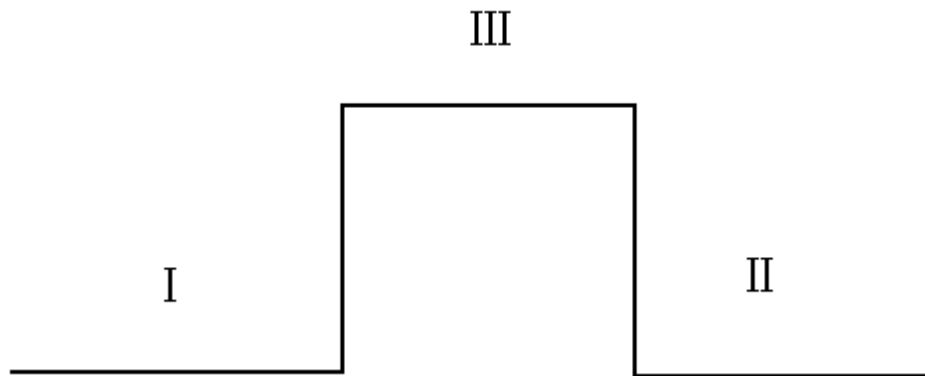
Kaswan remembers the tune he hears as they materialize at the banks of the river of life. The sweet sound of Pan's flute still etched in his memory.

They look for Nebulzar and do not see him, they DO see the younger couple as they walk down to a younger Taslasness, who is fishing songs out of the river of life.

"You stay here, Kas, and guard them." Kaswan looks at Delineni, "Where are you going?" As Delineni runs she yells back: "I have an idea where Nebulzar is, in case I'm wrong you stay there!"

Delineni continues on, leaving Kaswan with the younger couple and the younger Taslasness. The present day Kaswan watches in amazement as the principles of the triad are laid out to his younger self:

The wizard draws a figure in the sand with his staff:



"This is the Triad.." The younger wizard starts. "...It is the one true symbol for both love and the energy of love." The younger Kaswan looks confused and asks how love be a energy, after all it is only an emotion?

The wizard smiles. "Love IS an energy! It is the energy created and let loose when two souls bond! Have you ever heard of a man named Einstein?" The younger Kaswan looked shocked, there were many places that he expected to hear about Einstein, but not in a fantasy land during a conversation regarding the metaphysical aspects of love!!

The wizard continues without waiting for a response:

"Einstein said that no energy ever ends, it just changes form, changes states, right?" Both Kaswan's nod. "Love is the same way, there is no such thing as one kind of love, love changes, grows, and lives. Love is the greatest force in and out of the universe! Love is the one force to survive death, it is the driving force behind all the actions of all the creatures in ALL worlds, no matter if these worlds are molecular or galactic in size! "

"Look at the symbol again, do you see that the numbers I and II are opposed to each other while the number III is elevated above all others. Why is that do you suppose?"

Without waiting for a response the wizard continues to answer his own question. " Because the number III is the result of the bonding of the numbers I and II. Number III represents the energy released as two souls bond and merge. This energy is released in to the galactic domain as these to souls are elevated in to a higher plain of existence!"

The wizard moves to explain even more as Kaswan hears Delineni's scream in his mind.....

Part 8
You Are My Life, My Love

Kaswan runs faster than he ever knew he could! He doesn't even know how he knew WHERE to run TO, he just does. He runs in to a cave, grabs a torch and runs down the uneven path towards a large chamber. As he approaches he sees Delineni tied to a spinning dais. The dais is raising towards a stalactite, in a minute the stalactite will pierce her heart and Delineni will be dead! Kaswan runs towards the dais to stop it when he runs head first into the invisible wall surrounding it and falls.

Kaswan struggles to regain his composure as he hears the evil laughter of Nebulzar: "Ahhhhhhha! Trying to find your friend?! I wouldn't bother, because in a few moments she will be getting the point, Haaaaaa!!!!!"

"Let her go!!" Kaswan yells. Nebulzar gestures towards the dais, it starts spinning faster, moving Delineni closer to her death. Kaswan yells in rage "NO!!!!!!!!!!!!!" A small boulder flies up from the ground and into the base of the dais, springing the gear work out of alignment, lowering it back to ground level and out of danger.

Another small rock hits the enraged and shocked Nebulzar, causing him to fall backwards and lose his concentration on maintaining the invisible wall, allowing the wall to drop and Kaswan to enter.

Kaswan runs to free Delineni, his hands struggle to free her as she tries to gain her composure. Her bonds are finally broken as the evil one starts shooting bolts of red hate towards them. They jump out of the path as Kaswan sends another rock into Nebulzar's face. Nebulzar chases the couple back to a corner of the cave, they realize that they are trapped.

Delineni tries to stop time again, but Nebulzar is too powerful for her, Kaswan tries to move the huge boulders that are in this part of the cave and he finds that they are too heavy. They look frantically around for something to use in their defense and find nothing. They try and climb the walls to find escape, but the walls are smooth, almost mirror like.

"It's time for you two meddling fools to die!" Yells the overjoyed Nebulzar as he raises his hands to deliver the death blow.

The couple prepares themselves for death by holding each other and confessing their love for one another, eyes closed with expectation of searing pain, the portend of death. The pain never comes, they open their eyes to see Nebulzar struggling, trying to deliver the bolt of black energy and failing!!


Kaswan understands this, he understands everything, he sees the reason to the past year, he knows Taslaness's plan, the way to beat Nebulzar! "It's love, Delineni! Love can defeat him, OUR love!"

The couple join hands. "Begone evil one!" Screams Delineni as they walk towards the center of the cave, towards Nebulzar. "Your evil will not work on us!" Yells Kaswan as they raise their free hands, palms up facing the evil creature.

"Ah, Delineni... what are we doing?" She whispers in Kaswan's ear "Invoking!" Two circles of white light form around each of them. "Do as I do, she says in Kaswan's ear." The circles start to move away from them and towards Nebulzar as Delineni starts chanting. Kaswan hears what she says, doesn't understand it but repeats it, it sounds like Latin.

The light circles move to each side of Nebulzar, he tries to use his powers to stop them, he fails. The circles start to move towards each other, start to move towards Nebulzar, he tries to move and finds that he can't!

The circles join and Nebulzar is in the middle of this joining, he howls as the circles glow and become more than two circles, they become a single symbol, they become the

symbol infinity.  There is a terrible howl, a giant flash of golden light, and then silence.....

Part 9
Love's Valor

Delineni and Kaswan open their eyes to find themselves back in the present day Land Of Wonder!
"We did it!" Delineni yells as she spins around Kaswan, kissing him.

"You most certainly DID do it!" Delineni runs over to her father, and finds that he is no longer a smokey image of himself.

The wizard smiles, "The universe is a safer place because of you two!"

Kaswan looks hurt, yells out loud: "Three! Don't you forget what Toetro did, he is the true hero!!!"

Taslasness, not accustomed to being yelled at by a human, is speechless for a moment, then he waves his staff, points it towards the lake, which is no longer a lake, but a mirror to the future. Through shimmering waters they watch the activity of the cosmos and the slippage of the years, the lives of all those who would of never been if Toetro, Kaswan, and Delineni had failed. "It was a team effort, and one of your team paid the highest price, he paid it without hesitation. Oh yes, Kaswan, we know of Toetro's valor!!!"

Delineni, walks to Kaswan's side and she grabs a hold of his hand. "Father..." The wizard smiles, already knowing the question she is about to pose. "...What about Ke..., er, Kaswan and me?"

The wizard shakes his head. "You know the teachings of the Triad! Love is forever, love can not be stopped, it is an energy!!!"

They smile.

"However, Delineni is a creature of this dimension, she has powers that Earth people don't yet have, or haven't learned to use correctly yet. It seems this is a bit a dilemma, you know the answer don't you daughter?"

Kaswan feels the shiver that runs through Delineni's entire being. "But father I could never even SEE you again!"

The wizard shook his head in agreement. "You have to choose, daughter, you have to choose now!!!"

Kaswan breaks in: "Taslasness, WHAT does she have to choose?"

The wizard sighs, "She has to choose whether she will stay here and let you go, or whether she will return with you to Earth and loose all knowledge of this place and loose all her powers."

Kaswan looks appalled, "Yeah, but I could always remind her!"

The wizard laughs! "You won't remember, either! Your memories will re-adjust themselves and all the things that you THINK lead up to your falling in love will be fiction, the truth will be taken from both of you. You will remember nothing of The Land Of Wonder except, perhaps, when your hearts beat together!"

Delineni looks ashen, she is torn. She runs back up to her father, hugs him real hard. "I will remember you, even if I don't!"

The wizard nods as he hears the answer he knew he would hear! "Then I have to send you two Earthward!"

Delineni is now by Kaswan's side. They are joined, arm and arm, soul to soul. The wizard lowers his staff, pointed towards them.

"I love you father!" Delineni screams, almost hoping that one thought would echo through space and time until it returned to her ears.

"I love you, daughter!" The wizard says as a single tear runs down his cheek, and the bolt of magic shoots from his staff causing the couple to disappear.

...She makes up her mind as the clock starts chiming out the first of twelve rings, their lips meet. She pulls away for a second.

"What's wrong?" he says, brushing her hair aside.

"Nothing, I just felt, for a second that there was something important I have forgotten, it's silly!" She smiles and their lips meet again.

Outside it is cold, a few flakes of snow are falling. Inside there are fires that have grown up out of years of forgotten kindling. Fires of love, fires of passion.

In another room an invisible hand, or perhaps just a breeze, opens an old sketch book and turns the pages until it stops on a picture of a wizard, holding a staff with this funny, top hat shaped symbol on it.....

Epilogue

The room is a noisy place, almost everyone is excited about Mars. The teacher, Mr Kirlian, taps on the desk. "Alright! Can anyone tell me where they plan to land the spacecraft?"

That quiets the room, not a single arm is raised. "How about you, Cassiopeia?"

The girl looks visibly annoyed, not at the question but at something else. She looks up, tapping the computer stylus on the writer pad as another student whispers "Pee....a" and snickers.

"I don't remember the scientific name... but I know the one everyone calls it."

Kirlian nods, "Go head."

"I think it is called The Pyramids Of Mars?"

Kirlian smiles, "That's right! and why do they call it The Pyramids Of Mars, Class?....."

...The class drags on for Cassiopeia or "Cassy" as she likes to be called. She is around sixteen years of age, with brown hair, brown eyes, and many freckles. This scientific stuff boars her and sounds like something out of one of those old television shows her father watches from Rom. If she wasn't so annoyed at Mr. Kirlian's usage of her name, she would probably fall asleep!

Just when she think's that she can't bear another minute of it the buzzer sounds. Cassiopeia walks up to the teacher as everyone else exits.

"Mr. Kirlian?" The teacher doesn't look up from his writer pad, but simply keeps writing his lesson plan in to the computer. Cassiopeia just stands there, looking at him until the grey-bearded old man looks up.

"Yes, Cassiopeia?" She grimaces as she hears her full name. "Mr. Kirlian, could you PLEASE call me CASSY, everyone makes fun of me when you say my full name!"

The teacher looks back to his writer pad, then up at the girl. He takes a bit of his grey beard on his fingers and twirls it around.

"That IS your full name, is it not young lady??"

"Well, yes sir, but I hate it!"

"You hate it?! Why it is a wonderful name, has so much history in it! No matter, if you want to be called Cassy, so be it.

He get up and starts to pack his things, this being the last class of the day. It is then, as Cassiopeia is about to thank him that she notices this strange pendent he is wearing. It is gold and shaped like an old top hat! She starts to ask him about it, and thinks the better of it. It just looks SO familiar, like something she once saw in one of her mother's old sketch books. As a matter of fact, Mr Kirlian also looks like a drawing in her mother's sketch book, the SAME drawing!

Cassiopeia thank's Mr Kirlian and turns to walk out of the room.

"I know you are curious about this pendent." Said a voice in her mind. "Next time, ask me about it!" She turns around and Mr Kirlian, otherwise known as Taslasness, is no where to be seen.....

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Other Works Containing These Characters

H.S. 1974, Awakings - Audio play, June 1974, 110 Minutes.

The Mystery Of HIM - Stage Play, 1975.

The Trilogy - Short Story, 1982

Magic - Short Story, April 1992

The Poets Corner - March and April 1994 issues.

....Don't you know that there IS magic in the world? With every breath you take, this is confirmed!

*FIN!!