

Prologue

The world had always been big in Bella's eyes. With its vast horizons and mysteries yet to be discovered, it held promises of adventures and dreams yet to be realised. But now, it was a vast wasteland. In the blink of an eye, everything had changed, turned upside down by forces beyond anyone's comprehension.

She remembered the days before the chaos, back when her most significant concerns were the bullies at school, who always seemed to have something to say about her academic achievements or her skills in archery, swimming, and fencing, even tipped to compete at the Olympics one day. Bella was an anomaly, a beacon of excellence in a world of mediocrity. And because of that, she became a target. Yet, these tribulations at school had forged a resilience in her that would serve her well in the days to come.

It was during one of their after-school research sessions that Bella and Matt stumbled upon the warning signs. Matt, after hearing about the forthcoming solar light show and with his insatiable curiosity, had led Bella down a rabbit hole of data and forecasts. Their discoveries were terrifying. A solar flare of unprecedented magnitude was on its way, threatening to disrupt the very fabric of their existence. They spent countless hours studying the event, preparing for its arrival. But nature, ever unpredictable, had more in store than just a solar flare. Another cataclysmic event, dwarfing the flare in its potential devastation, loomed on the horizon.

The weight of this knowledge was crushing. It was one thing to anticipate and prepare for a single disaster. It was another to face the unimaginable truth that their world was on the brink of collapsing not once, but twice, in rapid succession.

Driven by a newfound sense of urgency and purpose, Bella and Matt started their planning. They began making preparations for the worst-case scenarios, gathering supplies, charting escape routes, and, most importantly, recruiting allies for the inevitable journey ahead.

Among these allies, was Daz, and like themselves, he was a teenager, who would play a pivotal role in the coming days. There was Alex, the enigmatic mechanic, whose skills would prove invaluable. Two friends, both who thought the other dead, and Matt's father, who bankrolled their plans with a large dose of scepticism. Together, they would face unimaginable challenges, forge unlikely friendships, and confront the darkest aspects of humanity.

In the harrowing days that followed, Bella's world was turned on its head. She had faced death not once, not twice, but thrice in a single day. These near-death experiences shattered her former perceptions and rebuilt them anew. The girl who had once been preoccupied with school bullies now grappled with life-altering decisions that would shape the fate of those around her. Choices that she would have found unimaginable mere weeks earlier became her new reality.