

The Prologue from the novel
The Trojan Project
By Eileen Thornton

“Oh my God! What on earth...?” Sarah screamed out, as a huge ball of light rose from behind the distant hills. Frozen with fear, she could only watch in horror as it slowly turned a sinister shade of green, while continuing to climb into the night sky. It grew larger and more vivid with every passing second before finally coming to rest high above the hills.

The glare was blinding and Sarah cupped her hands around her eyes to shield them from the brilliant rays beaming down onto the cottages in the valley below. Yet strangely, the farmhouse and fields on the hill where she stood were still in complete darkness. She wondered how it was possible.

Terrifying screams coming from the valley below interrupted her thoughts and, turning back to look down the hillside, she saw men and women fleeing from their homes. The people below were her friends. She wanted to go to them, to comfort them. But the light was too intense, making it impossible to see properly.

Then it was gone. It was almost as though an unseen hand had flicked off a switch. The whole episode had lasted little more than a few seconds, yet to Sarah it seemed like an hour.

Trembling with fear, Sarah thought of her children. They were still sleeping in the farmhouse at the top of the long winding drive. She tried to move, but her legs felt like two lead blocks and she slumped to the ground – her heart beating wildly. Then a horrifying thought occurred to her. A massive explosion might follow such a bright ball of light.

She heaved herself from the ground and began to make her way back to the farmhouse, forcing her stricken legs to move faster. She stumbled in the darkness and crashed to the ground, gashing her arms and legs on the sharp gravel. Scrambling to her feet again, she moved forward, unaware of the pain or of the warm sticky blood oozing from her wounds.

“Come on, Betts! Come on quickly!” she screamed out to the old sheepdog to follow her. She had to get back to the house – to her children. Their safety was the only thing on her mind. She must reach them before the explosion: they would be frightened – even worse, they might be killed.

Killed! That one dreadful thought gave her the extra strength she needed. With a sudden burst of energy, she bounded forward. She had to get her two children away from the house at all costs. Sarah’s mind was racing as she drew nearer to the farmhouse. Where would they go? Perhaps if she took them over the hill, behind the farm, they might be sheltered from the blast. There they may have a slim chance of survival. But on reaching the door she stopped and turned back to face the valley. Something was missing. What was it?

Looking out into the darkness, she realised the screams in the valley had stopped. Now thinking back, she recalled how even before the light had disappeared, the screaming had ended.

Listening hard, she realised there were no sounds at all. She glanced around nervously. Even at this time of night, it was never this quiet. There was always the reassuring hoot of a distant owl or the gentle rustling of nocturnal animals foraging for food in the undergrowth. Where were they tonight?

Tears rolled down Sarah’s cheeks, as she stood alone by the door. Burying her face in her hands, she desperately wished Pete would come home.

www.eileenthornton.co.uk

The Trojan Project is available from Amazon.

ISBN-10: 1905609094

ISBN-13: 9781905609093