

Checkmate by Lady Magdalena
Chapter 6: Eleventh Hour Calvary

Author's notes:

Main characters and Voltron are the sole property of World Events Productions from Voltron and Voltron the Third Dimension.

Story is based loosely on "The Law According to Love" By Adele & Moira

Copyright 2009, 2010 by Lady Magdalena

Yes, it's true that [we] the people of Arus attempted to chase away Sven, Keith, Lance, Hunk and Pidge when they first landed back on the planet after their escape from Doom. But after they restored the sleeping lions to form Voltron, we began to look at them as citizens of our planet and not as outsiders. We learned to trust that they would take care of us and our Princess. Even when the battles were at their worst and the Voltron Force seemed to be outnumbered we always knew that they would triumph over Doom's forces. And sometimes those triumphs came in the most unusual ways.

-An unnamed member of the Royal Guard as quoted in an interview with Rebecca Moriarity

Chapter 6 - **Eleventh Hour Calvary**

“What the hell is that thing?” Lance asked as the Robeast slowly emerged from the bowels of the Valdez.

“It looks like a miniature comet.” Pidge commented. “With portholes on the side.”

“Well, then it shouldn’t be all that hard to get rid of. Right Keith?” Hunk replied.

“It may look easy to dispose of but as we all know, Hagggar’s robeasts *always* carry a surprise with them.” Keith looked at his instrument panel. “Let’s tighten up the formation gang.”

The round comet looking creature hovered in the air as if it were thinking. Suddenly a bright white-blue light flashed from the top of it blinding the five pilots. The five lions tumbled backwards, righted themselves and hovered in the atmosphere. “That thing is going to try to blind us first.” Allura stated.

“Not if you lower your visors.” Maryann’s voice resonated over the com channel.

“That wasn’t ultraviolet light Maryann.” Keith protested.

“Keith,” the scientist’s voice remained calm and collected. “Pidge and I modified the visors last week when we were implementing the upgrades to the lions. Based on prior experiences the team has encountered we adjusted them so that they would block out pulse bursts.”

That’s my girl. Hunk thought. *Always one step ahead of the game.* The Yellow Lion Knight couldn’t help

but remember meeting his wife for the first time. He remembered how stubborn she had been about letting them protect her from Zarkon. Back then she did not care for war and violence. Now, seven years later here she was in the heat of battle with them.

Another pulse started emanating from the beast. "Do it!" Keith commanded lowering his own visor. "Alright team...let's eradicate this thing." He pushed the levers on Black Lion starting a charge upon the creature. Black and Blue lions appeared to be lagging while Green, Yellow and Red lions were swiftly taking over the lead. This was not good. "Lance! Hunk! Pidge! Fall Back!" Keith yelled.

It was too late. The base of the Robeast began to spin. Grappling arms began appearing between each of the portholes, each flailing about while the upper part of the Robeast remained stationary. By all accounts there had to be at least seven arms if not more.

"Pidge get me an analysis on that thing now!" Urgency was evident in Keith's voice. "Maryann, how are the gunners holding up?"

"Coran Chip and Jeff have gone to aid them." Maryann replied. "Lisa and I are working on an analysis and we'll feed it to Pidge as soon as we get it. For every five ships the gunners are taking out, one is getting a direct hit. I'm not sure how much longer the Castle shields will hold."

"Okay team. Until Maryann and Lisa figure this out, we're on our own." Keith launched a tail lash laser at the top of the beast. The laser deflected back off the beast nearly hitting the Blue Lion. "Princess!"

"I'm alright Keith." Allura replied. "But it was a close call."

Two of the grapping arms reached out grabbing both Hunk and Pidge sinking its claws into them, shaking them violently. “AAUUGGGHHH” Both pilots yelled in unison. As the grip tightened, the remaining team members could see the claws starting to tear the Green and Yellow Lions apart.

“Pull back! Pull back!” Keith commanded to Allura and Lance.

“Keith,” Allura’s voice was soft but concerned. “What now? That thing is tearing Pidge and Hunk to pieces.”

“I wish I knew Princess...I wish I knew...” He replied.

As the battle raged on, back in Castle Control Maryann danced her fingers over the control panel like a ballerina performing the nutcracker. “Lisa, I’m getting some kind of magnetic feedback and it’s interfering with our communications with the lions.”

“I’ve seen this kind of thing before...but where?” The Sea Team pilot thought aloud.

Maryann was so busy trying to dissect the robeast that she didn’t see what happened next. Maybe it was Devine interference. A shock of electrical energy flowed straight from the arms of the Robeast through the hull breaches of the lions and right into Pidge and Hunk. Both lions immediately suffered a complete loss of power. Each lion was thrown in a separate direction. Yellow Lion fell headfirst into the ground. Green Lion tumbled and bounce as it hit the ground. Turning her head back to face the control screen she let out a scream as tears started streaming down her face. “HUNK!”

“Shit!” Lance cursed. “Keith...” A worried expression crossed his face.

“Hunk! Pidge!” Keith tried to raise them on the com to no avail. His thoughts turned to Hunk’s bride. The loss of her family years before had hardened her into a Pacifist long before they had met. Her view on war and violence had changed when she met Hunk. Losing him would be like losing her family all over again. Keith couldn’t bear to see that. *C’mon Hunk. Pull out of it. I know you can. Maryann, don’t give up hope. You’ve come so far.*

“Keith, I’m getting very low vital signs from Pidge and Hunk.” Lisa’s voice resonated over the com.

“Maryann?” Allura inquired

“I’m here Princess.” The scientist replied between snuffles. “I’m....” the com channel went dead.

“Keith, we’ve lost communication with Castle Control.” Lance had had enough. “That’s it. I’m going after that thing.” Charging headstrong toward the beast his ion laser cannon fire fired with each step.

“Lance no!” Keith and Allura yelled in unison. Red Lion’s direct hit on the creature reflected right back striking Lance head on. Both pilot and Lion spiraled downward to the Arusian surface bouncing off the surface and tumbling head over tail. For the moment Red Lion lay lifeless to all movement.

Allura quickly scanned the lions for vital signs and movement. To see that they were alive but incapacitated brought some relief. “Keith, we’re going to have to take on that thing by ourselves. Pidge,

Hunk and Lance are hurt and their lions are a mess. Without them we can't form Voltron."

"I know Princess." Keith snapped. "We have to figure a way to disable that thing." *But how?*

Turning their attention back to the Robeast, the vile creature had begun rotate its base in a counterclockwise motion resulting in a strong force that quickly attached itself to the remaining lions pulling each of them closer to the head of the Robeast.

Noticing that the attraction between her own Blue Lion and the Robeast was less than that of the one between it and Black Lion Allura called out, her heart aching as she observed Black Lion inching closer and closer to the head of the beast. "Keith! Pull up!"

"I'm trying Princess!" he yelled back at her. "I can't pull out of it! It's like some kind of magnetic tractor beam!"

Black lion's crest started glowing, repelling the lion away from the beast and even further from Blue Lion. Activating his stabilizers, Keith headed back towards Allura.

"Keith...How did you break free?"

"You got me Princess. Something in Black Lion was affecting the Robeast. What I don't know. But I can't get close enough to do anything to it." Keith's frustration was getting the better of him. *And if I can't get near it, I can't protect her.*

Allura reversed her lion in an attempt to fall back and come alongside her commander. Blue Lion stopped responding to her commands as the Robeast started pulling her lion closer and closer. All the meanwhile she fought back, frustrated that her lion wouldn't respond to her. "Keith, I can't pull out of it."

Arus' Black Lion Knight watched in horror as Blue Lion started to tear apart with each passing second. His frustration at not knowing how or what he could do was tearing him apart inside. *I'm helpless to do anything. What kind of Commander am I? For that matter what kind of King could I ever be if I can't even protect the woman I love?*

Back on the surface Maryann too was tearing apart inside not knowing what the status of her husband was. Still she had a duty to help protect the castle and the planet. The lights and sounds on the control panel continued to flash and beep.

Lisa was perplexed trying to figure out where she'd seen this kind of interference before but just couldn't remember. *Magnetic fields...Metallic Lion Ships...* She snapped her fingers.

"That's it!" Maryann exclaimed as the schematics of the robeast flashed in front of her. She tried raising Keith on the com. Unable to do so, she hit her fists on the control panel in frustration. "Lisa, we've got to..." she turned her head as she spoke only to realize that the Ambassador was long gone.

Letting her impatience and impulsiveness get the better of her Lisa's mind raced with each step as she

headed towards the shuttle bay. Regardless of her orders she was going to have to enter this battle if the Princess of Arus was going to live.

Lotor could not believe his good fortune. Haggar's newest Robeast was right before him making mincemeat of the Voltron Force. The modifications Prince Zordar had suggested were the key to the Prince of Doom's success. Why he ***might*** just keep Zordar around after all. Three of the lions were out of commission, their pilots left for dead. *It will be more pleasurable to have that miserable Commander Bartley watch as Allura and I are married than to have all of them for slaves.* Daydreams of his wedding to Allura filled his mind and excited his loins.

"Prince Lotor!" Shouting from one of his doom robot soldiers gained the evil Prince's attention. "Look!" It pointed to the view screen. "Black lion has broken free and the Blue Lion is starting to tear apart! Voltron will be finished forever!"

Lotor cringed. His bride must not be harmed. "Override the Robeast and let the Blue Lion go."

"But sire..." one objected

"Damn it you fool! I **WANT** her in one piece, not strewn throughout the galaxy like pieces of candy."

Lotor drew his sword. *I'm surrounded by imbeciles!*

"As you wish sire." The robot replied hoping to be spared Lotor's wrath.

What occurred next was nothing beyond a miracle as far as the Voltron Force was concerned. For Lotor, it was just another miserable defeat for his father to throw back in his face. *This can't be.* The Prince of Doom thought to himself. *There was no way **SHE** could be here. Only **SHE** could figure out how to defeat the Robeast.*

"RETREAT!" Lotor yelled to his subordinates. "Retreat now! We live to fight another day!"

"AAUUGGHH!" The Princess of Arus grimaced in pain as she continued to fight the magnetic pull of the Robeast. "Keith I can't break free and my lion is starting to break apart. Lotor must not be allowed to take control of the Castle. Should Lotor succeed at taking me prisoner promise me you will recall Maria from Galaxy Garrison. She knows what to do." Allura pleaded with him.

What the hell is she talking about? Keith thought. "Allura..."

"Keith promise me!" She yelled at him.

As much as it tore his heart apart at the thought of Lotor possessing Allura, Keith clenched his teeth as he reluctantly agreed. "I will Princess. I will."

An unidentified fighter began approaching them from the surface.

"What the..." Keith was dumbfounded. Jeff and Chip were on the castle guns. Lisa was with Maryann.

Lisa's face appeared on Keith and Allura's view screen. Her soft but formal feminine voice interrupted the tender exchange. "Your highness let's hope that's a promise Commander Bartley never has to keep."

Relieved, Keith attempted to brief Lisa as quickly as possible. "Black lion is unable to get close to that thing. Lisa you're the Princess' only hope."

Lisa nodded an acknowledgment. "I understand. Keith you're going to have to grab Blue Lion as soon as it's free and climb to the mesosphere because if I'm right, there's going to be one hell of an explosion."

Keith nodded. "I hear ya. I'm ready when you are. How about you Princess?"

"I'm ready." Allura braced herself. *Long Live Arus!*

Lisa set her targeting scope on the head of the Robeast. "Atta boy. Your sensors should be picking me up right about...**NOW!**" The distraction caused a momentary lapse in the magnetic field allowing Black Lion to swoop in and carry Blue Lion up and away from the Robeast. Lisa fired two shots from her ship then followed the two lions into the mesosphere hovering alongside her friends. A slight burning sensation in her left arm made Lisa check her bio temperature readings on her flight suit - elevated but not dangerous. *That was a close one.*

The three Voltron Force members watched as both shots entered the sensor portholes exactly as Lisa had anticipated they would. The energy feed flowed up into the brain of the Robeast causing it to

explode from the inside tearing the rest of itself apart. Shock waves could be heard and felt all the way to the Kingdom of Helena. The spectacular explosion sent cheers roaring up from the castle defenders as the inhabitants of Arus slowly emerged from their shelters.

“She did it!” Maryann’s voice was filled with joy as her eyes filled with tears while agonizing over Hunk’s unknown status. “Lisa did it!”

“Yes she did.” Coran’s raspy voice agreed as he placed a hand upon his protégé’s shoulder as he looked towards Jeff and Chip. “Wouldn’t you agree?”

“Way to go Lisa!” Chip’s high pitch voice cheered for his teammate.

Jeff was not happy that Lisa had disobeyed his orders to stand down. Reluctantly, he agreed. “Yes she did.”