

# **Kevin – Master of the Universe**

## **Book 1**

### **Chapter 1 - The beginning**

Kevin Brown was a normal boy from a normal family. He lived a very normal life in a normal little town. He could not have been more normal. But although he did not know it, that was all about to change. He had woken that morning with a bad cold and his mother had thought he should stay in bed today rather than go to school. It had looked like rain when his mother had peeped out of his bedroom window.

“Looks like rain,” she had said, “best to stay in bed today.” Kevin did not argue. It was games today, football, and he was not fond of football. He did not mind kicking a football around in the field at the back of his house. That was different. But football at school was organised; you had to take it seriously. Some of the other boys were good at it, or at least, they thought they were. They play 'striker' or 'mid field', but the likes of Kevin played full back. He was not hopeless enough to be put in goal. That honour was reserved for fat Freddie. He was really hopeless and usually managed to get Kevin into trouble with Miss Rodgers into the bargain.

Now Miss Rodgers had little time for Freddie and was always on the alert for an opportunity to chastise him and anyone who aided and abetted him in his misdemeanours.

One day, the game had been raging at the other end of the field for quite a time when Freddie had thought it would be interesting to climb up the goal post and swing from the crossbar. Kevin had not tried to dissuade him, as it was more interesting than the distant game of football. However, it is strange how fortunes can change in an instant. The other side had gained possession of the ball and a giant swarm of small boys was stampeding in the direction of Kevin, Freddie and the goal. There was a thud as trainer made contact with

plastic, a whoosh of air past Kevin's ear, a thud and a gasp as the ball hit Freddie, and finally, a splat as Freddie hit the mud.

“What do you think you are doing?” It was Miss Rodgers, face crimson from running, arms waving frantically.

“It was an ace save Miss,” said Kevin. At this point Miss Rodgers' attention was drawn to Kevin.

“Oh, was it, indeed? Go and stand outside my room until I get back.” Kevin left the field and made his way back to the school building. Well, it was better than football.

Half past three came. Children passed him in the corridor on their way home, but there was no sign of Miss Rodgers. At four o'clock he decided that perhaps, if he were to disappear, no one would be the wiser. So, he went home. It was just as well really, as Miss Rodgers had had to go to the hospital with fat Freddie. He had broken his arm.

So, staying in bed today seemed like a good idea. But by mid-morning Kevin was feeling better. He knew he was feeling better because he was bored. Maybe mum would not mind if he got up and went downstairs. He decided she would not, so he got up and put on his dressing gown. Then he crept downstairs to find his mother in the kitchen.

“What are you doing out of bed?” she asked, “If you're feeling better you had better get off to school.”

“Oh, no,” he replied, “I don't think I'm up to that yet. But I think I'm well enough to watch a bit of television.”

“Well, all right then, but don't get under my feet, I've a lot to do today.” She went back into the kitchen leaving Kevin to settle down with 'The Monster from Space'. It was quite frightening for a ten-year-old, but he held a cushion in front of him for protection and tried not to cry out at the very frightening bits.

The programme finished just in time for his mother to come bustling in with his lunch. He nearly jumped out of his skin, the nervous state he was in after watching his programme. But he soon forgot all about that when he started to tuck into his sausage and chips covered liberally with tomato sauce.

“There's not much wrong with your appetite,” said his mother with a grin.

“Well, I'm feeling a lot better now, thank you,” he answered seriously, “I think it might do me good to get a bit of fresh air this afternoon.”

“There's plenty of fresh air on the football field,” his mother replied with a grin.

“I don't think I'm quite ready for football yet,” he answered gingerly.

At the back of Kevin's house was an old meadow leading across to the edge of the moor where the ground rose sharply in a short climb to some rocks at the top. Then after that it flattened out for a while. There were lots of little hidey-holes among the rocks where Kevin would play for hours on his own. So, when he had finished his meal, he strolled out into the garden. It was a lovely day; the sun was shining and the birds were singing as he made his way along the little stepping-stones that meandered through the shrubbery to the less kempt part of the garden, where brambles took over. It was more shaded here due to the enormous horse chestnut tree that stood in the corner of the garden. The blossoms had fallen but it looked as if there would be a good harvest of conkers, this year.

He made his way to the gap in the wall, where a few stones had been dislodged by cattle. The gap had been further widened by Kevin as he passed in and out of his garden to the fields beyond. He loved this place; it was like another world, his world, a world where he made the rules and decided what was to be or not to be. Here, he was the Ruler of the Universe. It is strange how dreams can become reality, for Kevin was to discover things stranger than he could ever imagine. But as yet, he was unaware of anything unusual as he made his way across the field to the hedge at the other side.

As he walked, he soon became aware that he was not alone. He turned and saw Billy plodding slowly towards him. Billy was an old pony that grazed in the field and was always on the lookout for Kevin in the hope that he might be given something nice to eat.

“I think you're out of luck, today,” said Kevin as Billy nuzzled up to him. He rummaged in his pockets and found an old peppermint sweet which he gave to Billy who crunched it happily then sniffed around Kevin's pockets for more.

“Sorry, but that's all I've got,” he said and turned to walk away. But Billy was not taking 'no' for an answer and kept nudging Kevin in the back as he walked away.

“Stop that will you,” he shouted over his shoulder, but Billy kept pushing and nearly pushed Kevin off his feet. Kevin was getting a little alarmed now, as Billy was quite big, and although he was not aggressive as such, could be a little rough. Kevin turned and tried to shoo Billy away but Billy kept returning to resume his search for mints. Then Kevin began to panic and turned and fled towards the hedge which he cleared at a single bound before tumbling headlong into the long grass. He could hear the sound of skidding hooves as Billy decided that show jumping was not for him, followed by some impatient snorting followed by the sound of heavy hooves clomping slowly away.

Kevin scrambled to his feet and looked to see if all was clear behind him and saw Billy standing some way off watching him. Oh dear, he thought, I'll have to come back the long way round.

He turned and continued up the hill, winding his way through the gorse and heather. As he climbed, the air seemed to get cooler and he felt a gentle breeze brushing his face and hair. It took about half an hour to reach the rocky outcrop and by then he was feeling exhausted. He looked back down the hill expecting to see Billy still standing there waiting for him to return, but there was no sign of him. Perhaps he was hiding somewhere, waiting to leap out when Kevin returned, and catch him unawares. Anyway, that did not matter, as he was not going back that way.

He turned and squeezed between the rocks to find his own favourite place. Here he could be a king on his throne, or the pilot of an interstellar space ship fighting off the evil Garks. He could be anything he wanted. There was a rock just like a seat hollowed out by water in the dim and distant past, just for Kevin, or at least, that was how Kevin saw it. It fitted him so perfectly it must have been made to measure.

He sat down in the seat as he usually did, got himself into a comfortable position and picked up a small rock that had been placed by his right hand.

“Captain on the bridge,” he said into it, “Warp speed five, full ahead.” He put down the stone. Time for a short nap before we reach Arcturus, he thought and lay back and dozed. He did not know how

long he had dozed or whether he had actually woken up again. There is that time between waking and sleeping when everything seems normal and you are sure you are awake but in fact you are not. So often his father had dozed off in the armchair in front of the television and had started to snore gently.

“You're snoring,” his mother would say, and there would be no response. “I said, you are snoring.”

“What?” his father would say in surprise.

“You were snoring, dear.”

“No. I wasn't even asleep.” And he was convinced that he had been wide-awake. What's more he could tell you what he had heard on television and he was usually right.

Well, that was how it was with Kevin. He had been dozing, no more than that, and he had been listening to voices talking softly nearby. It was part of his dream and he had been enjoying it.

The first voice had said “Are you sure he is the one?” and another had said, “Of course I am sure. Do you dispute the readings?”

“Of course not. You are the keeper of the Universal Crystal.”

“Then why do you question my decision?”

“Well, it's so unusual. Firstly, it is the first time that we have been led to a primitive being. Secondly, he is so large, and thirdly, he doesn't seem very old.”

“True on all counts. Just because the crystal hasn't brought us to a primitive world before does not mean that it shouldn't. Yes, he is larger than we are. Is this a problem? I hope not, because I am of the opinion that he still has much to grow. And finally, he is ten Earth years old which makes him about ten and a half universal years. Yes, that is young. The last Grand Master of the Council was five hundred and fifty-two when appointed, and fifteen hundred and twenty-seven when he retired. However, it would seem that these beings are very short lived; seventy to eighty years with luck.”

“If he is not yet adult, we cannot expect him to leave his parents. Is this practical?”

“I agree there may be problems. We will not confront him now. Let us return to the ship and consult the crystal, and if it still tells us that this is to be the new Master, then we will return and appoint him. I think he may be waking. Let us depart immediately.”

Kevin was aware of a scuffling noise nearby and became immediately alert. His first thought was that Billy had found a way

out of his field and had followed him. He sprang to his feet and looked over the surrounding rocks into the moor land beyond but there was nothing to see. Strange, he thought, I could have sworn there was someone there, or was it just my dream. As dreams went, it was a strange dream with no pictures, just voices. It was as if a group of people had been standing nearby talking about him. But it made no sense. He looked around carefully to see if there were any signs of intruders, but there was little to be seen until he suddenly saw something sparkling in the heather. He went over and picked up what looked like an enormous diamond. *Wow*, he thought, *I'm rich*. But then again it was probably only a piece of glass.

Slipping it into his pocket, he looked at his watch and realised that he should be on his way back if he wanted any tea. He forgot all about Billy until he was half way across the field. He looked about in alarm, half expecting the demon horse to be charging at him from his hiding place. But all was quiet and peaceful. In fact, as he approached the wall of his garden, he saw Billy on the other side of the field, contentedly grazing. He felt a bit stupid for being so afraid of a horse that liked peppermints. Perhaps it was not such a good idea to watch scary television programmes.