

Voltron Rebirth – The Missing Key by RadicalX
Part I

She stood, motionless for a moment, staring at Keith. Her expression was mostly without emotion, but confusion played around her eyes. She looked to Coran, as if to ask him something, but then turned back to Keith. His head was still lowered, the long black tendrils of his hair hanging below the shoulders of his flight suit. Pidge, Lance, and Hunk also looked to Keith, but he held his stance, so they did as well. Sven remained behind Coran, still holding the pistol on him. Rain could be heard outside, and the roll of thunder rumbled through the castle.

“Release Coran,” the woman finally spoke. Sven reluctantly tucked his blaster back into its holster, and pushed Coran toward the woman. “You there,” she continued, now looking at Keith. “How is it that you know me?”

He kept his head down. “I recognized you from a photograph given to the Alliance by your envoy,” he said.

“I was a child when that picture was taken,” Allura replied coldly.

“You look like your mother,” replied Keith, raising his head to look at her again. “You’re also wearing pink, the color of the princesses of Arus.”

“Rise,” she said, gesturing to them. Keith stood first, then the others followed his lead. “You’ve studied our ways very well, Commander. You are welcome to stay here tonight, but you must leave Arus as soon as possible.”

Lance stepped forward. “We’d be glad to, Princess. But we don’t have a ship anymore. That is, unless you’re hiding one under that fancy get-up of yours.” Keith shot a glare at Lance for his rudeness. Lance shrugged.

“Also,” Sven added. “We will not leave Arus without first finding Voltron.”

“Voltron... I’ve not heard that name in years, Captain,” she said, turning away. “I’m afraid Voltron is no more, though. None remain that know how to pilot him.” She began walking away, back the way she’d come.

“Your Highness,” Keith implored. “We have studied Voltron, and the Lion Ships. We’re confident that we can fly him!”

“Enough!” shouted Coran, angrily. “You’re disturbing the Princess. She’s offered you a great hospitality. I suggest you accept it, and then leave this place when morning comes.”

“Look here, pal,” Hunk chimed in. “Your people are out there fighting and dying against Zarkon’s forces as we speak! They need someone to help them!”

“And that’s what we want to do!” Pidge said, finishing Hunk’s thought.

“The rebels against Zarkon are few and far between,” Coran replied. “They amount to little more than skirmishers and annoyances to the Drules.”

“But,” Allura said, turning again to face Coran. “Voltron could change that.”

“Voltron could also get our planet destroyed,” countered Coran. “If he failed, Zarkon would not take that chance again. He would pulverize Arus into dust.”

“So,” said Lance, “you’d rather let Zarkon slowly plunder this planet and its people until there’s nothing left?” Silence fell across the room. Coran sighed, obviously searching his emotions.

“Coran,” the princess said, “Show them.”

“But—,” he started.

She glared back at him. "I am still ruler of Arus, Coran. Don't forget."

"As you wish, Princess. But I warn you. I fear we're making a grave error."

"Time will tell," she said as she turned and strode slowly down the hallway. Coran followed with her. Sven looked to Keith, who shrugged. Gathering back together, the group went along. Allura activated a hidden switch on the wall, causing it to open up into a small metallic room.

"It's an elevator," she explained as she stepped inside. She bid the others to follow.

"Man," Lance said, uneasily. "I've got a funny feeling about this thing." He looked back at Keith, who urged him with a nod. "Oh, well. Going down?"

The wall closed up behind the group, and the elevator lurched slowly downward. It gradually picked up speed, descending for several seconds, until finally slowing again, and coming to a stop. The wall opened up again, revealing a vast command center. A large viewing screen dominated the far wall, with a control panel situated in front of it. To the left of the command center was a series of numbered doors. To the right was one very large door, which took up a good portion of the wall. The room itself was clean, and abuzz with flickering lights and whirring sounds, in stark contrast to the decrepit castle above.

"Wow," Pidge said, letting out a sigh of awe. "This is more like it!"

Coran stepped forward and led them to the control panel. He pressed a few buttons, and brought up a video on the screen. It showed the heads of what appeared to be two robotic lions: a yellow one on the right, a blue one on the left. As it scrolled up, it became evident that these heads were actually the feet of something much bigger. Red and green lions now appeared, their heads forming the hands of this machine. Finally, it showed the head of this larger robot, the face surrounded by the open mouth of a great black lion.

"This," Coran said, "is Voltron." The video continued. It scrolled back, and the legs and arms came off of the body, transforming into the five Lion ships, which had working legs and tails. The video showed the alternately running and leaping like robots, and also flying like ships. "It is comprised of these five Lions," continued Coran. "Each is powered by a crystal at its core." Pidge's ears perked up. "The crystals draw their energy from the elements in which they rest."

"What do you mean," Pidge spoke up. "Draw their energy from the elements?"

"Exactly that," replied Coran. "The crystals were specially designed and infused with elemental magic."

"Magic," she said, indignantly. "That's just something people say when they don't understand how something works. Like the old adage says, 'Any sufficiently advanced technology should be indistinguishable from magic.'"

"Oh, but magic is very real," Allura said, speaking up. "You'll come to appreciate it the first time you have to deal with the witch Haggar."

"Well," replied Pidge, "magic would certainly explain why I couldn't make sense of it."

"Coran," spoke Sven. "Wasn't Voltron destroyed by Zarkon in the battle for Arus?"

"Not destroyed," he replied. "The lion ships were drained of power and badly damaged. The pilots of four of the lion ships were killed, including our King Alfor. The ships themselves crashed to the surface. Immediately, we worked to retrieve them and place them back into hiding before Zarkon returned to finish the planet. We thought their power sources had been neutralized forever. However, months later, I checked the monitors on the ships, and found that they had recharged themselves fully. I have kept myself occupied here by repairing them."

"And you've done a wonderful job of it, Coran," the princess said. "My father would be glad to know that his lions were in such good care."

“Thank you, your highness,” he said. He continued with the lecture. “Those five doors lead to a specially designed transport system that will take you to the Lions.”

“Alright!” said Lance, excitedly. “Let’s get going, then!”

“Not so fast,” Coran said. “You must first obtain the keys to the lions.”

“And where might we find those?” asked Sven.

Coran gestured toward the large door at the left of the chamber. “There, in the tomb of King Alfor.” Coran solemnly walked to the panel beside the large door. “Princess,” he said. “Are you sure you want to do this?”

“We must do something,” she said. “My father would want that.”

He activated the panel, and the door slid open with a metallic grinding sound. Behind the door was what looked to be a cavern, with walls that were partially hewn. Coran led the group inside. The cavern turned and the group descended deeper into the ground, using steps that had been carved into the floor. Finally, they reached another door that bore a crest of red and blue, with a golden cross in the middle, and a crown above the cross. Coran and Allura bowed their heads briefly. Allura then touched her hand to the center of the crest, causing the door to open, its two sides sliding away into the wall. Inside was a stairway leading up to a sarcophagus surrounded by four pillars. Atop each pillar was a lion, and another lion in the center of the sarcophagus. Solemnly, the group went up the steps, and surrounded the golden casket. Allura dropped to her knees, and placed her hands flat on the casket, and laid her head down on it.

“Father,” she said, tears brimming in her eyes. “I miss you so much.” Keith knelt next to her, his head bowed deeply. As he paid his respects to Alfor, the others, including Coran, joined him.

Suddenly, light filled the chamber. A voice rang out through the tomb.

“My daughter,” the voice said. Above the sarcophagus appeared a transparent vision of a man in with a full beard, longish hair, and wearing royal garb.

“Father?” Allura asked, confused. “Wha...Can this be real?”

“I was about to ask the same thing!” said Hunk.

“Voltron must be restored,” the voice continued. “Voltron will bring life to Arus.” The voice and the vision then faded.

“Father!” cried Allura. “Stay with me!” The tomb was quiet. Softly, the princess sobbed and pressed her face to the sarcophagus again. Coran stood, and went to the foot of the coffin. He placed his hand on the crest there, which slid to the side. A small black box pushed out from where the crest was. Coran took it, and the crest slid back into position. He handed the box to Sven.

“Inside, you will find the five keys needed to activate the Lions,” he said.

Sven took the box from him, and opened it. As he looked inside, he remarked, “There are only four.”

“What?” said Coran, moving toward him. “That can’t be!”

“I’m looking at them,” Sven said. “And there are only four.”

Coran examined the contents. “You’re right. The key to the Green Lion is missing.” He turned to Allura. “Princess, do you know what happened to the key?” Allura continued to weep quietly, making no response to Coran. “Without that key, you will be unable to form Voltron,” he said, finally.

“We’ll worry about that later,” Sven said. “Right now, we’ve got some work to do.”