

GARDEN
OF
SOLACE

Chapter 1 Between a Rock and Hard Place

“Men are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt



Confined beneath the world of the living, hardly in the grave and not buried or eulogized, Jamison suffered. His lament could not be heard by those above ground that were free to come and go flowing in life's stream. On display like a war map on a wall he ached suspended while peering eyes examined the map which was his body.

Jamison was a tattooed businessman with investments in the Jamaican exports of alumina, bauxite, sugar and agricultural products and clothing. He also imported food, beverages, mineral fuels and fertilizers. He wanted more than anything to be out on the ocean with his wife Lora on their tour boat "Soul Sabbath." Fate had reached out and snatched him from the comfortable living place they shared in Jamaica and for the time being he was trapped. His muscular arms had been stretched by harnesses over his head, his legs pulled tight, restrained by similar harnesses ratcheted tight. His body was supine, suspended high enough for the onlookers to walk beneath him during the examination. When he awoke this morning he could have never imagined being subjugated in this barbaric manner. Wearing only a loin cloth around his waist, this was the last thread of dignity that remained. No bodily harm would come to him immediately because his skin was a canvas of heavenly design waiting to be translated and interpreted.

Regaining consciousness his head hurt. He could not discern if it was from a blow to the head or jumping through time. It was either a concussion or his neurons trying to fire from the depths of the cortical folds within his skull.

A presence of someone or something was in this place with him. He could feel the coldness, a rising malice as coherence as well as fear struck his senses with sickness that attacked his intellect. Fully awake he would rather have remained dreaming in delirium replete with ecstasy but this wasn't meant to be. At least in the idyllic realm he could imagine himself anywhere but here. But wasn't this a selfish thought? There was Lora to consider. Where was Lora his beautiful bride that had been kissed by the sun? Was she also taken during his abduction? Should he yell out for her? What good would it do? If she were here what relief would that bring him? Calling her name may just alert these monsters and stir something in them to kidnap her as well if they had not already done so. He could only hope that she was safe back at their home in the "Land of Wood and Water."

If she were here he believed he would be able to feel her. Anytime she was close to him he knew it. He could not feel her. What does it mean? Could she be dead? Oh God no! Don't let her be dead. His sudden sorrow was intruded upon by the sound of movement beneath him. Something was rustling around, like restless fingers on wood, a tapping of a foot on stone. Whatever stirred made no audible sound and neither did Jamison who remained motionless, still trying to breathe normal. He knew that being reserved would not keep the inevitable from happening. The longer he constrained himself and pretended to be asleep the more time he had to think up a plan and detach himself from the callousness of this situation.

Jamison had been in many horrifying predicaments but he could not remember a more severe entanglement. Through the discomfort he noticed staleness in the room. He begged mentally for a breeze, something to wave fresh vivifying air to his body.

An icy dullness from something living touched his back. He dare not twitch a muscle. He would remain taciturn for as long as possible. When things began to become truculent which he figured would happen sooner or later he promised himself that he would not answer a word. He vowed to remain stoic until the end regardless of the brutality or ruthlessness showed to him.

He could not have realized that he was far too valuable to his captors to abuse, or scar in any manner. He was the Holy Grail, a guide to universal dominance and power. Savagery against him would not be tolerated. His keepers were under strict orders that no harm was to come to him before his time. Those in authority who controlled the premises acted with exacting swiftness and rigid structure so that they would not have the same failure befall them as their predecessors.

A noise like a hand crank turning broke the uncertainty and snapped Jamison from panic to sheer panic. He noticed his body was turning. He was being spun around headed face down. The pressure on his body shifted as his internal organs gave away to gravity and his lungs were squeezed. He kept his eyes closed not wanting to give his guards or guard any reason to suspect that he could answer questions. He needed to spy out the situation so he could measure what he was up against; without knowing the odds and possible exits he had no chance. His mind diagnosed every scenario in hope that when the time came he had a plan. It was vital he saved his energy. He did not know if he had strength or not. Not having anyway of knowing how long he had been prisoner, he wasn't even sure if he was hungry or not.

Once in the prone position, even with his eyes closed he saw light. His shoulder joints were beginning to sting and tingle. His hands and feet grew numb from lack of circulation. Ischemia is about the worse thing that can happen to a body part. With the build up of carbon dioxide and lactic acid along with nerve compression Jamison would have a hard time carrying out any devised plan of escape. He desperately needed to move. The sensation was becoming intolerable. Excruciating and unbearable his extremities were throbbing like a thousand pin pricks.

Jamison made up his mind and called on the bravery that had won many battles before this one. He slightly opened his eyes enough to allow the light seep through his eye lashes. He strained to see. Nothing was apparent; regrettably there was the absence of anything obvious. He would have to fully open his eyes if he was going to see what he was faced with. As his eyes opened he witnessed a very unsettling scene. Just beneath him to his left was a writing table. At the table was an old man, dressed like a monk busy drawing. Jamison got a clear view of the monk's work. On the large piece of paper was an exact duplicate of the tattoos that covered Jamison's back. This monk did not look at Jamison's face he was focused now entirely on the tattoo's which adorned the anterior part of his body.

“Picasso, You like what you see old man?” Jamison initiated conversation testing the monks resolve. Being ignored by the artist Jamison opened his mouth again. “I look better standing up.” The monk was not influenced he continued adding color to his work. Doing his best Frank Sinatra voice Jamison said "You don't scare me. I've got chunks of guys tougher than you in my stool!" The monk did not flinch. “So, you don’t watch SNL huh?” Jamison assumed that this would be a one sided conversation either due to a language barrier or just pure rudeness. “What, you don’t speak English?” For fun he switched languages. “Hablas Inglés?”

The monk stood and grabbed Jamison’s face tightly in his right hand and in a strong Scottish accent gritting his teeth together he said “Can A gie ye a haund? He pushed Jamison’s head to one side and let go.

“You’re a real jewel you celibate Friar Tuck looking freak. Why don’t you be a man and cut me down?” Jamison was angry and helpless. The anchorite returned to his seat and continued ignoring Jamison who hung like a human hammock feeling incompetent and incapacitated obligated to remain secure and deprived of liberty.

The sound of a creaking door made Jamison jerk his head to the side for a clear view. He had not noticed the door in the deep shadows of the room. He still had not surmised how big or small the room was. Through the large wooden door with rusty hinges entered four men appearing to be guards in this facility. From the quick look Jamison noticed a hallway on the other side of the door. Aha! An escape route he thought.

The monk rolled one of the pieces of art into a scroll and slid it down into a poster tube. He handed it to one of the men. They were dressed casually but carried side arms and what appeared to be asp batons. Jamison knew that if he could gain access to one of those telescopic batons that he could quickly manage disarming the thugs. He just needed the use of his hands.

“Guys, have some mercy here, my hands and feet are dead. I can’t feel a thing. Come on, loosen these things, please.” He pleaded with them with his best acting skills.

He heard the sound of wheels turning and realized that he was being let down by the hand crank. No one answered his request to be loosened or

acknowledged him in any manner but at least he was being either readjusted or moved.

He was brought down to the floor and then brought up to his feet. To himself he said "Please just give me my feet and I will make it worth your while."

He looked at the monk. "Come on man, loosen these they are killing me."

Thoroughly disgusted he responded "Haud yer wheest!" and pointed his finger in Jamison's face.

With extreme resentment splashed across his face Jamison mocked him "Wow, scary, and I thought we were becoming friends."

The monk smirked confidently "You're a long time deid. Ye'll get yir heid in yir hauns an yir lugs ti pley wi." In English that wasn't good. It meant "you're in big trouble. You'll get your head in your hands and your ears to play with!"

Jamison smiled at the monk and responded with his own wit from one of his favorite movies "Tomb Stone. "Why, Ed, what an ugly thing to say. I abhor ugliness; does this mean we're not friends anymore?"

One of the guards bent down and loosened his ankle restraints just enough that he was able to scoot his feet taking baby steps. Even loosened he was unable to take action. The shackles were tight but were not as painful as when he was hanging as a subject of the monks undivided attention. A canvas hood was tossed over his head and he was led out of the room. Then they went left twelve steps, took a right, he heard a door open and close behind him. Another twelve steps and they went down a flight of twenty four steps approximately two stories deeper. No one said a word and there were no discernable noises.

"You guys should learn not to talk so much; I can't get a word in edge wise." Jamison waited for a reply, but again they were not conversant. He counted forty steps and a new sound, a steel door sliding and it sounded heavy. There was a clang, a clank, and a crashing slam. Normally he was not the type to worry. His demeanor was usually calm, cool and collected yet in this case he saw need for alarm. If his captors had finished duplicating and making an exact copy of his body art they may no longer require his

services. If he had served his purpose and exceeded his usefulness there was only one thing left to do with him. If they had intended to kill him why did they not do it back there? Why lead him far away? Another 40 steps past the steel door and into an elevator; it must have been spacious because he didn't feel cramped in. Maybe they wanted him to walk to his death rather than carrying a corpse all this way. He wasn't about to make it easy on anyone.

“You fella's ever hear the old saying silence holds many words?” It was apparent that these guys were not going to give away any secrets. Obviously well trained and disciplined these were not the run of the mill prison guards these were soldiers.

Jamison counted 6 floors down when the final ding sound was heard. From the elevator they emerged and 24 more paces until they came to a halt.

Just remove the hood Jamison thought. Just remove this stinking hood!

Chapter 2 When Kids Come To Call

Count not what is lost but what is left.

Chinese Proverb



Lora was frantic.

Lora and Jamison had just awakened from a wonderful tropical sleep. The day before had spent out on the ocean showing a group of New York tourist the pristine coast line. When they had arrived home to their enormous fortified house sitting on thirty five prime acres they were exhausted. Their life had been perfect since the wedding. Perfect except for one surprise that hit them like a ton of lead. The curveball came when they had visited their safety deposit box in the States to find that everything was there just like they had left it with one exception. Something had been added. The item turned out to be a long silver cylinder that they believed had been disposed. It had now entered their life again, they were crying eureka. They never wanted it in the first place and definitely were not pleased to have it again. The cylinder was previously used to carry the fate of the world in and they could not imagine what use it would be to them now.

A week prior to this day their house had been broken into leaving Lora in a frantic state of mind. It had been ransacked but nothing was missing. They

concluded that whoever had entered by kicking in the back door was looking for something specific. There were many things of value within their well furnished home but nothing had been robbed. They concluded that there was one particular item of interest that someone would prize above all of their possessions. The silver cylinder was priceless. They had not mentioned it to a single soul. There was no one in this life they would trust with such a secret. This was the only heirloom left over from their time traveling days. After the break in, they had added to their existing security. A foolproof 24/7 monitoring of the interior of the home and perimeter would alert them to any and all breaches.

Yet on this day, the frantic day, no alarms sounded.

Jamison had given Lora a morning wake up kiss; he could not resist those full lips. He stood to his feet and admired her lying there, her red night gown complimenting her dark skin.

“You stay here and I will be right back.” Jamison headed to the attached his and her bathroom. He turned on the hot water to the sink and took a look at his face in the mirror. He thought he looked rough. Bending down he cupped some water in his hands and began splashing his face liberally. Something went wrong. The room trembled and began to shake. Tell me this is an earthquake his mind was rationalizing. Without warning the shower disappeared and a wall of swirling nothingness materialized. He knew right away what this was. He has seen it dozens of times. This was a wormhole.

“What in the world” he said aloud his mouth gapped opened. He heard Lora banging on the door and asking “are you alright?” He turned away from the wormhole to open the door when he was grasped by several hands. He heard Lora speaking her native language which she did now when she was nervous.

“Kouman tout bagay?” As he was mauled he answered Lora.

“Do not come in; don’t open the door!” The hands clamped down dragging him backward out of the room and into the abyss. Everything happened so quickly he never had a chance to fight back. It only took seconds to yank him out of his world and to transport him to the unknown.

Lora had the wherewithal to remember a key above the door but by the time she retrieved it, unlocked and opened the door, the bathroom held no trace of her dear husband. He was gone. Her beloved simply vanished. The wormhole had closed and there was no way to follow. There was no trail, markers or footprints. There would be no scent for the hounds to track today.

Lora staggered around the room out of her mind with guilt and grief. She did not know what to do or where to turn. She did not want to involve anyone else because of the dangers. She doubted that she could do this by herself. From her past experience with time travel, obscure history and uncharted frontier she needed more help, greater numbers. Once she gathered her thoughts together, she retired to her prayer room. She had been so busy in recent days with their business; she had spent little time in meditation. Lora was a direct descendent of the Queen of Sheeba. She was an oracle, one that had been used in the arts of divine revelation and had the gift of prophecy. She figured she might want to call on her prophetic gifts seeing that in her present state she was limited, bound by the laws of nature.

She situated herself on a rug in the middle of the floor. The room was illuminated by candles. She closed her eyes and began to chant, repeating a simple prayer.

She instantly felt the presence of a spirit. Whether of God she did not know. She only wanted the location of Jamison. She felt herself lifting, drifting away, her consciousness giving way to the winds of revelation as they blew past. The winds never cease. They broadcast and communicate a language only heard by those people who have finely tuned inner hearing. Most people are too busy with life and distracted by the mundane temporal world to get into the stream and break free of the chaos of the world. Lora was now in the jet stream where her clairvoyance was awakened. She continued to pray but she no longer heard her own words. Her ears were opened to (what saith the spirit). She did not need a group of people with musical instruments nor did she need dance leaps or celebration. She was not depicting “calundu” or any other occult practice. There was no need for her to raise her hands, draw on the ground, and arrange stones in any sequence, spin a wheel or smear powder about. She was not opening a portal between aye, the realm of the living, and orun, the cosmic realm of the gods. She certainly would not be practicing extispicium; for she wasn’t into blood, entrails or organs from animals.

Still far into her trance she heard a rooster crowing and a donkey braying. She found herself sitting on a rooftop in Tógu nà in a Dogon Village in Mali, West Africa. Sitting across from her was a Hogon, a traditional priest. She was with an ethnic group located mainly in the districts of Bandiagara and Douentza region. The escarpment was formed on sandstone cliffs. This was a place that claimed to be a channel between heaven and earth. It was an anthropologists and historian's dream of mystery and intrigue. To this cliff, the Dogon had withdrawn themselves centuries ago on their flight from the Muslim persecutors.

Across from the traditional priest Lora remained receptive. In this Mopti region on a rooftop hanging over a cliff she allowed this masked man to speak to her.

“J'ai attendu pour vous. Je vois trouble. Je vois un objet long et creux. Utilisez l'objet de trouver la paix.”

Lora understood that this man spoke French and though she did not speak French she knew what he was sharing with her. He encouraged her to use the silver cylinder to find Jamison.

The Dogon priest continued to elaborate, “Il ya deux autres qui doivent Voyage avec vous. Vous ne serez pas les soupçonner. Vous en aurez besoin dans votre voyage.”

“I must bring two others with me? How will I know?” Lora asked trying to think of anyone who would not lose their mind trying to take in the insanity of time travel.

“Les deux que je parle de sommes ici.”

Lora looked puzzled by his statement. She repeated it in the form of a question. “What do you mean that the two you speak of are here?”

The priest smiled and nodded and repeated “Les deux que je parle de sommes ici.”

She sat bewildered and confused. “Do you mean here in this place? I do not understand what you mean by here? Ki sa yo ou pale osijè de?”

She heard a bell ringing. She struggled to hang on to the trance. She did not feel as though she had the answers yet. The ringing in her head continued. She heard static and the scene became blurry and tiled. “No, no, no, I’m not ready.” She fought to stay in the trance not feeling as though she had received affirmation. The Dogon priest shared one last word of wisdom “N’ayez pas peur. Prenez les deux et tout ira trouver le repos.”

The ringing became louder than her ability to stay in this world. She was returned to her prayer room still hearing the bell ringing. It dawned on her. It was the doorbell. She slowly stood, steadied herself and stumbled clumsily across the room to the door. It was partially titubation and trepidation for he often was physically weak after a journey. She used the walls for balance and headed down the long hallway toward the front door. “Wait”, she thought. “What if this was the bad guys?”

She shook the cobwebs from her mind and answered herself. “No how silly, bad guys don’t ring doorbells.”

She worked her way first to one of three video monitoring rooms in the house. She looked at the front door monitor. It was Jamison’s uncle Ben with his wife Kate and two children Ruth and Paul.

Lora had forgotten that they were coming on vacation and Jamison and Lora had promised to babysit for a couple of days so Ben and Kate could have a second honeymoon.

The guard at the gold wrought iron gate at the front of the estate must have allowed Ben and Kate along with their children through without calling for permission to the house. Lora would have to speak to him about that even though Jamison and Lora had alerted the gate guard that they were having guests today.

The house was out of sight from the main road. Ben and family had to drive up the paved road past colorful gardens serene lily ponds and turquoise pools stocked with Koi fish. Privacy was assured. Sophisticated electronic security and video monitors ensure that only invited parties may enter the grounds.

She rushed to the hand-carved teak doors from Bali not knowing what to do but she was sure that whatever it was, it would present itself in an obvious manner.

She opened the door not realizing that she had not done a thing to her hair. Her dreadlocks were more like spider legs, going in several directions.

There stood Jamison's uncle and family, all smiles and thrilled to be in the Caribbean.

"Lora, you look fantastic!" Kate reached out with both arms and gave her a huge hug. "Where's the hubby, is he hiding out in a game room or something?" Lora laughed and mumbled "Something."

Ben was the typical real-estate salesman. He had his short brown hair parted on the side. He was pleasant enough but was always in the wide smile sales mode showing his veneers. He had a habit of talking to fill up dead space which is always a sign of insecurity. He and Kate were both dressed like equatorial tourists, they were all dressed in colorful prints, Kate in a Cabana dress; the children almost exact but in miniature of their parents.

Lora had to lie and explained that Jamison was still at their boat getting things squared away after a busy week and he would not be joining them. Ben and Kate wanted to see him before they had to leave but they understood and made sure that Lora was comfortable with the kids before they left to explore love lost.

Ben carried the children's luggage to their rooms, gave them last minute instructions on how to behave and said farewell. Ruth was 14 years old and had not reached the rebellious age of hatred toward her dumb parents. Paul was 13 and was big for his age with a mature attitude seldom seen in young people.

The parents were gone leaving Lora with two children and no husband. She was sick to her stomach with worry and beside herself on what to do. She directed the kids to the game room where Jamison had collected many arcade games and had the latest console games. She excused herself and headed upstairs to her bedroom. She headed straight for a bookcase where her fingers found a secret button along the top of the casing. After pushing the button she stepped back and the bookcase opened to a hidden room. She shut the case behind her and flipped on the lights. The room was small but contained some precious and valuable items. The most important of these items was the silver cylinder that they had in a diversion safe between the floors. The safe looked like an air vent. The removable dial was built into a

cheap wall clock hanging on the back of the bookshelf. She had retrieved it when she entered the room. She removed the screen on the vent and attached the combination dial. She speedily dialed in the combination and with a turn of the handle the door raised open. She pulled out the cylinder. It was cold in her hands. She could not hold back the tears, as the flood of emotion rushed over her like a collision of waves hitting her from every side. She was caught in the node. She held the cylinder close to her body and prayed to God for the answer.

“Lord even with my insight I do not possess your wisdom/ lasajès. I am unable without you to find resolution and comfort/ konfò . I look to you Father of us all to instill in me the answers. Who are the two I am to take on this journey/ konfò ? How can I rescue my husband/ mari without your strength? Awaken my spirit/ move zè Lord that I will receive your word. For your word is truth/ verite. Remove my fear, my doubt, all of my insecurities that I may embrace and trust the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen”

The answer came immediately and Lora tried to reject it but it was the only answer that added up. It was the children. They were the two. She remembered the words of the priest “The two that I speak of are here.” Yes they were at her door when she was experiencing this vision. But how was she able to explain such a thing to these young minds? That’s it; young minds! They would accept the unbelievable when an adult might have her committed to an institution.

With cylinder in hand she left the hidden room and made her way downstairs where she politely interrupted the gaming session.

“Hey guys, I wanted to tell/ rakonte, di you something so unbelievable that you might think I am crazy/ fou.” Lora smiled at them, but not in a strange/ dròl, etranj or weird way, she simply smiled nonthreatening.

Paul spoke up. “What is it Lora, we will believe you.”

Lora began sharing. “Have your parents/ paran, fanmi ever told you how Jamison and I met?”

Ruth smiled “Mom said that you guys ran into each other on the highway.”

“That is what we told everyone but that is not the truth/ verite. The truth is, Jamison came here to the island/ zile and he found me doing house cleaning. I was working for a very bad man. Jamison freed me from all of that. He wasn’t alone/ pou kont. When I met him he was with an older man named Mieszko. Mieszko was a monk from a far away place.” Lora stopped to see how they were receiving the story thus far. She was a little nervous and asked “Èske w konnen sa m ap di?” She caught herself and struck the question from her mind though it had already come out of her mouth.

“Why was Jamison traveling with a monk?” Paul wanted to know.

“Jamison had been in a terrible automobile/ oto accident and was dying. Mieszko visited his hospital room and through prayer saved his life. In return Jamison agreed to help Mieszko find something of great/ gran, gwo Value/ valè to him. Together they traveled/ vwayaj here because this is where they were led to begin their search first/ premye.” Lora paused again.

“What were they looking for?” Ruth was very curious now. “Mieszko had lost his soul/ nanm.” Lora waited again.

“Lost his soul? You mean he thought he was lost and they were on a pilgrimage?” Paul now sat up wondering why Lora was sharing this story with them.

“This part I am about to tell/ rakonte, di you is the unbelievable part. Mieszko had his soul stolen. Jamison agreed to help him search/ chèche the planet in hopes/ espere of finding it regardless the cost/ pri. Jamison stepped out in faith/ afwa and used his courage/ kouraj. That is when he found/ jwenn me and I agreed to go with them.” Lora used her insight to gage their responses. So far so good she thought.

“So did you guys travel all over the world?” Ruth wanted to know.

“Yes we did and by unconventional methods/ metòd. The hardest part of this story/ istwa to digest is that we were able to travel/ vwayaj through time portals that would open/ louvri us to our next destination. No planes/ avyon, ships/ bato, or cars/oto, though we did have to take a train/ tren a couple of times.” What could these kids be thinking Lora pondered?

“Well mom said since you were Jamaican you were probably into voodoo and some of the family had said they thought you were like a priestess or something, so none of this is surprising.” Ruth did not blink.

Appraising the situation and figuring that it was going better than expected Lora thought she might need to play up the voodoo thing which would save her from explaining an encyclopedia worth of information.

“Now I need something from you and if you decide to do this it will require from you the same faith and courage that Jamison had when he accepted/ aksepte his universal role to help Mieszko. Are you willing to help/ asistans?” Contemplating their answer Lora held her breath.

“What do we need to do?” Paul eagerly answered.

“This morning/ maten Jamison was taken. That is why he is not here. Someone used a portal came through our house/kay and took him while I was still in bed/ kabann. I heard him struggling/ batay, lit, boule and yelling/ kriye my name from the bathroom/ twalèt. There are no doors/ pòt or windows/ fenèt leading out of the bathroom/ twalèt, so whatever abducted/ kidnapè, anlve him came through my bathroom upstairs and left the same way. The wormhole shut before I could get the door/ pòt unlocked. While meditating this morning/ maten a voice/ vwa told me that two/ de would arrive/ rive and would be instrumental in helping me to free Jamison and release/ libere him back to our world/ lemonn.” Lora looked desperate.

“Tell us what you want us to do?” Ruth stood up from sitting cross legged. “Yeah do we get to time travel?” Paul seemed ready to go.

“Mwen pare. Èske ou pare? Come with me we must prepare.” Lora led the children to her prayer room. The three sat in the floor facing one another. The kids were amazed by the number of books and the incredible furnishings of the room. Her rug was Persian with the world’s superstitions recorded and woven into it.

“O.k. kids we must be very serious/ seri. What we are about to do is to call out to Jamison. Our minds must be free/ gratis of our own thoughts/ pante. We must reach out through time and space and listen/ koute for him to answer/ reponn us. Just meditate. Take normal/ nèmal breaths/souf through your nose/nen and sit/chita up tall/ro to allow the energy/ enèji to

flow/koule.” Lora had them hold hand with her and she began. With candles burning in the background there was an eerie presence filtering through.

She took a moment for everyone to get their minds free and after being convinced they were settled she spoke. “Jamison can you hear me? Tell us where you are? Listen to me my beloved. Think of me, for I am thinking/panse of you/ou. Dream/ rèv of me for I am dreaming of you. Reach out to me for I am reaching out to you. Let me see/ wè with your eyes/zeyes. Allow/ otorize me to hear with your ears. Permit me to see you. We are coming for you. Jamison can you hear us? Feel/santi our presence/ prezans with you. Let us be your companion now. Inhabit our thoughts Jamison we are coming for you. Tell us where you are. Take comfort/ konfò in my words. Clear/ nèt your mind and trust us. Open/ puvri, louvri your heart/ kè, mitan it is I Lora.” When she had said her name a whirlwind arose from the floor with a vision swirling in it.

Lora spoke a proverb for encouragement. “Darg-flea tell him pickeny him mustn’t say him dead till him ketch pon finger nail.”

The three of them opened their eyes in wonder and amazement. It was Jamison sitting in a room his hands and feet bound. He was alone and appeared unharmed. Lora wanted to reach out and touch him but she was afraid that she might disturb the vision.

She called out to him “Jamison! Jamison can you hear me? Jamison it is I Lora!” Again her name triggered something. Upon her name being said Jamison looked right up at Lora. He stood “Lora! I can hear you. Do not come for me. I am underground. I do not know where. There are too many of them. Do not come! I love you!” Crying Lora answered “I love you! Mwen renmen ou anpil.” The whirlwind began to fade. “No, no, no, please/ fè plezi.” Lora broke the circle and reached out for him as he vanished completely. Lora was distraught. The kids hugged her until she was able to gain composure.

“Isn’t there anybody we can call? Like the FBI or something?” Paul seemed very upset and agitated by this strange happening. Ruth was rattled and said nothing. She sat staring. “Are you o.k. baby?” Lora put her arm around her. “I am scared for him. He is there alone and said to not come for him. We have to, we just have to.” Ruth seemed moved to determination.

Lora led them from the prayer room to one of the unused guest rooms. In the closet was a large safe bolted to the floor. She went about turning the dial as she gave instructions. “Kids/ pitit, timoun, I know this is asking a lot. But Jamison was abducted/ anlve because he is very valuable. His body/ kò is a map/kat to world/lemonn domination/ dominasyon. Every tattoo he has gotten over the years is another piece of a universal puzzle/ problèm that many evil/ kraze-brize people/ moun, pèp would like to get their hands on. Other than being my husband/mari and I want him back, he is also the key/kle that could start a world war/ lagè and end life/vi as we know it.”

The door to the safe swung opened revealing the arsenal of weapons inside. “Have either of you ever used a gun dezyèm men kanno?”

The kids smiled. “Yes we both belong to dad’s gun club. We have shot many times. He was going to take us target practicing when we returned home.” Paul seemed like a kid in a candy store.

Lora handed out familiar weapons to the children not feeling culpable at all. She thought “why play/jwe video games/ jwèt with guns when you can star in your own real life episode?”

The three were loaded down with things that shot, exploded and plenty of extra lethal weapons if they ran out of any.

“This is the last time I am going to refer to you two as children or kids because from here on out you are going to grow up very fast. We are going after Jamison and you will not be able to hesitate/ ezite. I have gone through many battles/ batay with Jamison and never once did he flinch or hesitate. He did what he had to do. And because of his bravery the world was saved. The sad part was; the world never knew it was so close to dying.”

Chapter 3 Suspended Animation

It is the nature of men having escaped one extreme, which by force they were constrained long to endure, to run headlong into the other extreme, forgetting that virtue doth always consist in the mean.

Sir Walter Raleigh



In nocturnal blackness, a ray of hope whispers light, on wings of faith, into the starving ears of timeless love. Echo's flutter, awakens the deaf, to hear life's breath, speaking delightful truths for the quickening of the spirit.

Jamison had heard. His countenance was lifted but now he feared that Lora was about to attempt what would be a suicide mission if she came alone. He had to do something to break free. If she found him in this purgatory, she would not stand a snowballs chance in hell of getting out. He worried too because if his body did not provide these enemies with what they sought by the way of a map to wherever they were going, then Lora might be next. Someone knew about the cylinder because it just didn't end up in his safety security box by itself. Someone had to use a worm hole in and out not to be detected by bank security.

Jamison could not imagine who might be behind this present charade. He figured Paracelsus had something to do with it since they parted the wedding reception on very bad terms with Paracelsus threatening the entire guest list with death by poison.

Jamison didn't think it would hurt to pray. Even after all he had experienced he still had never established a steady prayer life. He could quote movie lines far quicker than Bible verses. "Lord, I know you're out there. And I know that I have taken so much for granted; my health, Lora, our financial situation. I know I am blessed and if you would take it all from me today I would have to be thankful for what I have had and experienced in my life. I have lived a life fuller than most men twice my age. I don't ask for myself but for Lora that you will protect her no matter what she does. If she listens to me and does not come bless her life greatly. If she is stubborn and tries to get me out of here, give her the divine intervention along every step. Lord I believe."

Jamison was able to stand, but could not take a step. He could lift both arms together but they were closely bound together. If he could only loosen these ties that bind he could do some serious damage to the enemy. He heard voices outside of his cell. "Maybe this was the moment when everything was going to end. Had his prayers been heard? Was there any chance that they would be answered? Maybe he wasn't a priority on the desk of God today. It could be that one of the holy angels had dropped his request; it got trampled under foot and would reach the Master's desk until it was too late. Why did he think like that? Now he had probably cancelled his prayer of faith. Maybe God doesn't hold thoughts against us as long as it doesn't trickle down to the heart? Oh my God what am I doing? I must be going mad. And God surely isn't going to take lunatics prayers serious. I am insane because God has abandoned me."

Jamison sat back down defeated. The door to his cell swung open and the four guards pounced on him, scooped him from his bed; without a struggle and returned him to the drawing room.

Strung up again his arms and legs stretched tight, Jamison was out of wit, out of fight, running low on life. Without food or water he was drained. Numbness dulled his thought process. He had just regained circulation in his hands and feet however now he was swinging in the center of the room

again. Two men were in the room this time. One was preparing his writing and drawing tools while the other was setting up an intravenous line.

“Guys, if you are going to give me fluids, I like lemonade flavor.” Jamison tried to laugh at his own joke but could not muster the lung capacity. Still Jamison was having a unilateral conversation. “Boys I am ready to dance, do you like the Tango?” Jamison shook his head to snap out of the fragile mental state.

The second man took his outstretched arm in his hands and prepped it with alcohol. A catheter was inserted and the IV was soon set. At least he was receiving fluids containing dextrose, proteins and molecules, and varying concentrations of electrolytes.

Until he could formulate a plan Jamison decided to meditate. He thought only of Lora. Scenes vividly came to mind like the first time they met on the island. He had just climbed through her window. In most places this would have been considered breaking and entering but Lora had welcomed him, prepared a meal and gave him and his traveling companion a place to stay for the night. Jamison could not get over her dark radiant skin, the invincible smile that captivated his heart immediately. Those were times that he was bringing from the vault of his mind. These were the memories that kept him alive. The last trip they had taken on their boat “Soul Sabbath” had been one of his favorite memories. They stood on deck enjoying their own company while watching their guest party, laugh and play. Jamison and Lora were blessed and now they were sharing their lives with others. They had a little saying they thought they had invented but someone had told them it had been around anonymously for years. “To the world you are one person, but to one person you are the world.” They lived by that saying in life, in love in everything they did.

The old scribe was busy again filling in the colors of his duplicate of Jamison’s body. No matter how hard he tried Jamison fulminating could not keep his mouth shut. “Hey there Van Gogh you are pretty fancy with those colors. I don’t know what they are paying you here, but I know a cartoonist in Disney makes bank.”

Jamison was getting restless with the communication skills of the artist. “You know something there Salvador Dali, that if you suppress your communication skills you will loose your ability to carry on normal conversations?”

This was a losing battle. Jamison could not penetrate the intense concentration. Very well, back to memories and Jamison sunk deeper than anyone could have ever followed.

Was it minutes, long minutes, hours, days, Jamison did not know, in his comatose state what had happened? He felt his body still stretched long ways, though once again his hands and feet were dead to the touch. The crank sound had started again which was indication that he was being lowered down. The IV had been removed. He opened his eyes and to his dismay there were only two guards and the artist. The artist had an arm full of posters under his arm. He stood facing Jamison. The guards stood Jamison on his feet. He wobbled a bit but caught himself. His balance was off because his feet could not feel the floor.

“Yes this was it. Had to implement a plan or die.”

The artist looked Jamison in the eye and said “We ur finished” then with his Gaelic accent he repeated “air ruith a-mach.”

“I guess we are Rembrandt.” Jamison’s knees deliberately buckled. He bent over at the waist and moaned. The artist naturally reacted by bending down to take a closer look. Jamison threw his head up at an accelerated speed. The back of Jamison’s head caught the artist square in the nose. The sound of cartilage being crushed exploded; as the old monk now brain dead dropped like a rag onto the floor. The posters under his arms scattered. With his hands still bound together, but before anyone could put the belly restraints on him, Jamison moved like a cat slipping his restraints around the neck of the closest guard. Jamison flipped his body three hundred and sixty degrees the restraints crushed the guard’s airway instantly. Using the guard’s rigid body as support Jamison leaped into the air with both feet planting them with driving force to the chest of the second guard. The guard went backward in crashing fashion. Jamison let the first guard drop to the floor as he hopped twice then leaped on top of the second guard. With intense clubbing fashion of savage brutality Jamison beat his way through the guard’s defenses until he reached the face. Jamison did not break off the attack until the guard no longer had any air exchange. Exhausted, tired and still bound, Jamison had started the war, now how was he to finish it? He immediately claimed a firearm and then searched for any sharp instrument to cut off the restraints.

Frisking each of the men he finally located a boot knife with a clip point blade in a leather scabbard. He worked feverishly sawing away at his ankle

restraints until they were cut through. He went to work right away on his wrist restraints. Like a buzz saw he hacked away until his wrist sprung apart.

He tried the door. He first pulled, then he pushed and it did not budge. It was tightly closed and locked from the other side. Thinking aloud he heard himself say “wish I would have taken that magic kit mom bought me more serious when I was a kid. Where are my Houdini skills when I need them?”

He stripped the guards of their clothes and found that though a bit tight, it was better than the loin cloth. The boots would not fit, better leave them off. There is nothing worse than uncomfortable shoes. He would have to go barefoot if he ever got out of this room. He could only assume that this was the original room where they had initially held him captive. All of the steps he had counted earlier were of no use to remember because he certainly did not want to return to the cell. During his march to the cell earlier he had gained no information that would lead him to the outside world. There had been no sounds, no wind or air, no smells of a kitchen or noises from even a single soul passing by them in the hallway. He might as well be blind in this place.

Jamison being deprived of direction felt horribly lost. He promised himself that he would not relinquish the control that he now had nor would he succumb to defeat. Giving up was not an option. Driven by a desire to escape the underbelly of this prison Jamison’s heart swelled with fearlessness and confidence. He thought about Lora’s smile and her romantic accent. His heart was full of conviction and determination and he had disposed in his mind that he would find his way to daylight.

Chapter 4

“O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!”

William Shakespeare



In the sleepy Russian countryside undisturbed by politics and government aggression an architectural gem stood like a mammoth adorning the landscape on the Neva River. This gothic medieval castle was fortified with huge sculpted overgrown gardens and an extensive system of lakes and fountains. Grigori had this fortress designed with various shapes that mystically denoted to symbolize women. The interior of the construction represented the "womb" of the woman; the ribbed buttresses (and what were called "flying buttresses") were analogous to the rib-cage of a woman's body. The nave or inner sanctum was shaped like the interior of a ship. The center part of the nave was the "navel" or the umbilical cord, to which a symbolic baby was attached in the womb of the woman. Grigori had a transept area built that was positioned two-thirds of the way along the hallway that acted as the heart of the woman as the emotional center of her being.

Grigori had a circular rose window installed representing the sun. He believed the rays of the sun shining through on the transept region were spiritual for conception.

Within its stone walls a cold dark figure ruled the throne.

Grigori had been to the earth before and left prematurely by tragic end. From the village of Pokrovskoye Russia he learned heartache and how to

overcome. He had lived the life of a religious lecherous mystic and wanderer. He practiced rituals similar to ancient shamanic and tribal traditions of the Siberian people. Because he had suffered from severe sleep disorders he had been trained in hypnotism to overcome the insomnia and sleep apnea. Living a vegetarian lifestyle he was a tall physical specimen of health. Unconventionally he used alcohol and also the use of various weeds and drugs for "spiritual transformation" according to ancient shamanic rituals. At the end of his life he was known to be a starets or holy man known for his powers of healing and prophetic powers. History had painted him in a dual role. Some saw him as a man of God offering himself a guide to lost souls through prayer. While on the other hand; he had been seen as a heretic, the mad monk, using and abusing his power for sex, money and greed. His belief that he could attain divine grace through giving into temptation became the main point of his secret doctrine and accelerated his downfall. Instead of carrying a Bible he carried a Webley .455 side arm, the exact model that extinguished his earthly existence. He is now never seen without his two Caucasian Ovcharka dogs Youssou and Pov. These giants had a built in nature to defend their masters and exhibit ferocious tendencies.

Grigori surname name in Russia meant "a place where two rivers meet." But he no longer wanted the last name Rasputin. He believed it had been slandered and misunderstood over the past 100 years. He opted to enter this life with a name that he wanted while he was here in his first life which was Novykh which meant novice. In his second life he would be called Grigori Novykh.

Knowing that he was brought back for a purpose, he was given some options on the day that he returned. Oddly enough he was required by a fiendish counsel to bring some others back with him of his choosing. One of the people he thought would be of great importance in the task at hand was Nikola Tesla. Tesla was a genius. He had an expertise in mechanical and electrical engineering, along with revolutionary developments in electromagnetism. He as the mad scientist and Grigori as the mad monk were ready to wreck madness upon the world. With his photographic memory and his attention to detail he was often misunderstood because of his obsessive compulsive disorder.

Grigori had Tesla down in the modified dungeon working on his "death ray" project. In his first life Tesla had intended that the "death ray" generator would be used to make war impossible. In this most recent version it was

going to be used against any opposing force that would come against them. The problem that he that he was having was; what happens to the mercury stream after it left the specially designed nozzle used for blowing high pressure air in an open tube leading to the evacuated sphere that acted like a constantly renewing plug to preserve the vacuum?

Pelagius had been returned also. He was a tall man, with an idiosyncrasy of being a fast talker, with an oleaginous complexion. He had been a man that had gone against the teachings of the Christian church and refused to submit to the doctrinal decisions it handed down. He had been deemed a heretic denying original sin, original guilt. There were six things written in his "Contra traducem peccati" works specifically he and his friend Celestius were condemned for.

The first was that Adam would have died even if he had not sinned. That Adam injured himself not the human race. That newborn children like Adam himself are without sin. That the human race does not die through Adam's sin; that the Law as well as the Gospel gives entrance to heaven. That there were men without sin even before Christ's coming.

Pelagius, who preferred being called Brito by his friends, would not have his sentence pardoned or accusations of being a heretic rescinded. Instead he had fallen into obscurity and his sect that followed Pelagianism all fell away. Grigori brought him forward from the netherworld to play a crucial role in their master plan.

Grigori, Tesla and Brito were sitting at the carved medieval dining room table in warm honey gold wood listening to Paracelsus give the latest progress report.

Paracelsus "the precursor of chemical pharmacology and therapeutics and the most original medical thinker of the sixteenth century." was credited for introducing opium and mercury into the storehouse of medicine. Also known as the "the Luther of physicians," his enemies were many however he did have disciples that bestowed upon him the nicknamed the "German Hermes."

"We have managed to copy the full map from Jamison's body. I should have them very soon. They are being examined by our monastery for accuracy comparing them to the photographs that we have we will miss nothing on

our way to our goal.” Paracelsus seemed proud as if he was the one that had used the pen.

Grigori looking like a wild mountain man reached for some vegetables. “Friends it is good to be back. To have this opportunity, to be blessed, to bring to light, manifold riches hidden to mortal man for so many centuries. People can define it as anything they so desire. Arcadia, Garden of Eden, Shangri-La, Utopia, I call it The Promised Land. I have used my gifts and talents to warn the world and to direct them in the path that it should follow. And what did that get me? I was murdered; shot, stabbed, beaten and even poisoned to drown like my brother did when we were children. Now I will drown this world in its own arrogance by finding The Promised Land myself. And when I do only those I see fit to enter will be saved from the flood to come.”

Tesla took a drink and chimed in. “Thank you Grigori for allowing me to be part of this wonderful plan.” Grigori nodded to him.

“I am getting close to perfecting our peace ray generator. Just a few more adjustments then we can run the online experiment.” Tesla reported.

“Why do you insist on calling it a peace ray generator when we all here can be honest and call it what it is, a death ray machine?” Grigori had a hard look.

Tesla answered kindly “I hope it does not have to come to death, we should hold the power to force a peaceful surrender of every country and open the portal to The Promised Land.”

One of Grigori’s body guards interrupted. “I am sorry for the intrusion, but we have had an incidence in the holding area. Jamison has killed the guards and our scribe.”

Grigori looked at Tesla, “I am sorry Tesla but it appears that your peace ray generator has no choice but to be a death ray machine. Can you now see what we are dealing with? The other side is fanatics, barbarians not willing to change or compromise. We have little choice.”

“Where is Jamison now?” Brito stood up.

The guard confirmed what they all assumed. “He is still locked in the cell but he is free and armed.”

“Who is handling this?” Grigori inquired.

“That is why I am here. We need to know how you wish this to be handled.” The guard reported.

“It is important that we do not live by the old saying an eye for an eye attitude. We will use wisdom and we will use our collective knowledge and the world will learn to not defy us. I will handle this, take me to him.” Grigori rose from his seat and followed the body guard out of the room.

Down into the labyrinth of the castle Grigori led a dozen armed guards to Jamison’s cell. Once they managed the twists and turns and cascading descent they stood at the large steel door where Jamison was held up. “Jamison, are you well?” Grigori asked with a soft voice of concern. Jamison was aggravated that he had found no way out of the room. He was uncertain if he should answer or pretend to be unconscious in hopes whoever was on the outside of the room would come rushing in. He might get the jump on them. Then again his captors probably already knew that he was waiting for them to make a mistake.

He decided to communicate. “You tell me, am I well?”

“I believe we have need of introductions and then we can resolve this without anyone else being hurt.” Grigori continued his gentle approach.

“Start introducing then, you already know who I am.” Jamison made a good point.

“My name is Grigori and you are a guest in my home. I know it doesn’t seem as though you are a guest but we want to reward you for helping us document your historic body of art work.”

“Let me get this right. You abduct me from my home. You bring me here. You tie me up. You then have this cartoonist copy my body on paper when you could have taken pictures. You didn’t give me food or water. You stuck me with a needle. You put a bag on my head. That was practically all that I have worn since I was brought here against my will. And I am your guest?”

“Jamison I do apologize for the intrusion, for the measures we had to go through to get you here. I can now see how you have been treated while in our care is inexcusable, and for the loss of life of my guards and my scribe, this is impossible to reverse. This is our fault and we have no excuse. We never wished this upon anyone.”

“You know what I have experienced; you know my life and what I have gone through. And yet you think you can gain my trust by stringing me up like a slab of slaughterhouse meat? Tell me Grigori what is it you want from me?” Jamison positioned himself in a better defensive posture so if the door swung open he could empty two magazines of bullets quickly before having to fight hand to hand.

“Jamison, we already have what we need. I want to show it to you. If you were not important to us, if we were through with you we could have easily just left you down here to starve to death and die and drag your body out later. But you can be included in our plan; we are giving you the choice in this matter.” Grigori mildly delivered his side.

“You answer this question correctly and I will surrender, if you miss it, then you will have a war.” Jamison was deadly serious.

“What are my choices?”

Grigori looked around at his guards who stood ready to respond at the drop of a simple word. “Jamison you have two choices, let us open the door, you give up, do not kill anyone else and we will reveal our plan to you. Or since I value life and do not want to loose anyone else unnecessarily we will walk away and leave you to die here.”

Jamison had a third option which in his mind was the correct alternative. They open the door, leave and allow him to return home. That is what Jamison wanted to hear. What bothered him with Grigori’s answer is that it removed Jamison’s free will. Human nature clings to the hope of free will and Jamison planned to hold on tight.

Jamison had turned the heavy wooden drawing table on its side as a barricade for cover and concealment. He had a hand gun, a knife and an asp

baton. “Grigori I suppose I am going to let you open the door.” Jamison took aim.

Grigori was no fool, he stepped back placing his guards in front of him. “Open the door” he ordered. The door slowly opened at first then swung opened quickly and four guards rushed in to meet four bullets from Jamison’s pistol. All four were head shots, all four were kill shots.

Everything became deathly quiet. “Jamison I thought you were not going to end it like this? You’ve gone and killed 4 more men. How are you going to appear before the Lord on judgment day?” Grigori was boiling mad but composed.

“Well, you see there General Custer you have made a couple of mistakes. Your choices for me were not very attractive. In your first choice you told me to give up. If we are on the same team why should I give up? And the second choice wasn’t much better you said that you did not want to loose anyone else unnecessarily, that tells me there must be some necessary killing in your future. And concerning judgment day, I suppose I am living it right now.” Jamison kept his eyes fixed on the open door. That door was his freedom. How many more guards were out there?

“Jamison I am sorry that you have misunderstood. What can we do to resolve this without anymore blood shed?” Grigori was unflappable in approach. Jamison wanted to believe him since he sounded sincere but Jamison was no fool.

“Well for starters, you can send the guards away. Secondly you can come in here yourself and stop hiding behind that wall. You want me to trust you, let’s start with you trusting me first.” Jamison was stalling for time trying to gain the advantage.

Grigori answered quickly. “Jamison there are seven dead men lying in that room with you. I do not want to become number eight; that would be just another obstacle for you to hurdle when you shoot your way out of there.”

“I suppose we are at an impasse. But let me sweeten the pot a little for you. I have some art work here that I think you need. From what I can calculate I may be in possession of some very important pieces of art. You want them?”

Jamison thought maybe he had played his last hand. He was the one cornered.

“Jamison, yes those are important. You know they are a map. That map is to a treasure we all can enjoy.” Grigori knew he could not afford to shoot Jamison full of holes or to have these invaluable pages manipulated or destroyed.

“We’ve already used the map. We found Mieszko’s soul and sent the bad guys to hell, so this map is of no more use.” Jamison shouted this truth.

“Listen to me. Yes, you found one treasure, but there is a far greater map and together we can follow it and my promise to you is, like Mieszko included you, I will include you in my quest.” Grigori was making his appeal.

“O.k. then let us pretend for a moment that I believe you, the part about the map leading to another treasure. What gives you the right to it? What gives you permission to snatch me away from my home, my wife my world?” Jamison sounded angry now.

Grigori could not believe that this lone gunman had his entire diabolical plan at a stand still.

“You are so right, we should not have approached you in the manner that we did. But would you have agreed to allow us to comb over your body, mapping everything you have had tattooed if we told you it was to find paradise? Could we have really just knocked on your front door?”

“I don’t guess we will ever know.” Jamison decided to initiate. He shoved the drawings of his body down the legs of his pants. He was thankful now that they were tight. The posters would not slip out the bottom. He left the safety of the table and with stealth he glided over to the doorway. He took a deep but quiet breath and eased it out. He was about to swing around the door firing liberally when Grigori spoke. “Jamison we are backing down the hallway. Take your time making up your mind. You are either with us or against us.”

Jamison did not hesitate his mind was made up. He spun his body out into the hallway both pistols drawn. The hallway was empty, not a single soul

was in sight. He evaluated the situation and double checked everything within sight. He was electric and galvanic and a bead of sweat rolled down his temple. Before abandoning the massacre he measured his bare feet against the soles of the boots on the deceased guards. He found a pair of socks and boots that fit comfortably. He took one last glance at the pile of bodies and instead of taking a left out of the room, he took a right.

Chapter 5

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.”

Marcel Proust



The prayer room was magnificent. It was more of an atrium with impluvium and compluvium and Achaemenian Persian bull capitals in each corner, floored with elaborate pavements made of potsherds and quartz pebbles arranged in decorative patterns. Lora and the children were back in her prayer room fully loaded with extreme fire power. They looked like little guerilla fighters from some sort of jungle fighting movie.

“What I am going to do is to open the lid on this cylinder. I have no idea what might happen but in my spirit I believe that it may be the portal that we need to find Jamison. I believe that it will take us right to him. In case it does not and we arrive at an undesirable destination remember be brave and do not hesitate. It could be a grave mistake to question. The last time we had this lid off we sucked some very bad guys from our world inside and sealed it back up. These were evil men. We almost died in the process. We gave the cylinder to a friend of ours and she was supposed to dispose of the contents. Let us pray that there is nothing in here and that when I remove the top we merely transport to our proper destination where we will rescue Jamison and return here.”

All three gathered close together. Lora took a firm grip on the tube. She inserted the key. "Ready?" She asked them. They looked more anxious than frightened.

"Let's do this" Ruth said dauntlessly.

"Yeah, do it!" Paul confirmed. The lid was twisted and instantly the air was sucked out of the room. They temporarily lost their breath then the vortex came. It would have been more comfortable to be on a wing of a 747 at 36,000 feet above the earth. Their bodies were slammed to the ground at first then lifted straight up. Bracing for impact and collision with the tall ceiling, the slam never came. The world that they had grown accustomed to disappeared. Circulating, anti-clock wise they were caught in the downwash and came crashing down. As if they were being pulled by a huge magnet they bounced once then settled.

Lora quickly lifted her head and crawled up on all fours. She began to thank God. "I know where we are!" It was inside the mountain of the Church of the Universal Savior located in the center of the Krkonose or Giant Mountain in the Czech Republic.

"So we are safe?" Ruth and Paul were both standing now. Lora delightfully answered "Yes we have friends/ zanmi here that will help ede us."

The three walked along the well lit corridor until they came to an immense cathedral room. From the other side of the room walked a familiar face to Lora. His noticeable eye brows and tender eyes gave him away. "Hello my dear Lora, I see you have brought reinforcements, we have been waiting on you." He gave her a friendly hug. "This is Ruth and her brother Paul. A holy man in a vision/ vizyon instructed me to bring them; you said you were waiting on me? Am I late/ anreta? What do you know/ konnen about my husband/mari?" Lora seemed nervous.

"What we have gathered is that he is alive and has escaped for now, but these that have him are more diabolical than ruthless. We are dealing with an entirely new monster this time. Come and I will share with you what we know from our own visions." Oannes led them into a private sitting room. Ruth and Paul could not stop looking up and around at the wonder of it all. This was the city within the heart of a mountain with no way in and no way out except if one use a worm hole.

Oannes began to instruct and guide Lora and her new troop. “We saw first Pelagius come over to our side first. He is by church standards Council of Carthage a disgruntle heretic. Though a supposed saintly man we wonder because of whom he has now associated himself with. The next that we saw come through was another displeased individual named Rasputin of whom you may not need an introduction but in short he was a Russian mystic who influenced the Russian royal family of Tsar Nicholas II. This man is very dangerous. The third man to come over is Nikola Tesla. This man is an engineering genius with a huge grudge. He spent his entire life being overlooked for his achievements. He was always in the shadow of Thomas Edison and lived his life offended at the attention his nemesis received. There is an army that arrived. This is not an ordinary army. These are deserters from WW1. 306 British and Commonwealth soldiers [were] executed for...desertion during World War I. These soldiers have returned for redemption. A monument called Shot at Dawn was erected for these men. Though they were pardoned 90 years after their desertion, I suppose they feel they had to return. And we saw a woman come in but we have been unable to identify her.”

Lora seemed puzzled and asked, “What does Jamison have to do with these men?”

Oannes became reflective. “These wormholes that we all have used to jump from one place to the other have been used since the creation of time. Biblical examples would be Daniel in the lions den “My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me:” here the word mouth in (Aramaic) is translated opening, orifice of a well, river, etc, this is the stream of travel. God’s messenger shut the lion’s mouth by transporting Daniel to another dimension. Again the story of Jonah and the whale can be used. “Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.” The word swallow means to engulf the portals, engulf, swallow us and place us in the flow of the cosmic time stream. The belly represents the organs of procreation, womb, or the place of revelation. Let me remind you of Moses and the Children of Israel when they were running for their lives from Pharaoh, “And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry [ground]: and the waters [were] a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.” Into the midst means “into or through” the sea is something that flows, the waters means transitory things, fleeting things, flying things.

Philip in the New Testament scriptures was transported after baptizing the Ethiopian and there was the three Hebrew children Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who were thrown into a furnace of fire but emerged unharmed, they too found refuge in a wormhole. But the greatest of all wormholes is the one that led to and from the Garden of Eden. The scriptures say that God planted a garden after everything was created and then took the man and put him into the garden. Man was transported to this place. There was no other way to get into it. That is why no one has found it today. It goes on to say that after man had sinned God tossed or thrust him out of the garden. As the wind drives a sail, man was driven from the garden. A guard was placed at the entrance to prevent anyone from entering again. An enchantment or flame was placed at the gates to stop the flow, to dry up the path in. These men that have returned want access to the Garden of God for if they achieve this they will have a clear passage to the Tree of Life.”

Lora and the children sat stunned. “So my husband/mara is once again the key/kle?”

“He is the key and a very detailed map too.” Oannes answered.

“Èske mwen ka mande w yon kesyon? What can we do? Lora asked.

“You three must rescue Jamison and make it to the Mouth of Eden before Rasputin and his company does. You will know what to do when you get there. In the meantime, we are prepared to assist you in retrieving Jamison. I will warn you that this is dangerous regardless if we are there to support you or not.” Oannes raised his brow and twisted his mouth to one side.

Knowing that time was of the essence Oannes brought in their backup. Six women dressed in loosely fitting attire entered the planning room. Oannes did the introductions. “This is Sibyl, Gaea, Hathor, Kali, Pheobe and Vivian. These women are at your beckon call. They each possess rare talents that will aid you in this mission.” Lora was surprised that Kali was a black woman. She had not seen a black woman among the mountain people before. Striking was the ornaments around her neck. She wore a garland of skulls and severed hands.

Speaking mainly to Lora, Oannes added to the instructions. “You will be traveling to Russia. We hope you will hit your target perfectly. If you do, you will be in the castle where Jamison is being housed. If you miss the

mark you may have to do some physical walking. We have calculated the best that we can and the window to jump is wide because of the earth's rotation. Contrary to what some believe the rotation is not clockwork. The length of the day changes about a millisecond over the course of a year. It gradually increases in the winter, when Earth rotates more slowly, and decreases in the summer. There are also longer patterns of changes in the length of day that last decades, even centuries. Let's just say that the earth's rotation is at the preferred speed, mass is distributed properly, temperature is favorable world wide and the magnetic compass has brought the dynamo effect into harmony with our intentions. If everyone is ready we can proceed, follow me." Oannes had practically overwhelmed Lora, Paul and Ruth with information. They realized that there was an army on the other side of the wormhole with one purpose in mind. Their adversary would be waiting to stop this band of travelers nine strong.

Oannes led the group through the arched doorways of the yawning gargantuan interior. Down one flight of stairs the troop stood in the center of a large room with a coffer and glazed dome. "This is our voyager room where we are able to travel from country to country, and between dimensions."

"I have never seen anything like this before." Paul was staring up at the painting of the ring of constellations painted on the outer realm of the ceiling with a mosaic wheel of the zodiac centered.

Oannes had everyone group together in the center of the room. "I shall be leaving you now. Once I leave and shut the door the voyage will begin. You need do nothing." He smiled hopefully and exited the room. Lora and Ruth were looking at the door when it shut. With eyes wide open and nervous stomachs they tried to brace for what was next. Next was something out of the most vivid imagination. A projection of the terrestrial equator out into space appeared and spun around the troop. High in the ceiling the sun appeared at its upper culmination. The troop acted as a celestial body and began to revolve around the sun overhead. They banked slightly on an axial tilt and slipped into the cosmic stream. They were astonished by the colors, the streaks of light and now their own long ascension. Knowing they had exited the voyager room, they did not know exactly where they were. The only sure thing was they were traveling as a collective unit.

Chapter 6

*Sometimes you have to throw yourself into the fire to escape from the smoke.
Greek Proverb*



Gliding cautiously down the spacious hallways, Jamison was vigilant and cagey. Listening for any signs of traps, threats and keeping an eye out for exits he did a panoramic scan every dozen feet. The hallway was as long as a football field. He had not found another door since his escape. He started running. The posters rolled and shoved down his pants made a crunching sound and stiffened his stride. Caught in the maze that was Grigori's castle it was a puzzle of hallways with no reason or rhyme.

In a room at least four stories above the mesh of confusion Grigori sat protected by his body guards staring into a vat of water. Scrying, he was dropping tiny marbles seer stones, which he called the Urim and Thummim into the hydromancy pool and waiting for a reaction. As the ripples smoothed out he saw Jamison running down the hallway. "Ah, there you are. You can run but you cannot hide."

"What are we waiting for?" asked Brito.

"We must remain patient. Once he realizes that he cannot escape he will ask for help. We ought not to worry about him. It is not my intention to kill everyone that opposes us. He is the key, the map and we may very well need

him alive and well to run our course.” Grigori spun the vision in the water with his finger.

“I do not like this cat and mouse game that you are playing. We haven’t the time for games.” Brito was dead serious.

“I am not making folly here. There is a method to what appears to be my madness. I am setting the bait even as we stare into the aqua mirror.” Grigori seemed confident.

Paracelsus looked disquieted. “I have encountered this man personally. If we spend our time setting the bait as you say, we may get caught up in the dream of Eden. Dreams are not without meaning wherever they may come from—from fantasy, from the elements, or from other inspiration. Eden is in our grasp so I suggest we live in the reality of Eden and close the trap on this man.”

“I can forge this man for our use.” Grigori suggested.

“Nature also forges man, now a gold man, now a silver man, now a fig man, now a bean man.” Paracelsus answered.

“And what sort of man is this Jamison?” Brito interjected.

Paracelsus did not hesitate “He is a gold man.”

“Then we shall test his purity and turn up the fires of purification.” Grigori smiled fiendishly.

Tesla had not said a word at this point and had been sitting alone hardly impressed with the dabbling of transcendental meditations or the superlative religious aspects of these recent events. “The gift of mental power comes from God, Divine Being, and if we concentrate our minds on that truth, we become in tune with this great power.

My Mother had taught me to seek all truth in the Bible.”

“And which verse would you quote in this instance my good Nikola?” Grigori seemed to be annoyed.

Paracelsus appeared to be in agreement. “The dreams which reveal the supernatural are promises and messages that God sends us directly: they are nothing but His angels, His ministering spirits, who usually appear to us when we are in a great predicament.”

Grigori was befuddled. “I do not understand what thoughts are going through your heads? It is simple. We keep Jamison searching for an exit. His wife will come soon, I can feel it. When she arrives we hold her and he will submit.”

The men looked at Grigori with confidence. Tesla answered favorably. “The scientists of today think deeply instead of clearly. One must be sane to think clearly, but one can think deeply and be quite insane. So my dear friend I shall continue to think deeply to reach my goal and you think clearly that I am not consumed.”

Jamison was growing weak, deprived of food and water. He was fatigued and aggravatingly lost. His mind wanted to invert and fold. He fought off the regression but his thoughts were clouded. He challenged his own choice to escape and calculated if he reciprocated and begged for leniency. No that would be a death trap. Maybe this fumbling and stumbling about, bouncing off walls and staggering was the enemies plan? Was he playing into the hands of men he had underestimated? Loneliness repealed his bravery momentarily. He became obsessed on losing Lora. Every what if, now came into play contradicting every positive notion that kept his equilibrium balanced. He sat on his butt and put his head in his hands. Jamison realized that he was undermining his own escape. The clutter in his head made sounds. Disorganized clatter, undistinguishable voices, riotous anxiety upended and threatened his getaway. Freedom contingent upon his ability to come back to sanity, to find deliverance one must be aware of the impending doom.

Watching from the mirrored pool were the four planners of the scheme to breach the walls of Eden and penetrate the core driving straight down the narrow path that led to the Tree of Life. The epiphany shared no space with collusion. Achieving the reward of eternal life without a Savior was not unheard of in theological circles yet it had never been achieved. Everything that is born dies. These men had died in their previous lives and were full aware that without the Tree of Life they would return to the world of the

unseen. They had no memories of their unseen experience and that is what terrified them most of all.

“You see my friends, he grows weary. By his own hands his fight is being drained from his life force. Time is on our side.” Grigori swept his hands across the top of the water splashing a small puddle to the floor.

“Marvelous. Our minds fused together are creating a masterpiece. Thoughts create a new heaven, a new firmament, a new source of energy, from which new arts flow.” Paracelsus was glowing with pride.

Jamison was now completely alone at the bottom of his vitality. He moaned as the creature he had denied. Mortal man is but a dark shadow of what God created in the beginning. A stirring began to mix two men inside of Jamison. The man he accepted and the man he denied were warring for individuality. An abstract identity with its independent consciousness violently pushed its way up from the earth of his being. Clawing, clinging, and gasping for air. Straining to meet the ambience and taste the marrow of life. Jamison refused, denied, and pushed back. His origin had been settled 2000 years ago in the mind of Christ Jesus. Twisting at his core was the knife of an Adamic race that fell from grace into the mire of humanity. Having no use for duality; or concord with types and shadows through artificial means Jamison’s identity through his belief in a risen Savior communed with the heavenly. Ageless truth touched his heart and with sensitivity pressed deep. The abstract that had bound the lost and blind that had its fix upon Jamison was rebuked by his own inward somebody. He spoke to himself and repeated “I AM, I AM, I AM, I AM, I AM! The womb of his understanding opened giving birth to intellect measured by wisdom and knowledge accompanied by intimacy. That is when he heard Lora’s thoughts echoing soundness submerged dissolving the umbra that masked the face that he wore. Coming back from that horrible bottomless pit his innermost being had awakened and he was filled with verve and a new purpose. Yes he was a human being but normal human beings do not return from the grave of their own undoing. The visitant that had dragged him down for the moment abandoned and released him. He stood to his feet looking refreshed, born again and started to run. He absquatulated hard and fast toward nothing. But at least he was running.

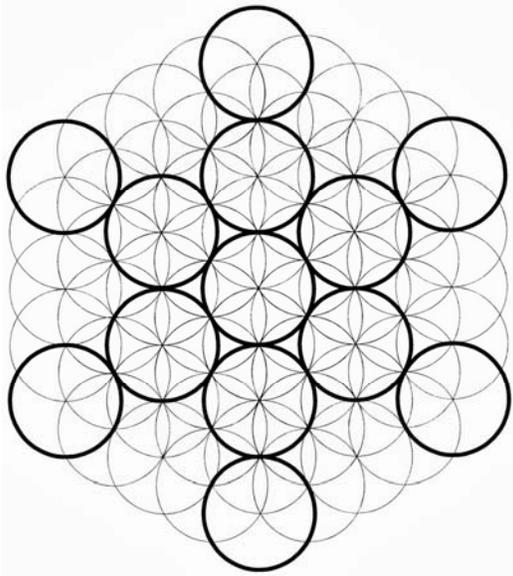
Impressed Paracelsus said “If we want to make a statement about a man's nature on the basis of his physiognomy, we must take everything into

account; it is in his distress that a man is tested, for then his nature is revealed.”

Chapter 7

The journey is the reward.

Chinese Proverb



When Lora and her fellow voyagers disembarked from the travel stream they found themselves within the castle walls. The room was a solar room used normally for the Lord and Lady of the house. It was split into two separate rooms using a large curtain. A fireplace at each end gave both parties individual heat if needed. This private apartment would commonly be used as a room for seclusion or withdrawing from sight. This was a ideal place to have arrived at. This room was modestly furnished with two great beds with heavy wooden frames, two chests, a spacious antique inlaid Russian armoire with leaded glass curio cabinet and bronze feet and a French Louis XV style parquetry inlaid secretary-commode with heavy marble top.

“Is everyone o.k.?” Lora did a headcount and everyone was present.

“Please pay close attention. This is not a dream or a fairy tale. Pain and hurt are real. Death here is final.” Kali was adamant.

“Follow me I know the way.” Sibyl took the lead and the troop filed in behind her without question. Sibyl was a special woman that had seen the inferno regions. She knew the way to judgment-hall of Rhadamanthus, who

was said to bring to light crimes done in life, which the perpetrator vainly thought impenetrably hid.

Down the corridor and to a staircase they marched. Down the staircase and into what appeared to be the Great Hall with the large vaulted ceiling. These halls were accustomed to banquets, where guests would dance and party. It was also useful as a court where the Lord would pass judgment on crimes and sentence the accused. They continued to the ground floor unopposed. Into the kitchen, past a fireplace and oven they came to a wooden door. “This is the door that goes down. We are about to descend into the underworld. This world is full of conspiracy, laced with religious superstition and masked in false realities. We must not compromise our goal to retrieve the map which is your husband. Once we open this door our lives will be eternally set on a new course.” Sibyl placed her hand on the handle. The door easily opened inward with a squeak and creak. It was dark.

Pheobe took the lead and she radiated light from her being like a winged beetle. She looked at the children and said “bioluminescence” which was the short explanation of her glowing. The spiral staircase wended its way like an arboreal serpent slithering into the heart of the castle. The dungeon area was below and Lora could feel Jamison’s presence growing stronger in her emotions. She had that tingling that one feels right before ecstasy.

Lora took the silver cylinder from around her neck and gave it to Paul. “In case we encounter something bad, hold this and do not let anything happen to it. This may be our lifeline back home.”

Paul swelled with pride that Lora would trust him with such an important treasure. He put the strap around his neck and it hung to his side.

Carefully maneuvering the steps each one conquered the dizzying descent. Now on flat rock, Pheobe was their light and the light was pushing onward. Only a few yards into the trek the sound of rocks grinding together but no shaking of the earth could be felt. Everyone scoured in every direction. The chilling sound stopped and to their astonishment Lora was gone. She had been snatched from them, out of sight, so quickly no one had time to react.

“Where is she?” Ruth yelled.

“She was here, right here, then gone!” Vivian was the first to place her hands on the wall attempting to find the secret door that Lora had been dragged through. “She didn’t even make a sound.” Paul said sadly. “We will find her. But we cannot stay here; we have to find the map.” Sibyl took the lead with Pheobe behind her. They dare not take their eyes off one another from this point. This was no ordinary underworld. Sibyl was skilled in caving and mazes. In her cave she was accustomed to inscribe on leaves gathered from the trees the names and fates of individuals. The leaves thus inscribed were arranged in order within the cave, and might be consulted by her votaries. But if a wind would rush through the hallowed chamber into the tunnels the wind would disperse the leaves, leaving all irreparably lost.

Advancing down the corridor Sibyl led the troop at a quick pace. It was now imperative that they find Jamison as quickly as possible in order to expedite Lora’s rescue as well.

Exploring every facet of their surroundings it was becoming apparent that this wasn’t going to be a quick salvage. The hallways were long and there were many alternate routes from connecting corridors yet Sibyl never slowed or stopped to consider any route except the one she was on.

“Look, up there a light!” Ruth was the first to see it. If it were possible to take their perception up a notch they did and everyone became ever more alert. Guarded they carefully moved to the doorway. Sibyl peaked around the corner and called out “all clear.”

The circular room had many doors with equipoise of bright colors. Ruth reached out and took Paul by the arm and pulled herself close to him. With exact placement, each one was light footed where they tread. Mindful of how quickly Lora disappeared from their midst this room was far too convenient and a person would be silly to not be leery of its happening.

Sibyl did not discriminate she went straight for the black door. “How do you know this is the right door?” Paul was protective.

“I do not believe anyone would choose the black door normally because black does not emit or reflect light. The black door is the obvious choice.” Sibyl seemed very sure.

“I do not understand what that means but if you say so, I guess we will follow you.” Paul seemed anxious but trusted her judgment.

Opening the black door revealed a lit ramp that extended far down to a corner. “Shall we?” Sibyl held out her hand inviting everyone to follow her. Through the door and down the ramp they found that the ramp continued around many corners. The blind leap through the black door carried them further into the bowels of the castle. The downward maze was a riddle that Ruth wanted solved. Further from heaven and deeper toward the unknown with every step; Paul had a sensation of claustrophobia. Wishing for the outside world of spangled skies, rushing winds, the sounds of the oceans beating against the sand and rocks would ease his aching mind. To see bright constellations, fish swimming in the sea, anything outside would be better than this dark, gloomy veil of the unknown.

The turns and curves came to an end and they were in a tunnel built out of red brick.

“All of the ingredients are adding up to a trap” Vivian said stoutly. “She is correct; they are waiting for us to reveal weakness, become vulnerable.” Hathor agreed. This was not the time for nerves to come unraveled. Kali was unsure about the children if they were ready for this coming attack.

Paul and Ruth had values, ethics and morals. They were not overly religious or brainwashed in a church doctrine but their parents had tried to prepare them for the world by pointing them toward faith. They knew right from wrong and understood the value of principles, integrity and behaved themselves as children much older than they were. The concept of good and evil was more than a symbol to them. Their parents were proud of their conduct, their decency, and from everything they had seen in the children they had reason to be proud. This journey would teach them the definition of the two most important words they would ever know; life and death. To keep their integrity at any cost, by any means in a world of darkness would challenge their virtue. Honor would be met with unscrupulous callousness and fallacy would be a shocking reality. In this world everything was subjective. Fairness may be at the expense of prestige and character could fall victim to reputation. Waist deep in transparent corruption, they were already becoming stained by imperial distinction. If their lives were to be read by others when this was concluded, it was important that no one, that could accuse them, be left standing.

Of course neither could know the magnitude of crimes that lay before them nor was it possible to understand why these things must be.

Innocence and youth are not to be compared. What remained of their youth would soon be swallowed by what had erased innocence from their mind.

Having Lora snatched from them was just the start, it was as if someone turned off their childhood and turned on every care in the world. But neither breathed a word of their anxiety or fear to the other.

Chapter 8

If the thunder is not loud, the peasant forgets to cross himself.

Russian Proverb



Lora had struggled but there were so many hands that grabbed her at once, pulling her down, sealing her mouth that no one had seen it happen or heard her cry for help. She was in pitch black. There was nothing to feel with her hands as she moved forward taking tiny steps and reaching out with her hands. She did not want to fall down stairs or step into a pit, nor bump into a wall. When the lights finally were turned on, the force of the brightness startled her and she recoiled shielding her eyes with her hand. She felt like she had been divided as if cut in two like a hemisphere that divides the world between heaven and earth.

The room was domed and solid white and there was no way of seeing where the light was coming from because it shown from every direction. The light shimmered so brightly it appeared to bare a deep swirling effect.

“Hello Lora, welcome to my home.” The lights dimmed and Grigori stepped through a hidden door out into the open. Lora immediately pulled her pistol and aimed it at his head. “Who are you and where is my husband?” She demanded to know.

He moved gracefully using his hands when he spoke. “My name is Grigori and your husband is safe. He is in another part of my home and I have come to take you to him.” He smiled almost sickly.

“Why did you bring me here like this? Why didn’t you just greet/ salye me when I arrived and introduced/ prezante yourself?” Lora was still enraged.

“Your companions, the six women, do you know who they are?” Grigori asked keeping a safe distance.

“Only by name and a friend sent them with us and I trust him.” Lora said reassured.

“Those women are not to be trusted. They come from the world of mythology. They have nothing in common with you or I. You see you and I both come from the Christian faith. Those women believe themselves to be Gods. They are selfishly pretending to help you in order to seize your husband for themselves. They will have no conscious when they are finished with him.” Grigori remained at a safe distance.

“Why would I believe that when you took my husband and now you have abducted me as well?” Rache manyok bay te a blanch. Lora dare not put down her pistol though it was getting weighty in her hand.

“I have already explained to your husband that he is of such great value to our work that I dare not take the chance of him declining our invitation. And now that everything has been explained to him he is cooperating with us and working along side in partnership.” Grigori was a believable liar yet Lora was not trusting.

“Then bring him here to me.” Lora was not asking she was demanding.

“Allow me to take you to him, it is a bit of a walk but I will gladly lead the way.” Grigori turned his back to her. It was a bold move but one that he had hoped would win her confidence. Lora could not think of any other options. She dare not shoot the man in the back in fear that he had done something with Jamison and might be the only one that knew his whereabouts.

The hidden door slid open and Grigori walked through with Lori close behind. “You will not need that firearm.” Grigori assured her. “I would be more comfortable holding on to it.” Lora held it waist high aimed at Grigori’s spine.

Lora followed him checking behind her often, watching for a surprise but none ever came. Succeeding the hallways, managing more stairwells, he led her up out of the basement to the living quarters of the castle. Within the dining hall she was overwhelmed with the crystal display on the table and the chandelier overhead. A ton of silverware adorned the table and there was an aroma of food in the air.

“Won’t you join us for dinner? We are having veal a la Menehoul, with cauliflowers in veloute sauce -- after that a glass of Clos de Vougeot.” Grigori asked with delicate politeness.

Irate Lora asked him a question “Are you completely out of your mind/fou? I didn’t come here to have dinner with you. I am here for my husband/mara, now bring/ mennen him to me or I will do something/ bayay, kichoy that you are going to regret/ chagren. Sa ki pa touye ou, li angrese ou.”

“My dear Lora, please, I am not a man of violence. I am offering you and your husband something that no one else can offer. How would you like to live forever, in health, in wisdom, and without the restrictions of this life?” Grigori said temporizing as he took a seat at the table.

“Enough with your endless games!” Lora fired a shot upward. The bullet went through the crystal chandelier shattering many of the glass ornaments. The gunshot was so unexpected that Grigori jumped awkwardly. The chandelier rocked back and forth showering the dining table with shards of glass.

Nervously speaking Grigori surrendered his hands. “There is no need to use that thing. Please be careful. Look what you have done to my illumination.” He was staring up at the damaged fixture.

“The next/ pwochen is going to be you that is damaged/ domaj -. Now, where is my husband/mara?” Lora stretched the weapon out toward Grigori with foul intent.

A voice from the side door was heard. “My Lord is it safe to enter?” Grigori looked at Lora. “Well is it?” he asked.

“Do not do anything stupid/ estupid, come in. Sa k rive koukouloulou a, ka rive kakalanga tou.” Lora took a step back toward the exit.

Brito entered the room. “I am sorry that I am late.” Prevaricating he said “I just left Jamison and he was in the blueprint room working on the plans.”

“What plans?” Lora’s eyes were bouncing back and forth from one man to the other.

“I am Brito and I have been working along side of your husband preparing our travels to the garden.” Brito smiled after his introduction.

“What garden/ patè?” Lora was more suspicious now than ever. She knew that if Jamison could and was able that he would have demanded to contact her. She was not buying any of their stories.

“Lora our next journey, thanks to your husband who is working to make it possible will be to the Garden of Eden. He has agreed to lead us there and in return we all share in its glories” Brito seemed even more unscrupulous.

Lora gave it little thought, which is all she needed. She spoke a short proverb, “Every cave-hole have him own duppy” she twisted around and out the door she ran. “Great! Just great.” exclaimed Grigori unsympathetic.

The castle was enormous and she was not running to something but from something. First she needed a hiding place to sort out this situation. Secondly she needed a plan of escape. But being alone was of no comfort. Meeting these two characters left her feeling as if she needed a shower. She could see through their outer shell of humility and because of her ability and insightfulness she saw them rejoicing in evil doing. If she could find a safe place she would put herself into a trance and try to communicate with the troop or even with Jamison.

Being escorted by a dozen body guards, Grigori and Brito used a secret passage and retreated to his divining room. Grigori was holding back his vile outrage but the maleficent was building in him. His patience was thinning. “We have rats in the cellar, a roach loose in the dungeon, and now a snake in our living quarters. Send the exterminators down into the cellar and do not let one vermin exit alive.” Grigori originally did not want to resort to these measures yet he was being given no choice. Jamison was all that he needed

in one piece. He was highly disappointed that the same charms he had used in his former life were useless on Lora. He could not explain why his charisma was declined. Returning to his pool of water he released the Urim and Thummim into the water. As the ripples began to settle he saw Jamison revived and running, the scene changed and he saw Lora hiding but she was in a trance and had used her gift to hide her position. The waters changed the image to the troop down below who were now walking into Grigori's trap. "Ah, this should be good." He said referring to how vulnerable and susceptible they would be in just a few short steps.

Pheobe had the lead, with Sibyl directly behind her. They had entered a large chamber that appeared to be a place where prisoners of old would have been held, possibly before either being sent out to work or possibly to be shipped out, traded for food or other luxuries in the day. Grigori was telling the truth about one thing when he referred to these six women, they did not have anything in common with mortal man. Their mythological senses were extremely heightened.

The women stopped altogether and formed a circle around the children. "They are here." Kali said her countenance was radiating light. Paul and Ruth noticed all of the women had changed demeanor. Gaea's green apparel seemed to catch air and she floated upward from the group. When the gun shots were heard the six women had moved at such speed, such precision that those who pulled the trigger took their last breath upon the squeeze of the trigger. The shots came from sniper boxes hidden up on the overhang above. Gaea had floated upward then like a crazed winged creature she unleashed an assault that caught the enemy off guard. There were hardly whimpers and no cries, just the sound of bodies hitting the floor along with the clanging of their rifles. Vivian had raised her arms then cast an electrical current toward the far wall where shots had also resonated from. She wasn't the killing kind. Instead a dozen men froze stiff, imprisoned in their minds in a sky castle that would suspend them in the fear of falling until she released them. Paul and Ruth had crouched down when they heard the gun shots. Now the entire room was silent except for their rapid nervous breathes. "What happened?" asked Paul rising to an upright position. "The threat is eliminated" Hathor announced.

In his divining room Grigori slapped an open hand flat onto the surface of the water in anger. "We must move now. Send word to Tesla that we need his machine in place. If he says he needs to conduct further experiments tell

him we are out of time. Send the guards down to retrieve Jamison; he should not have any fight left. Prepare the wormhole for travel.” Brito left the room in a hurry.

“Grigori, if I could beg your pardon. I have been in this position before. Patience is the key. If we rush this we will fail. Man is a microcosm, or a little world, because he is an extract from all the stars and planets of the whole firmament, from the earth and the elements; and so he is their quintessence. If you treat him as greater than the universe then you have credited him with too much.” Paracelsus stood directly behind Grigori.

“Of course but when the enemy attacks, when they cannot be negotiated with, when diplomacy fails, then drastic measures must be implemented to assure completion.” Grigori turned to his partner.

Paracelsus put his hands on Grigori’s shoulders “He who knows nothing, loves nothing. He who can do nothing understands nothing. He who understands nothing is worthless. Do not my friend, throw away your wisdom and come undone.”

Grigori turned from him. Paracelsus spoke again “A mortal lives not through that breath that flows in and that flows out. The source of his life is another and this causes the breath to flow. Ours is to capture this flow, attain it, control it, and become it.”

Grigori with maddening eyes said “Oh we will, we will! I will go tell the Great Madam to prepare herself.”

Brito entered Tesla’s laboratory through a secret passage heavily fortified with guards and surveillance equipment. Grigori had afforded him the best of everything to conduct his experiments and build his vision. “Tesla, are you finished?” Brito had barged in unannounced so this threw Tesla off and he almost fell off the platform he was working from. “What do you mean asking me if I am finished?” He seemed offended.

“We have a situation. The enemy is approaching and we must transport now. Your machine must hold them back so we can make our escape.” Brito examined the huge machine that looked like a satellite dish from the future. It was large, shinny and obtrusive in appearance. “I have some men out on

the south lawn finalizing the tower. But until the tower is energized we have no capability to implement.” Tesla had little worry in his tone.

“If you want to keep living in this life you best put everything in rush mode, or you will be here as this castle burns, because there are 6 mythological characters breathing down our necks and from the looks of what they are capable of I cannot assure our escape.” Brito was dead serious.

As Lora meditated in her secret place she called for Jamison. Jamison was running, running toward her. He ignored the critical pain, the heaviness of his legs, his sheer vulnerability because he thought anything was possible if he set his mind to it.

Paracelsus watched him in his own divining pool with great apprehension. Aloud he said “The human spirit is so great a thing that no man can express it; could we rightly comprehend the mind of man nothing would be impossible to us upon the earth.”

Chapter 9

We are all visitors to this time, this place. We are just passing through. Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love... and then we return home.

Australian Aboriginal Proverb



In a room lit only by a single candle suspended, seven wicks burned. Candle wax had spilled over, dripped down the Domnesca candle stand and the floor at the base was swallowed. A woman sat on a throne smoking a long pipe attached to a tube that ran down into a clear bottle filled with a rainbow of smoke. She stared into a mirror that reflected an illusion. This was the Great Madam of the Ages who appeared always as if she was in mourning. Her face lit by the single block of fuel situated tightly in the socket, wicks planted deep. Casting shadows, highlighting her face this was also her time keeper. Every night with her candle was a festival of light reflecting both her joy and concern. She was frail with loss of virtue and her countenance was absent of softness, gray with a look of illness. Her eyes were dim with cataracts and sublunary visions. Her veiny hands slightly trembled. Stained yellow was her thick finger nails which revealed her age. The sun damage to her skin had created large pores in her face causing her to have sagged

features. When she smiles her receding gum lines was only mortified by her stained teeth.

There was a knock of reverence at the Great Madams door. She resided in a room with curtains but no windows as antiquated as the pipe she smoked. She groaned, and spoke vexed in her spirit. "Enter Rasputin."

He entered respectfully. With his head bowed he apprised her of the current situation. "Madam Zebul we must depart right away. Our time is now."

"I hope that you have not shamed me. My candle still burns." She said taking a long draw on her pipe then blowing the smoke out with a furry.

"No Madam, no shame, but diplomacy has failed. Our enemies are defiant and refuse to obey so I have suggested we gather the map and make our way to Eden." He lifted his eyes slightly to see her reaction. Very well, make it happen and I will call the legion and we shall depart this earth for the last time."

She pushed herself up from her seated position and lay her pipe down. "Seize those mythological creatures and give them alive to the father of evil, ambush them, over power them and dilute them in every way. I do not want to be followed. If you must, take a long sickle with jagged teeth to their throats, then feed them to the dogs. I do not want our whole plot to be revealed to them. We cannot afford to run or even waste time fighting, we must journey softly and carefree."

"I agree; it shall be done. Is there anything else I can do for you Madam?" Grigori asked humbly.

She leaned forward the smoke circled her head. "Yes, for you to get out of my sunlight."

Grigori Rasputin backed out of the room. With his faithful canine Youssou and Pov by his side he went to organize their departure.

Madam Zebul fought her way through the original cocktail smoke to her cabinet. The combination of heroin, PCP (Phencyclidine), Psilocybin mushrooms, Ecstasy (MDMA) and Lysergic acid diethylamide, LSD kept her mind in a state of euphonium. She described the experience as one that

made her more presentable. She would normally feel it racing up her spine into her gut, her rush never plateau. To her the world looked gold and sepia. Her vision had become beautifully enhanced. She lived on the drugs because they took her to the boundaries of her mind where voices came easy from within and she could commune with the deepest part of her own being. On the edge of oblivion she had great affection for herself. She existed in a seemingly infinite perspective from a lofty height. At times she found it difficult to discern the difference between walking up stairs or down stairs but it did not matter. She would always have someone to carry her if need be.

She wanted more than anything to have a vineyard. The Garden of Eden was the pristine real estate. She would use her arbitrary power to crush all that stood in her way of achieving this garden. From the drawer she withdrew a crown and positioned it on her head. She walked back to her chair where she sat staring into the mirror. She did not think her reflection looked as good as it did moments ago. She pushed her nose to the glass and looking cross eyed at herself she reached for the pipe. She took a long hit never taking her eyes off her reflection; then another and another. In her mind magic happened. Her face transformed from an old woman to the woman she remembered in her youth. If she just kept using the drugs she would never grow old.

Grigori and his hounds met the soldiers in the conference hall. He had a hundred men here, and a hundred out on the lawn patrolling the grounds. The rest were throughout the castle following orders to bring in Jamison.

Jamison was now following Lora's voice. She was leading him through the twisted bowels of the castle. Jamison was a man out for blood. Coming to the end of the earth he was on a path earthbound with bitterness and rage invested in his heart. He was tired of these underworld figures rising again and attempting to bring chaos and madness to the world. The world was already polluted with real life Erebus characters and did not need to loose more of its children to invented darkness. It was time to rein affliction upon those that had dabbled again in Jamison's life. He knew Lora was near. He could feel her as if she was right beside him. A new sight for his weary eyes; it was a helix staircase. They corkscrewed upward and that was the direction he intended to go. He stepped up the winders following the arc, twisting upward with multiple rotations until he reached what appeared to be a hatch. He turned the metal handle and with little effort he pushed it open. Popping his head up through the hole he did a 360 degree turn and saw that the coast

was clear. As he climbed up out of the hatch he remembered an H.G. Wells quote and recited it aloud. "I must confess that my imagination refuses to see any sort of submarine doing anything but suffocating its crew and floundering at sea."

A noise to his backside caught his attention. Jamison swung around to see a rifle pointed right at his face. The boy did not look much older than seventeen or eighteen years old. "Do not move. Or I will shoot."

"It's easy to be brave holding that gun son. But you don't want to do anything foolish that might jeopardize you taking air into your lungs." Jamison had his hands partially raised.

"Mister, turn around and kneel down." The young man was shaky.

"Let me ask you a question boy. Did you know God laughs?" Jamison did not show expression.

The boy looked confused. "Say what?"

Jamison smiled "In Psalms (37:13): "My Lord laughs at him for He sees that his day is coming."

In a blink of an eye Jamison snatched the rifle from the young man's fingers and swung the butt of the firearm around at lightening speed. With what must have sounded like thunder in the young man's head the butt cracked his jaw. With a thud his body smashed to the floor. Instinctually Jamison turned and two more soldiers had come upon him. There was no where to retreat to. There was no time to fire the rifle. So he thrust forward with the gun catching the first man just under the armpit and struck him dead. The second man charged him with a bayonet attached to his rifle. Jamison side stepped him the blade missing his neck by inches. Jamison struck the man in the back and he tumbled to the floor. Seizing the opportunity and catching his opponent in a vulnerable position Jamison went for his rifle. A short struggle occurred but Jamison's superb power and speed stripped it from him. Eyes looking up helpless and terrified Jamison sunk the bayonet into the chest penetrating the thoracic cavity making a wound so large blood poured as if it were coming from a bung hole of a barrel. There wasn't time to consider if these men were still alive or stone cold dead, Jamison listened for Lora again. He could hear her. His heart leapt with joy. The enemy was close and

closing in. There were distant voices, footsteps, and chaos was about to ensue. He did not want to be in the middle of it. So he ran stepping over the ensanguined spot. He wanted to finish off these lousy forces of darkness but wasn't sure of the odds. He managed to work his way through the castle undetected.

He stopped at a door that he assumed was a closet. The pull from behind the door was overwhelming and Lora's voice in his head was louder than ever. Jamison lightly rapped his knuckles on the door. "Lora, it's me; are you in there?" He waited for an answer. There was no answer. He impatiently rapped on the door a second time. "Lora, open the door. If you are in there open the door it is me your husband." Jamison put his ear to the door to listen. The door knob twisted slowly. Jamison stepped back excited yet cautious.

He saw black fingers reach around the door. It was his Nubian princess. He pulled the door open and she melted his heart instantly. He pulled her to him and they kissed. He had never felt anything so wonderful in his life. She felt the same. He did not want to let her go but knowing there was evil hunting them he thought it best they cut their union short.

"You are the most beautiful thing I have ever seen." He drank her in. She put him at arms length and looked him up and down. "Where did you get those clothes? A bit tight aren't they?" She giggled. "It's a long story and even longer when I tell it." He took her by the hand and he led her away. "Did anyone come with you?" Jamison was planning in his head. "Yes, we met with Oannes and he sent a troop with us." She answered. He seemed confused. "Who is we?"

"You may not like this but in a vision I saw that I had to bring two others with me." She expressed worry upon her face. Jamison's mind flashed through all of the brave people they collectively knew that would be perfect for such and adventure and battle. "Well who did you bring; your uncle Keyair; maybe cousin Eldrick?" Both of these men were very formable and intimidating men.

"You might/ pisans be surprised/ sipriz to know that they are not from my family/ fanmi they are from yours." Lora's voice quivered.

"Someone from my family? Tell me who?" Jamison stopped momentarily.

“Well remember/ sonje we were having visitors, your uncle/ tonton, monnonk was coming by?” Lora smiled timidly.

He thought. “You mean Ben and Kate are here? They don’t have any experience in anything like this.” Jamison sounded fearful.

Weakly Lora answered. “It is a good thing it is not Ben and Kate.” Lora’s words were chilling to his soul.

“You brought the kids?” Jamison was emotionally upset. “Where are they?”

“The last time I saw them they were with the women that Oannes sent. We were under the castle searching for you when I was pulled through a secret passage.” Lora started to cry.

“Please baby, don’t cry. It is o.k. we will find them.” Jamison comforted her and assured her that she had done the right thing. He believed in her oracle ability and if she had been told to bring them, then she had done nothing inappropriate.

They were in the throat of mania but would have to go deep into the cruel bonds under ground. Both had been in the acidic affliction of the dungeon. Only Jamison had experienced the bitter anguish of being dragged to the borders of great grief of heart. He wasn’t going to recount those perils again.

Knowing that he had to return to the place of torture where he had escaped earlier made Jamison seethe with furious heat. If he were a log, one would be able to hear the crackle. He was a raging fire burning for justice. The best way to the dungeon was the way Lora had originally entered when she first arrived. This took them through the kitchen area and for Jamison he was thrilled. He snatched and grabbed anything he could carry and wadded his mouth full of fruit and nuts. He washed it down on the go with a glass of water. Maybe that would sustain him until they got through this next adventure.

Lora led him to the wooden door. She warned him that after the spiral staircase is where the secret passage opened and she had been abducted. Grigori had underestimated her ability to resist his allure and his own power to seduce. Now teamed up with her husband, Lora was energized and made

whole. Her powers of perception had intensified and her visions were vivid. She could see Paul and Ruth ahead.

“They are in trouble” Lora warned Jamison.

At the bottom of the staircase Lora suddenly saw the female travelers and the children in her minds eye.

“What kind of trouble?” Jamison stepped down from the last step.

“They are out numbered and are about to be attacked. This way!” Lora started running.

The travelers, Paul and Ruth had managed to find an exit to the castle. Hathor thought it best to leave and maybe reenter from a different entrance in hopes that they would find something they had missed. So far their search had not produced Jamison. Pheobe and Kila believed the best recourse was to retrace their steps and be more thorough. The children were up for whatever the others decided.

They did not have time to vote when the first bullet silently went through Hathor. Hathor twisted as if to see where the bullet had come from but it was too late. She went to one knee. Vivian grabbed her and screamed out prompting the others to seek cover. The only cover was the door which exited outside. Hathor fell, her body dissolved into nothingness. She had no pain, no regret, just a hollowness that took her away. Paul and Ruth were pushed hard from the back through the open door out into the courtyard. “Behind the hedges!” Kali ordered.

Bullets were cutting through the air, whizzing around them digging into the earth pinning them down. It was like someone was hurling handfuls of lead at them. No one could understand why they could not hear the shots. The enemy must have invested in silencers for their guns. Astounding heat rose in the faces of Paul and Ruth who had not even drawn out their weapons. Everyone was pressed to lay flat or succumb to the violence that showered them.

“Some destiny.” Kali said sarcastically.

“Poor Hathor.” Gaea said as she raised her hands and called out “Karpoi!, Karpoi!” “Cover your heads” Sibyl said.

The sky burst opened swallowing every cloud. From high above the air produced an agricultural phenomenon. Grain began to rain down, pouring from the basin of heaven. The grain became stinging pellets that came without warning. It fell away from the troop and found its aim upon the enemy who was hiding on top the castle and from gun turrets. The grain was unusual. Not only was it cutting through the clothing of the enemy, it shattered their helmets. The soldiers were screaming in agony but that was not the worst of it. Whatever was shut up in those tiny grains ignited. An avenging brand blazed. This might as well be the gates of Tartaros. The scorching heat incinerated the snipers where they were perched. The kids looked up to see the billows flame upward spitting carnage a shining stream bubbling upward into the sky. As quickly as the inferno had avenged Hathor it settled to ashes and the light went out. Darkness covered them again.

They slowly stood and appraised the situation. “What about Hathor? What has happened to her?” Ruth asked with tears in her eyes. “She is gone from this world but she never belonged here. None of us belong here. We have been sent for a purpose. In addition we asked to be here to experience this life. In return we had to complete our time. None of us know when our time will be but we will all have our time here. And when our time is up we will be thankful to have lived it and we leave here to return to our place. Hathor has returned to where we exist and she is probably keeping an eye on us still.” Pheobe was somber but not sad.

Chapter 10

*Time is a river of passing events -- a rushing torrent.
Greek Proverb*



Grigori had his remaining troops gathered at the other ends of the grounds. Brito and Paracelsus organized Madam Zebul and she had been carried in her hallucinogenic state to a waiting vehicle. She was aware of where she was, where they were going and she had control of her emotions. She was lost at times in her consciousness fading in and out of dreams, speaking with people no one else could see and shattering reality with imaginary movements. She kept telling those that got too close to her “Get out of my sunlight!”

Grigori had his dogs loaded in his vehicle a 1957 Ford Fairlane 500 Skyliner. Zebul was terrified of dogs. In her last life she had an unpleasant episode with a pack of wild dogs. Grigori was spirited that the Madam was not incapacitated but spoke revelation to them in spurts.

“Rasputin, come here” Madam Zebul groaned. He quickly went to her side. “Yes Madam.”

“I have been to the Garden. I know the way. You will not like what I am about to tell you but it must be done. Do you understand?” Madam sounded stern.

“I will do what you ask me to do.” Rasputin was devout.

“Drive the convoy to the River Neva. At the river Tesla must set up his device. He will not be coming with us. He is to activate the device and we are to drive into the river at the point which I say. Is this understood?” Madam was cold and deliberate.

“But the river?” Grigori was concerned.

Madam laid her cold boney hand upon Grigori’s hand. “Rasputin, I know the facts of your life. I know your siblings both died in that river. I also know the truth of your experience in the river. Your reluctance is understood seeing that you too found your way into the river. But you must erase your fear and see this through. Angels have spoken to me. They have sung by my bedside. I have seen Eden but I have not walked through the beauty of its garden. Do you want to walk the garden Grigori?” Madam never called him by his first name.

“We will walk the garden together Madam.” Grigori backed away admiringly and went straight to work.

With the troops loaded in the trucks and everyone in position the convoy of five Russian Tatra 815 6X6 trucks and three Ford automobiles sped away from the castle. Driving steadfast, the vehicles blazed a trail toward water. The whimsical parade of absurdities put miles between the castle and themselves. Trucks with soldiers mindful of debauchery and a loathing scene of fleshly cruelty sped away with thoughts of future lust and eroticism with all disregard for the temple of the Lord.

It did not take long for the convoy to arrive at the rivers edge. Resting at the Alexander Nevsky church at Ust-Izhora which is the settlement believed to mark the location of the Battle of the Neva, Grigori stepped out of the vehicle and began shouting orders.

The troops bailed from the backs of the trucks. There were one hundred and twenty five soldiers geared up and ready for battle. Their numbers had been decimated back at the castle within the last 24 hours. These men were angry and really no one knew why. It could have been because in their first lives they were deserters and were executed and maybe it could have been because they had suffered such recent casualties. Several men assisted Tesla in setting up his generator. Others formed a defensive perimeter around Madam Zebul.

Tesla worked feverishly setting up the generator that would manifest project concentrated non-dispersive energy which in theory would produce such energy it could bring down 10,000 planes 200 miles away. When they entered the wormhole and if his generator worked as he said it would they would have no one to follow them in.

“Are you close to having things in order?” Grigori asked Tesla who was bent over a lead box. He answered with agitation in his tone. “Let the future tell the truth, and evaluate each one according to his work and accomplishments. The present is theirs; the future, for which I have really worked, is mine.”

“The Madam wants to depart.” Grigori just wanted a simple answer.

Tesla looked up and said. “I do not think there is any thrill that can go through the human heart like that felt by the inventor as he sees some creation of the brain unfolding to success... Such emotions make a man forget food, sleep, friends, love, everything.”

“Let us not lose sight of our time.” Grigori was giving an order.

“My method is different. I do not rush into actual work. When I get a new idea, I start at once building it up in my imagination, and make improvements and operate the device in my mind. When I have gone so far as to embody everything in my invention, every possible improvement I can think of, and when I see no fault anywhere, I put into concrete form the final product of my brain.” Tesla went back to work fusing loose wires together.

A soldier interrupted. “Sir Madam Zebul is asking for you.”

Grigori went to her side without hesitation. “Rasputin our window is now. With or without Tesla’s device we must leave.” She had just finished another smoke and even though she looked wilted she saw her own reflection in the hand held mirror as that of a beautiful young princess.

Grigori ordered the vehicles all to line up in a row. All but a dozen soldiers loaded back into the trucks. He met with Tesla again who was still working on his invention.

“Time is up, we are leaving.” Grigori said.

“The spread of civilization may be likened to a fire; First, a feeble spark, next a flickering flame, then a mighty blaze, ever increasing in speed and power. When you arrive on the other side how will you build life?” Tesla asked.

Grigori seemed bewildered. It was as if Tesla had addressed something that no one had thought about. How would these people start over with no women? Grigori who had an insatiable appetite for female affection had not considered that the only woman going on this journey was Madam Zebul. He had no promises that her youthful beauty would return to her. What about all of the other men? It was too late to kidnap women from this time period. He would have to simply trust Madam’s wisdom. He turned and walked to the lead automobile that he was riding in. He raised his hand out of the window and gave the signal. The train of vehicles began rolling forward at a high rate of speed straight for the water. The river was moving swiftly and there were no boats in any direction. The sound of the road roared through the vehicles. The concrete drive was running out. The water was racing upon them. Flashes from Grigori’s first life displayed in his mind. The river and his sister fighting the water but unable to stay afloat and she drowns; then the face of his brother who was clinging to him in the pond as he pulled him through the water trying to get him to dusty and deliquescent land. He still remembers a man pulling them both from the river yet his brother eventually dies of pneumonia. His own demise rattled his vitality. He too ended up in a river; this very river they were facing at full throttle. In an act of hope and devotion and not servility Grigori’s automobile was the first to splash in. Brito and Paracelsus car was second; it plunged in with violent shaking. Madam Zebuel’s car was third. The trucks followed closely behind. Five vehicles were sinking, immersed into the dark abyss. Completely submersed, sinking to the bottom with the cabins filling up with water. The soldiers in the backs of the trucks were clinging on for dear life. Some would not make it; they would drown being sent to sleep. The vortex began turning capturing the caravan together. Madam was correct. The plunge was timed perfectly activating the wormhole.

The vortex played tug of war with the vehicles. The diverse and immense energy levels pulled down hard as the entity was winning the battle. The transformation from this world, this time, and this place to somewhere else was like a snap of a finger. Swirling around and around then they were all gone.

Nikola Tesla had sat on the bank of the river watching the impatient Madam Zebul lead her miniature army into the river, then disappeared under the choppy waves. He was once again at a crossroads as a scientist. In his first life he had died alone in room 3327 of the New Yorker Hotel. The world once before had taken him for granted and taken advantage of his genius. This second life for him had been no better. He was brought back, injected into this world and then left alone on the banks of the Neva with his experiment untested. Rasputin was depending upon him to activate it regardless if he was going to be part of the new kingdom or not. Rasputin was a very confident man to have been poisoned, shot, knifed, drowned and burned in his first life. Tesla thought to himself that he was tired, underappreciated and now abandoned again. He raised himself from the bank where he sat and walked to his device which he built for this moment. He took it in both hands and walked it over to the river. With a toss the box went into the water. He looked up at the Russian sky. It was filled with stars that looked down on him. He walked around a nearby tree three times then spoke his last words before walking casually into the welcoming torrent. "Our virtues and our failings are inseparable, like force and matter. When they separate, man is no more."

Chapter 11

Courage is ten, nine is the ability to escape.
Azerbaijani Proverb



Jamison and Lora followed Lora's gift of oracle through the dungeon and underground labyrinth and were soon convinced they were close to the others. She swore she was communicating with Sibyl telepathically. Following this voice they were able to make incredible time. All threat seemed to have been eliminated which was a sign that Rasputin had escaped and had a head start on them.

Coming out the exit into the garden Jamison could not believe his eyes, there was little Paul and Ruth looking like something from a Rambo movie. "Oh my lord, you've got to be kidding me. Paul you look like Audie Murphy." Jamison laughed.

Lora hugged Ruth. "We thought you were gone for good." Ruth said squeezing her tight.

Sibyl stepped forward. "Jamison we are here to assist you. I am Sibyl an oracle much like your wife Lora. These women are my friends Gaea," Jamison noticed her to be very buxom, "Kali, who is proficient in the art of destruction, Pheobe who acts as our intellect and brightness and Vivian who is also extremely gifted. We lost our good friend Hathor in the last battle."

"I am very sorry for your loss. I know that all of this must be new for you?" Jamison assumed.

“Jamison we come from worlds where war has been a way of life, daily power struggles are common and we have enemies there waiting for our return.” Kali informed.

Jamison realized that these women were much like Basthet his and Lora’s friend from their last time travel encounters. “So what do we call you ladies? Inferior Five? Frenetic Five?” Jamison meant it as a comic book joke but his obscure references would have been lost on most anyone. “Oh never mind. I don’t guess we need a name.”

“Rasputin and his soldiers are planning to find a wormhole. They may have already transported. If that is so we have to find a wormhole and follow them.” Phoebe said certain.

“Where are they going?” Paul asked adjusting his bandolier (ammo chain) on his shoulder.

“Their destination is the Paradise of God or Garden of Eden but only a miracle would allow them to make their mark with one wormhole. We do not feel that the God of the paradise would grant such supernatural occurrence. They will need many before finding it. We believe we have something that they do not have. We have the actual map that must be read by revelation. Jamison, you are the map.” Sibyl informed.

“I sort of thought that you were going to say that. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson “To map out a course of action and follow it to the end requires courage.” Jamison smiled.

“Emerson was correct. We believe that Rasputin’s power may increase the further away from this earth he travels.” Vivian said.

“Why do the children need to be here? Can’t they go home?” Jamison asked.

“I am afraid that we have confirmed with Lora that they are crucial to this journey and have not fulfilled their roles.” Pheobe was looking at Jamison’s pants.

“Oh”, he said remembering the drawings he had rolled up and slipped down his pant legs. “I almost forgot.” He dug into his pants and pulled the

wrinkled drawings out. “Wow that feels a lot better now. I hope I am not chapped.”

“We must burn these pages. There is no reason to keep them. Hopefully you stole a vital part of their cartography process.” Pheobe nor any of the other women were skilled in fire. Gaea did not want to repeat the fallen grain trick in fear of another fire and brimstone episode. “There is a fireplace inside we can use it” Ruth remembered.

Returning inside the castle they found the fireplace Ruth had remembered and they assiduously burned each page individually making sure that they were ash. Jamison had made the comment that they were really good and would have made an incredible mural.

Once burned, the troop gathered anything they thought useful that would not burden them down and ate to replenish their strength. Lora and Sibyl then began to examine Jamison’s body using their gifts to see into his tattoos for direction. Standing in his shorts he was a little embarrassed but he figured it had to be done. “This body art is resplendent” Sibyl said going in and out of her trance.

Lora was deeply entranced and she broke in with a word. “It is a sword, and flames/flanm, and a path/chemen that is blocked. I see darkness racing toward the light/leze. Turn three/twa, turn three/twa.” Lora’s saccadic eye movements were rapid abruptly changing the point of fixation. She appeared to be focused on the tattoo of a sword that had been inked into Jamison’s rib cage. Hot flashes and cold chills took turns running up and down Lora’s spine as she peered into the full scope of the vision. The scene within her mind became fearsome and affrighting as she gradually began to languish away under the consumption of such scenes. Gaea laid her hand on Lora and gently shook her.

“Lora, come back to us.” She said trying to bring Lora slowly out of her vision. Lora’s eyes changed from a flutter to staring straight ahead. She gently shut her eyes totally and when she opened them with a brief near reflex triad she was back.

“What is the sword?” Ruth asked.

Jamison put his shirt back on as Lora explained. “The sword holds no individual/endividi power/pisans in itself but in the hands of the one in whom the handle fits perfectly, that person/moun becomes invincible. We must find/jwenn a wormhole, concentrate on the sword and the stream/rivye will carry/pot us to where we ought to be. But there is darkness coming now. We must get out of the castle. Something terrible is coming.”

“I know the quickest way out, follow me.” Sybil said with natural spontaneity leading the troop in a run through the halls. It seemed a pity to be running out of such a beautiful structure. It was impossible to fathom that a place of such décor and splendor could produce so much hideousness and misery. Lora was still offended that Rasputin had the temerity to try seduction upon her. She would not miss this place. Being driven by a vision Jamison and Lora could not believe this was all happening again. During their past adventure together Jamison and Lora had grown closer to God and to one another establishing an ineffable communion with God and inseparable love for one another.

And now with Paul and Ruth involved was not acceptable but they had no options.

“Do you hear dogs?” Paul asked as he followed behind Lora. Jamison recognized the sound right away. “That is not dogs! It is Shuwd! Everybody run, I mean really run!”

The Shuwd were vile creatures that Jamison and Lora had battled with intractable ferocity on the last adventure. They nearly were killed and consumed by these morbid beasts that fed off the emotions of man. The Shuwd sounded diffused like they were swarming from several directions. Their bite was more vicious than a lion’s, their poison more than any reptile and their attacks cruel and merciless without conscience for they were generated from the lust of carnal minded men, they were predators craving blood. Shuwd were the loose thoughts lurking in the minds of troubled men.

The floor and the walls begin to tremble. The sensation was much like an earthquake. Jamison was wishing that they were entering a wormhole but this was not the case. It was an earthquake and it was bringing the castle down. The interior swelled and heaved, the floor raised and pieces of plaster were falling from the ceiling upon the runners. The clarity experienced moments before was now clouded over with the debris and confusion. The luxuriance they were all admiring was being crumbled and swallowed

whole. The antiques and treasures of antiquity were now becoming a cemetery. The vision, rapture and unforgettable ecstasies had failed to warn them of the severity of the darkness. They were perforce to abandon the building at the first opportunity.

Coming out through a side entrance the troop was instantly assaulted by a dozen Shuwd who sprung onto them with the element of surprise. Jamison was the first benefactor of the attack and he was tackled by a larger than usual Shuwd. Jamison spotted instantly that these were hardly normal Shuwd that he had fought against previously. These were Shuwd on steroids! Once he wrestled the slobbering beast off his chest he squeezed off a few rounds into the growling creature's chest. It stumbled backward and fell awkwardly. Jamison heard other guns being fired. He prayed that no one was hit accidentally with a stray bullet. First he thought about Lora, he could not see her anywhere. Then the thoughts of the children crossed his mind. This was not time to distress, he inwardly alleviated his frame of mind and used his training in self defense to begin taking out his vengeance. Lora had the frame of mind to snatch the children and make a run for it. Though she wanted to stay and help Jamison she reasoned that the kids had to be protected and that the women and Jamison were more than equipped to handle the battle.

The Shuwd engaged them with sheer intensity, roaring that reverberated through the troop and ached deep into their bones. Gaea had elevated herself above the battlefield and was casting down grain which exploded upon impact. She had direct hits to the tops of two Shuwd's head which buckled their hog faced knees. Kali had become insanely out of control attacking with reckless abandon. However what appeared to be a careless assault was actually a highly advanced onslaught. Her blitzkrieg was a storm of exact battery. The Shuwd bellowed sounds lunging from their throats. Vivian had used her gift and froze a Shuwd that had broke away to pursue Lora and the children. He was an easy target for Paul who took careful aim and made his first kill. Though the offensive had originally hit them at full tilt the thrust slowly proved to have little sustenance and had been launched merely to further slow their progress.

With the last Shuwd dead, the troop ran away from the crumbling castle. The entire structure was breaking into pieces and sinking into the earth. It was crashing down with loud explosions of stones landing on top of another and timber pulverizing turning to saw dust. Fires throughout the dilapidation were burning hot with billows of black and white smoke.

Quoting Sgt. Lew Slade from the 1974 movie Earthquake Jamison said “Earthquakes bring out the worst in some people.”

Waiting for a laugh or a chuckle, none came, he invented his own quote. “I’d say the architect has a lot to answer for.” Jamison said as they came to a stop a safe distance from the rubble, dust and flames. “The castle was cursed by someone to come down on top of us.” Lora said putting an arm around Jamison’s waist.

Ruth who was still trying to digest what just occurred and coming out of Costochondritis had a question “What do we do now?”

“Paul you have the answer/reponn hanging around your neck/kou.” Lora answered. Paul fingered the silver cylinder and pulled it from over his head.

“I guess I do.” Referring to the tube Paul said “It got us here.”

“The cylinder is not magic but as Mieszko taught us, it is an energy force and as long as the gates stay open and the universe doesn’t disconnect on one end we will arrive at some other point of space and time. And hopefully we don’t hit a stream that takes us into a baby universe somewhere.” Lora took the cylinder from Paul’s hands.

“If we are going to the Garden of Eden we might want to concentrate on going backwards into Eden. I do not know much about the Old Testament and creation but since we are seven thousand years into history, shouldn’t we go back and maybe find some cities from the past?” Jamison was trying to be logical.

“That sounds like a plan, I have studied Old Testament scripture to learn Latin and Hebrew for school” Paul chimed in.

“The Bible isn’t clear on the very first city but history speaks about many different places like The Land of Nod, Havilah, Çatal Höyük which is in Turkey, Jericho, then we have the rivers mentioned in Genesis; Tigris and Euphrates, we do not know of Pishon and Gihon today. I remember the City of Enoch, Sumerian Kish, the first city established in Mesopotamia after the Flood, which took its name from the man known in the Bible as Cush. It is all according to where we want to go back to.” Paul was highly informative for a boy of his age.

“Wherever we go, our enemy has a head start so we must go soon.” Jamison announced.

“The cylinder has always done us good/bon. I say we let the cylinder decide.” Lora held it out away from her as if she was offering it to everyone.

“Good enough for me.” Jamison concurred.

No one had a better plan. The troop gathered in a circle. They tried to clear their minds from everything that they had experienced and focus collectively on the Tree of Life in hopes that the unity would find the city closest to the garden. Paul remembered a Biblical verse that he shared “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.” (Proverbs 11:30)”

While in one mind and one accord the troop watched as Jamison turned the key on the cylinder. Just like a trapdoor opening the ground beneath their feet changed to empty space. Into oblivion the vacuum pulled them into the void. The vacuity was like water pouring through a hollow hand. No one tumbled, or spun, nor did they shake or quake, they emptied out of this world.

Resting firmly, feet planted on a rock they heard quiet, deathly quiet.

Chapter 12

Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail. Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.

TS Thomas Stearns Eliot



Everyone had made the journey and no harm had come to anyone. “Where are we?” Paul asked looking at the large structure just ahead of them. They all had the sense of being high up above everything.

Pheobe had the answer. “This is the Meteora Monasteries. We are in Greece but I cannot determine which age, whether it be our present or past or future.”

“Keep your eyes peeled. You never know when we will encounter the bad guys.” Jamison said taking the lead wishing he could find some clothes that fit. “I have never been to a monastery before.” Ruth said sounding like a

little girl again.

Looking to their left over the darkening landscape it was apparent that they were up on a large mountain. “Stay away from the edges a folk looks like a long ways down.” Jamison pointed out.

The series of six monasteries rested like riders on petrified giants of sandstone. Appearing to be suspended in the air, these incongruous structures watched over the two towns below. The rocks like giant fingers

rising out of the ground looked intentionally sculpted and if one was to view them from the ground they would have a hard time seeing that the highest point supported the six monasteries and their adjacent buildings.

They entered the large building without deterrence. The walls were adorned with beautiful paintings and Post Byzantine Mural art. The room was of the inscribed-cross tetrastyle type with a twelve-sided dome twenty four meters in height and two characteristic conches, one on the left side and one on the right. There was a breathtaking series of gruesome frescos which depicted the persecution of Christians by the Romans in vivid detail. The Descent to Hades mural reminded Paul of what they had just experienced back the castle.

The value of this place could not be measured in dollars, rather in drop jaw expressions.

As soon as the foreign voice was heard the troop swung around ready for battle.

“Χαιρετισμούς, εννοώ δεν σας βλάψει. Έχω σταλεί εδώ για να εξηγήσει τι πρέπει να κάνετε.” The man was speaking Greek.

Phoebe translated. “Greetings, I mean you no harm. I have been sent here to explain what you must do.”

“Ask him how he knew we were coming?” Jamison said as he swung around to take the weak side.

The man continued to speak. “Έχουμε έναν κοινό φίλο που ονομάζεται Hanus. Έστειλε λέξη. Είμαι ένας αγγελιοφόρος από άλλο τόπο και χρόνο. Το όνομά μου είναι Lancea Longini. Ήμουν ενός Ρωμαίου εκατόνταρχου κατά τη στιγμή της σταύρωσης του Χριστού. Είμαι αυτός που το δόρυ ώθησα στην πλευρά του Κυρίου. συγχώρεση μου ήταν την ημέρα που πέθανε ο Σωτήρας, την εξαγορά μου είναι τώρα.”

Phoebe did not need anyone to ask her to translate, she instantly interpreted. “We have a mutual friend named Hanus. He sent word. I am a messenger from another time and place. My name is Lancea Longini. I was a Roman centurion at the time of Christ crucifixion. I am he who thrust the spear into

the Lord's side. My forgiveness was on the day that the Savior died, my redemption is now.”

“Oh my gosh! That crazy clock maker.” Jamison said speaking about Hanus whom they had met on previous adventures. Hanus had pulled them safely from the hands of sure death a couple of times.

Longini was very stiff, expressionless with unmemorable facial features. The only characteristic was his uncomfortable stare. He never blinked, not even once. He was the type of guy who could make a one on one conversation uncomfortable.

“What must we do from here?” Lora asked.

Longini explained “Αναζητάς τον Κήπο της Εδέμ αλλά πρέπει να βρείτε ένα σπαθί για να μπορέσετε να βρείτε τον κήπο. Χωρίς το σπαθί δεν μπορείτε να φτάσετε στο Garden. Το σπαθί ήταν ένα ιερό εθνικό κατοχή του Ισραήλ. Υπήρξε ένας λαός που ονομάζεται "Tuatha de Danan" (φυλή του Dan) που είχαν μεταναστεύσει στην Ιρλανδία, έχοντας μαζί τους το Stone of Destiny (πέτρα πυλώνα του Ιακώβ). Κουβαλούσαν των άλλων περιουσιακών πάρα πολύ, αλλά τίποτε δεν αναφέρεται από το ξίφος.”

Phoebe repeated in English “You seek the Garden of Eden yet you must find a sword before you can find the Garden. Without the sword you cannot reach the Garden. The sword was a sacred national possession for Israel. There was a people called the "Tuatha de Danan" (tribe of Dan) they had migrated into Ireland having with them the Stone of Destiny (Jacob's pillar stone). They carried other possessions too but nothing is mentioned of the sword.”

“Are you saying that the sword is in Ireland?” Jamison asked.

Longini explained more with Phoebe translating.

“We haven't much time, allow me to briefly share the story with you. The Irish people are mostly descended from Dan and came to Ireland at various times, under various names, as they migrated by different routes and arrived at different times, having picked up new names along the way. One of those names makes their identity more obvious than the others and that name is the Tuatha de Danaan - the Tribe of Dan; who was the fifth of Jacob/Israel's

twelve sons. Jacob/Israel's twelve sons fathered the twelve tribes of Israel. Even though they further immigrated as far as the United States the sword remained in Ireland. The tribe of Dan is symbolized by the eagle holding the olive and arrows. Oddly enough these appear on the American Coat of Arms. You will look for red headed people who are warriors. Do not waste your time in Denmark. Others have confused it with Dan Mark. Do not. Your adventure is in Ireland.”

They were instructed to leave Metamorphosis, the first church of the Transfiguration and to make their way to Agia Triada or The Church of the Holy Trinity which was a little piece away. Longini informed them that it was there they could find a hidden wormhole. Like a small army troop they marched out and followed his instructions passing the circular domed church of Saint John the Baptist that was carved into the rock, looping around a dirt path, up one hundred and forty steps to the dramatically positioned church which rested on a slender pinnacle atop of the cliffs. This was a profoundly peaceful place that looked out over the hillside. The exterior of the small church was brick and tile and augmented by a large, unappealing narthex. The monastery consisted of a church, a refectory, a courtyard and a few guesthouses. The troop noticed the winch system with ropes and baskets that was once used to transport people and supplies to the top of the monastery and back in former years.

Jamison had something to share “The Chinese have a saying; "Before setting off on revenge, you first dig *two* graves"!”

Everyone looked at him dumbfounded. “You guys don’t have a clue do you? Look around. This is where part of the James Bond movie For Your Eyes Only was shot. I just quoted one of the coolest lines of the movie.”

“I saw the movie but I don’t remember this place.” Paul said his thoughts turning inward trying to produce the memory of the movie.

Lora laughed. “Don’t humor him; he’ll quote the whole movie.”

Entering the church a mystical aura seemed to hover overhead. Inside was a much different vibe than the sandstone and conglomerate of outside and easily forgotten was the fact that they were precariously perched high on rocks. The interior was ominous, divinely gloomy with an apocalyptic auspicious. Featured on the walls was Christ Pantokrator and in the spherical

triangles the four Evangelist. It contained a valuable collection of Byzantine relics, from carved crosses and icons to intricately embroidered altar vestments.

“Now what do we do?” Paul asked.

“Look around for something unusual, anything that would appear to be out of place. Then look at the obvious.” Jamison inferred.

The troop spread out and searched the church. Being careful not to move anything out of place or break these priceless pieces they combed the rooms thoroughly. No one was more efficient snooping and sleuthing than Ruth who was looking beneath anything that was not bolted down. On all counts nothing was left undone.

“Something is coming!” The treasure hunt came to a grinding halt. All was aborted. It was as if everyone was trying to use their powers of perception to understand the threat. There was no sound only serenity, overwhelming calm. The stillness was so thick a knife could cut through it.

Paul ran to the window in the back of the building. He stepped out onto an overhang, careful not to spill over the flimsy wooden banister he leaned forward peering downward. Below was a road. “There are big trucks and some cars down on the road.” Paul said nervously.

Jamison joined Paul on the banister inspected the scene first hand. With an uneasy feeling he disparagingly mumbled a quote from Raiders of the Lost Ark under his breath “Truck? What Truck?” Then he added his own cliché “We have company.”

“Wormhole, best find it quick.” Lora said resuming the hunt.

As if some one had switch on butane and lit a match; the walls went up into flames. The flames came from the floor and shot straight up the walls. Instantly the room became a sauna of suffocating air.

“This is a predicament, find an exit.” Jamison shouted. It was of necessity that they flee the constriction as the heat forced them into the center of the room. Ruth was beginning to panic as they all squeezed together looking for anything that would give them relief. Paul looked up. There was no fire

extinguisher to be found, to snuff out the flames. No vase of water to attempt a useless dousing, no rug to smother it, no magic spell to blow it out. “On the ceiling!” Paul yelled. All heads tilted back.

“It is the transfiguration of Matthew chapter 17. Jesus had taken Peter, and James, and John, and led them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.”

“How do we know that this is the right wormhole?” Jamison asked.

“How do we know it is even a wormhole?” Lora followed his question.

“How do we activate it if it is?” Ruth continued the questions.

“Try the cylinder. Now that we are all in the center of the room, maybe if we open the cylinder it will work.” Paul suggested.

There wasn't much time, little choice Lora had the cylinder in hand and she handed it to Jamison since he was deemed the key. Even though the walls were burning they were not seared, charred, or scorched, they burned without producing smoke or ash. But the immediate threat seemed real.

Jamison wasn't about to be toasted or melt, he produced the key and inserted it into the locking mechanism. He turned the key and held his breath with a prayer with hopes that the cylinder would save them from this situation. There was fire all around them with no exits available and the enemy which they raced closing in on their position. Whether the enemy was there to gain information, collect clues or to dispose of the troop did not matter. Jamison and his clan realized that the best strategy was to escapes as quickly as possible and leave no trace if they could.

Lora used all of her inspiration for guidance and she too hoped for the best. Everything began to change in their physiology. Flames intensified, anxiety swelled, as the spiral vortexes of the bodies began to change. Each one was stricken with a strange paralysis as they crowded tightly to the center of the room. A wind of typhoon proportions waved a mighty hand through the open door of the overhang and the flames were brighter then put out. Whether it was spiritual, magic or coincidence no one cared. They were safer already. Doom had been present like a muse and had accepted defeat fleeing, leaving a faded day and an absurd fear. The crippling effect had lifted yet the ceiling was transforming morphing from the scene of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration swirling the mural into an abstract degree of

abstract independence of expressionism. Bright red jasper resembling drops of blood with a green ring around the outer edges gave a bloodstone flagellation appearance. Being pulled upward into the rolling kaleidoscope, weightlessness, and free the troop were off their feet and floating through the colors. Spectacular flashes of light blinded them with a confusing sequence of signals. An orifice in the ceiling, a hole in the sky, through the incision of the stratified stratosphere, and launched with brutal velocity puncturing the turbulent diffusion of the unknown, the troop plunged elsewhere.

There was no time to say goodbye to the Meteora Monasteries in Greece. They were not afforded the moment of farewell, because they essentially were escaping for their lives. They were unsure and could not know if Rasputin was following them, pursuing them or if their arrival at the same moment in time was just coincidental.

The race was on but the troop did not know if they were ahead or not. Jamison's art work was what Grigori and his cohorts were following based on the expertise of a dead monk who would no longer be at the Madam's beckon call. Lora had the map in the flesh but on this adventure the directions were not as clear. She feared that without their old friend Mieszko who led them on their previous adventures in search of Mieszko's lost soul that she might make fatal mistakes. This lay in the back of her mind forcing its way to surface on occasion.

Chapter 13

A rustle in the wind reminds us a fairy is near. ~Author Unknown



After their journey the troop made their way on the stream to the new place. Every single one of them found themselves on their back looking up at a clear blue sky. They were lying head to head in a circle on the greenest, softest grass they had ever known.

“Are we dead?” Ruth asked not wanting to move. Jamison leapt to his feet and checked the surrounding area for any signs of where they might have landed.

To the astonishment of everyone the landscape was spectacularly heavenly. With green growing rolling hills and perfectly planted were high hedges of blackthorn, elder, ash, tied with ivy and brambles, over stiles. A steep climb to the north through thick deep heather and grass, revealed the natural hardwood of oak, birch and rowan woodland among the boulders.

At the crust of the forest from the invisible a woman accompanied by two dozen more women armed with crossbows stepped out into the clearing.

Jamison was the first to draw his weapon. Lora and the kids followed his lead. “Don’t move ladies.” Jamison said gallantly.

The lead woman spoke “My name is Babd we are the Tuatha. We have come to take you to what you seek.”

“How did you know that we would be here, at this time, this place?” Paul asked.

Babd reached into a small pouch that she wore around her waist and withdrew an object. When she opened her hand she revealed a gold time piece.

“Son of gun!” Jamison said astonished.

“Hanus.” Lora announced.

“The time keeper you spoke about?” Paul asked taking the gold watch from Babd.

“He is an odd/drol man but always came through for us on every turn.” Lora smiled broadly.

Babd led the travelers into the forest. As they walked the worn path the trees conveyed the impression that they were growing in size. “Anyone else notice how big these trees are from when we first came into the forest?” Paul observed.

It was apparent that the trees were taller with a thicker circumference. The sky overhead had all but disappeared from the massive hanging limbs. Babd forged ahead with the troop right behind. She led them to what so far was the most gigantic tree in the forest. The tree was so large that when standing directly in front of it, even at a distance of 50 feet nothing could be seen behind it.

Babd opened her mouth to speak. “The branches of this tree touch every single star in the sky. Its roots dig deep into the earth into the realm of the unseen. Trees provide us with healing substances, the wood provides shelter, as well as fuel for fires that cook our foods and warm our bodies in the winter time. This sacred tree is rooted in Uisneach, the center of the land. We are blessed to use this tree as an axis to align the sun in the sky with our most cherished monuments.” She laid her hands on the tree and there was a rumbling of the ground. The earth began to roll as if something was under the ground turning up the dirt. Everyone shuffled their feet with arms out to their sides to keep their balance.

The sacred tree began to revolve, twisting clockwise. As the tree pivoted it revealed the most amazing sight. The tree was a looking glass, opening by a wheel exposing another land. As it rotated Ruth gasped and Lora was bright eyed. The shaking came to an end and the picture was a town so real that Lora thought it possible to reach out and touch.

“What now? Jamison asked fixed, lost in thought.

Badb answered. “We go.” Then she stepped into the tree and was on the other side. With a single step her companions stepped through. “I guess this is follow the leader.” Jamison took Lora by the hand and they stepped through. The women and the kids did not wait.

The entire town seemed to be red headed, the men with potbellies paraded proudly down the sidewalks paying no mind to the troop. The women had titian or ginger hair with small frames. The buildings were mounds that they would later be told were called sídhe pronounced ‘shee.’ The people lived in these sidhe and farmed the land.

Jamison looked back at where they had entered this new land expecting to see the tree. But the tree was gone and a rock wall had taken its place.

Badb led the troop to a large sidhe. Having been invited in, they accepted the invitation. Once inside the quartz and granite stone structure topped with turf, they strolled along a long passage about a third length of the mound where they entered a cruciform chamber which was covered in megalithic art. The concaved depressions of concentrated rock art circles was spirally dizzying yet quite entoptic and impressive It felt as much like a tomb or a burial site as it did a palace. Maybe because of the haunting large stone basins were recessed into the walls reminding them of coffins. There they were introduced to Danu the leader of the Tuatha.

Danu was a lovely slender woman with an upturned nose. Her face had not seen sunlight and was deathly pale. Her piercing crystal blue eyes offset her rowan berry red lips. She had waist long fair hair which seemed to blow in the wind even when the wind wasn't felt.

Danu had everyone to sit as she gave them the instructions that had been given to her. “We have seen a lot of war, much violence throughout the years. We have lived in peace away from the world from which we came for centuries untouched by the world outside. But we were brought back because our world is threatened also. We have four items that you will need. These are precious to us they are not souvenirs, or mementos. What we are intrusting you with is The Lia Fail (Stone of Destiny) came from Falias. The Cliamh Solais (Sword of Light) came from Gorias. The Cauldron of Daghdha came from Murias and it had the distinction of providing a never-ending supply of food. And, from Finias is a sling-shot.

“I know your legend says that these items come from lands far away and that you brought them here with you riding on dark clouds. For you the cauldron or cup represents water. The slingshot represents fire. The stone represents the earth; the sword represents air. We will return these items to you when we have finished our journey.” Pheobe promised.

Danu along with what appeared to be several personal servants led them into a secret opening in the floor where they descended over one hundred feet to a basement the size of a football stadium. Enormous lanterns hanging from ship chains lit the room. There were doors all the way around the stadium room.

“We have an elaborate tunnel highway that extends for miles. This assures us that we can retreat at any time and surface at many points to surprise enemies. But we have had no reason to use the tunnels for war in centuries. We mainly use them to access our fields for food and to move animals through. We have a passage when extends to the ocean which was convenient when we used ships.” Danu had led them to the most fortified door in the stadium. It was arched with an array of locks. But the locks had no key holes. By touch she laid her right hand on the door, much like Badb had done to the mighty tree. The door mimicked the rotation of the tree and swung around. The room was a vault with neatly stacked treasure. Wrapped together in midnight blue Vicuña wool she produced the items.

Danu handed each relic out from the wool one piece at a time and explained the purpose of each one. “For the Tuatha people these items represent life. The Stone of Fal (Lia Fáil), keeps us above the waves of the ocean and sea. The slingshot, no battle has ever been lost with it against the man who held it. The sword of Nuada (Claíomh Solais), No one ever escaped from it once it is drawn from its sheath. The cauldron never runs dry. It is bottomless and capable of feeding an army.”

Jamison held the sword in his hands and could feel the power of the perfectly balanced killing tool. Lora held the slingshot and the accuracy of its deadly aim were sensed through to her soul. Paul was the recipient of the cup and Ruth would manage the stone.

“Each of you now has enormous power in your possession use it for good and bring an end to the universal threat that is building. Your enemy has

found your trail to be cold. They know you have left the hanging monastery cliffs through a wormhole that cannot be opened again. Once you leave here you will become apparent to them and they will seek to do one of two things. They will race you to the garden you seek or they will turn back on you and wage war upon you.” Danu was pensive, absorbed in the thoughts of her mind.

Wistful, Danu bid them farewell and opened another door just a few doors from the secured room where they had been given the treasured objects. A guide named Brigit escorted them into the tunnel and the door closed behind them. When the door shut the expansive hallway illuminated to guide their feet.

“Your destination is not far. I must take you around the Fomorians energy field. It is a wall that we are not able to penetrate unless nine times we circle it. We have not the time for such foolishness so we will take a path seldom anyone has traveled.” The troop did not understand what Brigit was speaking about and no one questioned her. They walked in silence.

Lora broke the silence “Brigit I have been thinking. Is your race called fairies?”

Brigit stopped and turned toward Lora. “Very good Lora, yes in your world we are fairies but not the typical fairies such as the Dullahan, The Banshees, or The Merrows. Some of our tribe has died of old age, others baptized into your faith. My father was Dagda who converted to the Christian faith. He chose death in Christ over an eternity in our world. The cauldron which you carry now was my fathers. We are fairies and once we were called Marcra Shee meaning, faerie cavalcade or Slooa-Shee the faerie host.”

Ruth asked “How did your father die?”

Sadly Brigit answered. “He was wounded in the Second Battle of Mag Tuired, though he lived 80 more years then succumbed to the wound.”

Intrigued by this whole episode Ruth said, “That is fascinating.”

“Yes our people have a rich recorded history in your world. Our hope is that you along with us are not wiped from histories record because of the evil that has risen. We are confident in you and your desire to preserve history

and to eliminate the danger that is now sweeping across the face of the universe.” Brigit began leading them again deeper into the heart of the earth. About twenty minutes into the walk a round door blocked their path.

“The Tuatha people are with you in spirit. We hope for you to have safe travels. We thank you for your devotion for it inspires us to seek after truth. Kingdoms will forever wage war against other kingdoms and even against the innocent. But you have proven to be faithful to both mankind and people from all worlds. May you have a strong light in your darkest hour.” Brigit placed her hand on the round protruding colorfully embellished door that bulged outward a couple of feet. Instantly the door began to spin slowly, revolving clock wise at first. It changed directions and rotated many times counter clockwise then back again clock wise for several more revolutions. A loud pop was heard like a muffled cannon blast and the door vanished. There was no warning upon vanishing Brigit made her way to the side out of direct proximity to the opening.

The travelers stepped into the dark space before them one at a time with Jamison leading the way. Despite some disturbances in the stream that caused mild instability the canal they soared along warping in what seemed to be slow motion. An unanticipated acceleration took hold and flung them like rag dolls along the stream. It was as if they were being bumped along. At the instance they would decelerate, thereupon they were tossed again tricking the amygdala part of the brain. Each traveler had a brief moment of schizophrenia before coming back to reality. This was a trippy trip the most outrageous of all travels thus far.

Chapter 14

Sunshine without rain makes a desert.

Arabian Proverb



Grigori stood on a mountain top looking out across the barren death of a scorching desert. Their journey had taken them to an unfruitful region of misery. Yet hope was a wellspring to his soul as he saw very far in the distance a river. The sun gleamed off its waters.

“Madam I have found a river. It must be one of the four we have searched for.” Grigori noticed that Madam Zebul looked much younger after their last trip into the time portal they had uncovered. He dare not say a word about it. Madam was very vain in her appearance and the hallucinogens which she liberally partook of kept her in a state of denial yet there was no denying that whatever had happened during their last travel experience had taken years off her.

Grigori had managed to bring his army through the river Neva only losing a handful of men that had panicked upon entry into the depths. When they had come out on the other side not one person had come out of the water wet or even damp. They emerged dry. He had not expected that but counted it as a miracle from God. They too had ventured into Greece and that is when Paul had spotted them on the road below. Grigori had been looking for the same wormhole that the travelers had escaped through but had been late in arriving. Thus he had called on his magic which he called divine perception. Whatever the power, and wherever he received it from, good or evil, he led his army to a cave large enough that their vehicles could be driven into its mouth. He had found a second wormhole in the same region as Meteora.

Now he and his army governed by Madam Zebul were in route for the river that he had keenly spied out from the mountain top.

Grigori and his army were being driven by a different force than Jamison and the travelers. Time was closing in bringing the two on a collision course.

“I want one of the trucks in the front and one in the back. If we happen upon any barricades I do not want our automobiles damaged. Keep at least 5 car lengths between each vehicle. If we are attacked by rockets I do not want us to lose every vehicle by one attack. If we encounter resistance Madam Zebul is our priority. Her car should receive maximum defense.” Grigori paced beside the convoy as they rested waiting to roll off the mountain into the sand filled valley below.

“Sir we have a problem” commenced one of his officers.

“What sort of problem?”

“One of the trucks has a large appendage on the outer portion.”

Grigori did not hesitate, he inspected the tire. “We have to travel. If the tire doesn’t hold up we will stop.”

Paracelsus interrupted, “The trucks are loaded and refueled. We are ready.”

To the shock of everyone Madam Zebul was out of her car unaccompanied and walking toward the men. She was radiantly beautiful looking to be a young lady of thirty years old. “Gentlemen we are close to the garden. I have gone through a transformation. The closer we are to the garden the more youthful I have become and less dependent upon my smoke.”

Stammering Grigori reported “We are ready Madam.”

“We shall accomplish what we have set our minds to do. We are giving ourselves freely to this cause to free mankind from the bonds of death. And then we will rule this earth as it should have been from the beginning. May the gods kill me; if I fail to lay my hands on the Tree of Life.”

By no fault of his own, Brito who was standing near by, overheard the conversation and remembered a Biblical scripture where Jezebel had said a similar remark. “So let the gods do [to me], and more also, if I make not thy

life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.” He held his tongue knowing that Jezebel in Bible history was a Phoenician princess who had massacred Yahweh’s prophets. She had met a tragic end by being tossed from her own bedroom window. He dare not say a word. He could not believe that he had not seen this similarity before.

Throwing themselves into the vehicles the caravan worked its way down the mountain down a winding road that boasted treacherous cliffs. Even though they ran their air conditioners the vehicles were absorbing not reflecting the heat from the sun. The highway in the valley was a smooth dirt road that seemed to stretch for miles. It was the never ending road but they were not going to the end. They were aimed at the river which Grigori had seen. He was riding with Zebul in her Ford.

“Tell me what do you believe the Tree of Life to be? Is it apple or pear? Zebul leaned back and cackled.

“Madam, I am convinced that there is a literal / physical place where a man and a woman lived. I also understand there is a deeper application and it runs spiritual.” Grigori answered his eyes lit up opening up a world of thought and contemplation.

“Please tell me more.” Zebul perked up to take interest.

“To return to the authentic tree of life one must first dismiss that we started from the primordial pea soup and would have to not only map the original DNA of the human species but also be able to retrace the steps that genes mutated from bacteria that invaded the tree. The complexity of the route would surely leave a person dismayed with the improbable return. The branches and limbs along with crown and the roots all contain a certain route in which the tree grows thus mapping its journey to adult life. The Tree of Life which is the DNA of man is also polluted with Archeaa and Eucaryota which are other paths to the same conclusion.

One should never blithely continue forward when some lengthy fossil timelines are clearly missing. Yes mutations come to play but mutations are not evolution, they are merely part of the creation process.

The Long Branch attraction sequence surely is a contradiction to anything that has to do with evolution. There are many inadequate factors whose sum leads one to say with certainty that the failure to account properly adding both the divine and science leads to shortfalls. Man is unable to build a tree, he can grow a tree but it is impossible to build a tree from nothing thus

evolution can never be proven for man cannot originate the basic starting tools to engage such a mission. For evolution to be proven true, one must borrow from the simplest of God's creational theories.

Tree reconstruction would not only lead us back to the Tree of Life but be a cure all for every illness and disease known and unknown to man.

Every tree trunk is a world, every branch is a world, every tiny bud is a world that cannot be reproduced and even in the basic Planctomycetes scientist are limited in their Genome. Much of their science is guess work and guess work falls short of faith. For faith tugs at the heartstrings and guess work is merely gut instinct." It was obvious that Grigori had his own definition and though Zebul understood not a word she was fascinated by the way Grigori pronounced the letters O (O) and Ye (E). He often simplified his consonant clusters into simpler sounds, particularly at the end of words;

As they became closer they were able to have a clearer look at the river. Stopping at the rivers edge they beheld an indescribable sight. The river was running red. It appeared to be the color of blood. Grigori leaped from the vehicle and walked down an embankment to the waters edge. He visually examined the flowing crimson river. "Send me a man." He ordered. One of the officers sent a lower ranking man to his side.

"Dip your finger into the water." Grigori ordered.

The young man hesitated. "Well go on! Dip your finger into the water! Grigori pointed his finger toward the water; sweat from the heat was dripping from his long beard.

Dipping a finger into the water in a crouched position the soldier rose back up. Grigori grabbed his hand careful not to become tainted with the blood on the soldier's finger. He brought it to his nose and inhaled.

"It is blood. This is not our river. Let's move on." Grigori announced as the young soldier stumbled forward and died falling headlong into the water.

"You see my friends; red is the color of sin. Best not to cross the river of sin, for sin brings forth death." Without any concern for the life of the recently deceased Grigori began making his way back up the embankment toward the vehicles.

Paracelsus met him half way. "What is this?"

"I am unsure but it isn't Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, or the Euphrates. We will find the Garden. We have not gone far enough." Grigori was staring off into the distance. We must move west."

"Why west?" Brito stepped up to join the conversation.

In Gen. 3:24 God gave us the first symbolic portrayal of the "east." "So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." When Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden of Eden, God placed a flaming sword to guard the entrance of the garden and the way in to the tree of life, and it turned away everyone from every side so that no one enter in from any direction. He set this guardian at the eastern gate. The gate to Eden is located at the east; the entrance must be in the west. Adam represents all mankind and being banished from the garden meant a life of exile eastward. If Adam were try to return he had to return west. Adam continued eastward away from the garden and mankind has traveled eastward since that time. We are in the east right now. West we will travel. In the symbolism of Ezekiel 47 the waters flow eastward, towards the Kedron, and thence towards the Jordan, and so along the Ghor into the Dead Sea. The main point is the rapid augmentation from a insignificant minor stream into a mighty river, not by the influx of side streams, but by its own self-supply. The answer is in how does it receive its own supply? If we can answer this, we can determine at what point in which river we must enter the garden." Grigori spoke as a man who was looking off into some strange land or galaxy and had witnessed himself in that place.

Westward the convoy kicked dust up under their tires. Grigori sat with the manuscripts of Jamison's tattoos in his fingertips trying to decode the map which was his body.

"Madam Zebul I have seen terrible things deep within the vaults of my consciousness. Things that I have damned up lest they break forth and spill out." Grigori had decided to be honest about events he had foreseen.

"Please tell me what is in your heart Rasputin."

“I have seen blazing lights burning on the horizon. Friend or foe I cannot tell, yet I see them by the thousands bowing down to a sword as it passes by.” Grigori turned his head toward her.

She had a look of concern yet affection. “This sword how can we possess it?”

“Madam, it is not accessible by the taking, it cannot be acquired, and it must be stolen with much bloodshed. I saw a room of death that rotated that no one could enter but one. But I saw the room empty of the sword. Someone has removed the sword.” Grigori frowned.

Zebul turned toward him seductively. “But you will find this sword that makes thousands bow won’t you?” Her seductive youthful eyes pulled at his heart.

“Yes Madam, I have pledged my devotion to you in every way.” Grigori felt foolish overcome by her present beauty and sultry ways. There was a discernable attraction between the two that was undeniable. Death and destruction met and serious consequences would be birthed for those that stood in the way of their destiny.

Grigori could not remember a place as barren and desolate as this valley in which they were traveling. No trees for shade from the blazing sun, or oasis for rest and water. Did an ocean depart these lands and leave it in ruins? Why had the wind been so cruel to the land? These are questions that Grigori asked himself but identified with as his reputation was one of desolation. He wondered about all of the civilizations that had either lived here among this dusty amalgamation or had made their way through this place. Did they leave on their own accord or were they whisked away by a supernatural hand? Why such mystery and a shroud? Had it been fertile ground at any time or had it always been faceless? How many people had traveled here from multi-universes or back from the netherworld like he had?

His identification with this dry and dusty land was due to his own thirst after life that he had once known. He was under no false pretenses. It was clear to him that even though he was among the living in the world he and his troop would never have mortal life again without reaching their destination and ceasing the eternal life that awaited them.

Chapter 15

“Sometimes only one person is missing and the whole world seems depopulated.”

Alphonse de Lamartine



The troop seemed to be caught in a major electric storm with thunder and lightening all around them. They had put their feet back on planet Earth not knowing if they had ever really left Earth or not.

Speaking about the flashes of light and lightening bolts streaking through the sky Jamison said “This is insane? I can’t believe this storm. The thunder is the loudest I have ever heard.”

Gaea held her hand up over her head and extended them to the sky. She was attempting to bring a peace to the storm but to no avail. “If Gaea is unable to make the storm ease then this is a bad storm” said Vivian concerned.

We ought to find shelter in case the sky opens up and dumps a flood on our heads.” Jamison had to raise his voice above the rolling sounds of thunder. “That sounds like a great idea/ide to me” Lora agreed.

Placing their feet firmly on the ground for the darkness of the night was hindering their hike they negotiated a hillside hanging on to firmly planted small trees and vines that laced the ground.

“Where are we going?” asked Paul. Jamison answered bluntly “Down.”

Navigating blindly they persisted to exploit the hill and its weakness. It was not going to stop them. Ruth lost her footing on the steepest part and slid several feet before Kali grabbed her by the arm. Everyone handled the hill steering in exact fashion without any more spills. Reaching the bottom without breaking ones neck was an accomplishment in itself.

Jamison averred and complimented each person for a job well done. Having a common vernacular Jamison had hoped that he had not insulted anyone with the positive speech.

On flat ground with few trees shelter did not seem immediately possible. They did not want to be noctivagant stumbling about all night. Everyone was waxing tired. But they could not rest until adequate cover was found. They needed protection from the elements because it had started to sprinkle.

“Can anyone see anything?” Jamison asked in all solemnity.

Paul answered “Matter of fact, I think I do. After the last lightening flash I thought I saw a building over there.” He was pointing to their right.

“Lead the way.” Pheobe said.

Paul was trying to differentiate reality from the made up images in his mind. The lightening was causing distortions in shapes and casting peculiar shadows. It was becoming clear. It was a structure. Everyone hurried to it as the rain could be heard on it’s way beating the ground with strong intent.

The grass hut was very accommodating for nine people. It was uniquely spacious with a wood burning stove, shelves with bowls but no food.

“If we are spending the night here, everybody find a spot.” Jamison said flopping down on the ground and taking off a couple of the guns Lora had given to him. It was time to remove the shoes and loosen the gun belts for everyone. The troop spread out settling into their nooks and crannies. The hut was large enough that everyone had room to spread out. It was nice for the children to slip off their weapons. It was amazing to them how weighted down they were.

Paul was examining the cauldron that he had been placed in his care. Suddenly apples appeared in the bowl. The longer he held the cup in his hands the more food it produced. Fruits, nuts, beverages, were all produce

din minutes. The hungry temerarious souls were fed more than they could eat.

“What are we actually looking for?” Lora was curious.

“If we are on our way to The Garden of Eden then we should be looking for certain rivers.” Paul who was a schoolboy theologian answered.

“So, you say if we find these rivers, we follow them and they will lead us to the Garden?” Jamison asked trying to wrap his mind around the concept.

“Conceivably we have four rivers; these are branches of one river. The one unnamed river runs through the Garden. These are ancient rivers that flowed out of Eden – of Pison the brimmer, of Gihon the burster-forth, of Hiddekel the arrowy. Because we are talking about centuries past the features of the landscape would be changed and we probably would not be able to recognize the land of Havilah or the land of Cush.” Everyone sat in amazement at the knowledge this young boy possessed.

“I see a religious upbringing and education has come in handy for you.” Jamison said mixing animosity with admiration.

“One thing to consider, there was no rainfall in the Garden of Eden. It had to have an underground reservoir to feed it”, Paul explained.

“An artesian spring.” Pheobe conceded.

“Beside the river, if my memory serves me correctly, by the flowing of this River there are some precious materials: gold, pearl, and onyx stone. I believe that the River Pison encompasses the whole land of HAVILAH which itself means CIRCULAR or a CIRCLE. The second river out of Eden is GIHON and is said to compass "the whole land of Ethiopia." Ethiopia means "the land of Cush" and Cush means "blackness." Paul paused in thought as his words were being absorbed and digested.

“The land of blackness.” Pheobe agreed.

“Yes I quoted this scripture in Ethiopia on our last journey. It was from the Shulamite maiden in the Song of Solomon "I am black/nwa, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

Look not upon me, because I am black/nwa, because the sun hath looked upon me." Lora made reference.

Paul continued with his unscheduled teaching class. "The ancient river Hiddekel, later named Tigris, flowed along the eastern border of both Babylon and Assyria. The simple meaning of the word "Assyria" is "successful." Another meaning from a source that I cannot recall defines Hiddekel as lively, or full of life. Euphrates means: "to break forth; rushing."

"Well Paul, that is all fascinating but how does it help us now?" Jamison asked trying not to sound condescending.

"We have four items, the cauldron, the slingshot, the sword and the stone. We are looking for four rivers. Four is an important Biblical number. There are four natural elements—earth, air, fire, and water. Four are the regions of the earth—north, south, east, and west. Four are the divisions of the day—morning, noon, evening, and midnight. Four are the seasons of the year—spring, summer, autumn, and winter." Paul was still spouting out Biblical facts.

All Jamison could say was, "Interesting."

Eating their share from the cauldron and being mesmerized by Paul's knowledge of scripture, the comfort zone engulfed them and dragged them into a satisfied sleep.

The rains came; they fell torrentially upon the hut. Weary and worn no one woke up, or if they did, they did not stir. Haunting voices in the wind moaned inaudible noises and creepy sounds that would have made a conscious person shake beneath the covers. The thunders shook the dwelling and earth while lightening streaked across the sky painting jagged edges against the ominous raven clouds.

With the commotion outside and the clamor of nature's wrath no one noticed the disappearance. No one was disturbed. Not a soul was roused. No person was aware. Nobody observed the snatching of two children from their bosom. The chaos and darkness outside spilled into the hearts of the troop. Waking to the absence of Paul and Ruth, Jamison was the first to race outside into the open air.

He screamed in desperation "PAUL!" His voice echoed high pitched and cracking. "RUTH!" his voice failed him. Lora took up the call. She wasn't

as loud but urgency resounded. This was a crisis. They felt lost. Jamison wandered in circles trying to shout his arms moving with agitation. The troop was stricken with painful sorrow as their hearts burst in anguish and guilt. They could not understand how the children could have been removed without a sound, and no trace. Spreading out they combed the immediate wooded area and the patch of high growth at the end of an open field that led into a dense forest of thick vegetation, dense foliage, with a condensed layering branch system of limbs and vines that create natural vistas and form a natural umbrella. This was a dark forest that looked almost impenetrable. An enemy indigenous to this place would have a great advantage here of camouflage and knowledge of the area.

The children had vanished. They had not abscond, it was concluded that even though there was no evidence of abduction, the children had to have been taken hostage against their will. The worse thoughts brandished their minds but they all agreed that the power of positive thinking would save the children. They fought off the notions to publish their fears openly in the event that the abductors could secretly spy on them. There was no reason to expose weakness or unmask emotion for them to feed off.

The plan had now changed. There was no debate or even a discussion concerning the next move. Initially disquieted the troop reached calm and put their talents together in one accord to find a solution. The children were the priority.

“The children have great perseverance, unwearied assiduity and heart. Whoever has taken them needed them for a purpose.” Gaea affirmed

“They were chosen.” Pheobe expressed a sense of excitement.

“Chosen for what purpose?” Lora commented

“Until we know who or what we are facing we won’t know the intention of the thieves.” Gaea construed.

Kali looked out at the foreboding forest and said. “That is the way.”

“How can we manage to cut through that mess? Jamison asked in disgust.

“One of my talents is destruction. I will lead the way and you just walk the path that I clear.” With that said Kali like night death charged wildly into the thicket. Like a human or nonhuman weed eater, Kali began to spin while moving forward. The forest was being split in two by her incredible rotation.

“What the heck is that about?” Jamison said amazed and impressed.

The forest moved for her and she shredded everything in her path. The troop followed behind being careful to not get too close. Lora swore she saw four horsemen by her side riding in the storm of her devastation.

“We call her the Cruel Mother.” Sibyl informed Jamison and Lora.

“You don’t say?” Jamison was almost afraid now.

The troop walked over a clear artery, a lifeline through the oppressive heart of the forest. The path that she had cleared was as wide as a bus and smooth as a stone. Kali had led them through the impassable thickets, penetrating with a piercing devastation.

Facing a mountain that was hidden now revealed by the new clearing Jamison was the first to climb. The cliffs had to be edged for they were steep. Crossing the first saddle was the easy part. Half way up the treacherous rocks they were stopped by a gendarme and had to change directions. The overhangs and rooftops were impossible without climbing equipment. Traversing, the new way caused concern with the scree tumbling and slipping at the least little touch of the hand. They were thankful that the sand like surface was temporary. They were close to the headwall and this concerned Jamison for Lora’s sake. But she encouraged him to continue that she could manage this part of the climb. With chimneys on both sides they had to jam and wedge finger tips and toes into the cracks as they used torque to ascend. The dihedral angles proved difficult but not impossible. This is where Jamison prayed for climbing shoes. This was the crux of the climb and their finger tips burned and toes were cramped. Finding a less difficult route the crag proved quicker advancement and a better grade. Jamison accidentally broke loose a flake and the flake of rock nearly hit Vivian. It was a near miss that would have been perilous if she had been struck. Sewing up their position near the summit everyone was still on the mountain. As they all reached the top they experienced Elvis legs and thought it best to rest a bit before continuing. This was the flash, the success

of conquering this rock. Jamison and Lora celebrated with a long lasting kiss then admired the world below.

Chapter 16

Even the highest towers begin at the ground.

Chinese Proverb



Dreams are often pleasant, other times they are nightmarish. No matter the dream most details are forgotten, even vivid dreams can dissipate before we wake but while we dream they are very real. But while we dream they are real. Some dreams take us flying, soaring through the universe in color while other dreams challenge us to believe the impossible in black and white. Stimulating the consciousness a dream after waking can leave a person wanting to return to the sleep world to finish the dream; while others leave the dreamer screaming in their mind in terror and waking in a pool of cold sweat.

Paul and Ruth believed that they were dreaming. They were of the opinion, as odd as it sounded, that they were sharing the same dream, identical thoughts, and a carbon copy of one another's lucid dream. The Oneironaut's were in a covered wagon. They heard noises outside. The bumps in the road rattled the wooden frame. Everything seemed real even the jarring of their bones.

“Are we awake?” Ruth asked.

“I believe we are aware, in a dream. This doesn’t feel like reality.” Paul answered.

“What if we are drugged?” Ruth supposed.

“I have never been drugged except for at the dentist. This doesn’t strike me as a drug. I just cannot figure out how we both could be having the same dream.” His brain seemed muddled but he had clear thoughts.

Paul tried to raise the cover to the wagon but it was tied tight. The bumps in the road and being tossed about made his fingers slip off the knots as he dug his fingertips between the ropes and dug aggressively.

“I can’t believe that we are not tied up.” Ruth said suspicious of the circumstances.

“Yeah, makes no sense. Help me untie this rope; we have to get view of whatever is out there.” Paul seemed to have much confidence.

The two pulled at the complex knots as quickly as they could until they had managed to loosen them enough to raise the corner of the thick leather covering. Paul peeped out and saw landscape, then some ancient buildings. These were not old buildings from ruins; these looked like brand new construction.

“It looks like we have gone back in time. Everything out there looks super old.” Paul was astonished yet impressed.

“Do you still have the cauldron?” Ruth asked timidly.

“Yes do you have the stone?” Paul held out the cup.

“Yes, but I do not know what it is for?” Ruth answered dragging it out of her pocket.

“I believe that the four items we acquired are all Biblically symbolic from the Kingdom of David. The sword is the sword that beheaded Goliath. The slingshot was the weapon that was used to kill him. Your stone was the stone that was propelled from the slingshot and this cauldron is the one David wrote about in the twenty third Psalms [Thou preparest a table before me in

the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.] It is not only the cauldron that produces food, but a cauldron of creativity. It creates nutrition.” Paul sounded undaunted.

“So do we wait until this wagon stops or do we jump while it is moving?” Ruth was sure she wouldn’t like the answer.

“I say we get while the getting’ is good.” Unafraid Paul lifted the edge of the covering again to see out.

“Oh my. I can’t believe what I am seeing” Paul’s voice sounded unsure. Ruth pushed her face against his and forced her nose out of the small look out. Upon seeing what Paul had seen she fell backward shocked by the site.

The inconceivable sight was a tower that reached so high into the sky that the top could not be seen. It looked like it was made of a combination of cement and bricks, as broad as it was tall. Thousands of workers labored on the construction site. Some were branded, some burned dark by the heat of the sun, while others were being flogged as they worked. On some of the walls of the gargantuan monstrosity emblems depicting the horns of a bull had been engraved. The slaves were leading animals pulling heavy stones on a highway of dirt. The stones were being rolled on logs to reduce friction.

“Oh my gosh Paul, what is this place?” Ruth was more alarmed than before. “I think it is the ancient city of Babylon.” Paul answered trying to come to terms with this.

Ruth started repeating “This is only a dream, this is only a dream; this is only a dream.”

“We can’t get out here, if we do, they might pick us up as runaway slaves. We have to have a more secluded area.” Paul said still looking out of the desert site.

“Do you hear that sound?” Ruth asked holding her breath as people do sometimes when listening intently.

“No I just hear people’s voices, this wagon and hammering. Is that what you hear?” Paul answered with a question.

“No it sounds like a rocket.” She said.

“They didn’t have rockets in the Old Testament.” Paul assured her.

The sound that Paul had not initially heard became audible. It was loud and coming fast like a fighter jet heading straight down to the ground. The impact of the object was so deliberate and served such a concussion that the wagon flipped over on its side. Paul and Ruth took a mild tumble but were not injured. People were screaming, animals crying and bellowing out. A second impact sounded like a dull thud but sent a shock wave underground that lifted the wagon up as the ground rolled beneath them.

“What is going on?” Ruth cried.

“I think we have arrived at the exact moment when God destroys the tower. Now is a pretty good time to escape.” Paul grabbed her by the hand and he dragged her stumbling out of the wagon. Dust slapped them in the face and they felt tiny grains of pebbles and sand being spit like bullets from the tower that was crumbling straight down as if it had imploded. The children began running with the crowd that had massed together in the confusion. Paul turned his head back to see if he could identify who had been driving the wagon they had just escaped from, but the driver was missing. Paul thought maybe whoever it was had been ejected, possibly killed during the explosion. The sky was cluttered with incoming balls of fire all aimed at the tower that was sinking into the earth. Flames were dancing all about the area where the ball of fire had burst into thousands of tiny fires scattered for what appeared to be hundreds of yards in every direction.

The children ran with the mass of people that were frantically trying to escape the holocaust. Deafening sounds of the tower crumbling and booming sounds of rocks slamming into rocks thundered like detonation. The children could not outrun the roar and rumble but were escaping the plume of dust and smoke that was rising from the ground into the sky. The air was becoming thicker as they ran but the worse seem to be behind them until everything went dark. The dust was yellow but then changed to brownish with the mixture of black carbon. The sweeping winds that were kicked up formed devilish distorted faces. The collision of the immense, colossal fireballs had now stirred powerful dust devils. The rolling clouds pushed their way up and out like a tidal wave.

“We are not going to out run it!” Ruth screamed squeezing Paul’s hand tight. The awful scene was chaotic and obstreperous. Paul madly searched everywhere as they sprinted. “Here, here, here!” he shouted racing down stone steps and into a tunnel. He thought it odd that steps would be right out in the middle of the city with no walls or railings but this seemed the only

way to escape certain doom above ground. The children ran down the stairs to the bottom one story below the surface. At first they thought they were in a cave because the walls were rough and unpolished, but as they walked, the torches mounted on the walls revealed elaborate brick work which was definitely man made. This Qanat was an open air aqueduct. They were traveling through a small canal called a kariz. This was a subterranean marvel of engineering. The children would not realize until they came to the first water well where they had entered. The catastrophe top side could be heard even at this depth. It sounded like a freight train rumbling over head.

For a moment the kids stopped. “Are we still dreaming?” Ruth asked trying to catch her breath. “I know we are dreaming. We have to find a safe place down here and go to sleep. We will wake up back in the hut.” Paul hoped aloud for Ruth’s sake even though deep in his heart he was unsure or anything at the moment.

Chapter 17

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”

The Bible



Grigori and his army were now barreling down a dusty unpaved road. On each side they were surrounded by jungle. His destination was wherever the human map was leading them. He swore he was getting visions from God along the way and that news intrigued the young Madam Zebul. Though she did not find the mysterious bearded man attractive she was drawn to him as many women in his first life had been. He was a man that others claimed had been responsible for many atrocities. Some had thought this muzhik, a dark peasant from a distant Siberian bog had thought him to be a devil while others worshipped him as a saint. Zebul had grown very affectionate and veritable of him and trusted his mystic insight. She did not care if he were an anecdote or an epoch; she depended upon and fed on his devotion to her.

“Tell me Grigori, how long before we arrive?” Zebul was admiring herself in a hand mirror adorned with a palmetto on top, a wild rose on the bottom and a variety of curves and arabesques.

“Madam we are very close to our destination. We must go through a great valley. In this dark valley many great armies have attempted passage. It is called the field of blood. At the darkest area called “The Fateful” we are to look for a gathering of ravens. That is our sign and the ravens will show us the way to one who will read the map and show us our next path. My abilities have led us here and I have seen nothing beyond the “The Fateful.” They noticed the car was slowing down.

“What is it driver?” Grigori asked looking over the backseat out the front windshield.

“We are stopping sir there are birds in the road.” The driver responded.

“Bravo! We are here Madam.” Grigori exclaimed. Madam lay her hand on his leg and smiled wantonly. Grigori stretched an evil smile across his face knowing that it was a matter of time and time was drawing closer.

“Follow the ravens!” He ordered.

The caravan turned as the ravens lit into the air. Straining to watch the flock of shiny black birds Grigori, Madam, Brito and Paracelsus all peered out of the windows like children driving to grandmothers. The jungle seemed to unfold and roll back as if it were making room for the cars and trucks carrying Grigori and his small army.

The ravens led them to the foot of a mountain. At the base of the mountain a light burned from a cave entrance.

Stopping Grigori ordered everyone to remain in the vehicles except for Madam and Brito. He approached without apprehension for Grigori believed he had been invited.

As they entered they immediately noticed a woman sitting alone at a glamorously well set table. A pair of painted dore’ bronze candelabra’s sat as the centerpiece. Each candelabrum had 12 arms that resemble intertwining grape vines, festooned with leaves and grape clusters. Standing at the foot of each vine was a detailed putti, one was holding a harp while the other wearing a crown and holding a sword. The woman sitting at the table was dinning on a piece of meat.

The woman was cloaked and when she spoke she sounded hoarse. “Grigori, Jezebel and Pelagius, you are welcomed. But I have a question for you Rasputin. After I read your map and share with you what I see, are you still planning to kill me?”

Grigori was shocked. He originally had every intention of killing her. He could not afford to leave someone alive that might help others who were racing to the Garden. He thought quickly. “You know our names, what may I ask is your name mea domina?”

“You should know me Rasputin. For I see from the fountain of Dor. I see the dead as though they are living. The inhabitants of the earth are all on the

same wheel spinning in the same direction to the exact same finish. No one can hide in their dreams or in the stars above. I see all. I am hid from the dreams that you dream, from the lights that you possess nor can your nabiyy' reach me with their visions and soothsaying. I am the witch of Endor that escaped execution by the hands of King Saul and I ask you again, is your intention to kill me once I share the vision that I will share?" The witch took a bite of the meat before her.

"My good lady, we seek truth, and in return we shall be on our way and no harm will come to you." Grigori then tested the witch by speaking Russian "Appetit prikhodit vo vremya yedy."

"If you are hungry, I have enough." She answered.

The Madam and Brito held their voices and watched the banter between the witch and Grigori.

Grigori sat at the table. His companions joined him.

The witch seemed a great hostess as she began to pour drinks and cut slabs of meat. "I have plenty and you may have your choice of meats. I prefer only the hearts myself." She informed them as she cut away at the veal.

As they feasted and the army starved the questioning began.

"What have you seen concerning our journey?" Grigori asked.

The witch was very witty and spoke Russian. "Bez truda ne vytyaschish y rybku iz pruda"

"So it will be difficult?" Grigori answered as he partially translated.

"Is God on our side?" He asked.

She answered again in Russian. "Kto rano vstayot, tomu bog podayot."

"Seer of Endor can you please speak a language that we can all understand. I wish for my mistress and my friend to understand your wisdom?" Grigori asked very humbly.

The Seer reached for her tea pot and recited a chant of thanksgiving and blessing.

Earth Mother
Giver of life
Strengthen me during my life-long strife.
Teach me Your ways of perfect love,
Peace, and wisdom true.
Spawn from my purest heart
These words to You
May this prayer help me to better
Myself in word and deed,
To a higher plane I shall succeed.
Beautiful Light of Goodness Fair
Lore of old we both do share
A Witch's brew, I drink to You
My love for You, by day, by night
In thought and in sight
Will my soul learn
The meaning of this life again.

“Ask what you will.” She said as she drank from her cup.

“Our journey has been long as you already have seen. We need your direction and where we must go next?” Grigori once again paid great reverence to her.

She pulled her hood from her head revealing a breathtaking beauty that no one in the room had ever seen in their life time. It was obvious to everyone that this witch was full of surprises.

“If I share what I have seen, what I know, what happens to me? Is there a reward? She smiled a spectacular smile that almost entranced the trio.

Grigori timidly smiled at Zebul who returned the gesture. “You are a great Seer, what could you possibly want or need?” Grigori had no reward to give to her.

“I want your Salvia Divinorum.” This request shocked the trio for they had no idea that the Seer of Endor had such abilities to see such things.

“My dear Seer.” Grigori was about to say that they had none remaining when the Seer had a second request. “And I want your Papaver somniferum.” Madam Zebul whispered to Grigori “Not the opium.”

“That is my request. Once I have it I will reveal the mystery that you seek.” The Seer leaned back in her high back seat and took another drink of wine.

“Give us a moment please.” Grigori asked as he led his companions from the table to the other side of the room.

“Madam, the Garden is our destination. It possesses everything you can dream about. It is the promise land, the land flowing with milk and honey. It is the Paradise of God.” Grigori did not use the drugs so he was more than willing to give them up if it meant expediting their trip to the garden.

“I am torn between the evil and the good and the black and the white. I am unable to continue the trip without the smoke.” Zebul said pitifully.

“Madam you are exquisite and most beautiful. You have other concoctions that can take your perceptions to a higher level in the absence of external stimuli. The drugs that she has requested will not be missed. Once we are in the garden you will find that you will no longer need these delusional perceptions.” Grigori almost pleaded with her.

“The road has been so long. Why is God commanding this of us? Why doesn't he just make it happen?” Zebul asked not expecting an answer.

Pelagius stood by not saying a word but was moved at this juncture to interject. “Why do we indulge in pointless evasions, advancing the frailty of our own nature as an objection to the one who commands us? No one knows better the true measure of our strength than he who has given it to us nor does anyone know better how much we are able to do than he who has given us this very capacity of ours to be able; nor has he who is just wished to command anything impossible or he who is good intended to condemn a man for doing what he could not avoid doing.”

“I agree. We can make this a reality, we must have faith. We will not be God's and expect the faithfulness of others if we have no faith ourselves.” Grigori looked to Zebul.

She then answered, "Give her what she has requested."

Grigori ordered the 50 pounds of weed to be brought in and 100 kilograms of putty like opium, about the amount that a mule can carry.

The Seer of Endor instructed them to place the drugs into a corner of her cave. As the soldiers retired from the cave she spoke a chant and waved her arms toward the drugs.

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Down to a sunless sea

...

I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome, those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

The packages of hallucinogenic drugs vanished.

"Well, that is that." Zebul sadly mumbled.

"Now, Seer we ask you to translate the map for us as you have promised."
Grigori strongly requested.

He handed the drawings to her of Jamison's body. She lay them on her table and spread them out end to end. She was not viewing them; she laid her hands on them and closed her eyes.

"Four rivers turn into one. One runs through a golden city from a high and lofty throne. Your journey continues outside of this cave. Follow the road west until it ends. When it ends you will leave your transportation and travel on foot. Over the mountain with much peril, a horrible fate awaits some. You are looking for the Tigris River at the foot of the mountain. Take the

Tigris by the great city Ninawa which lays to the east. It will take you north then turn west. Follow it west and as Daniel received his vision by the great river Tigris, you shall receive a sign. These maps are no good for you because the source is a body. Outside the body they have no ability to speak. These pieces of art are not silent yet they have no clear voice. I am able to see the shadows, the outlines, and directions but everything is dim. If I had the body, the flesh in my hands I could see all.” The seer took her hands from the maps and opened her eyes.

“We gave you all those drugs and that is the best you can do?” Grigori was not happy.

The Seer seemed offended but then turned and went to a large lacquer finish chest and opened the lid. There seemed to be something glowing from the box. She bent over and retrieved an item from the chest.

“Seer, why do you require the drugs that you have requested of us? Your potions and magic must be able to incorporate the spells you need.” Grigori was interested.

The Seer rose up from the box. “It is excellent for Twilight Sleep. In the night shades I can free others of pain if I have induced myself under the spell or in dreams.”

“This is a hamesh hand amulet. The words hamsa and hamesh mean "five" and refer to the digits on the hand. The Jewish name for it is the Hand of Miriam, in reference to the sister of Moses and Aaron.” The Seer floated the turquoise-glazed pottery piece to Grigori. “What is this?” he asked examining the detailed craftsmanship.

“Half way up the mountain you will encounter conflict. Show this amulet to the dissenters and you will be allowed to continue. If you fail to show this amulet in the open you will have war.” The Seer was deadly serious.

“Thank you Seer, we are leaving your company now.

She left them with her cunningness and resourcefulness a Russian saying. “Gde tonko — tam i rvyotsya.”

Though Grigori wanted to kill her so that she could not assist anyone else that came to her and he would have killed her even after everything that she

had done to help them but that last phrase she spoke resonated deep into his soul.

The trio left her safe inside and alive inside and went to the vehicles. The soldiers had waited patiently outside of their trucks for them to emerge. On the road again Zebul placed her hand on Grigori's hand and asked "You seem troubled when you left the Seer, what did she say to you?"

Grigori changed hand placement and put his on top of hers and answered "Where it is thinnest - there it snaps."

"What does that mean?" she wanted to know.

"It means that we have been warned. Whoever is weak among us must be sacrificed."

She agreed "Better safe than sorry."

He responded with "Doveray, no proveryay."

Chapter 18

If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.

Henry David Thoreau



The children Paul and Ruth had drifted off to sleep in one of the aqueducts; covered from the danger above and hid from anyone in this dream who would seek them. The children were traveling again. Their conjoined experience was the rarest of all sleep sequences. They egress from the natural, celestial world to their dreams where they were isolated at the core of a wormhole. This was an odd occurrence where Daath the reptilian brain stem at a physiological level and is the oldest part of the brain had slithered itself around their collective consciousness and dragged them into a piloting field of the supernatural. the small patch of dark cells which is thought to produce a secretion that initiates REM sleep in which a person dreams called the 'Locus Coeruleus' had been activated and in being turned on they were experiencing more than a common conscious ingress or hypnapompic state. The children had been sucked into a torsion tunnel. This was no sensation of the brain only; everything they were experiencing was real. It was all occurring in the fractal dream domain of fixative inertia.

Waking together, the children were no longer underground. “Where are we?” Ruth stood while Paul was still laying flat on his back looking up through the trees, “Wherever it is, it beats the Tower of Babel disaster.” Paul figured he might as well get up. Paul pulled out the cauldron from his backpack. “What are you doing?” she asked, “I am hungry, think of something good.” He said closing his eyes and making a wish. The cauldron over ran with fruit and chicken pieces. The two ate their fill. They were hungrier than they had thought.

A man walked the road ahead of them leading a donkey.

“Hello sir can you help us?” Paul realized that he was speaking another language verbally but he could understand it. “How did you do that?” Ruth asked speaking the same strange language. The old man turned. He was withered and worn but appeared to be spry and full of life. “Hello children, are you lost?” The old man had stopped and turned towards them.

“Yes we seem to not know the way.” Paul responded.

“Young man I am no prophet but I know you are not from our lands. May I inquire where are you going?”

Paul walked ahead of Ruth being suspiciously alert though the old man appeared harmless. “My name is Paul and this is my sister Ruth. We are passing through on our way to a garden.”

The old man smiled and said “He [is] green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.”

“I do not know what that means?” Paul smiled.

“You are a green tree. You will flourish regardless of the sun beams that scorn your leaves or the lack of nutrients in the ground. You are protected by the shoots of branches under the wall of the garden. Your roots are deep and no wind is mighty enough to tear you from the ground. You are interwoven with stone and you face the west. You will enter the garden and you will find it to be the winepress of your soul. But after the crush you will be a satisfying vessel unto the Lord.” The old man though not a prophet was very prolific.

“So we are to go west?” Ruth asked.

“The garden I do not know, but what you seek is in a westerly direction. I know because I have gone through the crushing. My conclusion is naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return: Lord has given, and Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of Lord.” The pious old man patted his donkey.

Paul thought he recognized the sayings of this man from the Bible and upon coming to a conclusion to the man's identity another male voice was heard. “

“Job, are you dragging your ass again?”

It was Job, the man whom was a character in the Bible that God and Satan had tested through a game of unleash the devil.

“No Elihu, I ran into a couple of lost wayfaring strangers and am pointing a way for them.” Job answered

Elihu stood beside Job. “Well what have we here? You children are lost? Which way did this old man tell you to travel? Elihu asked putting his arm around Job showing affection.

“I told them west was the way to the winepress.” Job answered.

“My friend Job here went through the winepress. He had a mighty adversary who stole everything he owned. But God is faithful and Job has been abundantly rewarded. If he says goes west I would not hesitate to follow his instruction. Job is a man of great patience and I suggest you condition yourself in this manner.” Elihu was an upbeat man not as old as Job but past middle age.

“Would you children like to visit my dwelling and spend the night, have food and rest before you venture onward?” Job asked.

“Would we? What we have just been through was tiring even though we just woke up; if Ruth has no objections?” Paul turned toward her.

“None at all, I am looking forward to it.”

Job led them to his farm. Everything flourished within the perimeter of his land as far as the eye could see. This humble gentle man had thousands of livestock, sheep, camels, oxen and asses. He introduced the children to his own children seven sons and three daughters. Paul was enamored at the beauty of his daughters. Ruth had to tug on his arms more than once to break the gaze and spell he was under.

Job had a banquet prepared in the honor of the children and as they sat around a open pit fire on the ground Job shared his life of blessing, temptation, adversity, loss, faithfulness, perseverance and blessing again. The night concluded with Job's admonishment and words of wisdom. "I know that the Lord can do anything. Nothing can be withheld from him, even our thoughts. I used to hear God with my ears, now I can truly say I have seen him." Job retired for the evening and the children were seen to their chambers where they drifted off to sleep, stuffed full and satisfied.

When morning came, or what they assumed was morning; they awoke outside of where they had bedded the night before. Waking up simultaneously their eyes were fixed on the sky overhead.

"How did we get out here?" Ruth again was confused as she stood. "Anytime we sleep, we are going to travel. I just pray that we are not standing on the fields of Armageddon." Paul brushed off his backside and gathered his bearings.

"Look at those clouds building." Ruth noticed. She was right, cumulonimbus clouds were moving in at a scary rate. "We need to find shelter and some higher ground in case of flash flooding." Paul gathered his belongings and the two started their hike toward the mountain in the near distance. There was a sense of urgency to escape the valley. It was imperative that they move rapidly. If they were caught in this lowland it would create a critical situation. Desperation was setting in as they realized just how deep they were in the earth and how high the hills and mountains were around them.

"Dark times rumbling toward us again." Ruth mentioned as they trudged along with a criticality.

The rains started to fall. "From the looks of what is coming at us we have to start up the mountain. We shouldn't take a chance on just finding a higher place, we need the highest." Paul said running.

He was correct. The channel that they had just raced out of was already holding water. “This isn’t natural; the basin is filling too quickly. It hasn’t rained that much yet.” Ruth said.

“You are right. Oh my gosh, this is the flood!” Paul screamed. “Flood? What flood?” Ruth asked.

“Think about it. We just experienced the destruction of the tower of Babel. Now we are getting this flood and the water is rising way faster than it should. This is Noah’s flood!” He answered. “What are we going to do?” Ruth was now panicked. “We do not have an ark so we are going to climb! But first we run.” Paul grabbed her hand and now their running turned to a rush.

There was drunkenness to their delirium. It was apparent that they were caught in a disaster type movie. The ground was breaking forth and the cisterns of the earth were erupting with violent force. They struggled up the mountain but pushing hard, neither even looked back; realizing how dangerous anything behind them might be. Paul led the way motivated more by saving his sister than himself.

“Is this a dream?” Ruth inquired.

“If it is, it is the most real dream I have ever had. No matter if it is a dream or not, we must climb!”

The two made their way up the mountain. They pulled on vines, and grass and planted their feet in the rocks and ledges. They clung to trees and vines and pulled and pushed as the rains fell and the waters rose. Powerfully the fountains gushed, the skies relentlessly opened their reservoirs and the flood conquered the dry ground. Paul and Ruth were soaking wet from head to toe. They were blinded by the sting of the drops and ascended blindly, guessing the next ascent. Ruth wanted to cry and did not know if she was crying or not. She could not feel her tears or taste the salt because the rain instantly washed them away if she were. Large trees were becoming deracinated being scratched from the surface of the earth. The ground was so soggy it could not support the top weight and they were slamming to the ground with a thump. Every living thing was being expunged from the earth. The children realized this and they climbed even higher understanding the prophecies that nothing out side of the ark had survived.

“We must go to sleep!” Paul attempted to shout over the deafening sound of the rain pounding the earth.

Ruth answered with a question. “What?”

He pulled her close. Close enough to touch his lips to her ear. “We have to go to sleep.”

She understood him this time. The children climbed another couple hundred of feet and found a dryer spot beneath a fern type tree. The two curled up next to one another and closed their eyes. They thought about home. They concentrated on leaving this horrible place. They prayed for deliverance. The waters rose swallowing everything in its wake. Nothing was spared or exempt. The earth was unable to absorb and dispense the flood, so it drowned, it died, and it was buried in a watery grave. The earth that did not drown was suffocated. And the earth that was not suffocated was crushed beneath the weight of the water.

Paul and Ruth had fallen asleep. Once again at the same time, the same place they had drifted off and dropped into the wormhole that seemed to have a destination planned for them. The universe was working to deliver them. The valleys swelled, the torrent rains fell with driving consistency. The moment of truth had blown in, and the children crawled from the vehemence in the calm of the wormhole that had opened in their minds. They understood the gravity of their predicament but it was all inconsequential now. At best the world of synchronicity was obliged to mesh with the children to give in to their lethargy and hope for the best. In this state the future did not beckon, the roots of the past did not hold firm, they drifted through the hypnagogic hymen veil. They had defined the flood correctly. It was no misnomer. Life and death was of no concern. Polarity and dualism had been filtered away through straining processes when they were sifted through the veil. They felt like ghosts, apparitions haunting the recesses of the oceans of their own mind.

Chapter 19

There is nothing to playing the organ. You only have to hit the right notes at the right time and the instrument plays itself.

- Johann Sebastian Bach



Lora had been in a trance for several minutes and the others stood by until she came out of it. As usual she was a little unstable once the vision had broken but then she was clear minded.

“We must look for the “Cave of Treasures. It is the cave where God preserved Adam and Eve under the garden/pate that we are seeking. I see numbers/nimewo. The numbers are 69.” Lora shared these thoughts and no one questioned her, though this was all new to them.

“The cave/grot was a prison for Adam and a place/andwa void of light. He wept because he missed the light/leze of the garden/pate. But his eyes of flesh/vyann were no longer designed to see such wonders. Adam was distraught and since the beginning he has attempted suicide/siside. His nature is that of destruction but God will not allow total annihilation. The serpent/koulev has never left the tree/pyebwa of good and evil which is planted in the mind/espri of man. Daily/toulejou man struggles/batay with the temptation of the senses and once entangled man will cast himself from

the tallest mountain/montay. Until man enters the heart/mitan of God he will have no constellation, no peace within/lape andedan.” Lora was speaking riddles to them, but speaking with great assurance.

“So we travel down hill westward still?” Jamison asked.

“No, we travel/vwayaj south/nansid first for the cave/gròt is near, and in it we should find the items of gold/lò, incense and myrrh; gold as a token of the kingdom that it may shed light in the darkness; incense as a token of His divinity a sweet/ dous, sikre smelling savor; and myrrh as a token of suffering/ soufri that it would comfort/ konfò in sorrow/ chagren. The gold is on the south side of the cave, the incense on the eastern side, and the myrrh on the western side. The mouth of the cave is on the north side.” Lora was sure.

“How much of these items are we looking for? Is it a little or a lot?” Vivian asked.

“There are 70 rods of gold, I am not sure how big a rod is, twelve pounds of incense and three pounds of myrrh.”

The troop began their way down the mountain. It was not as treacherous as the climb up. They found a path that they assumed had been made by wild goats. It was narrow but passable. This side of the mountain was thick with green vegetation and moderately tall trees which clung to the dirt like a desperate child clinging from his mother’s tit.

Three quarters of the way down night was falling and a light was seen burning just a short distance straight down. “Do you smell smoke?” Jamison asked.

“Yes something is burning below us.” Gaea confirmed.

“Where’s there is smoke there’s fire.” Jamison quoted.

“Menm lè desann se kote nou dwe vwayaje. / Straight down is where we ought to travel.” Lora remarked.

The troop cascaded the mountain trying to beat the darkness. Closer to the fire they realized that it was an absurd scene. There was a man dragging logs

to the mouth of a cave. From their vantage point they could make out that the man was tall, bent over in the back but powerful enough to be slinging logs on top of the resplendent fire.

“Hey there, what are you doing?” Jamison yelled.

The man glanced up “You are early!” He snarled at them and threw more logs at an even faster rate on top of the burning timber.

Jamison slid down the slope which was no more than a gentle inclination, while the others followed him. They were within normal speaking range of the man and the intense heat from the fire. “I asked you what you were doing.” Jamison asked again.

The man gave them a look of hate. His brow wrinkled his upper lip turned up and he bitterly said “And I never answered you boy.” He flung a large log in Jamison’s direction barely missing his head.

“Hey goof ball! What’s that all about?” Jamison was now angry not paying any attention to the man’s initial asseveration but now the jaculator had Jamison’s full attention.

“Turn back or die!” The old man was very vicious and demanding.

“Jamison pulled out his pistol. We have come too far to turn back now. So if you are looking for a fight, we will bring it to you.” Jamison was red in the face mad.

The old man reached to pick up another log and Jamison did not hesitate. He pulled the trigger. The bullet caught him in the shoulder spinning him around. Jamison did not expect what came next. The old man smiled. He attempted to reach for the same log and Jamison fired again. The second bullet went straight into his chest knocking him backward a few feet but he did not fall.

“I love it! Come on boy!” The old man smiled crazily and charged at Jamison.

Lora answered ““Fire deh a mus-mus tail him tink a cool breeze.”

That is when Lora fired her shotgun. The blast hit the man squarely in the face, tearing the right side clean off. He stumbled forward and fell face first at Jamison's feet. Lora's heart was pounding. "Mwen regret sa." Lora said feeling horrible for shooting the old man.

"Sorry for what?" A voice came from what should have been a corpse. Jamison jumped back as the old man stood again. He reached out and grabbed Jamison quickly before he could resist Jamison was tossed to the side. Lora fired three more rounds into this demon man. Down he went this time on his back. The girls were in their defensive poses waiting for him to resurrect again. Lora ran to Jamison's side. He was conscious and moaning. The demon man moved. When he did Vivian cast a spell of imprisonment upon him and she used her supernatural ability to cast him away with a wave of the hand.

"He is strong, very strong. I do not know how long I can hold him there." Vivian said.

Jamison had made it back on his feet. "Who was that guy?"

"He is no man. This was Moloch a veritable Canaanite god. He was building the same type fires here that he commanded his worshippers to build. Then he ordered their children be sacrificed to him by casting them into the fire." Vivian answered.

"Nou gen pou fè dife sa a te mete. This is the cave of treasures." Lora tossed her shotgun back over her shoulder. Jamison started working on clearing the brush and anything not burning or too hot to touch. The women all aided him. The fire was very hot but they were able to spread it out and to stamp out the smaller burnings.

"Why would that Moloch thing want to stop us?" Jamison inquired.

"If the garden is compromised and these monsters and beastly figures of demonic value are allowed in then goodness will be drained out of the universe. How these creatures are here now is unknown but I assume there must be an open wormhole allowing them passage. We entered from our place and time through a single portal together to meet you." Pheobe explained.

“I will say this about you girls, I realize that you are more than human but since you are on our side I am not questioning anything.” Jamison chuckled.

The time it took to finish clearing the entrance of the cave was longer than they had expected. Moloch had piled the logs and brush heavily thick. Once there was a path and the heat was cool enough to pass the troop entered the mouth of the cave. With no light Lora brought out the flashlights. The cave was enormous.

“We could get lost in this thing.” Jamison said shinning his light down one of the many caverns that branched off the main room.

“This is going to be like finding a needle in hay stack. Gen anpil tunnels.” Lora exclaimed.

“There is nothing in this room. It is barren. Vivian deduced the obvious. “Off with the shirt and pants man.” Lora articulated to Jamison.

“I feel I am being used.” Jamison jokingly laughed.

He removed his shirt and pants so she could read his tattoos.

Lora gasped. “What is it?” Jamison asked with concern in his tone.

“The tattoos on your back are moving and swirling, can’t you feel it?” Lora asked drawing in her breath sharply.

“Nothing feels weird. I feel normal.” He professed.

“Hold still.” Lora inhaled deeply and held her hands out toward his back. She could now start seeing. The ink swirls were as if Lora was looking into the smoke of a human crystal ball of flesh. Images began to form and appear, wiping out what he originally had tattooed on his back and now becoming moving pictures.

Falling into her astral projection, her conscious mind leaving the physical body, remaining attached to her physical body by a 'silver umbilical type cord she went to a different place. “I see red death/ touye wouj, flooding, drowning, carnage and sorrow/ carnage ak kè sere, yet deliverance. I see the sun burning brightly in the sky refusing to sink. There is riches and honor/

riches ak onore being giving to the last not the first. I see humility sincerity/ humilité senserite and truth and a great army that is judged by the sword/ jije, pa mouri nan lagè a.” Lora lamented and then her arms fell weakly to her sides.

Jamison spun about and grabbed her. She lay back in his arms panting. “Are you ok baby?” he asked wiping the perspiration from her forehead.

“Yes I am fine. We must find the items in this cave in order to have victory at the entrance to the garden/ pòtay antre pou jaden an.” She said using her own strength to stand. “What I saw was passages from the Bible that are in association with books that the Bible mention but are not actual books of the Bible/ liv de Bib la. Books such as Book of Jasher, Book of Gad the Seer, Prophecy of Ahijah and others. I do not know what it means but it sounds like danger ahead and the sword will bring us victory/ nepe a ap mennen nou viktwa.” Lora started helping Jamison with his shirt.

“If we want the gold we must find the tunnel that leads us to the south side of the cave, the incense the eastern side, and the myrrh on the western side.” Lora concluded now fully recovered from her trance.

“And how will these items help us?” Gaea asked.

“When we find them we will know. I saw more numbers in my vision. But the numbers were not clear. The meaning of the numbers is to pass or go from one place to another.” Lora answered.

The troop decided to head straight ahead. Since the mouth of the cave was north, they concluded that south had to be in the opposite direction. Rather than splitting up, they decided together that keeping their numbers strong was better than thinning out.

Southward the cavern was spaciouly wide with more than enough headroom. It turned out to be short haul and they found themselves staring at a solid stone wall that had a nook carved into it about 4 feet up from the floor. It branched east and west from that point.

Jamison reached his hand back into the wall.

“Got it!”

He pulled out several literal rods of gold each the size of a pencil. “Well we can’t retire on this but we have seven rods of gold.” Jamison said.

Lora took the rods and placed them in her backpack.

Jamison led the way taking the tunnel to their left which took them east. Once again the walk was not far and they came to a dead end. Another carved out nook in the rock wall. Jamison reached into it and there was the bahr or incense they were seeking. This reminded him of their time at Elephants Trunk and the box they had found in Yemen on the last trip. The incense consisted of stacte, which was a drop of aromatic gum, on'ycha, the shell of a species of mussel which burnt with an odour of musk. Galbanum was a fragrant gum. Frankincense was a bright burning gum. And there was salt which they assumed had something to do with it being used as an ingredient in many of the Old Covenant's various offerings, such as in the anointing oil of Exodus 30:30-38

They retraced their steps and walked back the opposite way westward. It took longer to reach the next stop, but again a nook and within it was their third find. Jamison pulled out sticky dark myrrh. This dried tree sap scent was stereotypically resinous.

“Fantastic, we have a bag of new goodies. Now let’s find that garden.” Jamison said almost sounding apostate but in reality he was trying to be funny.

“Nou ta dwe dòmi isit la aswè a / We should sleep here tonight before climbing the rest of the way down the mountain.” Lora suggested.

“Whatever you say dear” Jamison said taking her hand.

The troop worked their way by flashlight near the mouth of the cave. Kali and Vivian volunteered to take up defensive positions outside the cave. Jamison did not like the idea but did not argue.

The cave was a constant temperature and strangely the rock floor was more comfortable than they thought it might be. Neither Jamison nor Lora dreamt they were fast asleep. Holding one another all night and never changing positions they were hoping to be back home when their circadian rhythm woke them bright and early. Jamison and Lora dug into their backpack and had a protein bar for breakfast while the girls all chanced the outdoors right away.

By the time Jamison and Lora emerged from the cave the girls were lined up and ready to travel. Their celebration of first light, and the excitement to move on was interrupted by the coldest act launched against them thus far. A javelin some seven foot in length, flung from some cowardly vantage point hit Vivian squarely between the shoulder blades, penetrating half way

through her. She stumbled forward from the hard impact, fell forward reaching out for Sybil who missed her hand by inches. Vivian vanished before their eyes while Pheobe screamed in horror. The girls protested with internal upheaval as they turned in every direction to see where it had been launched from. But Jamison was keen and bounding in a straight line direction toward the tree line. Out from the trees from the western declivity stepped the old humped over man Molech. Jamison drew the sword of David. He reared it back behind his shoulder up over his head. He cut to the outside, away from his body. The sword was extended straight out at the end of his extended arm. He brought the tip of the sword low. Molech seemed to be taken off guard though he initiated the attack. Jamison sat down lower into his back leg flicking his wrist upward. The sword blade disturbingly moved in the opposite direction, now angled up, directly under Molech's arm. The combination of slash and thrust ripped through his flesh severing the arm cleanly. Before this feign could bellow out in pain Jamison gripped the sword with both hands. Because he had closed the distance so quickly he was near enough to use a chopping action right at Molech's neck. The power of the chop resonated through Jamison's torso through his arms and into his finger tips. The blade was a severing tool, a lethal weapon of combat. Molech's head was removed from his shoulders and the god they called Baal, ended his reign less than a god.

Hathor was the first to leave their troop and now Vivian. With the children missing this left six remaining. Lora took Vivian's departure harder than anyone. The others assured her that it was not her end. She was now where she belonged. It was of little comfort but did take the sting out of the loss. Even knowing that Vivian as well as Hathor was "where they belonged;" it was like losing an old friend.

The mountain soon required their full attention as the easy climb thus far took on a different complexion. The terrain became steeper and the rocks were looser with less vegetation to cling to.

As the troop approached the base of the mountain the forest blossomed with life. The trees were radiantly leafy and the flowers glowing in bloom. The colors danced from one patch of woods to another. The colors below looked like a box of crayons. Aquamarine, Caribbean Green, Forest Green, Razzmatazz, Unmellow Yellow, Razzmic Berry, Lemon Glacier were just several brilliant colors leaping out to tantalize their visual overload. A soft wind was pushing straight up from the valley below. At first it was

pleasantly refreshing. The intensity gently grew with more force and a lift drag took hold of the climber's bodies. It was everything that they could do to hold on. Each person felt themselves growing weightless. Nothing they could do prevented them from being pulled off the mountain.

"I can't hold on any longer!" Lora shouted to Jamison as she drifted out of his reach. At that point Jamison released his grip on the tree he was squeezing and allowed the wind to carry him away as well. At first they believed to be in great peril, but as they floated above the tree tops their anxieties eased and they stopped their commotion. Like hot air balloons without the balloon or the baskets, the human zeppelins lighter than air, more buoyant than their own imaginations they grouped together and did not resist.

Being pushed by the wind they were like clouds with a clear view of everything below. Careless freedom yet bound by the laws of nature; what goes up must come down yet they were defying the very laws of logic and explanation. Soaring skyward at menacing heights, their loss of control gave them no concern.

"Where are we being taken?" Kali asked her hair blowing delicately in the wind.

"I hope this is some sort of new time travel." Lora said wishfully thinking aloud.

"Maybe it's an unusual wormhole? I am wondering how we managed to find it. Gaea said swinging her arms as if she were swimming.

"We were heading west and Lora said that west is where the garden is. I think this thing found us." Jamison concluded.

"How are we going to get down from here?" Lora asked not expecting anyone to have a solution to their gravity problem.

"Can't you girls do some of that magic you have?" Jamison asked. Phoebe spoke up. "We are very limited here. I am afraid that we have only been granted a small measure of our natural abilities. When that runs out we will have no magic left to share here.

"Something is up ahead!" Sibyl pointed out.

“I see it, and hear something too.” Jamison confirmed.

“It is a building floating toward us.” Sibyl exclaimed.

“By golly you’re right.” Jamison declared.

“Dawg a sweat an long hair hide it / I hope we are not on a collision course.” Lora interjected.

“I am thinking we need to get out of it’s way.” Jamison remarked reaching out for Lora and taking her by the arm.

“That is larger than it looks.” Jamison said realizing that he did not make any sense with his statement so he rephrased it.

“What I meant to say is, the closer it gets, the larger it is and it is bigger than what I first believed.”

“Agreed, and that means we are going to meet it face to face.” Pheobe was positive in her assessment.

The sound coming from the floating building was that of a pipe organ. The building was multicolor being held up by giant balloons attached to its four corners. The spires shot up even further into the sky than one could imagine. Attached to the spires were flying buttresses and pinnacles stacked in a way as to create a height of lustrous décor.

The giant floating structure of opulent cerebral appeal was now right upon them. The troop managed to float up to the entryway. The grandeur of it all was easy to be swept up into the elegance. Once they reached the porch area their ability to float was gone. They were released from the grip of whatever had created their buoyancy. Each one stopped for a moment to regain the motor skills of their legs. Now that they had circumnavigated the area, they were seemingly safe for the time being.

“Well, we are at the door. Should we knock or just enter?” Jamison looked for a vote.

“How about surprising the landlord?” Gaea said with lingual utterance .

Jamison did not know if she was kidding or not so he opened the door and walked in.

Without much hesitation the troop sequentially followed him.

The organ music stopped when they entered. The silence was creepy and the only sound was the wind outside. So Pheobe shut the door.

The building was as much like a palace as it was a place of worship. Though the epitome of grandiosity with its impressive strokes and graced with high curved arches, the vivid colors of radiance and glow began to dim and become dull. The towering ceilings became stained and darkly tarnished. A shadow was cast and the light of the building was extinguished. All illumination was overtaken by a suffocating blanket of sorrow. The room seemed atabillious and pitiful. Dimly lit, the wisdom that it exhumed was dumfounded, lost and unable to connect heaven and earth, suspended lukewarmly with no world to call its own.

“Now that is just plain weird.” Jamison seemed very edgy.

Though anguished and suffering the room was still spectacular with its aesthetically furnished interiors subtly divided by cusped arches evocative of an understated elegance. The only color left was a monstrous stained glass window. The colored glass panels transform sunrays into a kaleidoscope of colors, which for a moment infused the room with an enchanting ambience. [But then suddenly the light no longer shown]

There was a seamless blend of royal living and contemporary luxury. The interior was embellished, richly furnished, pristine with its select artifacts, paintings, furniture and carpets conveyed a warm and welcoming ambience with the exception that the color had been sucked right out of everything.

Jamison was examining an area that displayed charming lamps, portraits, glass mosaic inlay. Overhead in the lower portions traditional cloth fans rotated. Many of the walls were decorated with frescoes depicting religious scenes.

“Mwen pa n' alatant / this really was not what I was expecting in here.” Lora affirmed.

“We must find out if there is anyone here that can explain things to us.” Jamison had now moved to one of the side doors. As he began to turn the door knob he heard an unfamiliar voice.

“I wouldn't do that if I were you.”

Jamison spun around as well as did the troop who could not believe that anyone could get that close to them undetected.

“Is this your floating crib partner?” Jamison asked very disrespectfully.

“My name is Etymon, and I abide here.” The man fit the black and gray room perfectly. He was dressed in dusty dinner clothes. He had a beak nose and a thin mouth. His eyes were very blue and his eyelids were noticeably large.

“So where is here / H ere se gen?” Lora asked.

“You are at Vimana. This is a place that has been measured and weighed and has been anointed as holy. This is an aerial temple for worship and revelation. If you were to see us from the ground you would see a bright cloud in the sky. This place was designed and built to escape the iron thunderbolt of the messenger of death. We use the power of laghima to propel us through the atmosphere. The knowledge and secret of "antima"; "the cap of invisibility" and "garima"; "how to become as heavy as a mountain of lead" has been passed down to us.”

“So this is a floating church?” Jamison deduced.

“I suppose one could say that but Vimana is so much more. You will experience it soon. But first is anyone hungry? We have plenty to share.” Etymon seemed very hospitable.

“First, did you know we were coming?” Jamison had to know.

“We were told that you were coming.” Etymon answered.

“By whom?” Pheobe asked.

“Come with me and I will show you.” Etymon turned to walk away.

“One more thing.” Jamison interrupted.

Etymon stopped.

“All we see is you but you keep referring to we. Where are the others?”

“If you will have patience everything will be answered.”

Lora squeezed Jamison’s arm as if to say, allow him to show us. Etymon led them on into a new room with decorative gilt moldings, sinuously sculpted marble, fine fretted screens, floor inlaid with yellow, diamond-shaped tiles and the ceiling embellished with frescoes.

They turned a corner and the site was intense. Staring at them, towering some 15 stories high was a pearl white pipe organ.

“I know it is impressive. It has 120,000 pipes.” Etymon boasted.

With unparalleled majestic beauty the organ was ominous in this building which from the outside did not look as though it could contain such a work of genius. It was inlaid with sculptures and carvings of people, cherubs and beast. The remarkable masterpiece had a haunting presence but at the same time a divine character. The most striking characteristic of the organ was the elaborate carved tree in the center of the pipes that rose up from three quarters of the way up that reached to the very top of the pipes. This tree had 12 manner of fruit hanging from its limbs.

Etymon positioned himself in front of the organ. “We built this organ at The Zone of Silence between the 26th and 28th parallels, along the 104th meridian. It’s area is a circle with a radius of 50 kilometers, and the center is the Vertice de Trino, a point which marks the juncture of the states of Durango, Coahuila and Chihuahua (Mexico). The organ is called Yidam and is used for enlightenment.”

“It certainly is impressive. So how did you say you knew we were coming here?” Jamison asked.

“Commonly Yidam creates her own music and thus the music turns into visions that we interpret and the interpretations are manifested. But in your case, Yidam did not sound a single note. Your arrival was announced by a gift attached to a bird that happened to fly through an open window.” Etymon went to a cabinet that seemed to be built in to giant a wall and from his pocket he produced a key. He unlocked the swinging door of the cabinet and brought out an hourglass. It was miniature and simply crafted. “The note read: “show them the hour glass and they will trust you. Take them to the garden.”

Jamison and Lora once again were floored by Hanus the clock maker and his foreknowledge of events in their life.

“We partially understand now Etymon / ò/demi.” Lora indicated.

“Our travel is being dictated by Yidam. When the organ begins to sound we change directions until the music ceases, then we hold a steady course.” Etymon explained.

“And the others you keep referring too?” Jamison reiterated.

Etymon, motioned to the troop and they followed him up to Yidam. On the right side was a fantastic golden handle. Etymon placed his hand on it.

“We must clear our minds. This practice is called Jivamala. We all come from different backgrounds, different beliefs yet we have one common thread; we seek truth. Truth is universal. Truth cannot be disguised for it is truth. All true transformational knowledge comes inwardly and the process is one of concentration and sincerity. When you have your minds clear and are ready I will pull this handle. A door will open for you. Your journey will continue from there.”

Everyone looked at the others standing about. “I would say we are ready.” Pheobe answered for the troop. They all agreed with a nod of the head.

Etymon pulled the handle. The instant the handle was manipulated flames shot up around each individual person. But the flame was not hot. It burned without heat. Visions of a thousand emanations raced in their minds but it gave the illusion that it was happening before their natural eyes. The fire rose so tall that no one could see anyone else. The only view they had was upward. When Jamison rolled his eyes to the ceiling he expected to see more flames with the possibility of the frescos he had admired on the way in. Yet what he saw was terrifying. A wall of water was crashing down on him. It was as if someone had turned on a giant faucet and he was standing in the drain. The water hit with tremendous force and instead of washing him across the room, or driving him into the floor he was instantly submerged. The rushing water roared as it tumbled over his body. He fought to swim but the weight of the water slapped him about and he had the sense that he was now falling downward. He had no reference point, nor guidance, just a

survival instinct not to drown. It occurred to him that he was in a perpetual waterfall but where was the bottom? Was he about to drown or was he about to collide on jagged rocks? The entire troop had the same experience. As they fought and wrestled the deluge each one found themselves on dry land looking up at the midnight sky. A circle of blue light illuminated like halos around their heads. Only a few stars glowed in the sky above. Attempting to think through the underlying plot everyone seemed dulled by the purging and cleansing process they had gone through. If they had left Vimana then where were they? If they were still within its walls then they must be having a Quantum dream. Everything was conjecture at this point.

“Is everyone alright?” Jamison asked sitting up. Everyone seemed intact and no injuries were reported. They stood on a black rock and the moon was their only light.

“Can anyone see a thing / anyen? Lora asked.

“It is dark out there. I cannot see outward to see if there are mountains, trees, or something unnatural.” Kali answered straining to view through the blackness.

Chapter 20

Wisdom and virtue are like the two wheels of a cart.

Japanese Proverb



Waking and groggy the children were lying beside one another. Ruth was the first to rise. She shook Paul. “Paul we are not back in the hut. We are under a tree. I’ve never seen a tree like this.” She said stooping under the low limbs. Paul sprung to life. He left the comfort of the tree cover.

“Wow! Look at this place.” He said engaged in daydreaming.

“I hear water running.” Ruth said. Her words snapped him out of the awe.

“Head west.” He said taking her hand.

The duo sprinted out into the floral surroundings and straight toward the sound of rushing water. They ran through the pleasantries of the forest a gentle breeze was to their back which propelled them even faster. Butterflies exploded forth from over head like confetti fluttering and drifting down upon them as they made their way through the trees.

As they came upon the river bank there was a group of people at the edge dragging their nets to the shore. Once again when Paul spoke it was not English yet he could understand the words.

“Excuse me, hello.” Foolishly he called to them never considering that not everyone they met were friends. His youthfulness was plainly his naivety. The men turned toward the children.

They seemed stunned to see anyone else out in this area.

“Greetings children; are you lost? The man that spoke was his mid thirties and looked in excellent health.

“Yes we are can you help us?” Paul asked catching his breath.

“Where are you going?” The man asked with sincerity in his voice.

“We are looking for a garden.” Paul informed them.

Another older, more mature voice sounded from several feet away.

“Garden?”

The man was extremely old. He was the oldest man the children had ever seen yet he looked relatively good for whatever age he must be.

“Yes we were told that four rivers run into one and then we are to follow the one into the garden.” Ruth joined the conversation.

“You seek the Garden of YAHWEH. Those who live long are holy. Those who die young are wicked. If you seek the Garden you will die young.” The old man moved closer with great interest.

“We are not going there to do bad stuff. We are going there to meet our friends who are trying to stop bad guys from going in and doing something horrible.” Ruth explained.

“You are not runaway slaves are you?” Another man asked.

“No we are not slaves! We are traveling through time from another place. We were asleep and when we woke up we were with Job, then we went to sleep again and there was a flood...” Ruth’s story about their journey was quickly interrupted by the old man.

“My name is Methuselah, I have prayed and mourned to YAHWEH to spare us and to not send the flood. I am 950 years old and YAHWEH has heard my prayers. You say that you have experienced a flood?”

“Yes, a world wide flood is coming. The Lord will not allow it to happen until you have died. After you have died, legend says that the flood comes within 14 years of your death. This is what I was taught. You are mentioned in God’s Word. But that is beside the point. We must find the Garden or our future will be in danger.” Paul said trying to explain the best he could.

“How can you know these things unless YAHWEH has instructed you? But no man has ever seen YAHWEH’s face and lived kee lo-yee'rahanee ha'adam va' ki.” Methuselah struggled with what he was being told.

The other men had now all gathered around to listen.

“You must understand, we are not from your land, or your world. We have been sent to find the Garden and to prevent these enemies of YAHWEH from entering.” Paul continued the debate.

Methuselah defended his position. “El Rachum is true and merciful; He has always honors my prayers. He has not instructed me concerning this. I have no instructions concerning these things.”

“I am telling you, that a world wide flood is coming. Once you pass from this life heaven will open, the ground will spring forth and everything will be under water except your grandson Noah and his family and a boat of animals.” Paul was adamant.

“We see water as life and for purifying. How can YAHWEH send a flood to destroy everything? For what purpose would this serve?” Methuselah could not accept what Paul was saying.

“That is YAHWEH’s purpose. He baptizes the world. It is for life for purity.” Paul expounded.

“You are a wise child, but we must consider these things and take it before the Lord. Come we welcome you and we will fellowship with you in our camp.” Methuselah instructed his companions to drag in the nets and they left the river for his camp.

Into the camp and around the fire they sat expecting great things from the fish and lechem or bread being cooked openly. Paul and Ruth were hungry and the fish made their mouth water.

The people spent the day talking and feasting; Paul and Ruth continued to expound on the events of the flood, they attempted to simplify the story for Methuselah and the other men and women that shared in the feast in order that their words would be accepted and they would find help here among the strangers. After the meal Paul and Ruth were shown a private place to sleep while Methuselah went to pray or teffilah to judge for him self and to make petition.

Paul and Ruth were fast asleep when they were awakened by a woman who gently shook them. “What is it?” Ruth asked. “Methuselah has an answer from the Lord.”

The children were led into Methuselah's tent where he sat with three other men. "Please sit. I have spent the evening in shama or hearing, listening and davar or a word came to my mind by ruach. I have been made clear that you are not sheker or deceivers. I used Pshat - פשט - Plain Meaning, Remez - רמז - Hint, Allusion, Derush - דרוש Analogy, Metaphor Sod - סוד - Secret, Mysticism to arrive at the analogy to the secret that you children had brought into our camp. YAHWEH spoke and in the vision I have been instructed to eizer-help you that Va yadu ki ani Havayah כי יהוה-וידעו כי "And they shall know I am the L-RD."

"This is wonderful news." Ruth said gleaming with excitement.

"A means of transportation that I have never seen before has arrived for you. It is waiting for you outside. It will take you to where four rivers turn into one." Methuselah gestured toward the door with his hand. The children walked out to see a group of people surrounding an odd machine. This was something from heaven because no one in this age could have ever built such a contraption. It was a horizontal greenish-bluish wheel spinning slowly inside of a wheel vertical wheel which stood some eight to ten feet. The center wheel was glowing metal with a small transparent vapor cloud encircling the entire apparatus. There was a man who appeared to be the driver. He was dressed in white down like someone from a marching band even down to white driving gloves. The craft was designed with four rotary blades which were attached to nothing but hovered over the craft. The reflection of the man's face showed in the front rotor with a metallic glare. There was a optical light effect like a rainbow blinking in sequence from top to bottom of the vertical wheel.

"I am amazed at this spectacle yet YAHWEH has provided." Methuselah inspected the circumference and gave it his blessing.

The children climbed aboard and said a quick farewell. Without restraints inside of the wheel the machine eased away then with a flash of lightening and a sound of ra'ash it was gone.

Traveling at light speed, the wheel inside of a wheel broke through the atmosphere. Traveling forward or backward no one could know. It was like a marble in a pinball machine. The children were amazed at the numerous clusters of stars they broke through. Planets that seemed specs of dust in a telescope were now visible as large as the wolf moon. The driver said

nothing; he looked straight ahead never engaging the children with a single word. They really were not bothered by his placidity. The terrestrial chariot ride lasted only moments and it was back to earth. They came down through the clouds, in midst of a rain storm but they did not get wet. After breaking the thunderstorm and rain they swooped across the landscape scrapping tree tops until settling at a junction where four rivers poured into one.

Chapter 21

*A heart that is rotten -- breath that smells.
Chinese Proverb*



Grigori and his army had rolled up to the mountain. They had followed the Seer of Endor directions completely. They were climbing the mountain having to abandon their vehicles. From here on out they would be on foot. Madam Zebul was being carried in a carriage with a silk sheet draped over it

to protect her from the elements.

Grigori had forgotten about the warning of the Seer. At the halfway point of the climb arrows with deadly convictions were launched from every direction. Twenty soldiers were vanquished instantly. The others began to duck and cover and fire their weapons at the invisible enemy. Grigori quickly reached into his coat and presented the amulet. He held it high into the air and took his chances by walking out into the open. "I have the amulet from the Seer of Endor!" His voice was loud and full of authority.

A man stepped out of the shadows. He looked barbaric with massive features and a weathered grave demeanor. He was armed with a bow and arrow and a large knife fastened to his hip. He bravely walked over to Grigori who bowed his head in reverence and handed him the amulet.

The barbarian examined the piece and he raised it into the air. "Він амулет проходу. Зараз ми знаходимося в боргу перед ним. Наші послуги належать до них, поки його подорож закінчується." The man had made an announcement to his unseen forces. "I am Andriy and this is our mountain I have now pledged my alliance to you and will help you until your journey ends. I am your servant." The man took a knee.

From her carriage Zebul was listening but did not reveal herself. "Please stand to your feet Andriy. We must make safe passage over this mountain to the river then we are to travel to where four rivers turn into one. Do you know the way? Grigori asked.

"Yes, we know the easiest passage there. It is a two day journey. We apologize for the men we have killed here." Andriy apologized.

"How many men do you have?" Grigori asked.

"We have five thousand fighting men." Andriy shocked Grigori with the numbers.

"Five thousand? Grigori thought how is it possible to not achieve his mission goal with that sort of army under his command. "These numbers are wonderful. And we have them all at our disposal?"

"They are yours." Andriy submitted his authority totally to Grigori. "This is Hryhoriy, he is our watcher. If we have a threat he will see it." Andriy introduced another large barbaric man. Men began to appear covering the mountain like ants on a hill.

Grigori could not be more pleased.

He ordered immediate marching orders and the legion conquered the mountain. Traveling down the other side with their new friends took no time and they stood before the mighty Tigris River. There were large boats waiting for them and over seven hundred men were able to board the boats. The rest of the men would walk along the river and catch up later on. Those on foot would be three days behind the boats when the boats would finally dock.

This was an undulating territory of muddy river basins, rolling plateaus and depressions, beneath the distorted eyes and irregular hills that looked liked deformed faces. Rocky outcrops and loose sand, though at times would be hard footing, would be better travel than the swamp lands which lay to their east.

The river was flowing strong yet it was not rough. The boats were easily pulled by the strong current at a steady speed. The weather cooperated and the trip turned into a pleasurable cruise. The northwesterly wind (shamal) gave them relief from the sun that would shine in their eyes for the next few hours. The boat trip took the biggest part of the day. Grigori reassured Zebul

every half hour that all was well and going as planned even though at this point he was making up a lot of his moves as he saw fit. He was disappointed that he had not put more value in the work the monk had done to draw the tattoos of Jamison's body. His incomplete work was now coming back to bite them. Then there was the impatience he had with Tesla at the original wormhole point at the river in Russia. He could really use Tesla's expertise at this juncture.

But Grigori was comforted that he now commanded this enormous army. He thought what sort of chance would Jamison and his small band of renegades could have against such a formidable army?

"It will not be long Madam and we will be in the Garden of Delight and have possession of the Tree of Life. Nothing can stop us now." Grigori reassured her. He thought it important to inspire her as often as he could without sounding uncertain or doubtful. The irrefutable pertinence of his tone gave her positive sanguinity and an unflappable security in Grigori's care.

Andriy navigated the convoy up stream in this tributary until there was a drastic change in current and direction. The boats were ordered to the shore and in a shallow part of the river that was barren and dry with little vegetation they came to rest.

"We are at the traducer junction." Andriy splashed knee deep into the water.

"Bring me the map!" Grigori ordered. His tone was stern and serious. An officer rushed the map to the front of his boat. Grigori rolled out the blueprint of their trip and began to examine it. "The key to this map, to finding the gate to Eden is finding the brightest point. The way is guarded by a flaming sword. If this sword is so bright as to frighten the boldest warrior it must be the brightest flame in the universe." He noticed on the drawings a bright yellow sun which his eyes glowed. The tattoo was on Jamison's left hip with the number "33" in the center of it. Grigori called for Brito.

"This is it, look at it; what does it mean?" Grigori asked.

Brito put his hands together forming a circle with his fingers and looked with one eye through his hands. "It is the age of Christ when he was crucified embedded in the blessing of the light." Brito interpreted.

"Are you sure?" Grigori pushed.

“Positive.” Brito backed away.

“Then what we have is the illumination of the spirit when Jesus was born. The star was a light, when he was baptized in the water there was a dove, the dove was a light, on the cross there was light until darkness filled the land. Then all went dark at age 33. We are to forsake the rivers as Andriy has instructed and to follow the sun west. We must all die to self before we will be allowed into the Garden.” Grigori sounded as if he was growing mental. Brito asked “Die to self? Do you mean not be selfish?”

“I do not know what it means. I am at a loss. I am struggling to find illumination. We must camp here and I will seek counsel alone. Put double guards of our men with Zebul.”

Without another word Grigori jumped into the water and walked to the shore. He kept walking. Brito went immediately to Madam Zebul.

“Madam we have been ordered to camp here tonight. Grigori has gone to meditate. Can you be made more comfortable?” Brito asked.

“Take me to dry ground and do as Grigori has instructed. Zebul lit her smoke and stretched longways.

Grigori walked until no one was within earshot. He was out where the vegetation was sparse consisting of desert shrubs, thorn bushes, and coarse grasses. He sat on the ground with his legs crossed and closed his eyes. He was troubled. Impulsively he had sought solitude and he sought peace in his mind's eye. He opened up to allow the light to pierce through, to awaken the part of him that knew. Grigori pried hard on his divine faculty to open his gracious talent that would guide him. He felt as though there was something unused inside eating at him, gnawing like worms in the pit of his stomach to be released. He sought his intellectual acuteness within his condition of darkness.

Grigori agonized over this situation. Through the entire trip he had been confident but now anxiety had begun to stir the serpent within his mind and he was distraught. He felt wetness on his face. He touched it with his hands and looked. It was not tears it was blood. Blood was coming from the corner of his eyes. He did not panic. Feeling the pull of the earth against his body he succumbed to forces from the underworld. The power of the eye which had turned inward was unleashing his true nature. His enhanced vitality was conjuring the blackest night within fertilizing the potency of his hellish

convictions. Incongruously he wasn't coming alive, he was dying to self just like he had suggested to Brito. There was definiteness to his assimilated delirium. Attending his own funeral alone, he was the mourner and the witness to his own resurrection. His sins swelled within. The deceptions that he had concocted, the lies he had invented the power he had used to influence people to do his bidding until the rot in his bones broke forth. He collapsed rolling in the sandy dirt. He realized his frame was dust his life but a vapor and rage and resentment erupted in his mind. As he moldered to decay blind and knavish, he would live again in purgatory until the gates of life he would find. He would not yield to the terror of loathsome familiar indignity but would rise petrified in his heart, stone cold oppressed something was tearing at his chest. He clawed renting his shirt off and began to dig into his own skin. His fingers broke the skin until he had wedged his finger deep into the wall of his thoracic cavity. He pulled outward his chest cracking with the sound of broken bones. His rib cage pulled apart revealing his beating heart. Gripping his own heart in his hand he ripped it from his chest. Though the heart stopped beating Grigori refused to die. He stood looking at the bloody heart being squashed in his red hand. He tossed it as hard as he could into the desert. He pushed his ribs back together with both hands driving his chest closed.

He embraced the surrounding darkness that was his soul. Repulsed by all that he was, for he had detested his impaired sight, he could now see only light and darkness for him the beauty of colors was a façade of the reality of the universe. His mediumistic powers were raging. He walked out of the desert to rejoin his army and to bring the most violent evil into the heart of his troops that they had ever known.

When the battalion saw him everyone noticed his body covered with blood and dirt. His face and chest were stained red. But no one asked what had happened. Some assumed he had been attacked by a beast and had been victorious and others found him too repulsive to imagine any scenario. He bathed in the river until he washed away the remnant of his former self and then he reported to Madam Zebul.

“Tell me Rasputin have you found the way?” Madam asked standing outside of her carriage with a veil on her face to protect it from the last of the sun.

“I have. We head out in the morning. That will put the rest of the army only a day or two behind us. I have been shown the gate of the Garden and we can now penetrate it.”

She looked at him with concern. “Is everything alright?”

“Yes Madam I have made my own personal provisions for entering the Garden and knowing that it is possible I can lead us all through.” He answered.

Chapter 22

The more sand has escaped from the hourglass of our life, the clearer we should see through it.

Niccolo Machiavelli



Jamison and the troop had to wait for daybreak to climb down off the rock. The morning was bright. From the top of the rock they had noticed something glowing far down into the valley but no one could make out what it might be. The rock was a chore to conquer but by mid-morning they were off it and into the valley.

“That glowing light we saw from atop that rock has to be something we are looking for.” Jamison said.

“I agree, it was west and even though we did not see a river from the vantage point I am not convinced that there is not a river in this valley somewhere.” Pheobe speculated.

Walking though the scrub filled desert, the heat was severe and the climate harsh, the terrain tortured by the wind. One lone cloud was smeared across the sky. Everyone wondered where it came from.

“Mwen malad ak enkyete / I am worried sick over the children. We have not picked up a trail nor is there any sign that they have been this way.” Lora said sullenly.

“I am not convinced that they were taken. We would have found some sort of evidence of abduction.” Kali reputed.

“The trail was washed away, remember the rain that night?” Sibyl reminded them.

“But we did not hear anything that night. As far as I am concerned no one came into that hut and no one left. We would have heard them.” Jamison was unbending in his opinion.

“If no one came in and no one went out then how do we explain their disappearance and absence? Lora challenged.

“I have been thinking about that night. Why was that hut out there in the middle of nowhere? We did not see another hut anywhere on our journey yet conveniently there was a hut and a rainstorm that drove us into the shelter. What if? And I am saying what if, the children were still in the hut?” Jamison was not making sense to the rest of the troop.

“Still in the hut? How did we not see them?” asked Kali stepping over a hole in the ground.

“Was it a magic hut or an illusion? Maybe a spell was cast over us?” Jamison seemed very concerned.

“If you are right; are they still in the hut or are they gone? What is the answer?” Should we go back? Sibyl catechized.

“We cannot go back. Lora can you see anything?” Jamison appealed to his wife for hope.

“My visions have not come for a while. I have tried to find my center in a trance and I am unable to produce any visions.” She was pleading for forgiveness.

“You do not have any reason to feel like it is your fault.” Jamison emphatically rebuked her guilt.

Lora seemed helpless. Kali pulled her to the side and embraced her. “Lora the cylinder! What if we tried to reach them using the cylinder?” Jamison now believed he was at fault because he had not thought of that earlier.

“But if we use the cylinder we do not have a guarantee / nou pa gen okenn garanti that we will be transported to them, and what if it sends us further away from the Garden?” Lora was more encumbered now than before.

“Do we have a choice? The children are lost. They were in our care. We are responsible to find them. If it takes us away from the Garden then we find our way back. It is that simple.” Jamison pulled out the silver cylinder from Lora’s backpack.

Everyone gathered around.

“What if only some of us use the cylinder and the rest stay here and pursue the Garden?” Lora suggested.

“I am not leaving you Lora, we are not separating.” Jamison declared.

“We cannot leave you; you are our lifeline to this place and time. Otherwise we go back to our world.” Pheobe pleaded.

Jamison said “I guess it is all of us or none of us and I suggest we go back.”

“Make a circle everyone” Lora took Kali’s hand. Everyone moved in close. Jamison took the key and placed it in the key hole. “Are we ready?”

He turned the key and pulled open the lid. The air was sucked out of the circle where they stood.

Tranquility and equanimity surrounded them. The sensation brought serenity and pleasant thoughts of peace and rapport. Other than the incredible sense of well being and repose nothing happened.

“What was that?” Lora addled.

Just as abashed Kali hugged her. “This was odd. Did anything happen?” Pheobe sounded perplexed.

“I feel unworried but I know I should still be concerned.” Gaea scanned the surroundings confused and perplexed.

“I’m stumped.” Jamison added.

“We never left, there is no wormhole; we traveled no where.” Gaea had a tone of discontentment.

“Hedge your bets people we may have went somewhere. We may be in the same place at different periods of time. That would mean that the kids were in the same place at different times.” Jamison was thinking aloud.

“We should head west.” As Lora spoke her eyes rolled into the back of her head and her back arched with hands out to her sides. She had fallen into a trance. Her spirit was dislodged enough to completely suspend the physical senses.

“Under the earth, under the cliff, Eden sits above them all.
The artesian spring is the giver of life giver to the greatest to the small.
Outside of God the lower realm extends into the soul
Upward into transformation a change of mind makes us whole
The children are innocent they stand pure
They have no need for a physician for they need no cure
Living waters for the ill for the poor and for the sick
Trade winds, air current blow away the conflict
Ascend into heaven you are there, lowest hell is comforting thought
A Savior bled, died and your life he has bought
If I say let me dwell in darkness you say I will your light
If I take wings into the sea you shall lead my flight
So stay the course to the flaming sword three the security gate
For the way is open to those who have faith
And for those that are lost if they are old in years or if they are small
Blessed be the children for they will teach us all
Creation stands on tip toe boundless presence unconditional love
For he will fill all things from a pouring from above
When the dead shall compass you all around
The tongue is the metaphor sharp and sound
Many will bow many will die before the altar supreme
From under the threshold they will never taste of the stream.”

When she spoke these words the troop realized that the children were safe.

Lightheaded her mouth was gaped open but she could not close it. Her head pulsated but there was no pain. Her eyes darted left to right, up and down but her brain refused to engage her motor skills. Lora slowly slipped out from the plenary trance. The displacement of her mind had revealed several things to her.

Lora spoke softly and submissively. “The children were taken by divine intervention to ensure safety for them / Se te pou pwoteksyon yo. Even though they have recently experienced tribulation and hardship these experiences have prepared them for greater things to come. We will see them very soon. Numbers were flashing again in my vision. I could not make them out but there are four numbers.”

Jamison and Kali both steadied Lora and she decided to sit for a moment to regain her faculties.

“Are you ok?” Jamison laid his hand on her head and she leaned against his leg.

“Yes I just need a moment / Mwen toudi.”

It did not take Lora long to get herself up and the troop carried on. The terrain gradually changed as they made their way westward. The ground turned from sandy mixed with rocks to sand. In the distance a sand dune could be seen. They estimated that it was a couple of miles away.

“Does anyone else hear that sound?” Kali appeared to be listening for something.

“Sounds like a low flying aircraft.” Lora responded.

“It is coming from that dune, sounds like an African vuvuzela noisemaker playing a song.” Jamison reckoned.

“Is it calling to us?” Lora mentioned.

“Let’s batten down the hatches folks and check out who wants us.” Jamison led them on, toward the dune, in the direction of the noise.

Jamison blurted out “I want him to know that I, Baron Vladimir Harkonnen am the instrument of his family's demise.”

Lora looked at him knowing it was a movie quote but to humor him she asked “What is that from?”

“It is Ian McNeice from Dune.” Jamison educated her.

It took forty five minutes for them to reach the crescent dune. Even with the sun to their back the glare from the sun had been blinding. The sound was not that much louder at the dune as it was two miles away. They assumed the sound must have been carried by the wind.

“Well here we are. We are looking at a big pile of sand.” Jamison put his hands on his hips.

“The sound is coming from the top of the dune.” Pheobe surmised.

“I suppose we are going to climb this thing?” Jamison assumed.

“If we are going to find out where the music sound is coming from yes we need to go to the top.” Kali answered.

Up the dune they trudged. The climb was hard, sand shifting under their feet made for lose of traction and double the work. After an excruciating climb the top was in sight. Curiosity had brought them to the top of the sand dune under specious pretense and now they stood having resolved nothing.

“I’ll admit I was wrong. This was a total waste of time. / Se te yon total de tounen dezè tan.” Lora disappointingly said.

“We pretty much had to come this way since we are heading west.” Jamison said trying to make her feel better.

A voice from the other side of the dune was heard yelling. “Hello up there!” It was a man at the foot of the dune. “Hello good people!”

Jamison yelled back. “What are you doing out here?”

The man answered. "I live out here, this is my sand dune. You are trespassing."

"Give us one minute and we will be off this thing." Jamison responded back as the troop descended the wall of sand.

At the bottom the man was irate, loud, and harsh, with disagreeable accents.

"Listen buddy, we didn't see a sign that read stay off my sand dune." Jamison said getting angry.

Lora apologized to the man though his acting seemed contrived. "N e te regrèt, we will be on our way we have a long journey ahead."

That wasn't good enough for the man who was very ardent about this dune. "You have made a mess out of my sand. I will never straighten this mess out."

"Man it is a sand dune, these things move and change with the wind, tomorrow it will look completely different anyways." Jamison said still not happy with the man's rudeness.

Sarcastically the keeper of the dune said "Well with your permission may I go about my business because my mind had precipitated and I am in a hole."

"I don't care what you do with this pile of sand." Jamison spat.

Contemptuously the man was still spouting venomous tones. "You come through on your way to who knows where and you trample my home, you kick my sand all over the place and you just want to move along without helping me straighten it out. I spent all morning putting everything right where it belongs."

Jamison continued to argue the point. "It is sand! The desert is full of it. I bet if you walk over there somewhere there is another dune just like this one!" Jamison was being petulant.

"Ha! You know nothing about mathematics, geometry or the infinity of big books." The keeper of the dune snapped at him.

Jamison had heard enough. “Let’s get moving guys.”

The keeper of the dune was not content. “Look at the prodigious shape of this dune! It is domesticated.”

Every eye shot him a look. “Domesticated? What did you catch it, train it, can it do tricks?” Jamison said mocking.

“Your ingenuity is beneath you sir. Have you no scruples? You are the strangers, you don’t belong! I am home. I bet you can’t say that about yourself.” The keeper of the dune had made his point.

“You are correct, we do not belong / nou pa pou so we shall be on our way.” Lora interjected.

“That’s it! Leave this dreary desolation. Leave without exercising your profound interest and curiosity. Proceed briskly forward, steadily and complacently on your unknown way.” The keeper of the dune said captiously.

He was certainly working on agitating everyone. His idiosyncrasy wore on their nerves.

“Is there something you are trying to say to us but for the life of you, you can’t spit it out?” Jamison asked acidulously.

“No, I think I have made myself clear. I am intensely imbued with personal interest in this dune.” He answered with an air of deep solemnity.

“Is there something we can do for you? / Sa kapab nou fè pou ou?” Lora asked.

“Perhaps you can help me. We are getting no where with this insurrection. Let us turn our infallibilities into manifested honesty. This is my dune, it is a special dune.” The keeper now sounded more rational in tone, less ornery.

“Ki jan sa espesyal? Parèt tankou grenn sab pou m. How is this dune different than others?” Lora asked now interested in what this fellow had to say.

“As I recollect I do not see any others within sight, do you? So mine is the only one here. It is an original, one of a kind, and it moves at my bidding.” The keeper smiled showing his rotting teeth. His cabalistic nature sent up warning flags but now he had claimed that the dune could move.

“How does the dune move?” Kali asked.

“It moves when I command it to move. Matter of fact; are you on your way somewhere? If you are I can get you there much faster” claimed the keeper of the dune.

“We are looking for a garden. Can you take us there?” Jamison asked.

The keeper took a step back. “The Garden?” he question. “You can’t go into the Garden.”

“We have no plans to go inside; we are on our way to keep others out.” Gaea informed him.

“My dear woman you are not needed to keep anyone out. The gate is secure.” The keeper sounded sure.

“Have you seen the gate and the guard?” Sibyl asked.

“Oh yes, me and the dune went by the Garden long ago and were threatened to never come near again. I took the warning serious.” The keeper said nervously.

“Can you take us? Èske li posib?” Lora was eager.

“Do you know the way?” Pheobe seemed as impatient.

“Yes I know the way and no I cannot take you. I value my life.” The keeper answered starting to walk up the dune.

“Wait, wait; just take us as close as you can.” Lora asked politely.

“What is there in return for me? How can I be repaid for risking my life?” The keeper asked.

“What do you want?” Kali asked.

“What do I want? I have my dune, what else could I possibly want?” The keeper asked.

Jamison addressed the girls turning his back to the keeper of the dune.
“Don’t beg him, let’s go.”

The keeper stepped up. “No, no, no, wait! There is something you can do for me. If you go into the Garden I want a souvenir.”

“We can’t bring anything out of the Garden. We are going there to preserve it, to protect it.” Jamison informed him.

The keeper of the dune frowned. “Then you can do nothing for me.”
“I’m not convinced that this dune moves anyways.” Jamison said doubting what he had heard.

“How about I take you and you give me whatever you think it is worth to you once I get you there? The keeper seemed to be desperate more for companionship than anything else at this point.

Lora said, “I am good with that if everybody else is? Se tout bon?”

“How does this thing work?” Jamison wanted to know.

“Excellent! Please come. Everyone come up onto the dune.” The keeper was waving the troop onto the sand mound. He led them up a short piece from the base.

“Are we all ready?” He asked excited like a little child showing off a new bicycle.

He faced the top of the dune and with his arms stretched out extended away from his body. “O’ yes there is something I believe I can trade you for this mode of transportation. I’ll take several rods of gold, the incense and your myrrh.” The keeper of the dune fell face first onto the dune and was absorbed into the sand disappearing before their eyes.

“You gotta be kidding me.” Jamison looked at Lora as if to say I’m not doing that.

But before anyone could utter a word their feet sank into the sand. Like quicksand or sand pouring through an hourglass they were all caught in the pull. Panic gripped them and before anyone could become hysterical they were dragged into the dune.

Chapter 23

*Where there is no vision, people perish.
Biblical Proverbs 29*



The children climbed out of the flyer machine and cleared themselves from any harm that may occur if they were too close to it when it lifted off again. Admiring the waterworks where the rivers merged, they never heard the flying machine speed away. When they turned to take one last glance at it, there was no trace of it.

“Guess that we are back on our own.” Paul assumed. “Are we still dreaming?” Ruth asked. “I don’t think so. We woke up somewhere along the way. I think when we were in the hut this flying machine picked us up and took us through space and time until we ended up here.” Paul was guessing but he had a good feeling about his adjudication.

“Yes I feel differently now than I have felt.” Ruth shared. Agreeing Paul responded with “I know how you feel.”

The children used the cauldron again and had a nourishing meal before setting off to find the Garden. The lands were green which surrounded the rivers but a little further out the children saw how barren and ruined the earth was. They followed the single river which fed the four up stream noticing the great erosion from hydraulic action and abrasion along the bank and the transport of alluvium. The velocity of the river was fast moving but glistening stones could be seen in the shallow river bed. The channel was cut steep in many places and the children steered clear of these banks. Staying the course westward they moved quickly.

“What are we going to do if we get there before everyone else?” Ruth asked as they jogged.

“Then we wait for everyone to arrive.” Paul answered.

“What if the bad guys get there before us and are waiting for us and we do not have any backup?” Ruth sounded worried.

“Then we don’t rush up to the gates and announce ourselves. We will wait for our friends before doing anything.” Paul answered her again.

“What if we can’t find it and we can’t find our friends, then what? What will we do?”

Ruth was punishing herself with “what ifs.”

Paul stopped jogging. “Ruth don’t do this now. We are going to be fine. We are going to find Jamison and Lora and we are going to find the gates of Eden. I am positive that Jamison has a battle plan for defending the Garden.”

With tears in her eyes Ruth said “I believe you. I am just scared.”

Paul put his arms around his little sister. “I am scared to but we are going to make it.”

They ran again.

Attempting to stay low, stay out of sight and to make it as far as they could before night fall the children began to become courageous as they ran. Running with a purpose they were not tired. They ran most of the day before they stopped. They had found a den in rock formation.

“When we are done with all of this and back home I am going to listen to mom and dad more.” Ruth said feeling like she needed more discipline in her life. She was a good girl. Actually her parents thought she was the perfect child. She always helped her mother with dinner, dishes, cleaning and laundry. Her mother and she were always seen together and they had a fantastic mother / daughter relationship. Her grades in school were perfect and she played concert piano.

“When I get home I think I am going to train to be a mixed martial artist and fight crime. Maybe I will join the military and get into Special Forces.” Paul

dreamed. Paul was a rambunctious boy. He was an average student though he was far more intelligent than his grades reflected. He played baseball and ran on the track team. He had taken four years of piano lessons but preferred the drums. He did only what he was ordered to around the house and was the pride of his father's life.

"You can't join the Army, you are too young." Ruth argued.

"I know, I'm just saying when I get older." Paul defended his fanciful notions.

"Paul something is wrong." Ruth said. She had been sitting up now she lay back and rolled over on her side.

"What is it, what's wrong? Are you sick? He moved to her side

"I am dizzy and my eyes are blurry, I feel like I am going to be sick."

Paul nervously said, "Do you think it was something you ate? Maybe we ran too long today?"

Ruth's body became rigid and she shook violently for several seconds before her eyes fluttered and she began to speak.

Paul held her as words poured from her mouth.

"Sleeping, sleeping a change within
The soul, the female is taken from him
Two people in the Garden naked and one
Qualities of the serpent her time has come
He called them Adam one and the same
The Madam is her wicked name
Male and female He created them
And called only to Adam called only to him
The mind the will and emotions
Tried, tested proven devotion
Leviathan swims in deep waters of the mind
To mock in derision to scorn in the earth in time
Fear not faithful children I rule the raging sea
The dragon dwells in the shadows of humanity"

Paul was stricken with grief and great concern. Ruth lay limp but breathing. She moaned quietly not from pain but from exhaustion. "Ruth are you alright? Ruth." Paul called to her. It took a few minutes for Ruth to open her eyes and to recognize Paul but when she did she hugged him hard.

"Do you remember what you said?" he asked.

“Yes every word and I see so much.” She answered.

“You are like Lora, you see things. Has this ever happened to you before?”

“Never.” She emphatically answered.

“What did you see?” Jamison investigated further.

“There is someone called Madam who is controlling this assault on the Garden. I think she may have been someone from the Bible. She is a lying spirit who even lies to herself. Tarradiddle I say. She seeks not only to enter the Garden but to replace the Tree of Life with herself that humanity would come to her for life. She is delusional. I think she believes that the soil of the Garden is what makes the Tree of Life a life giving tree.” Ruth was still looking inward.

“Are you saying that she wants to be planted in the place where the Tree of Life stands now?”

“She wants to die and to be buried there, in hopes that she will come to life again with the power to give life.” Ruth was confusing herself now.

“Oh my gosh. She is a freak.” Paul responded.

Chapter 24

Happiness is as a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but which if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.

Nathaniel Hawthorne



Madam Zebul was the first to the river bank. On the north side of the river they had arrived where the four rivers are fed from the one.

“This is it! Rasputin my dear friend you have done excellent. Send some men into the river. Test the waters. If it is safe I wish to bathe.”

Rasputin acted quickly. He sent several of the barbarians from Andriy’s men down to the river. They had no reluctance they jumped into the water and splashed about like animals.

After a few minutes Grigori ordered them out of the water. Paracelsus examined them for illness, changes in color, temperature and breathing. The men appeared well and unaffected by the water. A large tent was erected and carried out into the water. Madam Zebul was escorted by two soldiers out to the tent. In the privacy of the tent she was able to bathe as she requested while then men were ordered to stand with their backs to the tent.

Grigori in his new self, was vague, his eyes had grown murky like an abyss of black swirling fog. Madam Zebul hardly noticed. She was so intrigued with her own new persona she barely lay down her hand mirror and smokes. Brito and Paracelsus had noticed the drastic change in the two leaders of their multitude of warriors.

“What the bloody hell is going on with Grigori?” Brito said quietly.

“It appears that we have a couple of people that believe their own celebrity.” Paracelsus concluded with a pretentious glare.

“And if they believe their own legend, they will experience another 15 minutes of fame and in doing so they will make us anesthetized and debilitated.” Brito reckoned.

“Agreed.” So my good friend, how should we will remedy these matters in a fashion that will ensure our success but render them of no consequence?” Paracelsus asked being careful that no one was eavesdropping.

“I surmise that we fulfill prophecies that have already been executed in their past lives. Only by repeating the past will we cause them to fail?” Brito was bold in his statement but cautious.

“Grigori must find his way into the river and Zebul must loose her balance from a lofty height and thus we have two less adversaries to contend with. I believe that if we fail to implement a plan for extermination we two shall be found finalized by their hands.” Paracelsus was ready to procure whatever means necessary to annex and consummate their adversaries end.

“We have little time to refine a plan. It will take great influence, charlatanism, and convincing. Let me work out the details. In the meantime I suggest you do what you do best. Make us some poison.” Brito told Paracelsus with a conniving grin in the corner of his cozen mouth.

Grigori sat alone by the river bank appearing to stare into nothingness. He was not the same man since her had returned from the desert covered in blood. Lost in convincing thought no one dared disturb him. But someone made the mistake and called out to him.

“Grigori, what shall we do? The hunting party is back. Should we light fires close to the river or away?”

Grigori ignored the soldier who was doing his duty as officer in the hunting party.

“Grigori, did you hear me?”

The soldier walked to within arms length of the sitting mad monk.

Grigori leaped like a spring to his feet and with his large hands he wrapped his long boney fingers around the man's throat. The soldier was stunned by the unexpected attack. Grigori squeezed his fingers tightly closed. Fighting for his life the soldier attempted to pry the strong hands from his neck. Like a vice Grigori had clamped down and locked into place. He was pushing the soldier backward to the river. No one dare intervene as Grigori looked through the soldier's bulging, frightened eyes. Letting him go at the river's edge, there was a splash as the lifeless body was dumped into the flowing river where the current swiftly claimed it. Impassively Grigori turned and walked back to the spot where he had been sitting before the interruption, while the body unceremoniously floated past.

The uneasy silence that had settled over the camp was instantly replaced with noise and normal activities, displacing the tension of only minutes before.

Paracelsus retired to the solitude of his tent where he had many wonderful natural pharmaceuticals to work with. He concocted a cocktail which included the purple plant monkshood, he extracted scopolamine from the angel trumpet plant, and added some flowers from the evergreen shrub plus the sap from the mala mujer plant. The combination that he mixed would have an affect of deadly proportions. He had really wished he had tetrodotoxin which is a deadly toxin found in the ovaries of the Pufferfish. He had planned to look for a Hemlock plant. He thought if he had just one he could extract the cicutoxin toxic. He was aware that this was the plant that had been used to kill Socrates, Greek philosopher. He was disappointed that he did not have any cyanide, strychnine or arsenic but he believed he had what he needed to dispose of the two people that he considered to be the absolute most dangerous and unpredictable people he had ever known.

Brito went to blend in with the battalion in order to get a consensus of mood, feelings, fears, desires and moral. He figured he could discern if there was any dissention, reluctance, and despondent men among them. If he could sense any mutiny among them, he would take the chance and recruit himself some evil doers.

The next day at first morning light, Grigori had his followers on the move. Following the river they advanced quickly for a large group with the mass of his army only one day behind them now.

Hryhoriy the watcher approached with a scouting party that had been out most of the night. Grigori welcomed their report.

“Grigori others have been here. We found at least two sets of foot prints and evidence that whoever was here ahead of us is several hours ahead. They seem to be following the river as we are.”

Grigori was elated and disturbed by the news. Delighted because he was sure they were on the correct path that would lead them to the Garden; but provoked because he was behind those who sought the Garden.

“If we are behind we must step it up.” Grigori was annoyed by the news but remained composed. Any visible agitation that he demonstrated sent shock waves through the camp.

He reported to Madam Zebul who was being carried in the comfort of her carriage. Walking beside the carriage he said, “Madam it appears that we are on the right path and will be arriving soon at the Garden, are there any arrangements you wish us to make concerning this monumental event?”

Madam’s temperament was that of sensibility, and enthusiasm as her heart pounded in her bosom. “Yes we must make everything sufficiently stupendous. Can the savages find me flower? I would like a highway of flowers to walk upon as I enter the Garden? And I require a crown. Yes a crown.” If she were not one of surpassing beauty Grigori would dismiss her request as merely one who had partaken of too much smoke. Yet because he was captivated by her he immediately shouted out the commands. Madam never noticed the change in Grigori’s disconnected eyes. She could not see his crazed demeanor through the self medicated fog in her mind. In her head she saw herself as radiantly spectacular with a dynamic personality exuding outgoing personality characteristics. In fact she was beautiful but bland lovely but banal with her attitude. She was so caught up in herself that she needed strong guidance. The bliss she thought others could see was illusions from her own imagination. She was proverbially happier than she had been in a long time. Yet her enthusiasm was the result of ecstasies resulting from overindulgences.

A continuous profusion of extraordinarily, unattainable extravagances that were unexplainable to anyone else.

For a large number this battalion moved swiftly stomping through the brush and spreading out to seek those intruders that wished to thwart Grigori's intent.

Hryhoriy was on the trail of the un-expecting children. He and his top twenty trackers were using their skills. Without the aid of a compass or a map they combed the unfamiliar terrain sniffing out the footprints of children who were unaware that they should cover their tracks. Searching bruised blades of grass, over turned pebbles and inspecting signs of prints in the soft mud near the banks of the river and wet sands they were quickly closing in.

Paul and Ruth were making good time on their trek but were oblivious to the danger that was rapidly gaining ground from behind them. "Do you hear something?" Ruth said stopping and standing perfectly still.

Paul intently listened. "I just hear the river." He said taking a concentrated look around.

"I have really bad feeling." Ruth mentioned.

Paul figured it was time to be ambitious. "I say we listen to your intuition and run!" Paul said.

The two began to sprint through the wooded area knowing that they had no real covering and was susceptible to anything or anyone that was out there. This was no fervid dream though suddenly the wooded area became an entangled mesh of combined strangeness with a bold definitiveness that precluded the superintendence and government of the natural forces surrounding them.

Although the threat had not been seen, the witness in the spirit now had them running kicking earth up under their feet. The air was hot and running made them exhausted. They had run for a bit not wanting to get too far from the river when they came upon a precipitous ledge. There was nothing they could do but to stop.

"We have to get down there somehow." Paul said peering over the edge. "It is too steep, we can't make it." Ruth was being logical because desperation had not kicked in.

The sun was burning bright overhead. The forest was painted a deep green, suffused and tinted, though, with a luminous golden glow from the grand sun. But this sun was now their enemy. There was no hiding in the recesses of darkness. They felt as if a spot light was shining directly on them.

“What are we going to do?” Ruth asked as a flock of birds exploded from the tree tops making their hearts skip a beat.

“We do not even know if anyone is following us.” Paul suggested.

“They are not following us, they are pursuing us. We are being hunted Paul.” She said with a sense of urgency crammed in her throat. The woods spread about them in every direction and the sound of the river was faint being drowned out by the birds singing and the wind rustling the limbs and leaves of trees. Ruth’s sense suddenly became preternaturally acute and she was alarmed by the presence of something stealing away in the distant bushes. Something cunning and resourceful had caught them. They both drew out their handguns and fanned the area sighting down the barrels in every direction.

A sound of an animal like guttural yell was heard then it dies away in a savage undernote.

“What the crap was that?” Paul asked not expecting a response.

“We have to do something; we are out in the open. We are sitting ducks.” Paul continued.

“Let’s follow the ridge and see where it leads.” Ruth suggested.

“Look how thick that is, plus we will be going away from the river.” Paul protested.

“Then what do you suggest? Do we double back and run into whatever made that crazy sound?” Ruth was distressed.

“We can’t do that; we don’t know how many of them there are. I say we go over the cliff.”

Ruth resisted, “That is suicide. Look at that Paul it is straight down.”

“There are lots of foot holds and vines; I think we can make it.” Paul took another look.

“Paul, I can’t do it.”

Paul saw the disappointment in her eyes.

He inferred that she was correct and their only retreat was to chance the thick woods along the ridge.

The two began to work the ridge being careful taking their steps calculated and measured.

The thick woods were manageable and they were enabled by a path either made by animals or people before them. Being driven by anxiety and fitful courage their mood was melancholy as black birds complained overhead.

“I can’t hear the river any longer.” Ruth made Paul aware.

He paused. Listened, turned his head, and said “I can’t either.”

They had headed south for 30 minutes wrestling the brush and wooded growth as they went. “I have not heard anything behind us in a long time.” Paul surmised.

“We are just walking further from the river. Maybe this was a mistake.” Ruth capriciously said.

“Grand, now you think this was a mistake. Look up there it looks like a place we might be able to climb down. It isn’t as steep, Paul said a bit perturbed by her inconsistency.

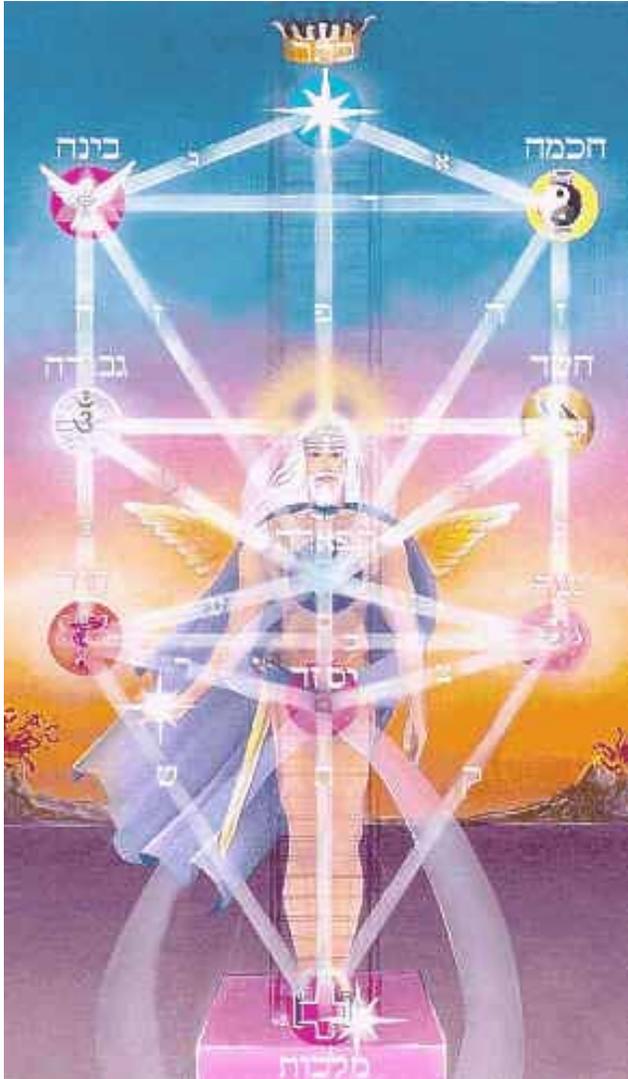
At that moment a butterfly playfully fluttered by the climbers with wind under it’s soaring wings; Paul took a glance overhead. Fantastically before he could react several men leaped down from the tree tops on top of him. Paul fought the best he could but his hands and feet were swiftly subdued and roped tight. Ruth was screaming unable to move. She was frozen in panic. The children were caught and bound and then carried away.

Paul was blaming himself that he had not forced Ruth to go over the side of the cliff instead of slowly trying to work their way around. But it was too late for would of, could of, should of, they were prisoners of these large barbaric mute men who wasted no time getting them back to their camp. One consolation Paul thought was that they were heading back toward the river. And there was that butterfly free in the Mandela of time.

Chapter 25

Making no mistakes is what establishes the certainty of victory, for it means conquering an enemy that is already defeated.

- Sun Tzu



“Khoras, my name is Khoras” said the keeper of the dune.

“That is some trap door you have up there Khoras. Probably wouldn’t have hurt any if you had warned us before sucking us down into this thing.” Jamison said brushing sand out of his hair.

The thing Jamison referred to was an encapsulated glass room. On the other side of the glass were walls of sand. Where they stood was a sophisticated wall of monitors, buttons, switches and lights. Stalls petitioned off other rooms.

“How did you know to ask for the gold and other items? Ki jan pou ou te konnen?” Lora asked.

“I got the heads up from a clock maker who gave me this and told me you would know who he was.” Khoras brought a small hourglass from beneath one of the work stations and sat it on the flat surface.

“Once again Hanus to the rescue.” Jamison remarked.

“We are now moving at a great rate of speed across the desert. The dune is very smooth and it on autopilot. We should not even feel it move or turn.” Khoras informed.

“So, how did you manage to create such a machine as this? Jamison asked.

“I was brought to the desert with my family when I was a child. My parents died. I was just a young kid when a man named Barchan found me. At that time this dune belonged to him. He instructed me on how it operated and told me he had to be leaving but would return. That has been 25 years ago. Barchan never returned. As much as a home this is also a prison. I vowed to him that I would remain until he returned.” Khoras was fiddling with some controls on the main board.

“So you just cruise around in this thing from place to place?” Jamison continued to pry.

“I can go anywhere in the desert. And this is a big desert. Matter of fact I meet all sorts of people who are traveling through and then there are the regular nomads which I have befriended.”

The dune moved across the sands taking on an arc shaped sand ridge with two horns formed that dragged behind the speedy pile of sand. In less than thirty minutes the dune had come to a stop. Khoras informed them that their ride had come to an end. They entered a chamber much like a decompression chamber on a submarine and with a pull switch the troop appeared on the outside of the dune.

“I am not even going to ask him how that thing works. Jamison joked.

The dune was parked on the edge of a wooded area. The troop waited a moment to see if Khoras was going to appear to take his salary. But he never came out of the dune.

“Do we just leave these items on the dune for him to find?” Lora asked.

I suppose. Strange that he did not ask for them while we were inside and even stranger that he did not come up here with us.” Kali noticed.

Lora took the items, the gold, the incense and myrrh from her bag and laid them in the sand of the dune.

They made their way off the dune and while looking back the items mysteriously sank into the sand.

“Well, I guess that was his intention.” Pheobe assumed.

“O.K. guys we have got to get moving. We have to find the river. And follow it to the Garden.” Jamison ordered. Swiftly treading through the woods the troop leaped, bounced and ran quietly unlike the children had. They wanted to make the river before nightfall. Moving westward on the north side of the river they found the terrain to be easy to maneuver. The woods were no different than many others they had seen. There were no defining characteristics just trees, grass, shrubs and undergrowth. Keeping their eyes peeled for any signs of the children or the bad guys that might want to kill them, they were ready for rescue or battle at any time.

The wooded area seemed to be flourishing despite its neighbor the desert. It was comfortable and plush and the troop was thankful for the steady breeze blowing. They all had an elemental feeling of relaxation even though they were running. No one could explain why they had no anxiety or fugitive fears going into the unknown.

“Does anyone else feel like they have restored vigor?” Jamison asked running a steady pace.

“I think we all do.” Kali said.

“My muscles, nerves everything just seems alive. I have perfect correlation of my five senses.” Jamison revealed.

No one could explain this phenomenon that was happening to them. They were gaining strength the further they ran. Gaea was the first to hear the river. This excited them even more with enormous elation. They could now see the glimmering of the water through the dancing leaves. They ran down into a ravine that was choked with briars and bushes and ran back up a slope. They were forced to slow down because of the nature of the broken ground.

At the head of the slope the river was in full view. It was one of the rivers for sure but they did not know which one they were looking at. The land was mainly marshes, and ahrash forest of poplar and cedar species growing on the banks and islands. The aquatic vegetation of this ecoregion includes reeds, rushes, and papyrus. Many water fowl were bathing, dipping and fishing in the river. Taking a drink on the outer banks was a small herd of water buffalo.

“It is a good thing that there are no Humbaba feeding here.” Kali mentioned.

“What is Humbaba?” Lora asked.

“Humbaba is a terror to humans. He has the face of a lion, his eyes the look of death his roar would drown out the sound of this river.” Kali ecstatically warned.

Jamison figured that she was referring to a monster from her homeland so he ignored the conversation dismissing it as nonsense. A reed fly buzzed by and caught his attention. He admired its control as it zigzagged about zipping and changing directions with sharp turns. The surroundings were auspicious, just the place they had been in search for.

“What is that hanging from the tree up there?” Gaea pointed.

No one could see what she was referring to. “I don’t see what you are looking at?” Jamison admitted.

Everyone was gazing in the direction that Gaea had pointed.

“It looks like a round metallic object hanging in the tree next to those purple flowers.” Gaea was more specific.

“I see it. It looks like a floating sphere of some kind.” Kali had it in sight. Jamison and Lora still had not spotted the object.

Even though Jamison did not have any idea what they were looking at he said “Let’s investigate. As the troop approached the tree the object became more apparent. It was a hanging geometric shaped sphere consisting of thirteen spheres.

“This is a symbol representing the whole universe. It is called the flower of life. I believe this is a sign confirming our path. We are seeking the point of Creation, the paradise of God where he intended man to be, it is God’s unity and love expressed through paths of wisdom that must come by divine revelation.” Pheobe shared.

“At least we have a sign. Who would have put it here? Nou gen yon siy.” Lora asked.

“I can only imagine that our little clock maker friend has been at work.” Jamison assumed.

“If it is Hanus giving us these clues and leaving signs how is he doing this? Kouman li ka konnen ki kote nou pwal fè?” Lora wondered.

“He must be looking into that crystal ball of his and sending word somehow.” Jamison ascertained.

Finding themselves strangers in a strange land the composed troop was jubilated by the sign which they took as a blessing. Every synchronicity or meaningful coincidences suddenly made sense sealing the entropy of their minds.

“We have our answer, time to move on.” Jamison announced.

The troop was moving with vision through the wide extended marshes. They had transformed into the territorial creatures willing to defend their position against anything that would come against them. They came to a part of the terrain where a forest of twisted trees happened to appear. The pines were bent in unusual shapes, contorted and twisted with some trunks developed as rings. Then there was the unusual stacking of rocks all the same size in piles all along the trail. They dare not touch or look under the rocks for they could only assume that it was an ancient burial site. They had no time for forensic work. Their concern was finding the children and then beating Grigori and his goons to the Garden. They did not have time for new discoveries or additions. Time was running out and the more time they wasted the closer to destruction they would come. They raced toward the Garden where Eve the feminine archetype and Adam the male were called the parents of all mankind. This was the untouched world where sin was birthed and Eve wrapped herself in the seduction of the serpent. Being expelled on the new

moon of the forth month according to the Book of Jubilees, they were unsure if this meant anything for their journey or not. Other pseudepigrapha gave further detail of their expulsion and after Eden life but Jamison did not believe them to be relevant to their search.

The landscape was eerie, strange and out of place, much less accentuated, ultimately falling away to a region of undulating steppe. The terrain continued to give weary fits and change frequently to shallow mud lined depressions, rocky outcrops and loose sand.

Restricted to the dispersive river for the sake of staying on course, they enjoyed a sensuous and spiritual apparition of their surroundings.

After a short run as a unified body the troop came to an abrupt halt when Jamison stopped and held up his hand. He spotted something.

Lora whispered “What is it?” She felt her heart beating in her chest.

“Something is straight ahead.” Jamison confirmed.

Gaea moved forward and up the path to carry out recon. She eased ahead, hiding behind the trees then moved on her belly out of sight. Moments later she appeared taking the same path back to the troop. Upon returning she gave them her report. Their report was part spying and the other half intuitive sagacity.

“There is a large battalion a few hundred meters down river. There are soldiers and then more indigenous tribesmen in their camp. They have a scouting party a couple hundred meters south of here consisting of 20 or so of the tribesmen. There are no traps ahead.”

Jamison thought for a moment. “How large is the main battalion?”

“Five hundred, maybe as many as seven hundred strong.” Gaea answered.

“Oh my goodness, that’s huge. Sa yon gwo.” Lora sighed.

“It is not impossible.” Kali said with full confidence.

“We can’t pick them off one at a time and do we know if this is our enemy?” Jamison asked.

“Sure it is; they have soldiers and tribesmen. Why else would they be out here together?” Gaea said without doubt.

“Can we go around them?” Lora asked.

“If they have the children, we do not want to go around them. We need to get in there and get them out.” Jamison argued.

“I agree, but not a suicide mission. That would prove nothing.” Kali said.

“How good do you think these tribesmen are?” Jamison questioned seeking answers.

“There is no way to know without engaging them.” Sibyl’s answer was what everyone was thinking, yet no one wanted to admit it.

“I suggest that we take out the scouting party. That way we test their strength in a small number and decide from there how we proceed against that larger battalion.” Jamison waited for opinions.

“If we could find a cave or tunnel I can find my way through it. We might have an element of surprise if I can get underground.” Sibyl mentioned.

“Legend says that Adam and Eve were buried in the Cave of Machpelah. One would think if we were on the right path leading to the Garden that this cave would be somewhere in the area?” Sibyl announced.

“We don’t even know what country we are in other than we might be in Iraq.” Jamison said feeling uncertain.

“Even if we cannot locate Machpelah, any cave leading through this area may prove beneficial to us for the element of surprise.” Sibyl was now laying flat on the ground as if she was allowing the earth to speak to her.

Sibyl led Gaea and Pheobe out of sight with the plan to surprise the warriors that she had spied on. Jamison, Lora and Kali followed the river alertly advancing in order to draw them out.

Jamison was the first to see movement. Five large men with their backs to them were standing in a grove of withered trees. Jamison thought why would

they be standing so vulnerable? Is this a trap for us? He noticed each carried a bayonet style knife in a scabbard on their hip. The weapons were straight, double edged blades a foot in length with a tapering handle, of equal length. Jamison had to be as silent as possible in his attack. Lot's of screaming and shooting would certainly be a call to the body of the battalion just down stream.

On his belly he wiggled himself closer to the men who talked amongst themselves. Lora and Kali lay back watching the surrounding area. Sibyl had mentioned twenty or more men with this group so the question being asked was where was the other group of men?

Moving like a silent assassin Jamison controlled his breathing preparing for the assault. He had hoped that Sibyl and her comrades were close underground ready to defend. He could not afford to be careless at this juncture or to hesitate when the time was right. He had no doubt in his ability to bring great harm to these unaware men but if this was a trap he would most likely be exposed and defenseless leaving him in a critical predicament. Jamison was energized feeling like the Nizari Ismailiyun which in the 1094 was an effective Shiite politico-religious sect though his religious affiliation was different. He did not know why that went through his mind, but it did. He shook the notion and waited.

Lora prayed silently for success and safety and Kali looked possessed her eyes were growing with anticipation. In her world Kali was far less reserved and enjoyed the taste of blood in battle. The legend was that the black subterranean waters of hell that hold the embryos of demons are understood to be a part of Kali. Yet no one in the troop dare mention such a thing to their alias.

Jamison turned his head to check his flank then he turned back again. He was ready just waiting for a sign or a signal. Jamison had the sun to his back; this was a great advantage for him.

Lora knew everything would happen quickly and she was thankful for the moment of rest and peace. She was exhausted from their long run. Any moment she was going to have to spring into action to back up her husband and their friends in their battle. She laid her cheek against the stock of her rifle and took aim on the enemy.

Jamison remembered a quote from Sun Tzu The Art of War. "You cannot shut your eyes to the thunder or your eyes to the lightning – so rapid are they."

His first move would be to take out the weakest link which by all observation should be the smallest tribesman.

He thought "Count the cost, speedy end, every means to that end, advancing constantly." As Gen. George Patton once said, "keep on advancing regardless of whether we have to go over, under or through the enemy."

He could not stop the quotes in his mind. He remembered Gen. Douglas MacArthur once said "There is no substitute for victory."

Abruptly from beneath the ground Sibyl, Gaea and Pheobe sprang up as if they had been launched from the gates of hell. Their sudden appearance in the midst of the tribesmen caused severe alarm. The unseen tribesmen were close and immediately emerged from their hiding places. This gave Jamison, Lora and Kali an element of surprise to begin the slaughter. Before the tribesmen could withdraw their weapons six of them laid dead on the ground covered in their own blood. The girls used their own swords. Jamison swung the sword of David. Jamison's blade was severing bodies in half leaving torso lying beside the trunk cleanly divided. Trees around them blazed from the sheer friction from the swords. The earth was scorched by the sudden heat of battle.

Two of the tribesmen attempted to fight back but they were now overwhelmed. One fought to the death. The second and last member of this small tribe dropped his weapon as the blade of Jamison's blade nicked his throat drawing a trickle of blood.

"Please I want to live." The tribesmen fell on his knees in surrender.

"Your life depends on your answers Crazy Horse." Jamison threatened.

"I understand." The tribesmen bowed his head in submission.

"I want to know firstly, are there two children among you?" Jamison pushed the blade against his throat.

“Yes I was with a group that found them in the forest and we brought them into the camp.” The tribesman sounded truthful and fearful.

“How many of you are there? Konbyen ki kanpe la avè ou?” Lora asked.

“We are five thousand plus the soldiers that we joined with.” Jamison struck the tribesman in the cheek hard enough to knock him to the ground.

“He stepped on the man’s chest and drew the sword back. “Tell us the truth Chief Little Dog; How many?” Jamison tightened his grip as he looked into the frightened eyes of the enemy.

“I tell you the truth. We have several hundred here but others are coming on foot. We took boats here but we had so many we could not get everyone on the boats. They are one day behind us now.” The tribesman was shaking with nerves.

“So you are saying that there are more behind us? A larger army?” Jamison asked in disgust.

“Yes, we are to meet, join forces and to destroy anyone that gets in our way. We are on our way to Eden.” The tribesman examined the eyes of his captors looking for compassion.

“Where are the children being kept?” Jamison asked.

Without hesitation the tribesman answered “They are being held in the only red tent in the camp.

“Is there anyway into the camp? Èske li fè a?” Lora asked.

“It is heavily fortified. Madam Zebul has marksmen around the perimeter, there are guards at the tent and everyone is looking for you.” The tribesman spoke in true humility.

“Do you know where the marksmen are positioned?” Jamison asked easing his foot off the man.

“Yes there are eight. But there are patrols also and they go out at different times. The patrols are ten to fifteen men at a time. Sometimes there are two

or three patrols out at any given time.” The tribesman continued to answer without reluctance.

“When was your patrol supposed to report back in Chief Dull Knife?” Jamison continued the interrogation.

“We were sent to ambush you and to bring you back. We were a roaming patrol that had no time to report back until we had found you.” He scooted to a better more comfortable position not wanting to get hit in the face again.

“You are going to help us, and if you mess up once, you will die. And if we decide that you die and we have time, we will make it slow and painful. Do you understand?” Jamison was gritting his teeth tight with anger, his eyes staring a whole through the man.

“I understand.” The tribesman was ordered to his feet. His hands were bound and his mouth muted with a rag. His legs were tied apart at a distance that he was allowed to walk but would not be able to run.

“I will prove my truthfulness to you. Reach into my pouch.” The tribesman asked.

Kali ripped the pouch from his side leaving a whelp on his hip. She opened it and found a scrimshaw with a decorative design on it. The shell appeared to have a colorful coat of arms painted on it.

“This is our flag, our emblem for the tribe. If you show this to anyone in our tribe we are vowed to honor it.” He said sincerely. Jamison took the shell, examined it and shoved it into his pocket.

“What is your name fella?”

“My name is Olek.”

“So Geronimo, you want to live do you?” Jamison antagonized.

“Yes I have a family back in my homeland. We are taken and used in these crusades. Our king doesn’t recruit us, he orders us to war.” Olek informed the troop.

“O.k. Cochise, if you truly want to return to your family, then after this campaign you will be allowed to. We only want our children and to stop this Madam person from destroying the world.” Jamison promised.

Chapter 26

You can worship a sardine's head if you believe in it.
Japanese Proverb



Sitting on the center of a Serabrand rug with a pear pattern the children were faced with their captors. Grigori, Madam Zebul, Paracelsus, and Brito sat across from them.

“Hello children my name is Grigori and I suppose you wonder why you have been brought here?” Grigori was nervously wringing his hands with a frigid glare from time to time uncharacteristically unstable.

Neither Paul nor Ruth answered him.

“I assure you, that you are here for your own good. This country is unstable, unproved and there are many dangers. When my men saw you they did not want to frighten you. From my understanding you were near a treacherous cliff and if you had fallen you may have been killed. They were forced to surprise you. Plus you were heavily armed and if some one would have panicked someone may have been shot. Though I am apologizing for your capture I am also saying we have brought you here for your own safety.” Grigori was sitting but anxiously squirming about.

Madam Zebul who was squinty eyed spoke. “How adorable; I am alarmed that anyone would bring such young children out into a hostile environment. Then they give you weapons? This is deplorable Brito.”

“Very deplorable Madam.” Brito said with casuistry and Ruth’s eyes lit up remembering her own vision “t-h-e-m-a-d-a-m” the madam.

“Did Brito say something of interest to you girl? You seem to have a spark in your eyes now. Man is a microcosm, or a little world, because he is an extract from all the stars and planets of the whole firmament, from the earth and the elements; and so he is their quintessence. Be of consequence here children.” Paracelsus exhorted.

Ruth looked away then down to the floor not answering verbally.

“Children you are our guest here. You are not prisoners. We simply need some answers from you in order that we can free you and you can be on your way. But if we feel that you might still be in danger then we would strongly encourage you to remain with us until the threat to you is eliminated.” Grigori had developed a slight twitch in the corner of his mouth that was noticeable to his colleagues.

“What are you doing so far from home?” Madam kindly asked.

The children said nothing.

“Children you seem to believe that we are the enemy, when in fact we simply wish to return you to where you belong. We have no desire to harm you or keep you from anyone that you may have been with. Without communication we cannot establish where you belong.” Brito cautioned.

Ruth yelled at Brito. “We belong with our friends!”
Paul shot her a hateful look.

“Did she say something wrong boy?” Paracelsus asked Paul bloviated.

“She said she wanted to be with her friends. I suggest we prepare to return them to their friends. They obviously do not wish to be here with us and their friends can better care for them.” Madam said as she stood to her feet.

“Do you mean it?” Ruth asked. Paul once again gave her a hard look.
“Yes, if you know where your friends are we will gladly take you to them. We are in a hurry and we cannot tarry here waiting on your friends to arrive.

We have enough men to spare that we can dispatch men to escort you safely to your friends.” Madam Zebul said deluding the facts.

“Paul let them take us.” Ruth pleaded.

“Shut up, what is wrong with you?” Paul snapped at her.

“What do you mean, they want to take us to Jamison and Lora, let’s let them.” Once again Ruth spoke out of turn.

“Stop naming names. Don’t you see what they are doing? They are getting information from you without even asking.” Paul said angrily.

“Ruth. that is a pretty name. Were you named after Ruth of the Bible? She was the grandmother of King David.” Madam said trying to frustrate her will by finding a common denominator.

“My mom said that she named me after her.” She freely answered Madam.

“You people are dangerous. We are not your friends. We will not help you find what it is you are looking for. We will not lead you to anyone, especially anyone we would consider friends.” Paul sounded agitated.

“Why are you so viscous young man? We only wish to help you. Ask and I shall give it to you. Are you hungry, we can bring you food? Do you want to bathe? We can manage that for you. And we can return you to your friends. We do not want conflict.” Brito assured Paul.

“Where is my cauldron?” Paul asked surprising the four interrogators.

“Your cauldron? I am sorry when you arrived you did not have it on you. I will send men to backtrack and see if it was dropped when they brought you through the woods.” Madam said showing only concern.

“I had the cauldron, I felt it on my back when we were dropped here and stripped of our belongings.” Paul swore.

“It is like the man who loses a limb and still feels that lost limb attached. It is a phantom limb effect.” Paracelsus said. He was like a chess master moving each piece by intellect, deception and stealth.

“Whatever.” Paul grumbled.

“Paul, please I want to see everyone again and go home. I am tired.” Ruth begged.

“Paul your sister is pleading with you. Won’t you stop being selfish and allow us to help you find your way? Children should be with their caretakers.” Grigori said his condition was deteriorating.

“You can do us a favor and leave.” Paul responded.

“Very well, let us leave them and time alone may show them that logic prevails. You are proving nothing Paul by your stubbornness. In fact what if you were in a position to help and possibly save your friends?” Madam’s words chilled Paul deep in his bones.

The four stood and exited the tent. Madam Zebul and Grigori went to her tent waiting for the children to succumb to her seduction. Meanwhile Paracelsus and Brito made their way to the makeshift pharmaceutical manufacturing plant to design a potion of deadly proportions for their two comrades.

Paul and Ruth were at odds now. “What were you thinking?” Paul demanded to know. “I want out of here.” Ruth glared back.

“And you think that if you give them our numbers, our names, where everyone is at, our plans that they are just going to say, thank you be on your way?” Paul was so mad that if this were not his sister he would have struck her.

“I don’t know. I am scared. I want to go home.” Ruth began to cry. Normally Paul would have had sympathy but he was forced to grow up quickly. He had to maintain his posture and his emotions.

“Listen, we have to get out of here. But we can’t lead these people to our friends. We can’t tell them about Eden. We have to be smarter than them. Don’t you remember your vision? Don’t you recall how ruthless these people are? They will kill when they are done with us. So if you want to die keep on divulging our secrets and we will see the other life without a wormhole.” Paul shouted with a muted voice.

“I am sorry” she sobbed alone. The flower of her youth, delicate and assaulted loses her sepals, petals, stamens, and pistils and bows to the ground incomplete. Ruth was embarrassed and ashamed that she had been weak when Paul needed her to be strong. Her tenacity had been robbed through clever words.

In Paracelsus tent he was sharing his poison with Brito. “First it brings hallucinations and a sense of delight. Then there will numbness, a sense of impending doom will wash over them. Muscle tremors then failure will follow with convulsions and asphyxiation accompanied by cellular disruption, cardiac and finally death.” Paracelsus grinned as he revealed the bottled serum to his friend. It was effortlessly to disport him self.

“This is magical.” Brito complemented his friend.

“He who is born in imagination discovers the latent forces of Nature. . . . Besides the stars that are established, there is yet another -- Imagination -- that begets a new star and a new heaven.” Paracelsus was never one to shy away from his own brilliance.

“When shall we give it? Have you seen Rasputin’s recent bizarre attitude? And as far as Zebul is concerned she is always in a different world due to her smokes. What is the plan?” Brito asked a few questions at once.

“That which the dream shows is the shadow of such wisdom as exists in man, even if during his waking state he may know nothing about it... We do not know it because we are fooling away our time with outward and perishing things, and are asleep in regard to that which is real within ourselves. In that event, I feel we can easily entice them to a cup of tea or some other delicacy.” Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim better known as Paracelsus seemed very confident.

“What about the children?” Brito asked.

“Those children are powerless, useless and are of no harm to us. I believe something is coming that will challenge us to the core. I suggest we prepare for what is to come. But first we must position ourselves in a position of authority that we will have the power over these forces.” Paracelsus made sense to Brito.

A knock at the door of their tent caused a small scamper and stir to put away the solution of death. Brito went to the door which was a hanging flap of material pulled tight and tied off.

A soldier was reporting to them and announcing their presence was required for a special ceremony. Madam Zebul was going to go through her symbolic death ritual in order to be purged before entering the Garden.

The soldiers were gathered around her tent like Hitler's SS. They had formed three circles. The tribesmen were watching from the perimeter of the camp.

Grigori met Brito and Paracelsus.

“Madam wishes to have her burial and resurrection now in order when we arrive at the gates of Eden we can march in without delay. The whole tenor of our adventure is to rediscover, recreate, and reawaken within us and around us the Garden of Delight. So let us prepare shake off our skins of humanity with its fleshly restriction and embrace androgynous spiritual realities, with its vigorous and virile, understanding our male and female consciousness.”

“Do you think it is wise that we have delayed our travels? I fear that we may be beaten to the gate and thus lose our advantage.” Brito voiced his concern.

“Madam has spoken this and we shall perform at her will. Can't you understand that a snake molts its skin without dying as a woman "molts" their uterine skins in menstruation, when they bleed without dying? Our old identities pass away and we strip away every integument and become new!” Grigori said sternly.

“Very well, what would you have us to do?” Brito obediently asked believing that any answer would be utter balderdash.

“I wish Paracelsus to say a few words before the ceremony begin.” Grigori advised.

Madam exited her tent and the soldiers immediately struck a pose. A man shouted “All hail Queen Madam Zebul, Phoenician princess, daughter of

Ethbaal, King of the Tyre and Sidon, Virgin of Baal, Prophetess of Thyatira.”

All eyes were on Madam and her bedizen dress. She was celebrating her fluidity and assertiveness her heart racing toward the humus of growth. She believed that she was the fulfillment of all women from Eve, to Rebecca to Mary the mother of us all.

Grigori gave Paracelsus a look which was his cue to speak.

“Thoughts give birth to a creative force that is neither elemental nor sidereal. Thoughts create a new heaven, a new firmament, a new source of energy, from which new arts flow. When a man undertakes to create something, he establishes a new heaven, as it were and from it the work that he desires to create flows into him. For such is the immensity of man that he is greater than heaven and earth. Madam Zebul now enters the realm of immortality and eternal life!” Paracelsus sounded like an announcer at a prize fight.

Madam walked to her carriage and sat long ways as the men carried her to a fire which had been lit in her honor. Once at the edge of the flames she dropped off the carriage and with her hands held over her head she began to speak.

“Name the shadows of the night where soul and spirit meet. Unite in the flames of purification and destiny. Wrap me in your arms of exaltation and cut away what binds me to the dust. Give me eyes to see through the veil of duality. Turn the types and shadows into reality. Wake me from the Adamic dream and ravish me whole. Allow me to give birth to a new beginning that shall never end or be vanquished.” At that point her robe slipped off revealing her nakedness for the camp to see. She was a creation now of physical perfection yearning to embrace the spiritual world and become the power which everyone longed for. The anticipation of reanimation, the hour of transformation and completion was at hand. She wore a robe that Grigori took and tossed symbolically into the fire. His presence was bestial, childish, scurrilous and tyrannical. The fire leaped at the material igniting it and burning it to ash. Madam danced infantine imbecility without music, twisting and contorting her body in a self induced trance. A dozen tribesmen surrounded her. They held small pales in their hands. The leader of the tribesmen commanded them to act and they simultaneously tossed the

contents of the pales upon Zebul. It was a combination of liquid and white powder which instantly blanched her skin white.

Madam spoke again. "I shall not turn to dust or be eaten by the worms. I rebuke the decay of the flesh. I shall not decay, I shall not rot, I shall not putrefy, and I shall not see corruption. I shall have my being, I shall have by being; I shall live, I shall live; I shall flourish, I shall flourish, I shall flourish, I shall wake up in peace, I shall not putrefy, my intestines shall not perish, I shall not suffer injury. My eye shall not decay. The form of my face shall not disappear. My ear shall not become deaf. My head shall not be separated from my neck. My tongue shall not be removed. My hair shall not be cut off. My eyebrows shall not be shaved away, and no evil defect shall assail me. My body shall be stablished. It shall neither become a ruin, nor be destroyed on this earth."

Everyone watched in amazement as Zebul in scapegrace form, played around the fire naked, covered in white paste from head to toe. Grigori shadowed her like a master observing his pet.

The tribesmen began to scatter incense beneath her feet as she frolicked about. Grigori spoke schizophrenically with animated hand gestures. "Cast down all of your enemies headlong all thine enemies for thee, and all thine enemies have fallen down headlong before thee. May you find safety in your infinite power and beauty, and cast down headlong all thine enemies. Thine enemies have fallen down headlong at your holy feet. We vow our dedication to thee to protecteth thee, and keepeth thee in safety. You covereth the powers of the universe with darkness, mastering all that would hide from thee. Bring flames against all that would oppose your rule and we act by your command. Your word is truth and we seal it at your order!"

Four tribesmen approached with torches in their hands. Another group of men brought four tribesmen bound on poles to the forefront. They were raised into the air. The men appeared to be drugged and unaware of the this ritual sacrifice that was occurring.

Grigori shouted "Today earth, wind, air and fire gives their allegiance to our Queen."

The lit torches were laid at the foot of the poles. Fire raced from the base to the top of the poles. The bound men screamed out in agonizing torture as their bodies were quickly consumed in flames and torment.

“Now our Queen Zebul will flourish throughout the universe. She is the altar where we bow to worship. She is our living sanctuary.” Grigori produced a new robe and wrapped it around her. She was escorted back to the carriage. Every knee bowed as the carriage was lifted and paraded back to her tent.

“Things have gotten out of hand. We must implement our plan soon.” Brito whispered to Paracelsus.

“And isn’t laudanum something to be praised?” Paracelsus grinned.

Grigori resigned to his tent where he wrestled the demons of his mind. His delusions were manifesting in madness. He fought for control, but the quest for Eden was eating a hole through his dark soul. The paranoia slithered and hissed in his ears. He swatted at the snake he thought was crawling on his shoulders. Pathologically exaggerated he was unable to rationalize. Flashes of sin, guilt, murder, erotic delusions violated and molested his mind as he drifted into the illness of his dream. His sleep was a vivid and terrifying nocturnal episode. Stepping on the thin boundaries of black and white, gray areas were out of reach and color was absent for the lack of illumination. Grigori was milked through paresis and delirium. Everything in this dream sequence was altered and distorted beyond recognition. Images were ghoulish and scenes ghastly. Speaking aloud to no one he experienced confusional arousals but not somnambulism, there was no where to walk anyway.

Chapter 27

An object in possession seldom retains the same charm that it had in pursuit.

Pliny the Younger



Olek led the troop unexposed through the wooded area and across the rough terrain. They gambled on Olek's honesty. If he really did have a family that he wanted to return to then they believed that he would be good as his word. If he was lying, then the troop was being led into a trap and possibly death.

As they came up over a ridge the troop lay on their bellies and crawled to the peak to peer over. Olek motioned with his hand that the enemy camp was just below them. The troop now had a clear view of the enemy camp. A fire was burning below in a pit. Four poles were smoldering at the edge of the fire. There seemed to be the charred remains of something hanging from the poles. Jamison counted thirty gray tents and one red tent. There was activity in the camp. It looked as if they were pulling up stakes. The numbers of men coincided with Olek's numbers. It appeared that possibly the enemy had pulled their recon troops back into the camp. No signs of snipers or anyone protecting the perimeter could be seen.

"I believe that the children are being held in the red tent." Olek informed the troop.

"We can't just charge down there firing guns and swinging swords. Sitting Bull, there are too many of them. We should shadow them and find opportunity to rescue the children." Jamison deduced.

“If there was a way to cross the river and follow them from the other side it would be less likely that we would be noticed.” Kali remarked.

“That would be ideal if once on the other side we could come back to this side if opportunity presented itself for a rescue.” Jamison pointed out.

“It is logical to believe that we will not have recourse for some time. Should we not move transparent until that time?” Kali asked while also offering wisdom.

“In order for us to have a fighting chance we have to maintain the element of surprise and when we do spring into action we will have to bring everything we have. Those soldiers have real guns. We are not just fighting against men and swords. Guns can reach out and get ya.” Jamison contended.

“There is the man that tried to convince me that he was not evil. Li se yonn nan de gro kay sa a boule.” Lora exclaimed pointing down at Grigori who just walked out of his tent.

“Looks like they are traveling tonight.” Pheobe noticed.

“We need to rest before we attempt to pursue them. We must find a safe place to rest for an hour or so.” Jamison suggested. Lora needed rest. Her and Jamison were very fit and exercised back home in Jamaica a few times a week, but they had been at marathon pace without a break.

The troop moved off the ridge and made their way to a dense forested area a few hundred meters away from the enemy camp. Here they would be camouflaged and have a defensible position if attacked.

“I truly want to help you stop what they are planning.” Olek affirmed his commitment.

“I would like to believe you Tonto, but until we have proof of your alliance we have to be cautious.” Jamison explained.

“I understand and I will prove my worth to you somehow.” Olek professed.

The troop drifted off to sleep, all but Gaea who seemed to never need rest. In her world she had experienced and lived through a violent war with the Titanomacha and understood battle.

No one dreamed but they slept well. Two hours into the sleep they were awakened by Gaea who informed them that the enemy was on the move. The troop sprung into action.

Flanking the enemy the troop had to be careful because the enemy had sent out scouting parties that had gone ahead, and two groups had fallen back. Jamison purposed that they take out the two groups that had fallen back. His theory was, as long as they could engage small groups they could eliminate the threat little by little thus making their chances better when the big battle occurred.

They were trudging again through sand. This land was more barren than anything they had experienced. Their cover was eliminated and they were forced to fall back even more. Jamison wondered if he should have crossed the river as Kali had suggested.

Lora had given Jamison most of her gear. He was carrying most of the guns and the heavy ammo belt. He was upset with himself that he had stubbornly refused to cross the river now eliminating their concealment and thwarting the opportunity to dispose of these smaller groups of men.

Against the backdrop of sand and more sand the troop labored on in pursuit. The enemy was leaving an obvious trail to follow. There were thousands of foot prints in the hot sand. Jamison never stopped looking for seclusion. He did not want to end up hapless in this environment. Jamison realized that the enemy was shrewd and resourceful and he feared that they had elements working for them that he was unaware of, such as magic or some sort of supernatural power. Minutes turned into hours and fortunately the landscape slowly transformed into some color. Jamison ordered everyone to move up on one of the scouting parties that had fallen back from Grigori's main battalion. The scouting party consisted of 12 men. It was a smaller group that the one Olek had been attached to. Olek said not a word but followed Jamison's lead. With drawn weapons at a large rock formation the troop catapulted into action. The scouting party were taken by surprise and this time there was no prisoners. Believing the old saying "strike while the iron is hot" Jamison moved the troop into a position to engage the second scouting party. The results were the same. No prisoners were taken.

The troop measured Olek's reaction while his tribesmen were cut down. He seemed unmoved as they were cut to pieces and killed. He had simply stood back and witnessed the massacres without flinching. Most anyone else would have been horrorstruck and sickened but Olek seemed to understand what must be done.

Sibyl tried the ear to the ground technique hoping that the earth contained caved or tunnels in this region but she was unsuccessful in locating any.

"Does anyone smell that foul smell?" Gaea asked.

A malodorous odor wafted across their path. The offensive smell was rancid, suggesting some kind of smoke. "Something is burning. Fè yon moun pran sa sant?" Lora said trying not to inhale deeply.

"There, right there between those bushes, there's someone standing there." Sibyl pointed out. Jamison pulled the rifle up and dropped to one knee. He took careful aim, seconds counted.

The man beckoned to them. "There is no reason for violence. I bear you no harm."

He was a little man not much more than two feet tall. He wore all green with shiny leather shoes with silver buckles. His sideburns were bushy and he wore a full curly beard.

"Who are you and what do you want?" Jamison did not lower the rifle.

"The question is what do you want?" The little man shot back verbally.

"We are just passing through and we are not interested in trouble." Jamison now had a perfect bead on the little man's head.

"I am not here for trouble. I am here to show you a short cut." The little man turned his back to them and began walking away.

"A shortcut to where?" Lora shouted back.

"A shortcut to paradise." The little man answered.

“Why do you think we are going to some place called paradise?” Jamison asked.

The little man laughed “Aren’t you?”

The troop moved guarded with due consideration slowly making their way behind the little man who was puffing away on a foul smelling pipe.

“It is always good to travel without luggage when you can. No need to get bogged down with extra weight.” The little man was babbling to himself.

“My name is Dinneen Drumlims, and I have a gift I wish to share with you.”

“Why would you want to give us a gift? You do not know us?” Kali jumped into the conversation.

“The world in which I reside is also threatened by the storm that is stirring.” Dinneen shared.

“How do we know that you are not working with those that we are pursuing?” Jamison asked.

The little man smiled. “You don’t know. But I can show you what you need to know if you are going to do something drastic.”

Standing before a withered tree with broken branches and no leaves Dinneen reached down to one of the above ground roots and pulled up. The entire tree flipped back revealing a passage way.

“If you are interested in my gift, follow me. If you prefer to challenge a large army ahead of you and a larger army coming up behind you only two hours away then do not follow.” Dinneen walked down into the underground tree lair.

Jamison and the troop were faced with a huge decision. They were on the trail of the enemy and were certain that the children were in that camp being held hostage. But they were sorely out numbered and thus far Jamison had no real plan for retrieving them. Now a stranger has extended a hand of friendship still yet to be proved, yet Dinneen did not appear to be one of the enemies. Matter of fact he did not seem to fit anywhere in this region of the

world. Despite reluctance it made sense somehow to follow him into this hole in the ground.

The troop one by one entered the hole beneath the tree until gradually they were all inside. They were led down a narrow corridor of dirt into a spectacular living space.

“Welcome to my noble retreat.” Dinneen welcomed his guest. The room had incredible furniture pieces. Small tiptop pedestal tables were placed at the end of the davenport. Striking was the ornamental furnishings and velvet sofa. The room was refined with lots of oak and mahogany pieces.

“I was an apothecary at one time; very successful if I may say. I was given this wonderful place in exchange for my life. I get comfort and life because I saved one. Yet I am cursed here because I could not save the other. There were two sisters involved in the orgies of Bacchus singing their ribald songs with explicit amorous lyrics. They were caught up in the Tarantism and danced all night long. They were from a very prominent spiritual family of what I suppose you would call Witches. They were bitten during their ritual by the Mediterranean Black Widow. These were not little girls for sacrifice; this was a ceremony where they danced in celebration as they came into adulthood. I was called upon to save the girls. I opposed their Bacchanalia rituals because it involved young girls indulging in the coarsest excesses and the most unnatural vices. The licentiousness activities were appalling. This particular evening I was called because twin girls had both been bitten. They were gravely ill by the time that I arrived. The only method we had at the time for curing such bites was to put them beside a burning wood stove and continue throwing logs on the fire until the poison was sweated from their bodies. One sister lived and one died. That is how I came to reside here.”

“This is a long way from home huh?” Jamison guessed.

“Yes a very long way. But that is a brief history of an extended life. You are here because I have a gift for you.” Dinneen walked to the far wall. The built in cabinets were plentiful and he swung open a door and brought out a coat reaching to the wrist and ankles.

“This my dear man is Joseph’s coat of many colors.” Dinneen introduced.

“You must be joking right? There are no colors on this coat.” Jamison contented.

“I promise you, this is the coat. It wasn’t a multiple color coat, it was a long sleeve coat reserved for noblemen and kings.” Dinneen exclaimed.

“Let’s say that I believe you. What sort of benefit does it have?” Jamison asked.

“It is Joseph’s coat!” Dinneen hollered out.

“O.k. good heavens, you don’t have to blow a gasket. If you want me to have it I will take it.” Jamison extended his hand. Dinneen placed the coat over his arm.

“Now for the good news, the short cut. This way.” Dinneen walked his short legs over to a miniature door, the size of a doggy door.

“If you will take this door, you will come out ahead of those you have been behind.” Dinneen revealed.

“That is a tiny door. Kouman kapab nou pase a?” Lora blurted out.

“I am a little man.” Dinneen barked back.

“So we are to climb through that little hole?” Kali frowned.

“If you want an advantage on your foe.” Dinneen remarked sarcastically.

Jamison knew if the door worked, unlike this coat he had to lug around, it would put them closer to the Garden and ahead of the adversary. Closer to the adversary they could set an ambush and use assault tactics that they could not use if they were still pursuing.

“What do you think Jamison?” Lora asked.

“I think we need to trust Dinneen and take this passage.” Jamison answered.

“We also agree.” Sibyl said answering for the rest of the girls.

“Thank you Dinneen. I suppose this is goodbye.” Jamison was ready to move along.

Dinneen opened the tiny door as the troop lay flat on the floor.

“May brooks and trees and singing hills join in the chorus too, And every gentle wind that blows send happiness to you.” Dinneen said as they embarked on their journey.

The passage was small, it was dark but at least it was cool. Using their knees and elbows they crawled slowly with little light. Then the door behind them was closed and everything was pitch dark.

“This is not good. Sa trè move.” Lora complained.

“Just keep crawling.” Jamison said encouraging everyone to keep up.

Claustrophobia began to set in as the passage seemed to never end. They were confined and shut up with no immediate exit. Though they were moving the advancement was restrictive and suffocation had entrapped the troop. The cool climate began to change and beads of sweat popped up on their foreheads. Lora felt her own heartbeat pounding away in her chest.

“I am feeling lightheaded. Tout ko mwen cho” She complained.

“Come on Lora you can do it. Keep going.” Jamison was getting nauseous but did not say anything. He had to stay strong for the others.

Jamison’s arms were able to spread out wider which indicated to him that the passage was getting larger. Larger was good.

“I believe we are coming to an opening here. Everyone stay calm I think we are almost there.” Jamison indicated. He picked up the pace and pushed himself harder knowing that Lora was suffering under these conditions. A shimmer of light jabbed its way through an opening ahead.

“I see light.” Jamison ecstatically proclaimed.

The troop emerged in shallow cave. The mouth of the cave was within several feet of where each one popped out and stood up.

“Oh my goodness, that was unbearable.” Kote Iopital Ia? Lora joked and protested.

“Is everyone good?” Jamison asked as he helped brush the dust off Lora’s pants.

“We are good Jamison. That did not feel like a wormhole, so how can we be ahead of Grigori?” Gaea analyzed.

“Lora and I have experienced some crazy time travel. So I am not going to assume anything until we figure out where we are.” Jamison went to the mouth of the cave and contemplated their surroundings.

“It appears we are in a mountainous area with a surrounding forest and directly below us is a river. I am guessing we have moved along quite a bit because the land is completely different. We actually have green and life out there.” Jamison said not using proper English but they understood what he was saying.

They worked their way down to the river where a pleasant breeze was blowing and the sun warmed them but did not scorch. Jamison sought vantage points that they could launch their attack from. He began to see areas of dominance where they could successfully fight and defend. Plus the key to all successful campaigns is to have an exit route.

“I believe we can have superiority from that ledge there.” Jamison pointed up high. Lora can rest there and with the rifle she can reach down here with no threat to her at all.”

He conferred with the girls and they established a plan. They understood the fighting would be ferrous yet he believed they could free the children. This battle would be for one purpose. Their aim was to free the children not to win the war in this one battle. Patience was the key to this victory and invariably patience was the key to life according to Jamison.

As night fell the troop had their positions. Everyone was settled in and calm. They had used up all of their anxiety and consternation in the tunnel. Lora looked like G.I. Jane armed to the teeth. His heart still did a pitter patter every time that he saw her. He loved her each day more than the day before. He could not help to think that the way she was standing with her gun on her hip that she would make a best selling action figure for kids. She gave him a

look as if to say “we have work to do, stop flirting with me.” He returned her look with a grin and a raised eye-brow that she interpreted as his way of saying “all work and no play.” But he snapped out of his fantasy world and his mind went to the business at hand. Jamison had borrowed a couple of guns from her. She had plenty to spare. The girls sat like trained warriors with their magical talents tucked deep inside.

Sibyl sat near the mouth of the cave where they had exited into this new landscape. She could be heard repeating “You shall have your wish, and with my guidance you shall see the dwellings of Elysium and the latest kingdom of the universe; and you shall see your dear father's shade. The way to Hades is easy; night and day lie open the gates of death's dark kingdom: but to retrace your steps, to find the way back to daylight—that is the task.” Before she was assigned to this duty she had been voiceless, doomed to fetters. She was ready for whatever came for she knew in time she would return to her former existence.

To this point Gaea had held back from wrecking the chaos she was capable of unleashing. She was perched directly in the line of most resistance when the enemy would appear. There was one way to pass and it would be through Gaea. In her mind she was ready to unchain grim violence, leaving mangled, broken bodies in her wake. Weltering through bloodbaths of warm gore; her mission was to free the children through unmerciful cruelty.

Kali breathed heavily trying to control the rage she kept inside. She had to be careful that she did not go on a killing spree where she lost control and destroyed everything in sight. She had a taste for blood. She stood practically nude above the ridge with a primeval all-embracing and transcendental nature shinning off her black skin. She destroyed only to recreate but this was a battle for destruction and devouring.

In the recesses of a rock formation Pheobe lay back in all of her beauty soaking up the rest of the evening. She hardly presented herself as a mighty warrior waiting for war. She wasn't the combatant that the other girls were. She had an intellect that seemed unmatched by the others.

Jamison sat gazing at the sword of David and knowing soon it would be drenched in blood while he kept an eye on Olek their only prisoner who sat quietly still bound hand and feet.

Chapter 28

To be deceived by our enemies or betrayed by our friends is insupportable; yet by ourselves we are often content to be so treated.

Francois De La Rochefoucauld



The Caucasian Ovcharka dogs Youssou and Pov led the way with Grigori walking behind them. He was thrilled that they were on the march again. The largest part of his battalion was less than an hour behind them now. Excited he could only imagine what it was going to be like to finally govern and lead thousands of men.

Madam Zebul was in her carriage with her armed regime protecting her more closely than ever since her ritual where she deemed herself a goddess and had sacrificed the four tribesmen. She was adorned all in white but no one could see her because she had her curtains pulled down.

Meanwhile Paracelsus and Brito had the witches brew with a tincture of morphine, and the added ingredients of crushed pearls, henbane and frog-spawn bottled and ready to taint the food or liquid of the queen and Grigori. They worked their way inconspicuously to the preparer of the food. There was a meal prepared for Madam Zebul and Grigori had tea prepared. His concoction was called “the stone of immortality.”

With a distraction and a sleight of hand Paracelsus drenched her food in the clear substance and sprinkled the remainder into Grigori’s tea pot. Then they slipped away hardly being noticed by anyone. There was a set of eyes that

had witnessed them near the food. Andriy the barbarian tribesmen had nodded to them as they departed from the chow wagon.

“Did you see that goon looking at us?” Brito asked paranoid.

“He doesn’t suspect a thing, and he has the mind of a three year old. The first fly that lights on him he will forget he saw us near the food. The dose makes the poison.” Paracelsus said manipulatively.

The battalion marched forward coming closer to the waiting six brave guerilla fighters cloaked in the scenery. Jamison saw them coming holding tight to the river. He signaled the others getting everyone sitting up and taking notice. Jamison had instructed his team to be careful to not get the children caught in the cross fire. Collateral damage was not acceptable. The large battalion was just about in the spot where Jamison had wanted them when they suddenly stopped.

There was a scream from Madam Zebul’s carriage then Grigori who had been drinking his tea dropped down to his knees. There was panic and pandemonium below. Jamison waited watching the event unfold, not wanting to ascend upon them too quickly. He thought he heard someone say “I think she is dead.”

His keen eye located Paul and Ruth in the center of the men near the carriage that had been lowered to the ground. They stood alone unguarded because of the chaos ensuing. Men were gathered around a woman and then a huge group of soldiers were hovering around Grigori that was struggling.

Jamison made sure that the troop all had seen where Paul and Ruth were located. He gave the signal and hell was unleashed.

The sky exploded with lightening striking the ground with enormous fireballs. Gaea rained fire from the heavens splitting the chaos below into a checker board of insanity. The thunderbolts belched out smoke; the white cliff where Lora sat guarding Olek was blackened. The near by river boiled with foam and steam pouring over the banks down into the gorge, until the flash flood boomed against the advancing army. Lora’s marksmanship reached out like a tool of fire in her hands boring holes in those to whom the cross haired had targeted. The bullets spun melting through the flesh with their ice cold tips. Bodies fell dead, some fell bruised, but they fell.

The moon turned blue and Pheobe caused a great enchantment that turned the soldiers and the tribesmen in the opposite direction.

Grigori fell to his knees wincing in agony caused by the iatrogenic intent of his two colleagues. His thoughts became scrambled. First he was on the battlefield; the doors of his mind opened and slammed closed swinging back and forth locking him in a secret room. He rolled on the ground hooting like a barn owl, grinning and chattering like a wild monkey. He was an idol being worshipped and praised, the priest ministering life to the masses with the threat of eternal separation and hell fire. He was worshipped as God; sacrificed as the Son of God. He gathered his strength and to his feet he stood. In wrath he roared like a lion with a voice that scaled above the calamity. He was confined, buried for a thousand years, in stone coffin borrowed from thieves, and forgotten in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. Frothing at the mouth he was kissed, with cancerous kisses, by hags and whores then Paracelsus and Brito. Then laid, confounded with all unutterable gruesome things, among the reeds of the soon to be fossil river mud. "He was dragged from the battlefield along with Madam Zebul to the cover of trees at the far end of the kill zone along the banks of the of the meandering river.

Gaea threw off the veil of the forest exposing the vulnerability of the enemy. Grigori's battalion unable to quash the assault scrambled in disarray spellbound and terrified. Men's hearts were failing them and knees gave way driving them to the dust as the earth belched flames.

Kali had entered the field of battle and was spinning in a fury wiping out every person that confronted her. Jamison had followed behind her his sword in the air.

Trees were being sheared in half and men torn in half. Once clothed in blissful verdure now splattered in unredeemed death. The river roared and rolled from its banks like tears from a giant washing many away. Smoke masked the sight and the fighting was close.

From the high towering rock refuge Lora was picking off anyone that had not found cover. She took a shot, stopped breathing for about ten seconds to locate another target. When a window opened she relaxed her diaphragm and breathing muscles then squeezed off another round. Her shots were precise. She saw Sibyl now on the field of battle. She was fighting against

two and three men at a time. A tribesman approached her from the back. He held a long knife with jagged teeth. Before Lora could target him through her scope, with accelerated force he impelled Sibyl in the back. Blood gushed from her back and she dropped without a sound. The ground received her body and she vanished from before their eyes. Lora was enraged, her shots rang out more frequently with less accuracy but she got satisfaction from dropping the barbarian that had taken Sibyl from this world.

Jamison obliterated the first line of defense and fought his way through blood and sweat to the children. Their eyes lit up when they saw Jamison though he was covered in splattered blood. Paul was impressed with Jamison's size. He had not seen him in over a year. Paul noticed how his well developed arm muscles rippled and bulged under the massive weight of the weapons he effortlessly hoisted. Yet he covered the battlefield with the ease and stealthiest of a cat. Jamison untied the children and led them through the mayhem. Pheobe's enchantment had worked keeping Grigori's battalion disheveled like blind men.

Paul pointed to the table where his cauldron was sitting out in the open. "Good eye Paul." Jamison shouted as they ran in the direction of the cauldron. Some killing had to be done on the way to the table but the cauldron was recovered and the three headed for their exit route.

Gaea and Kali had retreated once they saw the children in Jamison's care. Pheobe made her way to Lora's perch seizing Olek and the troop retreated down river as hard as they could run.

The troop escaped with one casualty which they would mourn when they stopped to catch their breath. The children would have to come to terms with their other fallen comrades as well. The absence of Hathor, Vivian and now Sibyl would be much for the children to accept.

In Grigori's camp order was being restored. Andriy and Hrhoriy of the tribesmen had taken charge of the men while Grigori and Madam were being tended to. Paracelsus and Brito had been summoned to Grigori's tent. Paracelsus assured Brito that it was to pronounce Grigori dead.

The soldiers opened the flap on the tent and the two men were ushered in. To their shock and dismay Grigori was sitting upright.

“Gentlemen we have a problem. Доза делает яд.” Grigori said changing from English to Russian.

“I do not understand sir.” Paracelsus said pretending to be confused.

Grigori's reptilian serpent mind reared its head and twisted between the two hemispheres of his brain, rhythmically swaying back and forth, pulsing from side to side. Like an intertwined rope or ladder extending from his lowest earth into his heaven, this bridge communicated his visions clearly. The serpent injected venom into his thoughts, biting, stinging and giving him the antidote to the poison that had stopped his heart earlier." Grigori saw Christ hanging on a pole begging His followers to eat of Him. Partake of His flesh. He introduces the cup of His blood to be consumed for life. Grigori called on his supreme five senses of reason that they would no longer be starved or suffocated. His serpent masquerading as an angel of life doesn't wither, shrivel, rot, fade or drop from its heaven. It streaks across the imagination of his lofty mind, soaring in the open skies like a lightning bolt. The fire falls to his dust realm connecting heaven and earth plunging into the rivers of life that flow from beneath his throne where he alone sits ruling and reigning. The hypnotic force of the Kundartiguador cleared the mind of conscious thought allowing higher vibration energies to make their climb up the subtle pathways within the spinal cord to reach the crown feeding his ego. The crystalline circuitry of his body exploded awakening the pineal gland, as well as a special resonant energy reflex arc extending from the coccygeal region to the brain stem. Lost now in the mystery of the self evolved Kundalini Cave honed from the sacred bone of his soul Grigori lamented his inner most thoughts. The gate keeper of anything foreign trying to reach into him was rejected by his own cherub called the medulla oblongata. Not only did it keep opposing forces out but it contained and imprisoned the old serpent of fire that restricted anything from being released thus Grigori fought inwardly a private war that no one could see.

“God talks in visions men. The dose makes the poison.” Grigori said as Paracelsus suddenly became physically ill. Brito's knees buckled and he caught himself before he fell completely.

“I have work to do so be my guest until I arrive.” Grigori departed the tent and went to look in on Madam Zebul.

When Grigori entered her tent she was lying on a bed her body entirely covered with a blanket. Two soldiers stood guard.

“I am sorry My Lord, she has died.” The larger of the two soldiers sadly brought Grigori the news.

“Remove the cover!” Grigori stood by her beside. The cover was removed. Zebul was motionless. She was not breathing and when he placed his hand upon her chest there was no heart beat.

“Leave us and do not allow anyone entrance. I do not want to be disturbed.” Grigori ordered.

The soldiers immediately exited and stood outside the tent not allowing admittance.

Grigori took a rope from his pocket and he tied Zebul's hands together then her delicate feet.

He began to quote Edgar Allen Poe.

My love, she sleeps! Oh may her sleep
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold -
Some vault that oft has flung its black
And winged panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crestled palls,
Of her grand family funerals-
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone -
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within

His threnody was a blend of romance and hymn. He placed her mirror on her chest and took a veil from her dresser box and laid the sheer material upon

her face. From a nearby pitcher of water he dipped his finger seven times and rubbed it each time gently across her soft lips. He pulled the veil down to cover her mouth now.

He held out his hands over her supine body and spoke. “By virtue of the divine resurrection, be obedient to life and refuse death. Present yourself here among the living from the darkness of sleep.”

He lifted the veil and gently blew a puff of air beneath it then lowered it down against her face. He performed this three times and on the third he blew longer directly into her nostrils. When he placed the veil it flew off her face from her own exhale. She breathed out long then began to cough deeply. Zebul opened her eyes and saw Grigori.

“My dear savior.” She whispered. She took him in her arms and pulled him close. The two were analogously woven together.

He smiled and said “It is all Thalamencephalon thinking Madam” he responded with respect and a superfluous smile. Grigori had a great concept of his own brain and understood the thalamus, the midline paired symmetrical structure within the brains of vertebrates. His visual paralysis leaned heavily on his back projections. Sometimes what he saw did not have to come from any input of the retina or be sent to the lateral geniculate nucleus, his mind found comfort in wakefulness when disturbed by signals from worlds beyond.

Paracelsus and Brito were marched out in the midst of the camp. They were withered, bewildered and trounced. Grigori and Madam Zebul walked out into the night to see the quislings. Smoke and the smell of blood still lingered in the air.

“Andriy how many men did we loose tonight?” Grigori asked.

Andriy did not look at Grigori, he stared hating at Paracelsus.

“My Lord, we have counted 153 killed and twenty missing. The missing are assumed washed into the river when it rose up.” Andriy reported.

“And the children?” Grigori asked already expecting the worse.

“They were taken.” Andriy further reported.

Grigori addressed the camp. “My fellow visionaries, tonight we suffered defeat. This is the first battle of many. We are marching on to the Garden and then through it!” The camp burst into cheers.

“We will wait for the remainder of our men to join us; then we will march thousands to the gates and through anything that stands in our way.” There were more cheers and applause.

“There are two worlds. I grant that one of the two must succumb. Yes, one or the other. But if we were to succumb, all hope for eternal life would succumb with us. Thus we begin a heroic struggle, opposed at its inception by nearly all. Nevertheless, the essential objects of our movement, embraces the decisive element. We have a clear and unambiguous aim. It is a definite goal safeguarding our interests regardless of momentary dissensions or confused thoughts. Thus, today, after the heat of battle, I again stand before you....Tonight while the battle raged I was unable to lead, or to participate because I had been poisoned. There was an attempt made on Madan Zebul and my life this evening. The attempts have failed! Tonight we look for retribution and revenge. The enemy has fled in fear of our reprisal yet we have two cowards among us. These gutless pusillanimous and milquetoast worms are standing before you.”

The camp began to shout out profanities and insults.

“I am turning these men over to you Andriy; that you would hand out your justice. I wash my hands of the blood of these primitive parasites for I will shed blood in good time.” For the last time he looked at his two limp comrades and shot piercing words into the hearts. “Tonight I shudder with the chill from the inbred and gross misjudgment that has stood against me. It has crawled up my body like a cold hand. Yet I am God’s anointed and no weapon formed against me shall prosper. This insufferable frigid grip could not reach my neck. This insurrection and loutish attempts upon me and your scurrilous endeavor upon our Queen to not only denounce her but to murder her are no more than mutiny and a revolt upon God’s anointed. God’s Word says [Touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm] Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. Here and now God’s commandments will be fulfilled! May the camp note my distress at your floccinaucinihilipilification?”

Judging the two men to be worthless, Grigori took Madam Zebul by the arm and walked up to Andriy, who stood ready to carry out his law.

Grigori mumbled in his ear. “We have had a trying day; whatever you choose to do with them, we wish not to hear it. So if you must, please remove them from the camp.”

Grigori would never see his fellow collaborators again. Andriy led Paracelsus and Brito from the camp into a remote area and returned them to the world from which they had sprung.

Chapter 29

"A person's a person, no matter how small."

Dr. Seuss, author



Jamison's troop and Olek distanced themselves a long ways from where the conflict had occurred. They were buried deep within the heart of a forest, far enough from the river that the rushing sound of water could no longer be heard. Lora wanted another look at Jamison's tattoos before they went any further.

Eating at her was the feeling that she missed some vital clue. Jamison lay on his back while Lora examined his artwork while meditating. Her breathing at first was deep and controlled then became shallow and erratic as if she was hyperventilating. Her oxygen deprivation slipped her into an altered state of consciousness. Her body trembled as a hand of guidance took her thought into a higher frequency. She waited for the dream projection that would interpret the symbols and oneiric images. As her body relaxed her mind was flooded with freedom of will and undeviating steadiness of purpose. Her eyelids fluttered her eyes transformed from gloriously dark chestnut to hazel then to a ivory pearl white. Her face glazed like an porcelain China Doll.

Lora spoke smoothly, monotone without an emotion.

“An abscess and a vexed heart yet the soul departs from the perception of the dream

Do not struggle against nor be apprehensive of the change that flows like a stream

The power to comprehend, invite transformation when a boy becomes a man
Be not afraid when you are summons to put the sword in his hand.

Suffer the children and forbid them not according to the apportionment and spinning of the thread of destiny

For the time will come 3327 when judgment will be reckoned from the innocent one
Perturbation nor desire detach from impiousness elemental fire embrace the sun
For truth will shine through the dissolution storms, and prayers for calm
And violence will give way to fertile green and the garden will sing psalms”

The troop was enthralled with her words and shining countenance. Gradually after she had spoken Lora eased from the trance. Her appearance begins to return to normal and her breathing was spontaneous. Jamison cradled her head in his hands her long locks were wrapped around his fingers.

“Lora baby are you ok?” Jamison gently asked.

“Mwen swaf anpil. Yes, I need water.” Lora responded trying to raise her head.

Kali gave her a drink of water and she addressed the troop.

“Jamison we have led the journey since the beginning but in my heart there is a voice telling me that to go on we must listen to the thoughts of another.” Lora turned her attention to Paul.

Paul look stumped, his expression was one of puzzlement.

“Why are you looking at me?” Paul asked wide eyed.

“Paul you are the man child that the Book of Revelations speaks about ruling with a rod of iron. You must step up now because you are the only one that can lead us to the gates of Eden. In you is the path we must follow. For this moment you were brought here.” Lora understood that the troop was not in agreement but she believed what she had seen.

Paul was in denial yet since the prophecy there existed a stirring in his heart that he had not noticed earlier.

Lora leaned over to Jamison. “The numbers are making sense. I saw 3327. This number is significant for us. Anpil moun la dwe comptées kòrèkteman.”

“I am horrible with mathematical equations. I am not going to be very good in deciphering the numbers.” Jamison exclaimed.

“Maybe they will decipher for us. Three is the common denominator. 3327, three times nine is twenty seven it must mean something.” Lora expounded.

“Wait. Maybe I am good at numbers. Paul’s birthday is June 9. That is the day the children arrived at our house. Look at his birthday take the 33, three plus three it equals six the six month is June. The number 27, two plus seven equal nine. Nine is the day of his birth. Maybe the numbers you have been seeing the 3327 has to do with Paul?” Both numbers are divisible by three and in one of your visions I distinctly remember you mentioning the number three.” Jamison impressed Lora with his science that draws necessary conclusions.

“I remember that three had to do with a security gate. I am sure Paul will know what to do when we come to that place. Vizyon ki soti nan Bondye. Se pou nou gen konfyans nan Bondye.” Lora was hopeful.

Ruth did not want to break his concentration but she knew her brother and could recognize when he was troubled. Not wanting to interrupt she cleared her throat and sat near him on the ground. Paul was facing away from her peering out into the darkness as if he was trying to bring the light to his eyes.

“What about it?” He said not turning around.

“You mean what Lora said about you leading us?” Lora knew what he meant but added the question just because she did not have an answer.

“Yes, how can I lead us when I got us captured? Would a leader get his sister kidnapped?” He said in revolt.

“That was my fault; I did not listen to you. If I had listened to you we would have went down the cliff instead of trying to find a place around it.” Ruth meant it. She was still feeling guilty for their abduction.

Paul did not even answer he sat staring into the oblivion.

The night was long with every sound piercing the ears like an alarm. Cicadas let out shrill cries in the distance. Buzzing mosquitoes were like fighter jets.

Unseen creatures scampered and rustled about coming and going on nature's highway. Droning birds perched up high calling unto the night. And the wind balanced the ambience embellishing the auditory like gentle brush strokes laying the musical ostinato in harmony.

When early morning finally broke through, casting rays of broken light across the treetops, the troop met the sun on their feet. Jamison had to hold back from taking the lead and barking out orders and ideas. It was hard for him since he always led. Paul took the point even though it was the most vulnerable position. Jamison watched him like a hawk worried more for the boy's safety than Paul leading them in the wrong direction.

"What's the plan Paul?" Ruth asked.

"Plan? What do you mean plan?" Paul asked as he took a large step over a jagged rock.

"You had all night to gather your thoughts Paul, what are your thoughts?" Jamison reminded the young leader.

"I am heading west just like we are supposed to be." Paul seemed a little perturbed by the line of questions.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and a little child shall lead them." Paul quoted a verse from the Bible though he did not know what verse it was.

"What is that supposed to mean?" Paul asked as if he had just bit down on a bitter pill.

"I'm not sure that it means anything." Jamison shot back with a somewhat caustic flare.

"Paul, I believe what we want to know is if during the night was anything revealed to you?" Èske ou kapab di nou? Kisa ou wè? Lora promoted herself to peacemaker.

"I am sorry if I have come across indignant. I guess I was hoping for a vision. But as long as we move west and work our way back to the river I

believe we shall be fine.” Paul excused his own hard attitude but deep inside he was troubled.

The burden of the world was on Paul’s narrow shoulders. He had reluctantly accepted the position of luminary but respected Lora’s visions and prophecies. He had not walked thirty minutes and was already fatigued. His legs were tight and he had a slight headache. The pressure of the situation compounded with the heat and rugged environment simply was exhausting yet he found the perseverance to forge on.

Skillfully they manipulated the landscape dominating the territory until they were within earshot of the river.

“It is important that we step it up Paul. There are thousands of guys on the move behind us and they will send out scouts that will move quickly to search what is ahead.” Jamison reminded the boy leader.

“Yes, is everyone ready to do some running?” Paul asked.

“I can not run with my feet bound.” Olek complained.

This was Paul’s first big decision as leader. What to do with the prisoner?

“Olek, you said you have a family?” Paul asked him.

“Yes I do. If I live I shall see them again.” Olek answered as if to be thinking about his family and homeland.

“Olek, I miss my family also and if I were in your situation I would want my captors to release me so I could find my family again.” Paul said reaching down and untying Olek’s feet freeing them.

“Today I release you. I trust you will be safe on your journey home to your family.” Paul removed the ties that bound his hands.

“Thank you from my heart. You shall be rewarded for your kindness.” Olek said still standing there.

“Go man you are free.” Paul permitted.

Olek smiled and bowed, then turned and began to run in the opposite direction.

“I hope he has a family, if not he’ll run straight to the enemy.” Jamison stated

“Either way the enemy is coming.” Paul reminded him.

Paul locked in on a seam he could see through the mountains ahead. The river ran parallel and from this view it appeared it cut a wrinkle through the gorge. The way the terrain was beveled forced the troop down near the river and the banks of the river though somewhat rocky was a muddy mess. Although their legs were fatigued from the weight of the mud clinging and sticking to their shoes they had the wherewithal to notice how pristine and clear the river was. Paul assumed because of the appearance of everything that they were in an alternative world. His mind conceived a whole scenario. He began to feel like the explorer looking for alien life. Would the life they found be intelligent or just a frozen speck of ice in a rock? Would the life be friendly or hostile? He could not imagine at his ripe young age that he was leading an exploration crew in another time, a different dimension and another planet possibly. The others followed close behind him stepping where he stepped and following his lead.

One large cloud shielded the sun overhead so they were not overcome with the scorching heat. It was a workable heat. “Doable.” said Jamison who wiped his forehead often. The fear the troop had was the thousands of men coming this way. Their plan was simply to outrun their enemies to the Promised Land.

Paul held up his hand. His youthful eye had detected something ahead. “There is something moving up there near those trees.”

Everyone stretched their necks to see. He had caught a glimpse of something because the trees were shaking ahead. Paul designed a quick plan to have everyone fan out and approach whatever it was from different angles. The troop crept slowly encompassing whatever was there shaking the tree. Pheobe was the first to see and then Gaea followed by Paul who stiffened instantly. He glanced at Jamison and mouthed the word “GIANT.”

Jamison froze and pushed Lora down. She whispered “What did he say?” Jamison first put his index finger to his lips hushing her then he mouthed “GIANT.”

The giant rose in full upright position and said “I can hear you.”

Paul then bravely stood. Paul was tall for his age and stood five feet nine inches tall while the giant stood some twelve foot. Smartly Paul spoke as if he was the only one present. “I do not want trouble, I am passing through.”

“My name is Asmodeus, I am from the Tribe Niphilim. We are many and have been waiting for you to come to stop the forces that have entered our domain uninvited.”

“How did you know that I was coming?” Paul was inquisitive.

Asmodeus looked at Paul with his enormous yet gentle human face and smiled. “The one who told us that you were coming told me to quote you this; Clocks slay time... time is dead as long as it is being clicked off by little wheels; only when the clock stops does time come to life.”

The troop instantly understood this to mean that Hanus the clock master who had continued to travel with them silently in spirit had already sent word this far ahead that they were coming.

“So knowing that we were coming, do you have something for us?” Paul changed his dialogue from singular to plural and everyone emerged from the grasses and from behind rocks and tress.

As the troop showed them selves to Asmodeus, they were shocked to see several other giants raised into sight. “This is my family.” Asmodeus introduced. “We are to lead you to the boundaries of Eden.”

“Are we far from there?” Jamison asked.

“No we are very near in fact but you may need our help from here on out. We can take you so far through the hard parts but we are not allowed to fight for you or to show you the actual entrance.” Asmodeus answered.

“Can we leave right away, there is an enormous army following us.” Paul mentioned.

“Yes if you wish we can carry you and make better time.” Asmodeus politely offered.

The troop agreed. Like huge human pachyderm the Niphilim loaded them up on their backs and began a tremendous run out of the green area into the scalding heat of the desert and sand. The landscape changed almost instantly. Paul thought it was good that these wonderful giants had been waiting for them at this point in the journey.

“Thank you for the ride, so how long have you waited for us?” Paul inquired.

Asmodeus never broke stride. “We have waited twelve moons. When we heard the stirring of Bolontika from beneath this is when we were told to come and set camp at the river. Then we heard Quetzl overhead from the spindles of necessity chirping warnings. We knew that you were near.”

The troop rode comfortably on the powerfully muscular backs of the giants. A dozen human like gargantuan non-humans ran light on their bare feet through blistering sand without one complaint. The Niphilim were making quadruple time compared to the speed the troop would have covered the same distance.

They ran for an hour across the sands indefatigable and then changed direction working their way back to the river. When they arrived back at the banks of the river the troop was let down to the ground.

“I want you to look up in the sky at what looks like a disc up in the sky. Look for a transparent disc in the sky just right of the red in that cloud.” Asmodeus was pointing upward with his enormous finger.

“I see it, a transparent disc floating up in that cloud. Mwen kapab wè nan sa. Li parèt tankou kristal.” Lora said excited.

“I see it!” Paul exclaimed.

““What is it?” Kali asked just now seeing it there.

“It is your destination, but you must focus even more. For within the transparent disc there is a cube. The cube is Eden.” Asmodeus informed.

“How are we going to get up there? Gaea asked.

Jamison produced the cylinder. “Maybe we can use this?”

“Wait, it is all perception. There are reflections of the laws of creation. We have energy spiraling inward and outward from our inner being. It is more about harnessing the flow. The disc is the object we seek. But I believe because it is transparent it is a reflection of something here.” Lora advised.

“You think that Eden is here though Asmodeus says it is in that cube?”
Jamison frowned hardly ever doubting his wife. He then looked to Asmodeus.

“I have never been to Eden.” Asmodeus answered the look.

“We have power in us. At the base of our spine energy flows. We are the gateways more so than the objects we have used. Remember the tunnel we crawled through and realized that we ended up far from where we started in a short period of time? I am not convinced that was a wormhole.” She made a good argument.

“What do you propose we do?” Paul asked.

“Our bodies are the temple. Kò a se la Tanp Seyè a. Like giving birth I believe everything that is, is inside us. I have become more convinced as we have traveled. When we unwind that coil of stored energy or life force, whatever we wish to call us nothing is impossible to us. This journey alone should have proven this. The reason we are wound tight inside is for protection. Nothing can enter in and get at our core for within us is a Labyrinth to our soul and no one from the outside can wiggle their way in unless we unwind the coil.” Lora seemed sure of what she was speaking.

“You are loosing me here. So you believe this entire event from the time that I was yanked out of our bathroom until now has something to do with coils in our butt?” Jamison was showing his Neanderthal side.

“Jamison, Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden and they did not carry a silver cylinder that I have ever read. Maybe Lora is right. Maybe the coil she is speaking about was unwound because their influence had always come from God until Eve ate from the Tree of Good and Evil? Paul sided with Lora.

“If the cylinder will get us there, why not try it first, it hasn’t failed us yet?” Jamison gave them hassle.

“What if this one time, the cylinder does not work and sends us somewhere else when we are so close? A mistake now will cost us.” Lora prevailed upon.

“O.k. cosmic kid, we’ll do it your way.” Jamison seemed to sulk.

“What are we to do?” Paul gave Lora control for now.

“This will take all of us using our energies and meditating on that cube. Claire tèt nou. We must animate our inner being in releasing our force. For I believe if we ask Asmodeus he will be honest and tell us plainly that where we stand today is the realm of the dead. Nou menm nan Hades. Sa se kote ki gen non moun.” Lora turned to Asmodeus.

“And honestly I would agree Great Oracle. Everything you have experienced until now you have tasted the realm of death on every turn. For to put it simply; I am the master of ruin and destruction.” He answered still looking like the gentle giant.

“Then why are you helping us?” Ruth who had been silent asked.

“We all are under control of one divine power who orchestrates all things according to His will. Without going into great depth we are all in existence for the pleasure of The One. The One has given me this task to do.” He answered.

“So we are in the Land of the Dead?” Jamison asked now all upset.

“You are where your energies are.” Asmodeus answered.

“So you see hon, we are the only thing real here and we have to get ourselves out without the use of anything except what we are. Nap an vi ak tout lòt bagay ki moun mouri.” Lora’s words broke through him this time.

“O.K. let’s start vibrating, chanting or meditating. You know, whatever it takes to get us back to the land of the living.” Jamison was pumped up and ready again.

Kali shot Lora a look which disturbed Lora’s spirit. “What is it Kali?”

“Lora you know deep down.” Kali answered.

Pheobe stepped forward. “Lora we are not from your world.”

Gaea cleared her throat. “This is the end of the road for us. We have more things in common with Asmodeus than you and where you are going.”

Ruth put her arms around Gaea. “Not yet she cried.”

“I am sorry my girl, but for us we cannot tell if this is real or a dream so we wish to wake to whatever existence we have.” Pheobe put her arm around Ruth.

Lora embraced Kali and for the next few minutes there were tearful goodbyes.

Even Jamison brushed a tear out of the corner of his eye.

“I hate to be impolite but the disc will not remain much longer.” Asmodeus warned.

The three girls backed away as Lora took Paul and Ruth’s hand and walked to a clear circular spot on the ground. Jamison joined them.

“Close your eyes and free your mind of everything; from this place, from your friends, and concentrate only on your inner force and that cube in the sky. Se pou pòte ou lespri ou nan Bondye. Pèmèt kado a nan men ou pou monte.” Lora instructed them.

Jamison planted a lingering kiss on Lora’s lips before the event. She returned the affection and for the moment forgot what she was doing. Once Jamison released her she continued instructing the four.

The four stood trying to shut out of everything and anything that would attempt to interfere.

Each of the four began to feel an odd tingling in their spine. Like a ball of adrenaline building deep within they all experienced the same sensation. Like a hand making a fist around their spine the coldness and tightness climbed like a serpent up a tree until it reached their neck. At their necks the single entity branched into two then interwove itself tying itself together in the left and right hemispheres of their brain. After this occurred they later described to one another that they truly felt naked and unashamed before opening their eyes to find themselves at the edge of the most overwhelming beauty they had ever witnessed.

Chapter 30

“My evening visitors, if they cannot see the clock, should find the time in my face.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Like a swarm of hungry locust moving through a fertile field, the army of thousands swept across the land destroying what little grass and weeds that grew. They trampled desert flowers and pushed small trees into the earth. This was a collective orderly plague. Notoriously voracious in the sweltering heat the land was stripped from the ground up of any living thing. The sparse areas of shade no longer remained and any creature that sought refuge and cover in the path found their shelter becoming their burial place. This contaminating force marching in rank even slaughtered a heard of wild camel that were drinking at the river.

Grigori led the army with the barbarian Andriy by his side. Hrhoriy had a scouting party out in front somewhere out of sight looking for dangers. Grigori knew that they were behind but he was making great gains. Madam Zebul was insulated from the harsh environment in her carriage.

“Andriy I see our future and it looks bright.” Grigori said coldly.

“We are at your command.” Andriy stated.

“Good because once we make it to the Garden we will need your forces. We will experience resistance. It may come from that Jamison fellow, maybe his nasty little bride, it may come from the Lord of Darkness or we may find God is against us but whatever opposes us we shall not hesitate because we have a destiny and this destiny is to seize, to conquer and to possess the Garden!” Grigori was raising his voice.

“I understand.” Andriy devoutly agreed.

One of the scouts could be seen running toward the battalion. He must have run a long way thought Grigori because the tribesman was out of breath.

“What is it man, what news do you have?” Grigori demanded to know.

“Up ahead, there are giants. They are not combative or aggressive. They are standing in our path.”

“Giants? Well how many of these giants are there?” Grigori asked.

“We counted twelve.” The tribesmen informed.

Grigori marched the battalion forward unafraid and full of confidence.

After two hundred yards of pushing ahead, Grigori saw these enormous giants standing in their path.

“I am Grigori Novykh and this is my moving city. We are on our way to Eden and we will use extreme persuasion to reach our goal.”

The giant broadened his shoulders. “I am Asmodeus and this is my family and no force is needed for you to pass. However if Eden is what you seek we may be of some service to you.”

“What do you know giant?” Grigori asked intrigued by Asmodeous.

Asmodeous handed Grigori a disk of fired clay. It was about six inches in diameter. Both sides of the disk were covered with spiral symbols. Grigori examined the disk. He saw image pressed, preformed into the clay, in a clockwise sequence spiraling towards the disc's center. There were many symbols, a man, a child, saw, club, boomerang, eagle, a dove and many more. There were a total of forty five signs and two hundred and forty one tokens typical of the script, and Grigori assumed they were purely logographical. He understood a logogram to be a grapheme (Greek-write) that could include something in writing such as alphabetic letters, numerical digits or punctuation marks.

Grigori immediately began to decipher the code in his head calling on his Spiritual prowess for a Biblical connection. Knowing that the numbers forty five and two hundred and forty one were not significant Biblical numbers he quickly broke the numbers down.

“The number two hundred means insufficiency. Money, beauty, and religion all external things of worship are insufficient when it comes to the worship of God. Forty one is also not a Biblical number but forty two is. It is connected with the Antichrist. But forty is important all through the Bible. Forty is the number of chastisement, not judgment and is also a number associated with revival and renewal. Then we have the number one. One is unity. So we have division. Then from the number forty five we have the number five.” Grigori stopped and examined the disc more closely. “Five is grace or favor. So this disc is a coin used to supply sufficient means to buy ones way out of long judgment, bringing renewal and bringing favor to the one that possesses it. If this is the case great giant then why would you hand it over to me?” Grigori asked suspiciously.

“I was instructed to meet you here, for I can not do for one without doing for another?” Asmodeous disclosed.

“So you have given a disc to someone else that passed through?” Grigori seemed panicked.

“Someone passed through but they did not need a physical disc in order to travel on.” Asmodeous answered vaguely.

“Was it a man and woman and two children?” Grigori asked.

“Yes it was and they have already gone from this place.” Asmodeous could see the contempt in Grigori’s eyes.

“It is vital that I find them.” Grigori said now pacing.

“If you feel you have answered the mystery of the disc there is nothing stopping you.” Asmodeous sounded noble.

Grigori looked at the disc. “By answering the mystery I am supposed to know how to proceed?”

“You have the disc in your hands; that is all I have been sent here to do. I know nothing else concerning this matter.” Asmodeous turned and he and the other giants began to walk away.

“Do you wish that I stop them?” Andriy asked anxiously.

“No I do not think that you could stop them and I believe they have served their purpose.” Grigori then mauled over the disc inspecting it in fine detail. “I believe what we have here is a coin that belongs in a slot. Now we must find the machine to which it belongs.” Grigori guessed.

He ordered Andriy to take his best scouts ahead and to comb the region and not to return until they found the machine or mechanism to which the disc could be inserted. Grigori allowed himself to be seduced by the forty five different glyphs on the disc in order to find their weakness. He noticed a number of glyphs marked with an oblique stroke, the strokes were not imprinted but carved by hand and were attached to the first or last sign of a "word", depending on the direction of reading chosen. He studied intently the overcuts, angulous points of the spirals, corrections in order to know which way to properly read the disc. He refused to become frustrated over the fact that some of the symbols were pictographs which meant they represented the object depicted. Others functioned as ideograms.

Grigori held the disc up in the air and partially blocked out the sun. When he did the disc vibrated in his hand. He pulled it away down to his waste still feeling the tingling in his fingers. He noticed that it resembled the star compasses of Arabian and Polynesian sailors but was not identical to them. He held it up again and covered more of the sun with the disc and this time he experienced a stronger vibration that shook his arm up to his elbow triggering his ulnar nerve and causing a spasm. He almost dropped the disc. He shook the pain from his ring and pinky finger.

He ordered one of his officers to make sure that Zebul was awake. He had a trumpeter blow the horn to recall the scouts. Madam must have been awake because she made her presence known very quickly surrounded by what she called her personal body guards.

She possessed a refined muliebrity that declared to every eye that she was all woman.

“What is it Grigori?” She asked in her sultry accent.

“We are about to move into a new realm. Once Andriy and Hrhoriy returns we will leave this place and if my calculations are correct we should be in Eden with our next transport.” Grigori informed her as he admired her uncanny beauty.

“Look into the sky My Lady, the sun is overhead and the moon is about to pass directly in front of the sun. I do not know why I was nescient to this, but we are going to experience an occultation.”

Andriy and Hrhoriy arrived back into the camp with their scouts. “Yes we heard the horn, the call to return so we brought everyone back.” Andriy reported.

“Excellent call the camp to gather in as tightly as they can.” Grigori ordered. The camp was called to push in until there was no space between any of the men. Grigori waited watching the Moon’s umbra move eastward as it lined up and began pass in front of the sun. As the eclipse began to occur, Grigori held the disc up in the air. As the lunar limb topography, (the lunar limb is the edge of the visible surface of the Moon as viewed from Earth) allowed beads of sunlight to escape through in places this Baily Beads effect is when Grigori aligned the disc perfectly with the sun and the moon. The arc of bright spots resembled a string of illuminating beads around the edge of the moon. The arcs suddenly began to shine downward toward the camp merging into a single light that broke through the darkened sky like a lightning bolt of sunlight shining through the valleys on the limb of the moon. As the light reflected on the disc in Grigori’s hands it was all he could do, by using every ounce of strength to hold onto the disc. There was a sudden roar like the earth growling. His arms shook violently. Andriy attempted to reach up to steady him but the force from overhead would not allow anyone to move.

Grigori did not know how much longer he could hold the disc. His back was giving in to the pressure and his knees felt as though they were about to buckle. This circular clay enigma, The Arkalochori; was now acting as a treaty between the sun, the moon and the earth and a promise to carry any traveler to paradise.

The eruption was violent, unearthing, and expeditiously unforeseen. The disc was yanked from Grigori’s strained fingers and flung like a saucer into the air. It danced zipping back and forth across the sky breaking up into

hundreds of pieces forming other tiny discs. The camp parted forming an opening straight down the center dividing left and right. A figure of a man walked toward Grigori gliding like a ghost not touching the ground.

“I am Epimenidis of Phaistos and I am the maker of the disc. I will take what is mine and send you on your way.” This ghostly cloaked figure raised his arms to the heavens and the tiny disc gathered collectively and spiraled downward gently resting in his right hand.

Without warning he spun counterclockwise raising the sleeve on his cloak. The wind from the pirouette caused a Simoon a searing wind that took many of the men off their feet. The poison wind leveled tents and kicked up a blinding dust storm causing everyone to shield their eyes from the stinging particles.

As the storm died down and Grigori was allowed to open his eyes without painful observation things were practically barren. He stood along with Madam Zebul and only his soldiers. Andriy, Hrhoriy and his thousands of men making up his massive battalion had vanished.

Grigori was perplexed and irate.

“Rasputin, what has happened? Where are the men?” Zebul asked her fear was obvious.

“I do not know Madam. It seems that someone or something is trying to even the odds.” He answered his heart burned with venom.

As Grigori surveyed this new world he came to a terrifying conclusion. His army of soldiers had been grotesquely transformed into something scarcely retaining any semblance of humanity. No longer did they have young smooth human faces. The soldiers appeared as reanimated corpses. These were not movie zombies uncontrollable, mostly mute, primitive and lethargic. These monsters were still men, extremely violent and under the command of Grigori. Though they were presented as resurrected decay without divine bodies, eaten up by maggots and worms, their rot and filth of walking death brought no reproach to Grigori. The soldiers were from their unseen place being reduced by the last jump to a state of dullness, without even the slightest tingle in the limbs. Their personalities had been robbed and they did not even know that they were numb. They would follow orders

though working more as a whole rather than having individuality for their nature was now of the dust realm, easily devoured.

This new land was parched, dry and burnt sienna. The landscape was flat with a few low grade hills and black rocks protruded through the cracks in the cracks of the ground. The sky was overcast with thick black clouds looming but it did not look like rain. But in the distance a tiny shimmer of light flickered.

“We go to the light.” Grigori stated.

His diminished army feeling great defeat followed Grigori toward the flickering light that danced on the horizon. The ground under their kicked up fine dust as they walked toward what Grigori kept reminding himself was his destiny.

As the light became brighter, it became larger but the light would not penetrate this land of bleak desolation. There was no air moving, just bland staleness and dust. Grigori fought the duality in his mind. The horrifying aspect of his duplicity was that both sides were undesirable. The dissimulation was not hidden from the soldiers. They were witness of his new facial twitches and the involuntary jerking of his body.

Madam Zebul paid no attention. Her focus remained on admiring the beauty of her reflection in her hand mirror and asking for others to compliment her. She was a magnificent looking woman and if the soldiers did not fear Grigori they would certainly have had their way with her. But no one dare to stare, and if they addressed her they looked downward only getting a quick glance at her smooth face.

The flickering light became larger and larger. Grigori was beginning to make out what appeared to be a sea. But he did not see any ripples in the water. He was astonished when the scene became apparent. It was not a sea of water. It was a sea of glass, a crystal lake mixed with fire. On the other side of the crystal sea a marvelous rainbow that appeared to be emerald touched both north and south of the sea.

Grigori called for Madam. She came at his beckoning as radiant as ever. “Yes Rasputin, have you found something?” She asked oblivious to the

transparent brilliance of quartz like sea with external planar faces reflecting star shapes for a mile in every direction.

“Madam, take a look at what is before you.” Grigori called her attention to the sea.

When she finally did pull herself away from her reflection she was flabbergasted at the opulence and sheer optical properties that were staring back at her. It was her reflection magnified thousands of times in the sea. She was hypnotized by the accolade.

“This is grand. What an astonishing sight to behold.” Zebul said wanting to keep everything copacetic.

Grigori had a handle on Biblical symbolism and he immediately had an idea what this all might mean. “Madam I believe this is an illusion to stop us.” Then he began to share his insight. “Man is like the raging sea, foaming out their own shame. These many waters represent multitudes, nations and tongues.” Within Grigori he was restless, raging like the sea he spoke about. He was surging like violent waves and fighting to keep his emotions intact. “We must remember that glass is melted sand. This is symbolic Madam for something that has been refined in a great fire, intense heat and purged in a furnace of affliction. The sea typifies the mass of humanity that goes through trial, tribulations and proving.” Zebul was now interested and interrupted.

“But what are they purged from?”

“Human passions. God washes humanity clean of the earth that he can instill a pure, perfect and holy nature patterned after his Christ. Christians believe that it is through this transparency that they are given access to God.”

Grigori had not emotion to his voice. He sounded like a man who had lost everything.

“And what do you believe Rasputin? Do you believe we must go through this furnace of affliction to receive divine favor?” Zebul asked.

“I believe that if I have your favor and if I am in your good graces Madam that I stand before the Divine.” Rasputin answered to her demented self absorbed delight.

Grigori ordered a dozen men to venture out and test the stability of the glass. He did not want to fall through in fear first that he did not know what might be under the glass and secondly if the glass shattered beneath them they

could be cut to pieces like sending their bodies through a shredder. The soldiers made their way out onto the glass. The krystallos held firm. Grigori ordered everyone to follow him leaving the dozen men out front to lead the way.

The further they nimbly scooted across the crystal the stranger the transparency became. Faces began to appear below their feet frozen in the clear glass. They were the faces of agonizing mortality caught in the moment of death. Some were faces of contorted misery, anguishing over spitting out their last breath. Frozen countenance whose mouths were stretched grotesquely wide open screaming for relief from beneath the clear prison sea. The insulted ones being trampled under foot and unable to feel their cheeks, with the rouge of embarrassment; for they were pale examples of humans, ghastly exploited cadavers, a mortician's dream. Thousands of petrified pressed expressions peered up with no particular focus unable to mimic the living for they are the dead ones. Loneliness has escaped them and now all alone they experience abandonment of their only affection that remained. Begging to be disturbed yet nothing is allowed to burden or disturb the limbic system of their mammalian brains. They were no more than ectothermic, jawless fish not yet evolved in the great pond of crystalline solidification.

Chapter 31

“Fake is as old as the Eden tree.”

Orson Welles



An enchanting wonder lay before the four of them making them seem small and frail. A true golden sun kissed the traveler's brow, opened their eyes and intoxicated them into a state of awe. Even in their wildest dreams and imaginings no one could remember seeing anything so luxurious. The land pulled at them and set a yearning in their hearts.

They stood miniature before the opening entwined with honeysuckle and jasmine cut into the rock mountain that had impossible straight cliffs. They heard the sound of a waterfall spilling and crashing into a pool below. Something was moving on the other side; impalpable as mist, floating, undulating faintly like smoke with a haze full of sadness.

“We are here.” Paul confirmed.

“What are we waiting for?” Ruth asked smiling.

“If I have read the scriptures correctly there should be an angel here with a flaming sword to stop anyone from entering.” Paul answered.

“I don't see any angelic being. I say we go in.” Jamison said taking the lead and walking toward the opening. He only took a few steps when he was pushed back with an intense force that knocked the wind out of him and took him off his feet the ground.

Lora ran to his side. “Are you hurt? Èske ou respire?”

Jamison took a couple of deep breaths and sat up. His solar plexus was sore and he rubbed his chest. The temporary paralysis of his diaphragm was relaxing and he was regaining his ability to speak.

“That was drama on its grandest scale.” Jamison said actually meaning comical instead of drama.

“I’d say we found the flaming sword.” Paul assumed.

“My whole body was shaking like I got hit by a lightning bolt.” Jamison described.

“Sounds like some sort of electrical force field. It must be getting its source of power from somewhere near by.” Paul exclaimed.

“Look up on the cliff, there are hundreds of jars.” Ruth noticed.

She was right. On the ledges overhead hundreds of unexampled glass jars were illuminated glowing blue and red.

“I guess that explains that Mike Tyson punch I just took.” Jamison moaned.

“I read about the ancients thousands of years ago inventing batteries to protect certain valuables. Perhaps this is what they were talking about. Paul analyzed.

“I don’t see any wires leading from the jars so it must be some advanced technology.” Jamison asserted.

“If these jars are the flaming sword I would say that it is divine technology.” Paul speculated.

“What should we look for? Would there be a control panel somewhere? Petèt nou kapab fèmen.” Lora theorized.

“Yes an on and off switch somewhere! Let’s spread out and take a look around for something that might control those things.

The troop was standing in a clearing surrounded by dozens of species of trees. Some were less than one foot in diameter at the ground to four hundred feet in height and others more than twenty feet in diameter. The larger trees were the monarchs of the forest. The mighty towers were dressed and clothed in a variety of colored leaves. A single white puffy cloud cast cooling shadows on the ground where the troop stood. The sunshine sent down enough light to provide a clear scene in the area where they were searching. Fanning them was gentle souging winds rustling the leaves without pruning them.

The luminous jars were too high to reach and the cliffs were deceptively slick and straight up and down; too dangerous to attempt and assent.

Near the smooth garden where no pious destroyer had ever trod Lora was consumed in the beauty of the shrubs when she stepped on something practically twisting her ankle. She caught herself and looked down expecting to see a rock under her foot. To her surprise, hidden behind the herbaceous vegetation was a clocklike mechanism buried just under the ground. She knelt down and brushed away the top layer of dirt revealing several dials and three large slots in the top of it.

“Mwen jwenn yon bagay! Over here!” Lora called out.

The three joined her excited about the find. It was a large object and when dug out Jamison had trouble pulling it out into the open. He leaned it up on end to reveal the back side. The bottom contained more dials. The lower one had three slip rings; the upper, four. Each had a little subsidiary dial resembling the "seconds" dial of a watch. Each of the large dials was inscribed with lines about every six degrees, and between the lines were letters and numbers. The letters were Jannat ‘Adn and the numbers were 3327.

“Here are the numbers we knew we would find but I am unsure about the letters. Sa te kapab yo repwezante?” Asked Lora.

“The letters say EDEN in Arabic.” Paul revealed.

“How did you know that?” Jamison was impressed.

“Private schooling.” Paul answered. “I believe that this device is powered by those battery jars. I remember reading a paper how many experts agreed that in ancient times they called these jars lightning in a jar. There was something called the Bagdad battery. Electrogilding or electroplating basically only requires rods or wire, a couple of simple electric cells connected to a bath of common chemicals wherein the items to be electroplated are placed. And now that I am recalling in the Book of Leviticus there was a scene where Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, approach the Ark in the Tabernacle: they offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not to do. Fire went out from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord”.

“That is reassuring. So we are messing with something that is potentially going to electrocute us.” Jamison said grumbling.

“There has to be a way to turn it off.” Ruth said optimistically.

“God sure didn’t hide it very well.” Jamison remarked.

“Maybe it wasn’t hid.” Lora added.

“If this is the same power protecting the Garden as was protecting the Arc of the Covenant we are dealing with a device capable of delivering nuclear type holocaust.” Paul warned.

“Let me ask you. Why do we want to turn this thing off? I mean is there any reason for us to go into the Garden? I thought we were here to prevent anyone from going in.? Jamison reminded them.

“When this Rasputin guy shows up with his thousands of men how are we going to defend this place from here? How are the four of us going to have any sort of chance stopping an army of that magnitude?” Paul made his points.

“I just think if we turn off this device that we have just opened the gates for them. I agree, the four of us cannot stop an army. So are you proposing we do it from the Garden?” Jamison asked.

“If we can turn this device off, enter the Garden, take the device with us, reengage it once we are in we might be able to buy us some time. But on the outside we are sitting ducks.” Paul argued.

“Good point. We best get busy decoding this thing.” Jamison was now in agreement.

“We have four slots, four numbers and these dials. Looks like we need some sort of crank; is that all of it?” Paul asked questioning if Lora had found all of the pieces of the mechanism.

“Yes, Wi se lè sa a, tout sa mwen te jwenn.” Lora answered still combining the languages.

“The prophecy! Lora you said; the sword holds no individual power in itself but in the hands of the one in whom the handle fits perfectly, that person becomes invincible. Paul is our leader according to prophecy maybe the sword has something to do with this in his hands.” Ruth remembered.

“I agree, I remember another prophecy where you stated so stay the course to the flaming sword three the security gate; for the way is open to those who have faith.” Jamison reminded them.

“And I remember my prophecy where I spoke; the power to comprehend, invite transformation when a boy becomes a man. Be not afraid when you are summons to put the sword in his hand. Suffer the children and forbid them not according to the apportionment and spinning of the thread of destiny. For the time will come to incorporate (3327) when judgment will be reckoned from the innocent one. Di daakes' part a di night, a when diay soon light.” Lora recalled.

Jamison pulled the sword out and placed it in Paul’s smaller hands. Paul was impressed with the weight but the balance was perfect. He approved of this majestic weapon. This was the prize of David he contended. He felt great honor that he was in charge of the sword that did in the giant. Gazing upon his own reflection he imagined the shepherd boy David looking at his own reflection. His face in the shining metal morphed between his own face and the face he believed David had worn.

Lora smiled at Paul and said “Every dog got dem diay, Every puss dem 4 O' clock.”

“What did you say?” Paul asked chuckling not understanding Lora’s Jamaican dialect.

“She said it is your time to shine.” Jamison translated.

The four examined the mechanism and analyzed many scenarios. After careful consideration they concluded that the number three was the common denominator. There were literally thousands of combinations that could be calculated concerning the placement of the dials, but they were convinced since it was their destiny to be here that the simplest combination made reasonable sense to them.

They placed the mechanism out in the open so they could manage it. Everything they were about to do would be guess work. For all they knew they were dealing with a astronomical computer or a real nuke. Their worse fear was that they might be tampering with the celestial sphere, the lunar phase, or even other worlds. But their journey had brought them to this moment and this hour.

Meticulously scrutinizing the mechanism the front dial included a parapegma, a precursor to the modern day Almanac. The upper back dial was in the form of a spiral, with 47 divisions per turn. The lower back dial was also in the form of a spiral, with 223 divisions. It had a smaller subsidiary dial.

Paul turned each dial on the back three times then stopped on the number three. The four dials on the front he turned three times but stopped the first on three, the second on three the third on two and the fourth on seven. Paul understood that the number three was the most sacred number in all of creation, nature and held great Biblical significance. He had taken a class in numerology and his mind was photogenic in that he never forgot anything that he put into his head. Three or its multiple meant perfection and completeness. Three was the number of trinity in religious circles. The ring of a circle is three hundred and sixty degrees. There are twelve signs of the zodiac, each thirty degrees. The Moon's diameter two thousand one hundred and sixty miles which he figured was seven hundred and twenty times three. The speed of light is 144000 miles per second = 48000 x3. The lunar year cycle is 360 days God's attributes are three: omniscience, omnipresence, and

omnipotence. There are three great divisions completing time--past, present, and future. Many more Biblical references came to his mind concerning the number three but he did not allow them to surface. He had enough evidence to proceed.

After adjusting the dials they waited and nothing happened. This was frustrating.

“What do you think is wrong?” Ruth asked as she raked her fingers through her long brown hair.

“The numbers must be right. From Lora’s dreams and visions we have the numbers.” Paul was encouraged.

“Look at these slots in the top.” Lora pointed out. Then she mentioned how they looked like large key holes. “Twa emplacements sa sanble kle nan twou.”

“The sword is the same size as these slots.” Jamison recognized.

Paul produced the sword and while standing he inserted the tip of the sword into the first slot. He felt the sword sink into a locking mechanism. The sword turned three rotations by itself in his hands then stopped. Everyone looked around to see if anything had changed with their surroundings. They saw nothing apparent. Paul pulled the sword up and it came out of the first slot with no resistance. He sank it into the second slot and exactly the same thing occurred. Again there was no change in the vicinity. The sword in Paul’s hands found its way into the third slot and the sword turned three times as before.

This time the gears inside this mechanism began to click. The teeth formed through equilateral triangles all perfectly angled to bring the divine result expected. Employed by differential gears, it enabled this masterful mechanism to add and subtract angular velocities. This jumped from the second dimension into the third and everything connected with the axis of rotation shifted from the normal plane and now direction became perpendicular to the direction of rotation with orientation given by the suppressed magnetic field causing an electric flux. The clay jar batteries began to glow brightly. The electrical current that flowed through the filament from one end to the other began to be affected. The colliding electrons with the tungsten atoms flowing through the wires became extremely hotter than normal burning off the filament. The tungsten evaporated from the solid wire, and the wire got thinner in spots. An electric spark flashed through the gas ionizing the argon in the jars discharging the gases emitting a brilliant blue-white light, at that time the jars went dark. It wasn’t spectacular but the jars were no longer illuminated.

“That was anticlimactic.” Jamison grumbled.

“Don’t complain. It sure beats being yanked up and thrown across the universe into the unknown.” Paul was grateful.

“Shall we attempt another entry?” Paul asked referring to attempting to enter the Garden.

“Do you understand that we are standing before the Garden of Eden?” Paul asked.

“Yes Paul; and I also understand that if we stand here in awe long enough then bad guys are going to be all over us.” Jamison answered trying to be realistic.

Lora asked “Moun ki vle fè tès si sa te travay anvan? Who is going through first?”

“I am not taking another hit for the team.” Jamison spoke up.

“Throw something through it.” Ruth proposed.

“Gwo lide. Good thinking.” Lora applauded.

Lora took one of her throwing knives and launched it over handed through the opening of the mountain to the other side. The knife met no friction and no resistance and landed several yards into the greenery.

“I guess we have our answer.” Paul supposed.

The four of them hoisted the mechanism up and carried it to the point where Jamison had been jolted backward earlier. As they crossed the invisible line they all held their breath anticipating the worse. But thankfully for their diaphragms they crossed without incident.

As they approached the Garden their hearts raced. Passing through the archway they were able to better see the world into which they were entering.

This world was delightfully enhanced compared to anything on the earth that the four were from. The land was fertile and glowing. The ground was not dirt. It was musk and saffron, it did not stain nor stick to their shoes. The Garden had a salubrious climate and an equable temperature and the air was pleasant and easy to breathe. It was a walled orchard garden. The four compared it to a pristine park. Nothing from the valley existed, no roses, no lilies, no darkness or shadow of turning. In this world the mountains had been leveled placing everyone on the same plain with their Maker. There wasn’t time to take in the overwhelming scene and majestic beauty. They had to re-establish this mechanism and restore the force field. It was difficult not to be overwhelmed by the unspoiled flawless and unsullied antediluvian place. This was the non-polluted center of the universe, the un-contaminated beginning of all things.

Paul did everything in reverse. He re-programmed the dials and then he inserted the sword yet the sword would not turn in the slots.

“What are we going to do now?” Ruth asked in a panic.

“Maybe we need to bury this thing partially or take it deeper into the Garden?” Jamison guessed.

“I don’t think that is it. I am doing something wrong.” Paul blamed himself.

“The Tree of Life might provide some answers. Mwen senpleman menm deviner. Men, li te kapab tankou yon chargeur batri a. Li pote lavi.” Lora mentioned the Tree of Life as a battery charger.

“Yes, if it brings life to people, it probably brings life to this place. I bet it can bring life to anything.” Paul spoke quickly.

“This is not some little park guys. Look at this place. How can we find a single tree among so many? Ruth asked.

“I have never seen trees so large. You could ride in their shade for a hundred years.” Paul poetically said.

“Yes the tree we are looking for is in the center. Nou senpman ale mitan an.” Lora planned.

“And who watches the front door in case that mad monk and his army shows up?” Jamison inquired.

“If they arrive before we get this thing reactivated it won’t matter if we have a warning system in place or not.” Paul grimly said.

The four picked up the force field mechanism and began to trudge deeper into the Garden. Blown scattered fragrances added to the luster of the beauty. They heard the sound of distant water.

“But let justice flow like a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” Paul quoted a scripture from the Book of Amos from the Bible.

The four walked carrying the mechanism deep into the Garden. Colorful birds overhead seemed to be leading the way. They swooped down and flew in circles overhead. Golden Pheasants, Hyacinth Macow’s, Scarlet Tanager’s, Orioles, Cardinals, Blue Birds, Finchs, Painted Buntings all grouped together painting the canopy with the Rainbow Lorikeets, and the King Fishers.

They followed the birds until they arrived at a milky white river. The river flowed smoothly and had the appearance of milk. The river banks were adorned on either side by flowers that matched the brilliant and vibrant colors of the birds that had companioned them. The yellows of the Daybreak Red Stripe glowed like the sun. Bellis spoke volumes in the pedals of the Auroa’s Kiss. The purple jumped from the lips of the Kiss and tickled the pure white Gazania’s that leaned to whisper to the Akita’s. This Peony of India wrapped itself seductively around the variegated colorful Tulips.

As the overpowering scene unfolded before them, the girls were spellbound. The intoxicating spectacle of colors, scents & scenery was exhilarating and

provocative, fully arresting all their five faculties. The garden was a perfectly formulated drug causing wild inebriation, engaging and sharpening their senses. Nothing was out of their grasp and the further they penetrated this paradise they were aware that they were being absorbed. Stimulated and tantalized they were enraptured by it all. Jamison had to remind them of their mission while Paul agreed and stressed the importance of moving on. They had to stop at one point to rest and to eat. The cauldron produced tasneer, ginger and kaafoor to drink which it had not previously done. “This is one strange world. Have you noticed there are no rocks? Every place where there should be a rock there is either pearls or jewels.” Jamison observed.

“I saw a pearl honed out that was so large that I could have taken up residence in it.” Paul wondered how large the mollusk had to be to produce such a massive gemstone.

Lora kissed Jamison out of the blue. “He smiled swimming in her eyes and said “What was that for?”

“How many couples can say they kissed in the Garden of Eden? Ou pa gen opposition ou ye?” Lora said shyly.

“Absolutely not. I would never object to those lips.” Paul said expressing his attraction.

“We better get moving.” Paul said standing back to his feet.

“Party pooper!” Jamison said directing his comment in a joking way to Paul. The troop trespassed on without pain, no sorrow, the mechanism they carried was no longer a burden to them. The sense of lurking fear, adverse pressure of their dilemma and innate darkness had long been dispelled and freedom was embracing them not imprisoning them.

“Does anyone feel a vibration under their feet?” Paul asked.

“It is like something is running; like a motor.” Jamison responded.

“We must be getting closer to the center. Nan mitan nou va jwenn pyebwa a. Pyebwa a pa janm stòp ki bay lavi.” Lora said as the troop moved on.

Chapter 32

A snake can change its skin but not its disposition.

Iranian Proverb



Madam Zebul, omnific in her own mind, was losing touch with reality. The present was a place where she wallowed in the lavishness of her own beauty. Addicted to her own glorious reflection she was lost in the mirror. She was an adversary, masquerading in the guise of a queen. She was self appointed and her army had been sorely diminished by the last time they had trusted the wormhole. Though she lived behind the smoke screen and her beauty, she was looking for any conceivable opportunity to transform into an all powerful being. Lost in her happy thoughts, swimming in a bowl of wine and illusions, she was immune to all grief, pain and the sting of life. All painful memories had been banished.

Grigori led his zombie army across the crystal sea to the other side. The serpent was rising up more in his heart with each step toward the garden. He began to have flash backs to a time that he did not remember living but he convinced himself that he must have because the Hallucinogen Persisting Perception Disorder episodes were becoming more vivid and more frequent. These events were all recorded in the pages of the Holy Bible. His total recall had been switched on and ancient Old Testament memories semantically brought forward a collection of events that he was instrumental in taking part of.

He had realistic memories of attacking Sarai by preying on Abram's fears. He remembered the shame he had brought Abraham when Abraham introduced his wife as his sister to Pharaoh causing Pharaoh to want her. His recall brought him to another place when he launched an attack through Rebecca by inducing her to deceive Isaac regarding the birthright for his firstborn son Esau. By this deception the birthright and it's accompanying blessing was transferred away from Esau, to Jacob.

Another episode flashed before his subconscious as he attacked through Pharaoh by seducing his mind to issue forth commands which condemned to death all the male children of the Israelites as soon as they were born. Grigori was having many unnatural flashbacks to a life before his own.

Having safely crossed the crystal sea Grigori ordered another westward march. They were on a highway of sewn animal skins. Stiff, jagged rocks and high peaks squeezed them in. Little stones littered the highway giving concerns that a landslide could cave in the narrow passage without warning. The exceedingly high cliffs and steep inclines presented a mentally harsh environment and the mountains themselves stood like warring barriers with the highway being the DMZ.

Grigori was a man possessed by his own doctrine. He had adopted the theme of Galen a Greek physician "...resists poison and venomous bites, cures chronic headache, vertigo, deafness, epilepsy, apoplexy, dimness of sight, loss of voice, asthma, coughs of all kinds, spitting of blood, tightness of breath, colic, the lilac poison, jaundice, hardness of the spleen stone, urinary complaints, fever, dropsy's, leprosy, the trouble to which women are subject, melancholy and all pestilences."

The road was long and troublesome but there was an end to the passage. Grigori led his battalion of zombies out of the gorge and into the open. Ahead in the distance they saw the mountain with the straight cliffs and the archway opening going into a splendid Garden of divine purity. Finally they had made it out of the dry and desperate places to their destination.

"Here is our reward! Madam Zebul has led us to the place of our birth. Now she will lead us to the place of our exaltation! New Jerusalem awaits us. We shall build a city unto our Queen with the trees of Eden. It shall be adorned with the jewels from it's very heart. We shall raise it beyond the heavens and the stars shall sing praises unto her. She shall be worshipped above all others and she alone will be our Queen Mother!" Grigori shouted his invocation for all to hear.

The army of the dead chanted in unison, "Mother Queen, mother of mercy and our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee we do cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy

toward us, and after this our exile show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, give birth to the manchild. O' clement. O loving Holy Queen Mother of us all. That we may be worthy of your promise."

"Where is the cherub with the flaming sword?" Asked one of his officers.

Grigori surveyed the scene carefully. His eyes pulled in the images. He caught glimpse of the jars overhead on the steep cliffs. His mind did not register what these objects could be used for. He did not want to rush into what could be a perilous situation so he ordered two of his men with climbing gear to scale the wall and to retrieve a jar for inspection.

"I believe it is better we know what we are dealing with rather than making a blunder that would end our journey altogether." Grigori told Zebul.

"Yes I agree my Prince. We have come so far, our crown is so close, our treasure before us, let us trod lightly." She agreed shocking Grigori that he would be called prince once again.

The soldiers scaled the wall quickly using ropes and climbing gear. They fetched two jars and returned them to Grigori who had set up a table and was sitting with his fingers clasped when they arrived. He took the clay jar in his hands. It was coated outside and inside with tinfoil not quite extending to the top. It was provided with a wooden lid, through the centre of which passed a brass rod, terminating in a brass knob; a short length of metal chain was attached to the lower end, and of sufficient length to touch the tinfoil lining. The tinfoil served as the insulated conductor.

"This is a battery. What could it be for?" He spoke out loud but thinking. He was baffled by the configuration but it did not matter because he saw no threat posed.

He ordered the men to fan out and to search the area for booby traps and snares. The men searched for an hour while Grigori and Zebul sat at the table under a white canopy drinking tea. His officer reported back that nothing of interest had been found. The coast was clear.

"In that case, there is nothing stopping us from entering." He deduced.

He ordered another soldier to go through the archway into the Garden alone. This Guinea pig walked unconcerned straight through the half circle curve into the beauty of Eden unharmed.

“That settles it. Let’s proceed!” With that said Grigori and his battalion of about 50 men along with Madam Zebul marched unopposed into paradise.

“Creation was birthed from the mouth of this womb; a Garden fertile and divine the egg to be enriched. Man the seed the tool for reproduction impregnated this paradise and from it we are birthed into existence. Cast out onto the barren plains of an unappreciated world. Now we have returned home.” Zebul rattled on.

“My Queen we must find the Tree of Life.” I believe there are others ahead of us.” Grigori announced.

“Lead the way my Prince.”

Following the same path as Jamison and crew Grigori was not far behind. He understood even in his distorted state of mind that finding the Tree of Life before anyone else was his main concern. Meanwhile Zebul was lost again in her histrionic personality disorder but no one paid her any mind.

Marching engrossed, profoundly impressed with the all encompassing glory, their mouths were shut tight. No one had the words to run commentary on the splendid blossoms, the trees which spread the width of the sky nor would words suffice to speak about joyous sounds of birds as they sang together in perfect harmony.

The golden tree trunks glistened, the silver leaves sparkled, the natural lights erased every shadow, and the diamond boulders were fashioned as rest areas. The long bed of flowers swayed to the rhythm of an internal song. Vines hung from the trees like curtains of velvet and the refreshing wind stood gently at their back. The animals overhead stared downward from their lofty balconies at the strangers that were visiting. Nothing was fading, all things were constant, nothing withering or dying, for all flourished and life was promoted at every turn. The most fanciful dreams that one could dream would pale in comparison to the Garden. Every imagined thought or elaborate engineering feat made by the hands of man would be but a micro particle in relation.

They made up a lot of time and covered much ground. The battalion stood before the white flowing river. Madam Zebul left the comfort of her carriage and placed her bare feet upon the banks of the river. Her toes were soothed by the embrace.

“Rasputin, come to me my dear.” She ordered. Grigori raced to her side. “Now is the moment that you have fantasized about. Now is the time that your dreams are manifested. Are you ready for your final transformation?” She asked.

“I am ready for your blessings.” He answered in submission. “Come into the river with me.” She took him by the hand and led him down a passable decline to the water.

Chapter 33

A drowning man will clutch at straws.
Armenian Proverb



The four time travelers feeling refreshed and revitalized after walking came to the edge of the Garden. The edge was a long deep drop off into an enormous pit that plunged down a few hundred meters in three steps. Seven water falls were bursting out of the crystal face of the pit. They cascaded down steep talus before dropping over a 100 foot cascade. The milky water was splashing below into a mote that was not white, but the clearest blue. The falls exhibited a high volume of flow, becoming an immensely powerful cataract. In the middle of the pit rested an island with a single tree in the center of it. The tree illuminated brightly and was the light of the pit. A staircase led down the side of the pit to the bottom and stopped on a ledge where a bridge connected the staircase with the island. The staircase was a lustrous silver Palladium. The handrails were enameled with thousands of elegant Alexandrite minerals with garnet stones mixed in.

“Shall we venture down there?” Jamison asked peering over the side.

“We have no business down there. Our business is here to protect this site.” Paul corrected Jamison.

“Well I like the idea about not going down there and not messing with the Tree of Life but how do you propose we hold off an army from here? Even

Einstein once said; a country cannot simultaneously prevent and prepare for war.” Jamison said.

“War is coming. Tou depan sou jan nou apwoche li.” Lora was positive.

“If we are going to fight then we better learn from the greatest. Sun Tzu said all warfare is based on deception.” Jamison quoted.

“If you have a plan I am all ears. But in the meantime we must try to get this mechanism going again. It may protect the tree as well as the entrance.” Paul said being under the perusal of the other three others.

He rethought the mechanism again and turned the dials back to zero. With 3327 in mind he went through sequences in his head again. Again and again he tossed numbers around brainstorming, conceptualizing, cerebrating to the point of giving him self a headache.

Then Ruth blurted out “3327 times three equals 9981.”

“That sounds simple enough.” Jamison blurted out knowing very little about mathamatics.

Paul turned the three dials on the back that he had reset to the number three. The four front dials he turned each one three times but the first he dialed in of nine, the second nine, the third eight and the forth on the number one. Inserting the tip of sword into the slots he turned each one three times. The vibrations that had followed them ever since they entered the Garden stopped. It was very noticeable.

“I think it worked, that vibration is gone.” Paul was holding his hands out to his sides almost like a surfer would be riding on a wave.

“Yeah I noticed. Now everything seems even more tranquil, if that is possible.” Jamison calmly spoke.

“We need to set up some sort of defense here.” Paul was turning into a commander.

“A defense with an exit and some sort of deception.” Jamison added to Paul’s words.

“The best defense we have Paul is an offense. I propose that I go back and meet the enemy. I will catch them off guard and soften their numbers. I can get there and back without getting caught or being killed.” Jamison assured him.

It sounds too disadvantageous.” Paul rebuked.

“I can do it. You guys stay put. Lora set up the sniper rifle and if worse comes to worse, exit. I am going to give the bad guys some things to think about. Jamison checked his many weapons and took Lora in his arms. They gazed deep as if trying to read one another’s eyes. They met at the same time lips locking together. He squeezed her tight and she almost went limp. He released her and she caught herself before her knee buckled. Jamison left in a sprint going back the way that they had come ready to dish out some force concentration upon their foe.

Lora set up her sniper rifle on the edge of the cliff. She was taking a chance that if she had to exit she would go down the steps into the pit to the Tree of Life. Paul hid the mechanism by dragging it behind a large emerald crystal. Ruth sat with Lora and they talked about things they wanted to do when they returned home. Lora had a comfortable position. She could target a person from every angle. She had estimated the distance and since no wind was blowing even a long shot would not be a problem.

Meanwhile Jamison raced through the Garden like a silent hunter. His breathing was controlled, his eyes focused, he assumed the enemy would be looking for him. After he had distanced himself from the troop he had slowed and moved methodically through the Garden. His route was planned and every scenario had already been played out in his head. He would move, stop then stop, look and listen. He was doing a lot of medium crawls and concealing himself as often as possible. He took advantage of every difficult terrain. Staying purposely off anything that could be a path he kept constant visual on the Garden ahead. His smoke grenades were within reach if he was found out. He had fragmented grenades if he had to retreat. He did not want to have WWII in the Garden of Eden but he was ready to act out whatever was necessary to make the mission a success.

Jamison had remembered, there was a clearing at the river that made sense for an army to rest. He worked his way close to the river until he was within site of the clearing. He really did not expect to see anyone there. It was far

too convenient. But to his amazement there was an encampment. He counted far less tents than his last encounter with this group. He only counted 50 men. He kept an eye on the scene and began to calculate and measure his odds.

Down below he saw Grigori sauntering like a school boy out into the water with a beautiful woman. It looked like some sort of baptism. She stood in the shallow of the creamy river and took his hands in hers. Jamison positioned himself to where he had a clean shot. He brought the rifle up to his shoulder and began to sight the scope in. The woman was saying something but it was inaudible from where Jamison was stationed. As the woman spoke Jamison observed a whirlpool beginning to turn around the two people.

“Very odd.” He thought in his head.

With careful fine tuning he had a perfect bead on Grigori’s head. The cross hairs would make this a doable kill. The whirlpool rotated faster and faster. Jamison took a deep breath and curled his finger around the trigger.

Madam Zebul squeezed Grigori’s strong hands tight with her delicate soft fingers. She spoke loudly as the whirlpool spun. Her smooth face with its creamy complexion looked at his sun burnt withered face in its frame of tangled dark hair and beard with grey streaks racing through it. Grigori’s two Caucasian Ovcharka dogs Youssou and Pov were barking madly from the bank as if to sound a warning. What was occurring was not some mundane natural phenomenon; Jamison was witnessing a sight that sent cold chills up his spine. The spirit of deception had managed to slither into paradise and was now turning the water. Poison filled the air at the rivers edge and the zombie soldiers were backing away. This was Jamison’s first look at the zombies. He had not remembered fighting these guys. A callous vindictiveness clinched Grigori. His eyes though cold and dark brightened. He tried to pull away from Zebul but supernaturally she had him tight and he could not break free. His mind bit at his soul releasing the final poison and the transformation began to take place.

“Pledge to me Rasputin! Pledge to me your devotion!”

Grigori shook with fear, his hands trembled; his body partially convulsing.

“Say it Rasputin. Pledge your devotion to me! Say my name! Say my name! She shouted staring at him with her wild appealing eyes. But his eyes were lusterless, and seemingly pupil less.

Youssou and Pov plunged into the water as if to attempt to save their Master, but the current was too strong. The dogs paddled hard but were being swept down stream.

Grigori feebly announced “My Queen Zebul I pledge my devotion to you.” His voice was low and tremulous.

She was holding up his slender symmetry without any effort, he was unable to stand on his own or fight the current. His body was extended outward and the river was trying to take him.

“From beneath the earth I have been awakened for this moment. You are my beast Rasputin. Your devotion is accepted. Now awaken inside my servant and shed the skin that confines you and be free in your wisdom and viciousness.” Zebul opened her hands and let loose of Grigori. On this never to be forgotten day what Grigori was with all of his complicated portions was exorcized and annihilated by the self-complacent interlocutor which was Madam Zebul.

Youssou and Pov were swept up in the whirlpool which had grown enormously. They had gone beneath the torrent. Grigori was now stumbling. Yet standing on his own strength but falling backward when Jamison squeezed the trigger. The bullet grazed Grigori’s forehead but missed its target. Jamison had used a long barrel silencer so no one heard the shot. Grigori slipped face down into the water and was spinning length wise in circles caught in the spinning. Eventually Grigori too was sucked down in the whirlpool and he disappeared from sight. As the waters settled Zebul elegantly walked out of the water and commanded that the troop carry on without Rasputin.

The zombie army did not question the event that was just witnessed. They followed her every order. She pulled one soldier into her carriage and shared her smoke with him as they marched forward.

Jamison was mortified. “Hells Bells.” He was unsure what he had just witnessed. He knew he was dealing with supernatural elements but this was

sinister, disturbing and morbid. He rolled over on his back and gathered his thoughts. He knew now that he would have more opportunity back with Lora and the children.

Jamison ran quickly ahead of the approaching army. He calculated their route and he quickly set up booby traps. He only had three smoke grenades, they were the M34 white phosphorous and two fragmented grenades. The smoke grenades were good for about 25 meters. His idea was that the enemy would trip a wire and the smoke grenade would detonate sending the enemy into a panic. They would then run blindly into the fragmented grenade and even though there would be casualties which were the desired effect it would also frustrate those remaining and slow them from advancing. Jamison got some distance between him and the approaching zombie army and worked quickly stretching wire and being careful with the safety pins. After setting the traps he sprinted away heading to Lora and the children. He prayed that Lora would not mistake him for the enemy when he presented himself out into the open.

As he ran he listened for the explosions. It wasn't but a few minutes when there were multiple explosions. He prayed that his devices had been effective.

Back in the Garden Madam Zebul was picking herself up off the ground. One of her carries had been hit with fragments from the grenade and she had been dropped. The air was full of choking smoke and a dozen zombies had taken the full impact of the explosions and now had been removed from the Garden. Three others were missing arms from the initially blast that burned and blazed through them and one a hand from the second explosion.

Madam was stupefied and aghast she cursed and swore and was hesitant to move in fear that other traps had been placed in their route.

“Wretchedness! Go around, do not follow this way.” She ordered angrily. There would be no more moments of dalliance and merriment. She was serious and refused to comply to weakness.

Ill-fated and bedeviled she thought as she carefully took her self from the kill zone. She thought that one as beautiful as she should not have to tolerate such beastly creatures that were so mindless that they carried her right into a war zone. This entire adventure for her had been disheartening and she was

loosing patience. This was her second life and she was squandering it away but the reward would be immortality. She rebuked the episode, cursed the Garden, and smoked more. She and her new friend were smoking a lot. He was loosing his zombie features and transforming minute by minute into a young man. Her smokes were temporarily and she was running out yet she knew if she could get to the Tree of Life she would not have to rely on the smoke. She was ennui to death and refused to think about a non-existence.

She was most terrified at the aspect of never remembering again. Her memories were vague from before this new existence. She remembered a tower, gloominess, grey then darkness. She had no thoughts of the past concerning pleasure, happiness, joy, maladies, or monomania, or morbidly details. She could not recall. She did not allow herself to become lost in contemplation for she wanted the new life. To muse for more than a moment was an insult to her present ardent condition. She had questioned her own distempered visions but then was quickly convinced of her own exalted goddess status.

Chapter 34

Behind the man is the Tree of Life, bearing twelve fruits, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is behind the woman; the serpent is twining round it.

Arthur E. Waite



The sensation was as if he was being sucked down into a drain. His body twirled and spun shooting down the pipes being forced by gallons upon gallons of milky water. Such a momentous occasion yet Grigori could not yet see the silver lining. The current totally engulfed him and the pressure was stinging intense. His algorithm was in a quandary and he was helpless to solve the mystery

of why he was submerged yet he was not drowning. The tonnage of his heart seemed to be what was dragging him downward. Betrayed by trepidation and resolute silence he was perplexed by the extremity of it all. His perception was distorted; unable to recover an ounce of presence of mind the plunge was a senseless drenching stripping away his fortitude of power. Feeling lost in the peril he ceased to struggle against pressure and gave in still having possession of his faculties and did not resist the dragging voyage. The dragging turned into a tugging; the tugging became a violent shredding. Grigori lost his cloths and now was completely naked being flung vehemently. The water thrashed him disturbingly and he began to flail frantically like a man gone berserk. The ecdysiast process had begun. His human form was being stripped away. If his copious thoughts were not dark enough they were being twisted even tighter as he spun, winding through innumerable passages on his way to his place in the greater scheme of things. His transformation in the desert just a couple of nights before had not prepared him for the calamity and horror of this moment. Miseries turned to shrill and piercing agonies and these accented burning agonies coiled around his brain like dreary black serpents. In this liquid morass all human vitality

was ripped from his being in a paroxysm of explosive terror. The penetrating white fangs of baneful finality sunk its deleterious venom into his weakened soul crippling all will to resist and banishing every reflexive and reflective thought. From dormancy a new creation consumed all existential realities of his human nature. In the malignant clutches of a formidable grip his last thoughts were maladaptive and irrational. Perceiving a broader scope, deeper dimensions and a fuller range of significance Grigori shed the last ounce of himself, drowned in the River of Life. Light burst through the torrid in the direction of the steerage. As if he was being expelled from the birthing canal his lungs gasped at the air provided. Grigori looked about to acquaint himself with the reborn him and to measure his perceptibility. He was renewed going through what he could only compare to the dhauti cleansing process. He inhaled then exhaled, feeling beautiful about the life he now had. A wonderful scent filled the air around him. His own voice had become resonant and his appetite had increased. Something was very peculiar to him. He was missing something though he was not concerned. He turned to his reflection in the now crystal blue water. He was neither shocked nor taken back at the image. No longer did he have fingers, hands or arms, gone were his feet and legs. Gone was the image of God. He was a charming, beautiful serpent. He loved his protracted incarnation and laid there on his belly for a good long moment languishing in the jubilation of the transformation. He twisted and slithered away from the water finding his new home in a tree in the center of the island, in the center of the Garden at the bottom of a great pit where seven waterfalls emptied into a mote encircling the island.

High above the island Lora was positioned looking across the clearing at the tree line. Paul was still examining the force field mechanism wondering if he had set it correctly. Ruth had left Lora and was near the staircase that led down into the pit.

A voice from below called to her. It was a summons and a beckoning in a language that tugged on her heart strings. This voice was distinctly heard. This was a sound she had to reconnoiter.

Ruth was a curious child and her ability to resist was not stronger than her inquisitiveness. She made it to the staircase and started the descent before Lora noticed that she was out of site.

Lora had fallen into a trance. This one grasped her like a warning siren. A voice rang in her head. She was being spoken to by an unknown force. "I am eternity and trembling. I am chiefs of ten, the blind god. Deliver up your

soul! Three lives have I. Gentle to soothe the skin. Light enough to caress the sky. I am hard enough to crack rocks. Who am I? The child is going to die. Who am I?" The low gruff whisper departed her mind and she rolled out of the trance visibly shaken. Her eyes were blurry and she strained to focus. Her mind was fresh and she was aware of the situation. The riddle made no sense at first but as her senses came back to her she began to guess the meaning. She said the answer aloud "Water!"

Her next word was "Ruth!"

Lora expected Ruth to be beside her but from all indication had wondered off and was out of sight. It was prudent she find her right away. Lora would have to give up her strategic position and go on a rescue mission. Her worse fears were confirmed when she looked down over the edge of the pit. Ruth had already made it half way down the glimmering staircase. Ruth was running as if there was something of great importance at the bottom that she must find. Lora decided not to scream for her or find Paul. She started down the staircase behind her.

Ruth never slowed and at the bottom she bolted across the bridge toward the umbilical tree standing the island. The tree was golden with silver leaves and each leaf had a face that seemed to be a reflection of the history of the world. Every race of people was represented from every time period. She thought "how unified, how inclusive."

She wondered for a brief moment while her right mind broke through...

"The Bible spoke of The Tree of Life and a Tree Called the Tree of Knowledge in the middle of the Garden, yet there was only one tree here."

This was confusing for her and she was drawn in again listening to that single voice that had called her down into the pit.

In the tree she noticed movement. It was a large thick snake. It was emerald green with red diamonds on its back with a white underbelly. She had never seen a snake so beautiful. The scales reflected light. The snake was not bearing light but was masquerading as light radiating waves of rainbow colors. Unaware Ruth's mind was being seduced by the most subtle creature in the Garden. The fruit of his enticement appealed to her five senses. He was magnificent in the strangest of ways. Ruth was no fan of reptiles but she could not see him as a reptilian tempter. She only saw him as the Prince of Peace. The snake bent the light in such a way as to mask his true nature and

to project a charm that enthralled her. Her fastidious character was skewed by the panorama view of brilliance that the snake had created. He was a lover, a prince, a prom date, the first kiss, a carnival of changes and oddities to keep her amused and guessing.

“Hello my damsel thank you for coming. Come closer so I can see your loveliness.” The snake spoke softly and gently.

Ruth scooted her feet together and came closer to where she was looking up at the snake. He was slithering down the tree toward her speaking in a tranquil tone that soothed her every concern. Her heart rate elevated and she became flush and light headed.

From her vantage point Lora had a clear view of the scene below. Knowing something wasn't right she stopped. The rifle came off her shoulder and she knelt on the staircase. Propping the sniper rifle on the hand rail she sighted through the scope. The light burning from the tree practically blinded her at first. She repositioned trying to avoid the glare from the silver leaves. Now she had a clear view. Lora was shocked that Ruth was standing beneath the tree staring up at what appeared to be a very unusual vermicular serpent.

“Oh no you don't koulèv. Boo Coo very much.” Lora took precise aim and laid her finger on the trigger of her rifle. The cross hairs met the serpent between his eyes. Lora noticed a scar across the head of the serpent visibly fresh. She pulled away and rubbed her eyes. She took another view through the scope. The serpent had moved down the tree closer to Ruth. Lora squeezed the trigger. The shot rang out blasting like cannon. Even from a military point of view this was a difficult shot. Lora shot prematurely but the weight of the event had its desired effect. The bullet went past the serpent, through the tree missing the target yet the sound broke the spell that Ruth was under. She recoiled in horror and her body in a tremulous shake almost collapsed at the serpent dangling from the golden branch of the tree invading her space. She did not know how she managed to get to the bottom of the pit but realized that she was indeed in the forbidden zone.

Paul had heard the rifle fire and was on his way at break neck speed. He shuttered at the thought of what just happened. Why a single shot if the enemy was upon them? From first glance he saw nothing but noticed Lora and Ruth were not where they were supposed to be. The sound of the

waterfalls drowned out Ruth's screams as she broke the restraints of the serpents spell and ran across the bridge away from the serpent. Lora left her position and ran down the staircase to meet her all the while keeping an eye on the serpent that had crawled back up into the tree.

Paul searched the staircase while hanging over the ledge of the pit to see Ruth and Lora meet about half way down. Paul stood frozen unsure whether to join them or keep watch as they pushed upward on panicked legs. Noticing the serpent was camouflaged in the tree and not pursuing he waited at the top for them to emerge.

The two girls were exhausted by the long climb and fast pace which they covered the staircase.

"What in the heck just happened?" Paul demanded to know.

"I was next to Lora and then suddenly I was down in the pit. I don't know how I got down there." Ruth answered.

"The main thing is that she is safe. M rayi sèpan." Lora voiced her disgust with snakes.

"That was no ordinary snake. That thing was talking to me. I heard its voice." Ruth shook nervously.

"O diab, I do not know if that was the devil, but through my scope he looked frightening. Reptile se." Lora was entangled in thought wrapped up in the terrifying scene that she had just witnessed.

"We cannot go back down there. And I hope no one heard that shot. Let's get into position just in case someone did hear the shot." Paul feared that the enemy heard the shot and if so they would trace the sound to them.

The three took up defensive positions and prayed that Jamison had been affected in his guerrilla assault. The wait was nerve racking. Lora agonized with worry over the fate of her husband but she did not let her distress show. The trio could not help but to be on edge but they reminded one another to not pull the trigger too quickly concerned that they could accidentally shoot Jamison upon his return.

“There!” Paul pointed toward the cut in the trees. There was a human figure coming. The person was evasive. They could only be seen for a second at a time. Lora thought no one moved like this except her husband. She wanted desperately to call out but she held her cry in her throat. To Lora’s relief Jamison emerged from the trees waving his arms. The trio held their position not wanting to give anything away in case he had been followed. He ran to their flank then in concealed fashion he worked his way along the ridge line of the pit and joined them. Lora practically choked him with a tight hug around the neck. Once the welcoming party settled Jamison gave detail of what he saw and what transpired. Lora then followed his tale with one of her own explaining the serpent below and its seduction of Ruth’s mind.

“This cannot be the same serpent as in The Book of Genesis.” Jamison protested.

“Maybe not the same but for some reason I believe just as deadly.” Paul remarked.

“If there is a snake in the tree what if the enemy has planted it there? What if they have beaten us here some how?” Ruth questioned.

“Far be it from me to question the impossible in this journey but I just gave them two pretty good explosions. They were behind me then and I know they were slowed by my trap.” Jamison sounded sure.

“Pa gen anyen enposib nan mond sa a. It is possible that the serpent is part of their plan.” Lora voiced her concerned.

“If that is the case, we should go to our panic stations.” Jamison joked trying to lighten the mood.

“This is serious Jamison.” Paul said unnerved.

“Don’t Peter out Paul.” Jamison laughed then caught himself.

“O.K. if that serpent is part of the enemies plans then we need to bag that rascal.” He said.

“I am not going back down there.” Ruth cried.

“Pa enkyete ou. You do not need to go back.” Lora assured her rubbing her tense shoulders.

“We won’t be shuffling off the mortal coil today folks.” Jamison started reloading his guns and Lora handed him a couple of grenades.

“You guys hold the fort and I’ll be back.” He turned and gave Lora a kiss. “Leave a light on.” He said as he headed for the staircase. Lora’s eyes swelled with tears watching the love of her life marching into the pit.

Jamison never looked back he hit the staircase running. He figured there was no reason to sneak down it since the entire structure could be clearly seen from the tree below.

Jamison made it three quarters of the way down the golden staircase when he suddenly got a sickening feeling in his gut. It was so nauseating that he almost vomited. But he managed to keep going. His head was spinning and he had instant dry mouth. His eyes were still in working order but he could not see the serpent anywhere in the tree.

Because of the acute illness he approached more cautiously. His mind was clear and rational. He knew person, place, time and the event that was occurring so he had his mental faculties in tact. Then the serpent appeared. It was much larger than what he had imagined. Jamison knew the serpent had seen him so he decided to engage.

“Looks like I brought a sledgehammer to crack a nut.” He said. The serpent slithered down the tree and Jamison listened for a response. But there was no voice coming from this thing.

“Trick or treat. Heard you can talk. What? Cat’s got your forked tongue?” Jamison said as he crossed the bridge at the bottom of the staircase.

The serpent moved gracefully down to a lower limb staring directly into his eyes.

“You know what is sharper than a serpents tooth?” Jamison hesitated; waiting for a reply before giving the punch line. “No? The only thing sharper is to have a thankless child.”

Still he could not get a rise out of the scaled creature.

He pulled his rifle from around his back and took it into his hands.

“Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent and the serpent didn't have a leg to stand on” Jamison was telling jokes but bringing the rifle up to a firing position.

To Jamison's surprise he heard a voice. “Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.” Though the mouth of the serpent only produced a slithering tongue a word came from the monster.

“Listen snake, you might be a talking snake but you ain't no dragon.” Jamison took aim.

The voice returned soft, harsh and full of venom. “Unless a serpent devour a serpent it will not become a dragon. Unless one power absorb another, it will not become great.”

“You think you are going to absorb me snake?” Jamison said wryly.

Again Jamison allowed the serpent to respond. “He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him. Mankind dug this pit and in it you have placed the Tree of Life. You have fallen into the pit you have dug. I have devoured a serpent whose name you know well. Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin a serpent in his own right was consumed and thus a serpent has devoured another creating the dragon.”

“Well, all I see is a fat snake, a green eyed monster at best.” Jamison's nostrils flared in anger.

When the shot rang out the serpent jerked at the same time. Once again Jamison merely grazed the head. Its long powerful tail whipped from around the tree and slapped the rifle out of Jamison's hands. The force jolted Jamison forward at the same time knocking him off balance. Jamison could not keep his footing and was violently hurled over the railing of the bridge and into crystal blue water.

The water had a dragging effect on Jamison's body. He was pulled helplessly down.

Jamison was disoriented not know which way was up. He was being consumed by the nearby waterfall which was pouring from the walls of the pit. There was a desperation tugging at his soul to escape yet the gallons of water bore down on him driving him further from solid ground and air. The only thing he could do was to look up in the direction he thought he came and swim for it. He realized that he had to take command of this situation or he would never see Lora again. He made a precipitate to swim faster feeling the pressure building in his lungs and behind his eyes. Jamison was about to go from desperation to unequivocal tragedy when he saw a glimmer of light overhead. He used his immense muscular strength to torpedo upward. Fatigue was setting in caused by the microscopic tearing of muscle fibers. The lactic acid was building preventing his muscles from producing contractile proteins causing calcium to be released in his muscles that replaced the oxygen. Although Jamison was a superb athletic and in world class condition he was barely managing to escape the depth.

His effort was coming from his heart and his heart drove his body to the surface. At the surface he gulped at the air trying to fill his lungs. He spit water from his nose and mouth. He did not know where he was. The island was gone. There was no Tree of Life. He had popped up in a cave. Torches burned along the smooth walls as if he had been expected. Otherwise he would have bobbed up in complete and utter darkness.

Jamison pulled himself out of the water pool and realized that the passage before him only traveled one way. He had no choice but to follow the passage and see where it led. His hope was that it came out back in the pit. The passage was on an incline so maybe he thought, it led to the surface.

Chapter 35

“The man who fights too long against dragons becomes a dragon himself”

Friedrich Nietzsche quotes



Lora and the children had been watching the horrific scene from their vantage point atop the pit. Lora had stood to run to help Jamison when a shot rang out from the tree line. She ducked and covered quickly.

The shot had missed but now she had given away their position. The zombie army, what was left of it commanded by Madam Zebul had found them. Lora and the children prepared themselves by checking to see if their guns were ready to fire.

“Pran tan ou ak vize, do not panic and do not hesitate.” Lora stated.

The children’s eyes looked like saucers, round and shiny with anticipation. Lora rolled over on her belly and sited through her scope. Both Paul and Ruth did the same. Paul had a rifle and Lora a pair of binoculars. The enemy was concealed and Lora figured the shot came from a long distance or she would be dead now. She carefully eyed the tree line until she saw some movement.

“Mak pye sou yo bliye.” She was encouraging the enemy to show themselves.

From behind the golden trunk of a towering tree she saw the gnarly head of one of the zombie soldiers. She squeezed the trigger and the bullet ripped the side of the zombie's head clean off. The concussion was so violent it spun the soldier completely around and it fell flat to the ground. Shots began to ring out from the same area. The zombie army was not well trained and they were reactionary without strategy. They were firing at random in Lora's direction but with aim. Bullets were hitting the ground far short of their target or soaring overhead. Lora waited patiently for each shot. Paul was firing but his shots were less accurate. When he would hit his mark he would yell out excitedly "I got one!"

Lead was flying in every direction and Lora's fear was that a stray bullet would actually find its victim but she had the hope that God was on her side. Despite the exceedingly precarious situation Lora and the children seemed to be in a good position for both offense and defense. There was still a high stress level. Ruth did not like the loud booms from Lora's rifle and eventually put her fingers in her ears. The most imminent danger is if they were flanked. Lora ordered the children to keep watch in all directions while she did the shooting. The children were not solicitous in their duties but were growing in heart as the battle raged. Lora was feeling the soreness of the rifle butt kicking her shoulder with each shot. But her chestnut eye had the perfect bead on the enemy.

"Grenade!" Paul screamed picking up the rolling explosive device and throwing it out of their area. The grenade exploded several yards away but still the shock wave was felt.

"Yon moun fè ou mal? Are you o.k.?" Lora asked.

"Yes, where did that come from?" Paul asked breathing heavy from anxiety.

Ruth screamed "There!" At that moment a soldier with a hideous pale face with protruding purple and red splattered veins came over their barricade. Lora jumped up and was knocked down with a clubbed arm. Paul jumped onto the zombie's back and attempted a choke hold. The large half-man reached over his shoulders and tried to peel Paul away. Paul was locking in a tight hold but was slipping. Lora had sprung back to her feet and she knifed the zombie several times in the stomach as it grabbed awkwardly at her. The

zombie dropped to its knees and that is when Paul managed to lock in the choke. Down to the ground both of them went. The zombie now was lifeless.

“Oh my gosh! That is too close.” Paul stated, standing to his feet.

The three heard a crazy noise which startled them and froze them to the ground. It was a cross between a roar of a lion, an elephant seal and a Howler monkey. But the sound was amplified triple.

“What in the world was that?” Paul asked not expecting anyone to have a answer.

They saw Madam Zebul exiguously dressed, running across the open field toward the pit.

A few soldiers were flanking her as a shield.

Lora hesitated then realized she needed to be stopped. There wasn't time to take careful aim. Lora fired her weapon several times. She managed to hit three of the soldiers sending them back to their graves.

Madam Zebul continued running to the pit executing the machinations of her driven mind. As she reached the edge she leaped right off the side flinging her self down in a manner which surely would be deadly when she crashed to the bottom. But she was met by the creature that had created the mighty roar just seconds earlier. Grigori had been truthful. A serpent that devours another serpent transforms into a dragon. For what rose from the pit was something from the world of fantasy and legends. Madam Zebul had jumped from the cleft over into the pit and the dragon had cushioned her fall by meeting her and placing her on its back.

Zebul the woman who obsessed with having her vineyard, a garden of riches, was now riding the dominating factor in the Garden rising above paradise to set up her kingdom. Her victory over Naboth who had blasphemed against God and her seizing of his vineyard long ago was no different than this current event taking place. The dragon would have devoured the dishabille Zebul or drowned her with water from its mouth but the dragon knew that the Garden would simply absorb the water. In order to be victorious the dragon had joined her in her quest to rule and reign rather than being destroyed.

The dragon was an ominous beast, with a strong and mighty structure of bony scales and a head that resembled that of a snake. It was red with wings that moved the air like a wind storm. Its green gelid eyes were squinted with the eyelids of the dawn and had a piercing stare that made Lora and the children want to bow. But they refused to take a knee. It was covered in scales the size of arm shields. Lora opened fire emptying her rifle in vain. The dragon's thick skin was firmly cast and could not be penetrated with modern weapons. His appearance was so fierce they dare not look directly upon him. Lora quickly reloaded. Even Ruth fired her handgun wildly but her bullets were also useless. They were working in vain to take the beast down and it would be impossible to negotiate.

“Run!” Lora yelled. The three left their position and made their way out into the open with hopes of making it to the trees.

The stunning Zebul was radiant atop of her leviathan. Her beauty had fully transformed. Without the dragon beneath her she would command reverence. Gone was the haggard elderly weak appearance. Her pallid countenance was gone and her face was rich and rosy with plump cheeks, smooth silky skin. Her eyelashes were lush and long. Her voluminous hair hung long and thick blowing back from the flapping of the dragon's wings. She spoke her orders through full, red lips.

The dragon reacted instantly. Now Lora and the children were being pursued.

Running as fast as they could was not fast enough. The dragon was coming followed by a handful of sickly zombie soldiers and two giant dogs Youssou and Pov.

The dragon was bearing down upon them. The hot breath of his nostrils could be felt on the back of their necks. Quixotically with a move that under the circumstances would be considered rash and foolhardy, Paul withdrew the sword of David and turned to face the beast. His heart changed. He turned from a boy to having a heart of a warrior, a heart of a King. Ruth stopped too, she turned pulling out the sling shot and the stone which she had been given to carry.

Lora was screaming at them, encouraging them to flee. Her voice had cracks and tears mixed in and she feared the absolute worse.

The dragon and its beautiful nearly bare rider were not intimidated by two children and a Jamaican Queen. Zebul a plenipotentiary, laughed anticipating a quick kill. The dragon roared again, sparks leaping out of its mouth like burning lamps. He stomped the ground angrily with his hind feet that had deadly talons like a bird of prey. Paul did not wait; he brought the attack charging forward the sword high over his head. Lora pulled the sling back and took aim with her smooth stone. She released her finger grip and the stone rocketed through the air. The stone was purposeful and accurate. It hit the dragon squarely between the eyes. The dragon stumbled, its legs weakened. Zebul squeezed tight to hold on. This gave Paul the opening he needed. He swung the sword with incredible conviction first striking the front leg of the beast ripping a massive tear in its seemingly impenetrable armor. The second cut tore a hole beneath its chest on its underbelly. A large flap of skin dangled grotesquely. A roar shook the Garden. Paul looked like a demented animal trainer torturing his pet. The TANNIN showed its teeth. Though it had the head of a serpent it did not have fangs. Large daggers like shark teeth shined from a poisoned mouth.

Paul climbed up the red monster using its scales as foot and hand holds. It began bucking wildly trying to throw Paul off. Madam Zebul could no longer hold on. Her fingers slipped and she plummeted down. The fall was silencing and fatal. As in her first life defenestrated to the ground; Madam hit the ground in a spectacular tumble breaking her neck. Grigori's dogs ran to her growling and barking. At first they sniffed her then extending her no civilities they devoured her.

Paul now was sitting aloft the terror where Madam Zebul had reigned briefly. This beast was not frangible. Thrusting downward with all of his might he ran the sword through the back of its neck staggering the creature. His hope was that he would sever the spinal chord and end this war. The dragon jerked and contested and Paul was twisted sideways just in time to see the long venomous tail swing toward him. As he pulled himself out of harms way the dragon's stingers struck itself where Paul had been perched. The stinging probes penetrated through the scales and into its thick skin. Paul continued hacking and stabbing the dragon as it fought to throw its intruder.

Lora grabbed Ruth and sprinted to the tree line as the zombies caught up and were hot on their trail.

Lora set up her rifle quickly and began picking them off one by one. Ruth stood holding the last two grenades in her hands as a last resort.

Paul had regained balance and was riding the dragon wildly. The leviathan had turned and was half way attempting flight back toward the pit. Fire was dripping like hot lava from its nostrils and the smell of sulfur polluted the air.

The ignivomous dragon attempted to flap it's wings and catch air beneath them. However, stumbling and weary with pain and exhaustion, it's efforts abated as it's talons slipped over the edge of the cliff to the pit below. Paul managed to jump and roll clear of the beast, landing on solid footing away from the edge of the cliff. He shakily stood to his feet although he still felt dizzy from the hard fall. Shuffling to the edge of the precipice he looked below for some sign of the dragon.

Lora and Ruth were safe having disposed of the last of the soldiers and were sprinting toward Paul who had been stunned from the fall. He arranged to stand and still dizzy dragged his feet proceeding to the edge. He looked down into the pit. The dragon had fallen straight down into one of the seven waterfalls. There was no sign of the scaly red beast.

Lora and Ruth joined him embracing his hurt body as he groaned a bit. But he did not care he was thankful that Lora and his sister were safe.

“Is it gone?” Ruth asked with apprehension.

“Yes he is gone.” Paul answered.

“We have to find my husband. Èske ou kapab vwayaje?” Lora asked.

“Yes I am good, I can travel.” Paul realized that he understood her question though he did not speak her language.

The three ventured cautiously down the stair of the pit to the bottom, across the bridge and stood where Jamison had last been seen before the serpent had struck him knocking him into the water. There was no body, no sign that he had come back to the surface.

“Jwè, I am going down into the water.” Lora announced.

“You can’t what if you drown? Ruth said shrilly.

Mwen dwe, I have no choice. If my husband is down there I will bring him back. M pral.” Lora said with confidence.

“We are going with you then.” Paul said inviting himself.

“Non, rete. You wait here for fifteen minutes. If I do not come back take the force field mechanism and return to the entrance. Set it back up and go home.” Lora said handing the silver cylinder to Paul.

Lora pulled back her long, black dreadlocks and tied them tight. She gave the children all of her weapons with the exception of a handgun, a few magazines full of bullets and a large hunting knife. She gave the children a quick hug and quickly dived head first into the crystal blue water. She went in quickly both lungs uncomfortably expanded with air. The water was clear and she could see for many yards. There seemed to be no bottom to this mote. Her eye caught a glimpse of something coming beneath her rising quickly effortlessly to meet her. As they came closer into view they were gelatinous, mostly transparent and glowing brightly. They spread out their wings and had an appearance of giant butterflies. Lora hoped they were friendly and there for her. She reached out her hands and her hands sank into their bodies. They beat their wings slowly in a rowing motion propelling Lora further down into the deep. The deeper they descended the stronger burst of speed they used. Lora saw the opening in the floor and these sea angels brought her safely right through to dry ground. They released her and she surfaced inside a cave. Pulling herself up into the cave she noticed torches burning on the walls. With only one passage to follow immediately she began to run pursuing wherever it led. In her mind if these sea angels had come for her and brought her here it was a sign that her husband had likewise been brought this way.

She followed the passage charging forward; for there was no basis for going back. All the while trying to connect with her husband by calling out to him in her mind. The passage was narrow, allowing adequate headroom but gradually becoming more vertical making it hard to maintain a steady run. Pacing herself Lora pushed on rasping a bit. After 15 minutes the tunnel emptied into a large cathedral with a carefully rounded, domed ceiling. The glow from large, black votive candles permeated the gloom, but wasn't enough to dispel the eerie shadows that danced in the dark corners of the

room. A massive chandelier hung in the center holding more than four dozen burning candles. Lora wondered who lit all of those candles? Being far below the surface of the Garden of Eden Lora supposed this lair had to have a caretaker residing within. Her eyes nervously scanned the perimeters of the cathedral where maybe more than the shadows resided.

Chapter 36

So he drove out the man; and he placed Keruvs at the east of the garden of `Eden, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Hebrew Names Version



Paul and Ruth watched the water. They looked for anything that might suggest that Lora was coming back. They had watched her dive in and swim downward several yards before she disappeared. Now they waited for her to return. But there wasn't even a air bubble surfacing.

"It's been twenty minutes." Ruth announced loudly to be heard over the crashing of the waterfalls.

"I know we must go. She must have found something or she would have returned." Paul agreed turning to take one last look at The Tree of Life.

"Where is the other tree Paul?" Ruth asked.

"The other tree?" He asked not clear on what she was asking.

"You know, the Tree of Good and Evil, the Tree of Knowledge?" She reminded him of the other tree mentioned in scripture.

“I believe this is it. I believe it is one and the same. The Bible says that the two trees were in the midst, or in the middle of the Garden and two trees cannot occupy the same place. I think it all has to do is your motives for partaking of it. If you eat from it with a Spiritual mind you get life, if you eat from an evil state you get death. It could be compared to going to church. A person can go to church and practice religion and seem moral and just in the sight of the congregation while all the while not having a personal relationship with Christ Jesus. The same man can attend church and seek God with all of his heart, mind and strength and serve God and that same man will get life in the same church.” Paul did not mean to preach a sermon but he wanted his older sister to understand what he thought was truth.

The two took one last look at the incredible tree. The faces on the leaves seemed to stare back as if to take one last look at them. The two made their way back up the stairs. Paul was very tired from the earlier events with the dragon but knew they needed to exit the Garden and make their way home. They collected the force field mechanism and lugged it back into the heart of the Garden. They were able to retrace their steps through many landmarks they had taken notice of on the way in. The mechanism would prove to become heavier as they distanced themselves from the Tree of Life but determined they manage to haul the apparatus with a series of yanks, jerks and will power to its resting place.

The children still marveled at the pristine beauty and assuage ambience they were privileged to travel through. Paradise was immaculate in every way. Paul thought the only thing that tarnished this unsullied wonderland was the presence of his sister and he being in it. They made their way to the river and followed it the best they remembered. There were no broken branches or footprints to follow by for the Garden had the ability to restore everything back to purity and untarnished clarity. Even though they had just fought a war in the Garden; everything seemed virginal and innocent. It was no time and they were back at the archway looking out at the world outside of the only Paradise the world had ever known.

"Should we return the mechanism to where we found it?" Ruth asked.

"Good question. I am wondering what we should do with it. If it is on and we leave it in here, then no one can turn it off again. If it is off and we take it back where we found it and turn it on, anyone that finds the Garden can possibly venture in like we did. " Paul speculated. After a few minutes of

deliberation he finally made the decision to leave the mechanism hidden in the Garden.

"I am concerned about people getting in here and causing trouble. I am convinced that if we can get in others can follow. And who is to say that they have not already followed us?" Paul said.

"Do you think we are still being followed?" Ruth asked with a worried quiver in her voice.

"One thing I have learned from our travels is to expect anything, assume all things and be ready. I have no reason to believe that we are, but I will not let my guard down." Paul answered with a scowl on his face.

Inexpressible grief overtook Ruth and she began to weep. For Paul it was inconceivable that they had to leave and he too was stricken with a sense of sorrow and oppression weighing on his young shoulders. As in the past, he swallowed his fears and tried to present a strong, positive front for Ruth who was not handling the shock of this transition well at all. Darkness had fallen on the outside world and seemed to radiate sadness that penetrated both their souls.

"Ruth we have to leave, we cannot stay here any longer. We have to return to our own time, we belong with mom and dad."

Ruth looked up with teary red eyes that had now become puffy and through her sobs answered, "I know." Wiping tears from her face she solemnly asked, "What is our plan?"

"We will hide the mechanism here near the entrance, then walk through the archway out of the Garden. We will have to test the force field to ensure that I do have it turned on. So we will simply throw something back through it to see if it can penetrate the gate. If it bounces back out we know I have successfully activated the force field and thus the flaming sword is back in place." Paul presumed.

The two dragged the mechanism to a large diamond boulder. The boulder had the perfect crevice at its base and the mechanism slid tightly beneath hidden out of sight.

Both turned to take in their last full view of the Garden. It was overwhelming but they were able to break away. Paul took his sister by the hand and they walked with deliberation out of paradise into the darkness of another world. No longer were they trespassers of God's park, they were where they belonged for the moment. Armed with the sword, the cauldron, and the sling they were only missing the smooth stone which lodged in the head of the defeated dragon. They had one rifle, two handguns; Lora was in

the possession of the two grenades she was using as last resort. They had plenty of ammunition for a small assault. Their mission was to return to their world, their time their place.

The two distanced themselves from the entryway of the Garden that split a mountain down the middle. Paul looked for something to throw at the entrance. He could not locate a stone so he emptied one of his pistol magazines and shoved the bullets into his front right pocket. He threw it really hard his aim was the Garden. It soared through the air, a perfect throw toward the opening but bounced off the invisible force and ricocheted back at him falling short right at his feet.

“I guess that answers that question.” He said; problem solved.

He turned toward his sister who struggled with leaving paradise. She was visibly upset and depressed.

“Ruth, you have the power. You must learn how to use it. See if you can go into a trance. Think about home. I will use the cylinder and it will take us back.” Paul construed.

“Are you sure?” Ruth was irresolute.

“Positive. We have no alternative.” He nodded his head.

Ruth closed her eyes and tried to shut everything out of her mind. After a couple of seconds she stopped and said “I can’t do it.”

“Yes you can! Just concentrate.” Paul encouraged her believing that to go back the way they came would produce pernicious consequences.

She shut her eyes and bowed her head. Paul stood guard. He produced the silver cylinder. This tube had been instrumental in getting them through this journey. He watched his sister and her lips moved but no audible words were heard. Paul inserted the key into the lock and turned the key. The lid slid off into his hand.

Ruth had drifted into the cosmic world of her enkindled soul. She recited;

Explore and hike and hitch a ride

Catch the wind from the back side
Lift and soar cause to fly
The anointed are taken in the sky

A sheet of wind, a stiff heavy gale caught them beneath their feet. The weather changed instantly into a storm. Paul shrunk from the extremity of the sound. He had no time to shout or exert resistance. He fell forward into Ruth and they both slammed to the ground. Ruth's eyes open confused and disoriented. They had already experienced enough privation and terror for several lifetimes and now evinced with a new reality they were helpless but to crawl on their hands and knees blindly unable to stand.

When the wind had subsided and they were able to pry open their eyes they were no longer at the entrance of Paradise. The two were in a building furnished with Victorian style furniture.

Chapter 37

My dear young maiden clingeth Unbending, fast and firm To all the long-held teaching Of a mother ever true; As in vampires unmortal Folk on the Theyse's portal Heyduck-like do believe.

Heinrich August Ossenfelder

Lora was baffled by what she was seeing. The room was large with a round ceiling lit by candlelight. Shadows danced off the walls with each little flicker from the flames. She just could not imagine who would have lit these candles. There was one door out and instead of



searching out the room she opted to leave through the door. There was nothing of great interest here. She had more avidity about leaving through the door. The door swung open to a small town. She bravely walked out of the cave and closed the door behind her. She noticed that the door had disappeared and where there was a door was a tree. The entire scene had shifted. She was looking at jumbled red pantile roof buildings that overlooked a harbor. She noticed perched high on a hill a magnificent church. Tombstones littered the east side like stones rising out of the ground to meet the living. She started walking toward the red roof buildings when she stopped in her tracks to focus on six hooded figures heading her way on the road. She put her hand on her firearm and waited to see where they were going. The person leading the way slipped his hood from his head. He was a black haired man, with a pale face and dark circles under his eyes. He had an antiquated appearance almost superannuated yet he moved with youthful zeal.

The man stopped at a safe distance and addressed her with a heavy European accent. “My name is Incubus and I think you might know me, but better yet, we know your husband and your husband is safe with us. If you would like to be with him follow us. We do not have very long. These are my friends and yours, Vrykolakas, Mullo, Kosac, Prikosac, and Tenjac.” With the

introduction of each man their hoods dropped revealing some disturbing features. These men were all pale, with glowing yellow eyes and visible fangs. Lora recognized that they were vampires.

“What if I don’t believe you and refuse to go?” Lora asked with her hand tightening on the grip of her Glock handgun.

“That my dear lady is your prerogative. You will be safe with us and your husband desperately wants to see you. He told me if you refused to tell you Mieszko found his soul.” Incubus shared.

Lora and Jamison had helped Mieszko a monk from centuries past to find his soul and no one would know about this in this world unless Jamison had mentioned it. With that being the case she agreed to follow them. She kept her distance and prepared each step with an exit in mind in the event this was some sort of trap. But how could it be a trap she thought? There were six of them and they had her dead to right if they wanted her. There was no one without shouting distance and no witnesses. She still had unease in her gut.

The six vampires led her up the hill to the church she had took notice of when she had crossed over into this world. Entering through the nave of the church they were standing in the large sanctuary. People were scattered throughout the wooden pews and they all turned when Lora arrived. A woman with long gray hair dressed in a black gown approached. She was as white as a ghost.

“You must be Lora I am Obayifo. Allow me to take you to your husband.” Her voice was heavily romantic accent. Lora was led to a backroom through large arched door with metal trim and then they proceeded to go upstairs into a loft. The wooden stairs creaked heavily and when they reached the top Jamison met her with open arms. She hugged him like she had met him for the first time. He didn’t care that she was still damp from the crystal blue water of the Garden.

He explained to her how he was unable to swim out of the mote and how he found the cave. Once in the cave the vampires had met him in the large candle lit room and brought him to the church. He revealed to her that these were outcast vampires that had committed themselves to the church in hopes of finding salvation.

“Mwen pa konprann. What does that have to do with us?” Lora asked.

“You are not going to believe this but our friend Hanus the clock maker has sent word here that we would arrive.” Jamison said and was cut off by Lora blurting out “How?”

“I do not know how. But they know him. Now I have a question that they asked me. Did you kill Rasputin?” Jamison asked in all seriousness.

“I assume that he was the dragon and Paul killed him?” Lora guessed.

“So the snake that knocked me into the water became a dragon?” Jamison sounded surprised.

“I am guessing yes. Mwen pa t ' konprann transfòmasyon a men depi lè sa a, tout sa k te pase a, sèpan an dwe devni sa Pòl te batay e te tiye dragon an.” She answered with a look of concern on her face.

“I believe you. I believe that the serpent became a dragon because he told me he would right before he struck me. You say Paul killed him?”

Lora nodded her head.

“Did you see the body of the dragon lifeless?” Jamison asked.

“Paul stabbed him with the sword, the dragon fell over into the pit into the water and no I never saw its body. We supposed that it sank in the water dead. Èske nou te fè yon bagay mal? Lora asked putting her hands on her head fretting.

“No baby you did not do anything wrong. I am just saying that these Christian vampires are telling me that Rasputin survived the fall into the pit.” Jamison sounded sure.

“I cannot believe this. Paul stabbed him a dozen times. The dragon even accidentally stung itself with its own stinger. Li dwe mouri. Pa gen moun te kapab siviv tout de abi sa.” Lora protested.

“He could survive it and I believe he did. He did it when he was a normal man and now that he is something else he obviously has become more powerful.” Jamison was gathering his belongings.

“Where are we going?” Lora asked.

Jamison pulled her close and ran his finger up and down her back.

“We have to gather the children and then dispose of this Rasputin guy once and for all. He will be mad and he is coming. We have destroyed his army, foiled his plans to conquer the Garden of Eden and stole his dream of being God. He is ticked.” Jamison then gave Lora a deep passionate kiss.

A knock startled the two of them. “Come in.” Jamison cleared his throat.

Incubus entered. “Jamison and Lora it is time to go. We have the children located. They are in our town here in Whitby. They were seen walking the street below which is dangerous. I have some men following them. We did not want to frighten them so we decided to take you to them.”

They immediately abandoned the sanctuary of the church and followed Incubus out and down the hill into the small town accompanied by five other male vampires. Lora glanced back up at the church that they had just departed and something was different. Now it looked like ruins rather than a church that could be occupied.

“Incubus, the church what?” Lora was cut off by Incubus.

“Lora we have the ability to make people see what we want them to see. The church no longer exists as it did in its days of glory. It is ruins now and that is where we stay. We are ostracized and have been outcast from our own kind and the world itself for centuries. The world has no place for vampires that worship God and confesses Christ as Savior. But we wait our day, living out our existence until He returns that we can be changed.”

“So you stay here hidden away century after century in hopes of the return of Christ?” Lora asked.

“Yes, we have a small parish and we find sanctuary and solace in that old church of ruins.” Incubus answered.

“If you do not mind me asking, padon mwen si m ofanses, but can you share with me about your conversion to Christianity? Lora asked.

“Certainly. You see the church for the town looks abandoned; it is lonely without the spiritual conception that produces life. The town below basks in the agrestic emptiness of the ruins. But we have the ability to use illusion and create in the minds of people like your self how we see this church. We remain without feeling and we are dead yet we all have felt a quickening within which we attribute to the Lord’s Spirit. Our complete darkness has been broken by a shard of light piercing through daily. What began as a sliver of light in us, creatures who were allergic to the brightness now has formed cob webs within each of us. Daily the darkness was consumed. Jamison told us when he arrived that he was amazed to see us read from the Holy Scriptures and to hear us pray aloud collectively. Once we were lost souls of the damned but now faith has transformed us to follow a New and Living Way.” Incubus shared.

Lora was impressed and had great respect for Incubus and the others, creatures of the night that used to feed on the image of God, regularly they had blasphemed His Holy name, and trampled the blood of Christ Jesus, existing only to mock the Son of God and deny the cross and now they had given their lives in the service of the Kingdom.

Incubus continued telling his story. “It was through the word of a single monk that one vampire gave his life to God. The vampire spared the monks life. An inquest was held. Only a few vampires accepted this Jesus Christ as Lord. The majority denied Christ and banished the other vampires and spared the monk. Those that had professed their faith to God shielded the monk from execution and escorted him far away to this place. The unrepentant vampires regretted allowing the monk to live. They tortured themselves over sparing his life and thus broke the treaty with the newly converted vampires. They employed Dhampir to hunt the monk and seek his blood. Dhampir was the product of a union between a mortal woman and a vampire. Her tracking abilities were unmatched. During evening prayers they attacked the church with fire. The monk was unable to escape and as the church burned around him the monk our dear friend perished.

Down one hundred and ninety nine steps from the church into the town through narrow cobbled streets, yards, and old worn steps and over to the Cliffside with wind in their face, Jamison saw Paul and Ruth walking ahead

of them. Jamison caught them right at the Pavilion Theater. They caught a glimpse of a couple of seagulls overhead and rats were underfoot.

Jamison quietly walked up behind the children. "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em"

The children vaulted around alarmed but seeing friendly faces their fears were relieved. Jamison sat them down and he and Lora spent the next 30 minutes discussing Rasputin. The introduction to Incubus threw them back for a brief moment they had never been introduced to a vampire but once they learned he was not after their blood they had no concerns. Their ideas of vampires were blood sucking creatures that hypnotized their victims and then drained the life force from them. Paul did not take his eye off the revenants of evil beings.

Incubus led his clan along the docks of Whitby harbor. They made their way down the old stone stairs near the water. The smell of fish filled the air blown in off the water and there were a couple of people fishing for 'flatties at this late hour off the pier. Lora thought how she wished the moon was brighter so she could view the sandy blue flag beach. Jamison asked a man if he had caught anything. The man replied "not a sniff." The clan worked their way around the pier past a fish smoke shop where fish were hung on black tarry rods to be cured.

"Ka sa mwen mande w nan? The stone you are all wearing around your necks does it have a significance? Lora asked referring to an opaque, intense black rock attached to a woven thick thread.

"Yes you may. This stone is a distant relative of the diamond; fossilized and eventually buried in the upper lias shale. It is called jet and we wear it while in mourning for those that have not seen the light." Incubus answered.

"It is nice." Ruth said having never talked to a vampire before.

"We had a great friend by the name of James Cook who was a seaman. He brought us the first jet stone as a gift. We had heard that he was killed in Hawaii at age of fifty. We mourned him by having all in our clan to wear the stones and in doing so we also remember our former life and those we left behind.

The clan ventured to the River Esk at the Esklets on Westerdale Moor in the North York Moors. Being careful to not fall on the rocks they worked their way back down a steep incline to the actual bank of the river. A cloaked figure down at the river waved a lantern over their head as a signal to the clan. There a large stain glass boat waiting for them trimmed with elegant woodwork. Ruth was dreading any sort of boat ride. At the shore the cloaked figure removed his cloak to reveal his very hairy appearance. Incubus introduced him as Blautsauger a vampire from Bosnia-Herzegovina who was a new convert.

“How far down river are we going Captain Ahab.” Jamison asked.

“We are not going down river, just down.” Incubus answered.

The bow of the boat opened up and lowered down using two chains attached to a windless. The clan entered the boat without having to step into the water. The belly of the boat was a staircase. The staircase disappeared in darkness far beneath deck of the boat. Incubus had no reservation about descending into the belly of this great fish. Everyone followed. Three stories down, they entered a golden chamber.

“This is the Inner Circle; or as some call it the Sacred Central land. This place is our resolve if we are ever under attack. The church provides us with a certain sanctuary that is affordable to our abilities yet there are those in the stratosphere of vampirism that our illusions will not work on. This is our fall back.” Incubus explained.

“Why don’t you just reside here then?” Paul asked.

“The light my boy, we crave the light and here the light is artificial. Here in this chamber we do have a jeweled palace.” When the words were projected from Incubus’s lips the room illuminated with a night sky overhead filled with a billion stars and thousands of planets.

“Man is a universe within himself. He is full of magnificence and wonder. Man can imagine, dream or be enlightened. Man can live from his spirit and seek higher things or live from his flesh and live in the lower realms and feed the mind alone. He is capable of miraculous changes or recrementitious lust and cupidity. Man evolves, progresses, grows, he is a universe that is forever learning but unable to come to the knowledge of the truth. As

extraordinary as human capability can be man has limited himself and confined his own soul within a body that one day die. If I have learned anything from being a vampire it is to live forever in this lower state is hell. Man never ought to be so limited. He will never see himself as a universe unless he first sees himself in a garden. There are two gardens. One garden you have experienced. It is the Paradise of God. But no man can start there and ever know who the real God is. A man must begin in the Garden of the Winepress. It is a place of thorns, briars and thistles where the grapes are pressed and through much pressure New Wine is produced. You four are about to enter the winepress. In the winepress all that you are will be extracted as you are crushed. But if you endure until the end you shall be saved.”

Incubus waved his hand and the stars and planets disappeared giving way to the daylight overhead. A sun blazing but it was not blinding nor was it producing heat. It hanged in the IMAX style dome just out of reach.

“You are the light of the world, not lights of the world. Continue to show the unity and oneness that you have already demonstrated and you shall grow into the full stature of your being.” Incubus held out his hand in the direction of the only door in the room. The scene over head changed again to the waters above. They could observe the river creatures swimming in their natural environment as if they were looking into a huge aquarium.

“What is behind the door Monte Hall?” Jamison asked his reference was to a game show from the 1970’s called Let’s Make A Deal.”

Incubus didn’t seem to be bothered by Jamison’s humor he simply smiled and answered.

“Behind the door is your future and home.” Incubus was able to elucidate the conditions.

The door was double the size of a normal door without a door knob. It was wooden with the symbol for protection while traveling burned into the grain. On either side of the door were two metal crosses twelve inches high and six inches wide.

“Where does this door take us?” Paul asked looking at Incubus.

“The destination is not certain but the fate of what we all are rest in your ability to accomplish the adventure you are on and to stop the threat that is upon the world from age to age.” Incubus resounded.

“That is just fantastic but we thought we had stopped the threat back in the Garden and now you are telling us that the mad monk lives and is still up to no good. How do we kill Mr. Staretz?” Jamison asked referring to Rasputin as staretz which means holy man.

“Jamison it is important for you to understand that you are dealing with forces beyond this world. We are limited in our abilities to help you. We do not know the future we can merely point the way and you make your own future.” Incubus answered.

“We have gone through a boat load of doors, no pun intended.” Jamison teased.

“I am ready, bring it!” Paul said like a street punk.

“Paul!” Ruth said correcting him.

“What! I mean it. I am ready. I am tired of this guy trying to kill us and I am tired of his crazy plans to take over the universe.” Paul shot back.

“We have no options nou gen pou louvri pòt la.” Lora said.

“Please allow me to introduce Chiang Shih. He can tell you about this door.” Incubus said introducing one of the cloaked vampires that was on the boat when they arrived.

Chiang Shih removed his hood and everyone took a step backward. Chiang Shih was a terrifying creature with less human characteristics. His hair was bright pink and his eyes glowed red. He had long claws and serrated teeth.

“Do not fear, I once had fear of crossing water but since my Christian conversion the anxiety has departed. I hope to provide you some confidence in the door before you. I am from China. Not many people know that vampires do come from Asia also. There were many from the regions of Bayan-Kara-Ula (around 97°E 34°N), in Qinghai (Tsinghai) and Sichuan Provinces, on the border of China and Tibet. After our conversion some became monks. I am the oldest of all of these Chinese vampires. In the

mountains of my home land my brother Kyonshi came across some unusual disc in a cave. He found the disc among tombs with small skeletons still in them. These skeletons were not human for they had enormous heads and fragile, tiny bodies. He found the disc which are called Dropa Stones. They were nine inches in diameter with a hole cut in the center.”

“Like a phonograph record.” Jamison interrupted.

“Yes, much like a phonograph disc.” Chiang Shih confirmed then continued on with his story. “My brother was only able to carry 20 disc; he gathered them and returned to our clan. There we had our experts examine the disc. From the disc we learned many things about time travel, travelers from other worlds and even about this world. We were able to decipher the inscription and to build from the microscopic designs in the grooves of the disc a portal. The door before you is an advanced and improved portal taken from their directions.” Chiang Shih shared.

“What happened to the Dropa people?” Paul asked.

“Those that were not killed when their spacecraft crash landed built a portal and left earth through it, leaving their dead buried in the cave. You have no need to be concerned with your own welfare; this portal has been used many times all with success.” Chiang Shih assured them.

“What do we need to do and do you know where we are going once we step through this thing?” Jamison asked.

“All we can be sure of is that you will travel where the Lord expects you to be at the time that you arrive.” Incubus answered.

“Well that is about as reassuring as saying there is a 50% chance that if you jump off the bridge you’ll either drown or hit rock.” Jamison said sarcastically.

“Ti bebe, we will be fine.” Lora reassured Jamison by taking his arm.

“Let’s do this.” Paul repeated.

“Very well. And for you my dear I say, Si se Bondye ki voye. Li peya fre ou.” Jamison said to Lora.

She smiled broadly showing her perfect white teeth behind her plump lips.

“What did he just say? Ruth asked.

“If it is God who sends you, he'll pay your expenses.” Lora answered.

Jamison stepped forward. “O.k. Incubus, send us.”

“Stand in front of the door and stare at the symbol” Incubus instructed.

The four travelers gathered as they were told. Incubus stood on the right of the door and placed his hand on the cross. Chiang Shih stood on the left and he did likewise. They nodded together and inverted the crosses. The door opened to a place full of light. It was so bright everyone shielded their eyes with their hands.

“Good Lord they are sending us into the sun.” Jamison joked nervously.

The travelers held hands and locked fingers and one behind the other they entered through the door.

Chapter 38

When the mouse laughs at the cat, there is a hole nearby.

Nigerian Proverb



The four travelers saw a great light that blinded them temporarily, then the light burned out and they stood in the chilly air at the edge of a forested mountain full of pine birch and aspen trees.

“Does anyone have an idea where we are?” Paul asked trying to process this new place.

“It doesn’t feel like America.” Jamison was a bit contentious.

“We have company.” Lora said pointing at a man coming up the mountain riding tantivy on a horse. The man wore a brimless hat of fur and a loose fitting tunic type shirt and wide trousers.

“Greetings you are in Krasnoyarsk Russia. I am a Cossack which means free man. My name is Fedor Godunov. I have a house nearby; we must go there right away.” The man spoke English with a strong Ukraine accent.

“Do you know us?” Paul asked.

“I know that four people just arrived through the portal and when people come through the portal it is my job to introduce myself and take them to safety.” Fedor answered.

“And why would we need to be taken to a safe house?” Jamison asked.

“From what we have heard, Rasputin has risen from the dead. We assume from our reports that you have had something to do with returning him to the underworld.” Fedor tossed his leg over the horse and stepped down.

“Where are you getting your reports from?” Lora asked.

“We have a team of travelers that have encountered a man named Hanus who has advised us that Rasputin is coming and he is bringing hell with him.” Fedor had a look of great concern.

“Is that right? Well I suppose we ought to go with you then. How far is it?” Jamison asked taking Lora by the hand.

“It isn’t far just down the hill a short distance. You will be safe there and able to use our resources to make your plans.” Fedor said welcoming the travelers to his home.

Working their way down the mountain Fedor had taken them on a worn path which made the walk tolerable. His house was a cabin style structure that looked thrown together. Jamison noticed that it was leaning heavily to one side.

“You guys don’t have building inspectors up here do you?” Jamison said making fun of the house.

They entered the home through a battered door and to their surprise the interior was quite different than to exterior. His home was an atelier with scattered unfinished portraits resting on easels. The main room was compelling a mixture of modern antique furniture. The walls were adorned with man mirrors. A couple of things stood out for the travelers; several mantelpiece clocks, candelabra, a variety of decorations including dozens of colorful hanging show globes. Jamison particularly was drawn to the Sack Back Windsor Chair with Comb. This rare triple back form with hand carved

knuckles and comb, crisply executed blunt arrow legs and an oval seat was calling for Jamison to have a seat.

“Do the globes and their different colors represent something?” Paul asked staring up at the ceiling where they hung.

Fedor looked up as well and said, “Yes these have many meanings. For me they represent all who are involved with the sciences, chemist, apothecaries and physicians that bring forth solutions and remedies to the world. I designed these and as you can see some are plain glass while I had made others with etched glass. I come from a science background. Not to change the subject but from my understanding you folks have endured a difficult journey.” Fedor was asking a question while pouring everyone something to drink.

“Yes it has been brutal.” Jamison responded.

“You can stay here as long as you would like but in the morning there is something that you must see.” Fedor said with great consideration.

Fedor was a good host who seemed phlegmatic with a laid back attitude but was excited about the many interesting gadgets in his home. He took the four of them on a tour showing and explaining to them the many items that he had created and built. One item was a alembic which he used for distilling purposes. He had built a athanor that he used as a furnace on cold winter days. His sand bath was ingenious made for heated sand when testing chemical reactions. Fedor was a man of many talents.

That night the travelers were able to bathe, eat a good warm meal and everyone had a bed to relax and sleep in.

Morning came too sun with a bright sun peaking in through every opening waking them almost simultaneously. After breakfast everyone geared up and followed Fedor out into the cold morning air. They made their way down the mountain to the vicinity of the village of Kurgany. There Fedor led them across an open field that had recently been mowed. Middle ways of the field the travelers were shocked to see ten holes in the earth large enough for a man Jamison’s size to walk upright into the mouth of the tunnel.

“Who made these?” Paul asked looking into the hole.

“They were not here two days ago and then suddenly they appeared. When we first found them they emitted foul odors, loud noises and tremors, shaking the ground violently. A rush of water could be heard from its depths but then it stopped. Some of our people heard a cacophony of horrid cries and desperate indistinguishable voices from the tunnels.” Fedor informed everyone.

“What do you suppose they might be?” Jamison moved into the mouth of the tunnel but dare not venture in too far. He examined this deep break in the ground.

“Our people believe that something is coming up out of the earth using these tunnels as highways.” Fedor answered.

“No ebery chain you hear a fe rollin’ calf.” Lora said as she closed her eyes and held out her hands toward the tunnels.

“What is she doing?” Fedor asked entertained by Lora’s behavior.

“She is looking for a sign of life down there.” Jamison answered. Lora held her pose for sixty seconds then she spoke.

“A solitary people that have never been above the ground
Descendants of Cain who bore his mark.”

A magnetic storm stirred within the cave making everyone take a few steps back. This rare inexplicable natural phenomenon was a surprise and everyone became guarded.

“This is unsettling.” Jamison did not like what he was seeing.

“What happened to all of the dirt when these holes were dug?” Paul asked.

Fedor glanced away from the hole just long enough to answer. “There were no tracks leading to the holes. The ground above was undisturbed. There were no piles of dirt or evidence to suggest that dirt had been hauled away. These holes were dug from beneath the surface.”

“So do we explore? Have you sent anyone down into them?” Jamison asked as the noise began to die down and the electric show stopped.

“We dare not take such risk.” Fedor answered.

“Forgive me, but you continue referring to (us / we) but you are the only one we have met. Where are the others?” Ruth asked inquisitively.

“My people are all around us. You see my people did not escape the hand of cruelty. We were encamped in the city of Lientz, which was in the occupational zone of the English in 1945. Our officers were the first to be killed by the KGB death squads. We were refusing to be repatriated to the USSR. They brought tanks and lorries to surround us and tighten their grip upon us. The soldiers tried to drag our people into their trucks. Our people jumped out of the trucks refusing to go. Our camp was praying when shots rang out. Tanks crushed our people; there was the sound of automatic machinegun fire. Others were run through by the bayonets. There were women and children running and screaming and blood everywhere. Mercilessly the genocide had begun. The British were among the killers using the butt end of their rifles against the heads of babies. We ran for the bridge. People were being cut down as they jumped into the river. We had been deceived and betrayed. It was all a political stunt that proved that government is about power and not people. My people are here in spirit with us today.”

As Fedor said the words “in spirit with us today” the field where they stood was filled with appeared to be ghost on men, women and children.

“Are they real?” Lora asked unable to read the scene.

“They are real to me. They are projections of my imagination; images of the past that are engrained in my subconscious. I do have family and associates that live in the city below but I come here for solitude until these holes appeared.” Fedor shared solemnly.

“How is it possible that we can see your thoughts? Li sanble enposib.” Lora was perplexed.

“I was part of a secret experimental procedure conducted by the Nazis. In these experiments Hitler was determined to create a race of people that could

live hundreds of years with the ability to project thoughts, control the minds of others and in doing so he would mass an army that simply by suggestive thought could take over governments and rule people. I was the only one that lived through the experiments escaping to only be caught up in the massacre in Lienz. Now I am here in modern times a relic growing old slowly while others around me die. But for this moment I was born, to help you stop the evil that is coming.” Fedor explained.

“And how do we know that Dr. Evil is coming back?” Jamison asked referring to Rasputin as Dr. Evil.

“We have read the minds of those that are coming. Pyotr Krasnov a dear friend of mine has worked for years experimenting with the ability to read thoughts, project thoughts etc in order to help me to rid myself of this curse. He was able to collect thoughts that were transmitted from the world which you just came from. There is a dark evil pursuing you. It is enraged because of something that you did to it. Its head has been wounded and it carries within its brain a stone that has opened a path of vibrations manifesting a great energy in your direction. Without the habitual medium of words we can gather the influences as it moves through space and time. The transmission is being collected by a perceptible device that we are still improving upon yet it is working. The distance we can read is proportioned to the strength of the thought or feeling.” Fedor was turning into much more than the mountain man they had first encountered.

“This device can read thoughts from other times and dimensions?” Jamison asked with great interest.

“Yes, an example would be a stove in a room. Long after the fire has been distinguished the heat remains. Another example would be long after a star burns out its light travels the universe. The stronger the thought the better we can isolate it and define it.”

“Just amazing / Absoliman étonnant. Lora spoke aloud.

“At this point we are at a stand still because the thoughts we collected from the entity pursuing you was so strong and powerful that our perceptible device could not handle the transmission. Everything was garbled and confusing.” Fedor clearly reasoned.

Lora looked at Jamison and said “Chicken deh merry, Hawk deh near.”

Jamison answered her proverb. “Yes I agree too much excitement and danger must be near.”

“I say we get some rope, some flashlights with new batteries and take a trip into the earth.” Jamison suggested.

No one disagreed. Fedor finally produced some of his friends and family who came up from the city to the field. They brought repelling gear, water, flashlights and other items that would assist the troop as they explored these tunnels.

Jamison was the first to take the plunge. Lora followed him then the children. Fedor and his companions fed the line to them and guarded the entrance. Fedor had the aid of five men and four women who were all Cossacks-middle age in appearance.

Below the earth some two hundred feet Jamison was becoming worried that this was a bottomless pit.

“Talk about the abyss baby, we are in it.” He addressed Lora.

“Feel like Gumbel drum widout a goat-skin.” Lora responded and the two shared a laugh.

“Yeah I agree, this is not the most comfortable position I have ever been in.” Jamison agreed.

At three hundred and seventy five feet down the tunnel continued straight down yet there was a vertical tunnel large enough for them to stand up in branching off from it.

“Shall we repel further or walk a while?” Jamison asked.

“If you yeary debil a come, clear de way.” Lora gave her unclear opion.

“So are you saying that down is bad or the tunnel is bad?” Paul asked as he swung his feet into the tunnel and balanced himself on the edge. Ruth followed.

“Me no call you no come!” Lora spouted off playfully.

“O.k. you are confusing me now. Do we go deeper or take this tunnel?”
Jamison looked to Lora for her wisdom.

“If you two can’t decide while hundreds of feet below the surface then why don’t I decide? Let’s take the tunnel. If the tunnel doesn’t go anywhere we can always back track and descend further down.” Paul gave his opinion.

“Well put. The tunnel it is!” Jamison approved.

Chapter 39

"Now this is the point. You fancy me a mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded..."

Edgar Allan Poe



Sickening madness like a whirlwind was rampaging insanely through the portals of time. It pressed its nose to the ground following a trail, hunting, ready to devour and consume its prey. Insanely rancid spewing venom through its pores burning the atmosphere with hot sulfur with every step that it took, its desire was inbred carnage.

Rasputin no longer needed the air to breathe, for there was no human blood in his veins. He had become every disease, every illness, every plague combined into one human form. His appearance was that of man but his heart was demonized enflamed by fires that raged from the center of his being. He had transformed into a creature of instincts without feeling, remorse or conscious. Rasputin had no place left in the universe where he would not be enemy of all. His final transformation was complete. To transform again would mean nonexistence in any form.

Gathering the only thing that he had two Caucasian Ovcharka dogs Youssou and Pov, Rasputin was giving chase, raking through the recess of the earth foraging like a wild hungry animal for those that denied him his ultimate prize which was to attain the Tree of Life and the rewards that came along with it.

Rasputin felt like a man that had been prematurely buried. In his mind pleasure and pain mixed like bleach and ammonia producing psychoactive (mind-altering) effects. Intoxicated throughout his very being and rancid and degraded he had no desire to detoxify. His obsession was revenge and nothing seemed more important to him in his present state of defeat.

Sickened by recent events and the loss of everything that he desired and held precious his rage was directed at everything good and anything that crossed his path. Delusively wild eyed with all lines erased between genius and insanity he danced to music that no one heard and verbally praised an imaginary god in his transient passion.

Now he was known as the bloodless thing with a pulse less heart. He was a hungry soul

that only wanted to be as warm as the simplest mammal and to have his ears sonorously

tickled by his own breathing.

Chapter 40

"Courage and perseverance have a magical talisman, before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish into air."

John Quincy Adams

After exploring the horizontal tunnel for no more than twenty minutes Jamison concluded that it was endless much like the vertical shaft they had initially repelled down into. Traversing infinity was getting them nowhere.



Paul was running his hand over the polished sides of the tunnel.

“I cannot imagine a machine creating this hole. The luster is incredible. There are no notches or dents or even a single crack that I have found.” Paul remarked.

Lora said “Cow sey “Tan upno mean rest”

“Yes I agree not everything that glitters is gold so we must stay alert.” Jamison reminded everyone.

Momentarily each heard a faint tapping like someone slamming two rocks together from the direction they were heading.

“What do you make of that?” Paul asked referring to the noise that unsettled him.

“We came down here to find something and now we have. It is either a tapping for help like a code or it is a tapping to alert someone or something that we are down here.” Jamison had hoped for his first invented scenario.

Jamison began moving again in the direction where the sound had been heard. Moving cautiously, shining his light as far as it would reach, he saw a bend in the tunnel. Now they were faced with a blind spot.

“Whatever is tapping is around that corner guys.” Paul announced.

“If you yearry debil a come, clear de way.” Lora added.

“It’s probably the devil alright. He’s the only one that hasn’t introduced himself on this trip.” Ruth moaned.

“Follow, but follow only if ye be men of valor! For the entrance to this cave is guarded by a creature so fowl, so cruel that no man yet has fought with it and lived. Bones of four fifty men lie strewn about its lair! So, brave knights, if you do doubt your courage, or your strength, come nay further, for death awaits you all . . . with nasty big pointy teeth!” Jamison chuckled as he quoted a line from Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

The children didn’t understand the connection but Lora smiled regardless.

“Don’t worry; he was quoting “Tim: the Enchanter”, it’s from a movie.” Lora reassured them.

As they approached the bend in the tunnel Jamison pressed his body against the slick wall, now having to hunch over a bit for the headroom had been lost the further that they had gone. He took a quick peek without his light to illuminate the passage.

“Too dark.”

He flipped his flashlight around the corner and it threw a beam of light one hundred feet down the tunnel. The scene was shocking and weird. The tunnel was crowded with large men-like creatures. They were boney

anorexics with white faces, their bones were pushing through their skin and there were no eyes or sockets. Though they had no visible eyes they seemed to have lapis lazuli eyebrows. Many had a four pointed star painted on their foreheads. Their hair was shoulder length and flaming red, some had their hair pulled up in top knots. They were already over six feet tall and this top knot gave a more intimidating appearance. They had grotesquely lengthened their earlobes and had added other body modification, such as sticks through their noses and obvious scarring to their transparent scaly skin. They were squished in the tunnel suffering uncomfortably aching awkwardly vexed by the lack of height and the fact that they were squatting bent over to accommodate their bodies in the confined curve and arch of the passage.

Jamison quickly withdrew the light in hopes that these creatures were as blind as they looked but he heard a stirring among their new acquaintances and that was his cue to lead a retreat.

The four gave up their position and scampered back the way they came. Their disquieted movements triggered a pursuit and now the four were running through the tunnel with the Snake People right behind them.

“From the looks of them they have missed a few meals so they must be hungry.” Jamison declared.

“Throw them a candy bar or something.” Paul recommended.

Ruth reached in her bag and pulled out a chocolate bar which she quickly broke in half and dropped on the ground not wanting to look back.

The upright snake people ignored the candy bar and continued the chase.

“That doesn’t seem to have worked; I think they want meat.” Jamison said forgetting where the vertical tunnel was at. He shined his light sporadically ahead not wanting to fall into the tunnel. Seeing some of their supplies on the floor he knew the tunnel leading down was there.

“Gear up guys we have to repel.” Jamison announced.

“Up? Should we get out here?” Paul asked slipping into his harness.

“No time – Go!” Jamison ordered.

The snake people were practically upon them.

Jamison waited for the other three to start down into the tunnel. He slung his rifle from around his back and dropped to one knee. His light had the tunnel bright and he waited to see the enemy. When they appeared they were not charging forward but walking slowly. Jamison took aim though he figured in the tunnel full of snake people it would be hard to miss even with a careless shot. At first he thought his eyes were deceiving him but the snake people seemed to be shrinking. Then he realized they were not shrinking but as they moved toward him they were being absorbed into the floor of the tunnel as if they were walking out into deep water. He stood his ground until the last one had completely vanished in the floor of the tunnel.

Lora and the children had already repelled down some fifty feet by the time Jamison started his descent. Jamison was trying to process what had just happened. The glimpses of these denizens of the netherworld seemed to follow him wherever he went.

“What happened up there?” Paul asked while hanging suspended and adjusting his Kong Futura Acsender device.

“They simply sank into the floor and were gone. I was about to fire on them and they dissolved. Strange to say the least.” Jamison added.

Lora was below them and she called up abseil clear. She had found another horizontal tunnel below. The three joined her. This tunnel was not as tall and would require a more uncomfortable humped over position. They agreed that they should take this path since the descent down seemed endless. Jamison led the way scooting along with his left hand on the ground for balance. Lora followed behind him then Paul and Ruth.

“My momma told me, Me no call you no come, and maybe she is right.” Lora said.

“Yeah your momma is a wise woman.” Jamison agreed.

“This cave seems dormant, there isn’t even precipitation.” Lora remarked squatting low.

“Hey there is something glowing up ahead.” Jamison announced.

Twenty more feet with difficulty they managed to make it to the illumination. A halo some six feet in circumference glowed like a neon sign.

“What do you make of it?” Paul asked safely keeping his distance.

The halo seemed to pulsate before their eyes. A pale shaft of light extended above the halo like a moon pillar.

“I am not sure this is a good thing.” Ruth said with a quiver in her voice.

“This thing reminds me of a moon on the wall. You know that the word lunatic comes from the Latin luna, and a full moon turns people from Dr Jeckyll to Mr. Hyde.” Paul reported.

In a split second, a twinkling of an eye without warning the halo transformed into a funnel of darkly colored spiders. Thousands of spiders crawling one upon the other meshed together in infraorder formed the funnel. A huge fishnet web expelled from the halo splattering Jamison and Lora and wrapped itself around them. Paul and Ruth watched in horror and sudden fear, frozen unable to do a thing to help. With lightening speed both Jamison and Lora were pulled into the halo and disappeared along with the halo. Paul came to himself and leaped forward, too late. The wall was sealed and his slapping it with an open hand only stung his palm. Hysterically Ruth was screaming “What happened! Where are they! Oh my God! No! Paul where are they?”

Paul put his hand over her mouth. “Stop screaming” he breathed the words loudly but without using his throat. “Calm down! There is nothing we can do.”

Ruth tried to pull away but Paul shook her hard. “Stop acting this way. They are gone and we are alone. We got to use our head. Pull yourself together.” Paul was now pleading with her.

Ruth crumbled to the ground her face in her hands and wept silently. Paul slumped beside her and put his arm around her for comfort.

Chapter 41

I have been in such a pickle since I saw you last
The Tempest Shakespeare



Jamison and Lora had been abducted in the most violating manner. They were alive and well but sliding through limbo. On the edge of the unknown bound together praying that they were not to be about dropped into the infernum. Being held up and delayed their thoughts were not only

for their own well being but now the children were alone again. Jamison hoped that Paul would have the wherewithal to ascend back to the top and join Fedor. Fedor seemed like a man that would know what to do. But Jamison's current and most immediate thought was how to free Lora and him self from this webbed prison.

His thoughts were interrupted when the web began to loosen. Unable to see anything or to speak he could feel Lora beside him but they were not touching. The web seemed to crumble into dust. Jamison and Lora waited for the drop into nothingness or to be rocketed into space but it never happened. They found themselves standing in a completely dark place.

“Are you o.k.?” Jamison asked feeling for her with his hands.

“Yes, Noh cup noh brok, noh coffee noh trow weh.” She answered to his relief.

“Can you see anything?” Jamison asked.

“No not a thing.” Lora took Jamison's hand in hers.

“That is your hand that I have isn't it?” Lora asked making sure.

“I hope so or I have another persons hand as well.” Jamison answered trying to make light of the current black out.

“Hey I found something, feels like a light switch.” Jamison said enthusiastically.

Jamison flicked the switch and both of them practically burst into tears.

“Oh my sweet Lord, we have returned home.” Lora was shocked and elated.

“How?” Jamison was practically speechless unable to finish his sentence.

They were in an upper room that they seldom used. It was full of knickknacks and holiday ornaments decorations and trimming.

“This isn’t good. Paul has the cylinder. We can’t even make an attempt to get back to them.” Jamison reminded Lora.

“When water trow weh i' cyaa pick up. We are where we are.” Lora said sadly.

They exited the room and went down stairs to make sure that they were actually in their home in the time frame that they ought to be. The calendars were correct; the clocks on the walls and the digital read outs on their microwave clock read the proper time and place.

“Babe it seems we are home, back to normal but we are missing two children.” Jamison seemed depressed. His heart was decimated and troubled. Though their journey had seemed to have ended, the children were still imprisoned somewhere out there, maybe light years away. He was completely lucid yet with this realization he realized he was standing there mouth gaped open in thought.

Lora immediately rechecked the calendar. “They are coming back today.”

Jamison answered her statement with a question holding back his growing anxiety. “Who is coming back today?”

“Ben and Kate will be back today to pick up the children,” Her eyes punctuated with anxiety. They had no way of keeping actual time while

traveling through the wormholes and now the day that the children's parents were arriving was upon them and they would be unable to produce the children.

"This is just great." Jamison said derogatorily containing a fusillade of profanity he wanted to unleash out in the open.

"They will think we lost them." Lora assumed.

"We did lose them." Jamison confirmed.

"Wat doan kill, will fatten" Lora said.

"Kill is not a good word to use here. They are going to think the worse." Jamison seemed more worried about the children being absent than the supernatural battles that he had fought.

Lora stood resolute "Fool-fool pickney mek fowl get away from him two time" she reminded him.

"O.k. you're right. So far everything has worked out. We have unseen forces helping us. But why bring us back here?" Jamison dejectedly wondered aloud.

A sudden gust of wind blew through the home chilling Jamison and Lora.

"Was that the air-conditioning? Jamison was looking for confirmation.

"No, I did not hear it kick on." Lora answered. They went back to back and drew their weapons.

"Could someone have opened a door or a window?" Lora asked.

"Not without the alarm going off. Just stay alert." Jamison reminded her.

"Is the dutty duppy man dweet. What if it is a duppy." Lora asked.

"Lora I told you, none of that voodoo hocus pocus stuff." Jamison said.

He had tried to alleviate Lora's superstitious upbringing from her. But with all they had experienced together it was hard for him sometimes not to give credence to some of it.

“A duppy is a sign of death hon.” Lora said.

“O.k. I’ll humor you. If there is a duppy of death here what should we do?” Jamison was scanning the room his back still against Lora’s.

“We lead it outside and mark an X on the ground they can only count to nine so it will spend all night counting to nine and we can come back in. If we see it, it could be in human form, plant even animal.” Lora apprised him of the superstition.

“Very well let’s go outside mark an X and come back in if that will make you happy.” Jamison complied.

The two walked out the front door and then strode across the manicured lawn to the edge where many palm trees separated the grounds from the beach. Lora carved a large X in the sandy soil with her hunting knife and they stepped back.

A cat could be heard purring from their front door step. It ran their way and stopped at the X scratched in the ground. The cat looked at Jamison and Lora then down at the X. It never looked back up. It oddly stared at the X while Jamison and Lora worked their way back into the house.

“I’ll admit that was very strange.” Jamison agreed.

“If it had changed into a human and was wearing black we’d be safe. If it was wearing white you have to strike it with your left hand not your right, do not forget.” Lora advised him.

“Yes dear, I’ll remember that.

“We must prepare for Ben and Kate what are we going to tell them?” Lora asked.

“We’ll say they are out fishing, with friends, we’ll make up something.” Jamison was thinking hard.

“My momma used to say, (No cup no broke, no coffee no dash wey). Lora seemed optimistic.

“Let’s pray that your momma was right on this one.”

The two changed out of their military / rock climbing attire and began working to get their story straight for when Ben and Kate arrived.

Chapter 42

"The riddles of God are more satisfying than the solutions of man."

G.K. Chesterton



The children were alone, disheartened but not beaten. Paul had helped Ruth gather her emotions and they were up exploring again. They opted to not return to the main tunnel yet because deep down in their hearts they understood that a greater purpose lay before them.

Ten minutes of crouching Paul was shining his light on a man-made panel on the wall. It looked like a checker board but contained numbers. The numbers were bold on each square. There were three rows two contained four numbers, the bottom row contained only three numbers.. A couple of numbers were missing. The first row contained the numbers (1, 2,

3, 5).

“What is this?” Ruth asked.

“It appears that we have a puzzle. And I think I know this. You see the second row is out of sequence as well as the third row.” Paul enumerated

“How do you know this?” Ruth asked.

“This is called the Fibonacci sequence. These are numbers that occur in nature. I can’t go into the full theory of it all, but believe me I was taught this. It has to do with the laws of nature. Unless a flower is mutated these

numbers apply. Plants respond to physical restraints not mathematical rule.” Paul examined the panel as he explained the best he could to Ruth.

“For example you probably have not noticed but a lily has three petals, a wild rose five petals, delphiniums eight petals, I can’t remember all of the flowers now but I know a daisy has 55 petals. Now look at these numbers, I just need to put them in sequence.” Paul reached up and by a touch he was able to activate the panel and the numbers changed with a simple touch of the finger.

He kept the top row the same (1, 2, 3, 5) the second row numbers were scrambled and he changed them to (13, 21, 21, 34) and the third row which only had three squares he changed to (55, 89 and 144) The precise moment the number 144 appeared a doorway slid open right before their eyes leading to a staircase that went down.

“How did you know to do this?” Ruth asked impressed with her little brother.

“Each number is obtained from the sum of the two preceding numbers.” Paul explained. Ruth still had a hard time comprehending but accepted his rational.

“Do we explore or go back and have Fedor pull us up?” Paul asked.

Ruth did not hesitate, her fears were calming. “We have to go down there. It is our destiny.”

“If we go through this doorway I am pretty sure, based on everything that we have already experienced we are not coming out this way.” Paul said giving her the choice to opt out.

“My mind is made up let’s see what we can find down there.” She answered with a more confident smile than he had seen in a long while.

As they stepped through, Paul’s calculations were correct. The door slide shut but the staircase itself illuminated. It was a glass staircase with built in lighting containing no visible bulbs.

The children made their way down the stairs. Two flights down; they entered an enormous chamber through an opening in the ground. The chamber was radiantly glowing and twinkling with brilliant shades of emerald. Light danced from the jagged edges of raw emeralds and they could hear the unmistakable sound of water trickling. Immediately they began searching for the source. It seemed to be coming from everywhere at once. "I hear it." Ruth said, both identifying the audible sound of the water.

The two began searching for the source of water. It seemed to be coming from everywhere at once.

Ruth stopped, she froze. She had gone into a trance. Paul was immediately alarmed and frightened. He knew there was nothing he could do except watch her, make sure she did not fall.

Ruth was in a state of profound abstraction. She was not aware of feelings, emotions, images or her surroundings. Her detachment from reality left Paul helpless to do anything. He waited to see if she had a word for them.

And she quickly did.

"Abysmal and deep are those that keep
The way back is through sleep
In the house of heat take a seat
The throne of the heart defeats
Awake arise, pull out your eyes
And see what time of day
And when you have done pull out your tongue
And see what you can say"

As suddenly as she fell into the trance she came out virtually unaffected by the journey.

"What else did you see?" Paul asked.

"I saw chairs and it was really hot and we simply spoke and we disappeared from the chairs." She answered.

"That is crazy stuff. I guess we'll figure it out." Paul said.

The two scoured the chamber unable to find where the sound of water was coming from.

They sat down to think about their decision to come down the stairs instead of heading back when Paul was overwhelmed with paranoia. "We are being watched." Paul placed his hand on his sidearm.

Don't do anything sudden. We need to find out who is watching us and from where." Paul advised.

"Yes I feel it to." Lora agreed.

Paul caught a glimpsed of a set of eyes peering at them from behind the far wall. He casually stood and walked nonchalantly in the direction of the eyes. He figured there must be some sort of passage in that area. He slipped behind a large stone near the two holes in the wall where the eyes were still fixed on Ruth.

He got down on his hands and knees out of sight of the searching eyes. He used his hand to feel along the bottom of the wall. He noticed a crease, something that could be a threshold. He traced it with his finger up the side of the door and found a tiny indenture. Ruth could see him in plain view. He nodded to her to be ready. He pushed into the indenture firmly and the door popped open as if it were on a spring. It sprung outward forcing Jamison to take a step back. In the doorway stood one of the snake people unlike the others they had encountered this one had human eyes.

Paul drew his side arm and backed away quickly.

"Who are you? What do you want with us?" Paul demanded to know. The snake creature stood staring at him, then glanced over to Ruth who had her handgun pointed in it's direction also.

"Look at me not her and answer me or I will shoot you." Paul ordered.

The snake creature was expressionless though its eyes were full of life.

When it spoke the sounds were many voices blended and harmonized together.

“I am Lord Nagdev and this is my Kingdom. We are threatened by the same darkness that pursues you now. You two can rescue us, as well as your world, from the darkness that has begun its descent into our highways.”

“How can we rescue you?” Paul asked not lowering his weapon.

“You possess the sword that killed the giant and the same sword has wounded the dragon. Your mistake was that you did not finish him. Our people will help you and you have our word that we will send you back to your world once we have defeated the danger.” Lord Nagdev promised.

“I am so tired of bouncing from place to place fighting this guy, thing, whatever it is. One minute we fight him, then we run, then we fight. Why should we believe that this is the final battle?” Paul asked being confrontational.

“We are aware of your plight and everything that you have endured has led you here. You are the bait, the trap so we can take Rasputin back to the dark regions where he belongs. We will confine him there until the day that he is judged. This room where you stand is sacred it is the heart of Megiddo. Above us is the Plain of Esdraelon. In order for you to defeat the monster you must take your place upon the throne that he has come to occupy.” Lord Nagdev informed.

More of the snake people entered the chamber. They pushed two thrones in through another secret passage. Paul and Ruth were now completely surrounded on every side by the creatures, half man and half snake.

Paul made his way to his sister’s side and they lowered their weapons but did not holster them yet.

“What must we do?” Paul asked.

“The dragon Rasputin seeks you. He is mad with revenge. His power has been amplified. Your sword is the only means that any of us have to stop this threat upon the world. He knows that you are here and we have very little time. We will leave you briefly. When he enters he will not be reasoned with. You must attack and strike him immediately. That is when we shall emerge and bring our forces against him while he is weak from the blow of

your sword.” Lord Nagdev had a plan and all Paul and Ruth could do was to agree.

But Paul needed to know. “If we refused and said that you were on your own what would happen?”

“We would send you home and we would attempt to wage war but we would be destroyed alone and you would be hunted and he would find you. It is your choice, stand with us and fight or run.” Lord Nagdev began walking back to his hidden doorway and the other snake people followed him.

“We will fight.” Paul consented.

Paul understood completely that in many ways he was a boy. He realized that he was a child. But there was a part of him that stood like a man and this is the part he called on for courage. He was nervous yet prepared to do battle. He would not admit fear but at times found himself shaking. Anyone this young in this position would be somewhat scared. In reality anyone at any age would have apprehension. Yet this was something that had to be done. Paul did not want to be hunted by monsters the rest of his life.

A rumbling sound was heard and at the other end of the chamber a huge wall moved to the side revealing another room. Paul and Ruth walked across the chamber and entered the room. Dotted along the ceiling were trees growing upside down dangling their baskets of colorful flowers toward the floor. In the center of the room was a hole full of crystal blue water. The pool was bubbling in the middle like fish beneath the surface. Running down the walls were several tiny streams pouring into the pool. This appeared to be a sacred cenote and Paul and Ruth were the Emperor and Empress.

“How did that happen without us seeing it?” Ruth asked referring to the wall they had walked through. It had closed up and the thrones the serpent people had brought out were now in this room with them.

“Stinking magic stuff.” Is all Paul could reply.

A loud pounding sound was heard on the other side of the wall coming from the chamber they had originally entered. It was violent and crushing. The wall was not going to hold. Chips and pieces of rock were crumbling from the consistent battering. Paul and Ruth moved to the other side of the pool.

“I have a plan! You stand here and do not move until I tell you to.” Paul ordered. Paul bolted backward and sprung up the wall grabbing the ledges and crevices pulling him self upward until he was on the ceiling. Like a jumping Chinese Gibbons ape Paul leaped from the rock wall to one of the trees. He slid down the tree to the ball of flowers and hid himself.

Chapter 43

"Doubt is uncomfortable, certainty is ridiculous."

Voltaire



A knock at the front door signaled to Jamison and Lora that Ben and Kate had arrived. Lora greeted them with a no worries smile.

“Bien vini! Antre!” Lora invited them in.

“Good to see you Lora. Hope the children were no problem?” Kate asked with a huge smile on her face.

“Jamison entered the foyer. “No problem at all. Hardly made a peep.” He put his hand out to shake Ben’s hand.

“Tout bagay mache bien.” Lora said.

“What did she say?” Ben asked.

Jamison was glad that Ben and Kate did not understand Kreyol. Lora had almost made a mistake by stating “everything is fine.”

“Where are the kids?” Ben asked.

Jamison and Lora looked at one another. Jamison answered. “Oh they are around here somewhere. I thought they were going fishing one last time.”

“They were really excited to spend time with you guys.” Ben said.

Lora appeared visibly nervous when she asked “Ou vle bwe?”

Ben and Kate looked puzzled. “Oh I’m, sorry you didn’t understand her. She wants to know if you are thirsty.” Jamison said giving Lora a stern look.

“I could use a soda if you have one.” Ben answered. Kate replied with “I’ll have water.”

“You guys have a seat, make yourself at home and I’ll help Lora get the drinks. She might even whip us up a snack.” Jamison was working hard to kill time and stretch things out as long as he could.

“Don’t go to any trouble. We cannot stay long. We like to get to the airport plenty early.” Ben checked the time on his wrist watch.

Ben and Kate took a seat on the bamboo sofa. “I thought Lora spoke English?” Kate said to Ben.

In the kitchen Lora began preparing a plate of cold meats, cheese and crackers. She had jerk avocado dip already made.

“You have got to speak English. They are going to know that something is wrong.” Jamison scolded her.

“I know M’eskize.” She said remorsefully.

“Take your time putting this stuff together. I will go out and stall them.” Jamison put the drinks on a tray and walked them back into the living room. “Here we go.” Jamison interrupted the ongoing conversation Ben and Kate were having.

“Nice place you have here Jamison. It is very impressive.” Ben complimented.

“Yes it is. The Lord has been good to us. It hasn’t come without hard work though.” Jamison looked around praying that the kids would walk in.

“How is the tourism business? You guys are still running your boat out aren’t you?” Jamison was happy Ben was talking about anything except the children.

“Yes, we hardly have time to enjoy the sun. By the time we prepare the boat, pick up the guest, cater to them out on the ocean, bring the guest back, dock the boat and get back home the day is gone.” Jamison knew he looked nervous glancing around but he could not help himself.

“Are you expecting someone you seem like you are looking for someone?” Kate asked.

“We aren’t holding you guys up from doing anything are we?” Ben asked setting his soda on the coaster on the glass table.

“No, we have no plans at all. I was expecting the gardener. That guy is always late.” Jamison was making up things now to keep them from thinking about the children.

“Our rental car isn’t in the way out there is it?” Ben asked considerate of the gardener.

“No, you are fine. He parks on the side of the house anyways. I don’t like for him to unload the mower on my drive. It gets grass everywhere.” Lora entered the room with her finger food tray.

“Lora you and Jamison have a lovely home.” Kate complimented.

Lora still nervous answered “Pa de kwa.”

“Baby Ben and Kate cannot understand you unless you speak English.” Jamison said with an imitation of understanding.

“Kebe sa pou mwen. “ She handed Jamison the tray.

With a extremely strong Jamaican accent Lora spoke to Ben and Kate. “I am sorry. I have been teaching Jamison our language and I get used to speaking it. Mwen regrèt sa. "Whoops I did it again. Ney de m." Lora started to laugh which contagiously made Ben and Kate start laughing. Jamison pretended to laugh along but was worried how they were going to get out of this mess.

“More to drink? Ou vle manje? Lora asked picking the tray up and pushing it toward Kate.

“Why thank you Lora.” Kate said feeling awkward as she took a cracker.

“Try the dip.” Jamison blurted out.

“Yes dear try the dip.” Ben suggested as he reached and placed a piece of cheese on a cracker.

“It is my own recipe. Slice a avocado into small pieces. Blend and place 1 medyòm zonyon, ¼ teaspoon sugar, cooking oil, 1 teaspoon Vinèg , Jerk Seasoning, garlic poud e thyme. That’s how it is made.” Lora raced through the recipe.

Jamison and Lora stalled the best they could. They changed the subject at every hint of boredom from Ben and Kate. Lora excused herself to the kitchen again to unthaw some codfish balls in the microwave. She also had a Gizzada; a coconut pastry, in the refrigerator. Jamison and Lora did not know how long they could keep up this charade but they had no other choice. The children were gone, lost to another world and there was no guarantee that they were returning or sign that all was well.

Chapter 44

*"Why this cult of wilderness?... because we like the taste of freedom;
because we like the smell of danger."*

— *Edward Abbey*

The pounding was louder, and rocks were being chiseled away. Like a battering ram whoever was on the other side was relentless in their pulverizing. Ruth stood shaking but not budging until Paul gave her the cue to run. With one last deafening wallop the wall went to dust and a plume of powder residue rolled up from the shattered pieces. In the newly formed doorway stood Rasputin; looking refreshed from when they had seen him last.

"Children where are the children?" He spoke boldly with an insane edge that reeked with instability.

His eyes spied Ruth standing alone like a timid flower facing a raging forest fire.

"There's my darling little girl. Remember me precious child? I am the one that warned you of this day." Rasputin walked toward her staring a hole through her.

"Do not be afraid, I forgive you for what you have done." He rubbed his forehead where the stone had lodged itself from Ruth's slingshot back in the Garden.



“Where is that beloved brother of yours? What an inquisitive two you have become.” Rasputin took notice of the two thrones sitting along the wall.

“Ah I see you have set up the Seats of the gods for me. Are you willing to be my queen or my artifact?” He ran his long finger along the arm rest of the throne. Ruth remained speechless.

“Dear girl, you are so refined, rare and elegant. I bet your brother takes you for granted and your parents never compliment your statuesque beauty. You are so young and innocent. Allow me to be your king, the one you worship and adore and I will give you pleasures that you could never dream about.” Rasputin was closer to Ruth but directly below Paul.

Ruth cleared her throat and said “I am an oracle I live my dreams and not one dream has ever included you!”

At that very instance Paul dropped from his camouflaged hiding place feet first. He had the sword firmly gripped in his hands pointed straight down. Ruth glanced up right when Paul dropped and ran from her spot. Rasputin looked up to see what Ruth had seen. In that split second Rasputin understood the significance of this time. The tip of the sword penetrated Rasputin’s open mouth. His view of the Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Japanese Maples, and Devil's Club’s hanging from the trees above went dark. The sword lacerated and cut a straight line down Rasputin’s pharynx through the hollow of his stomach tearing a hole through the stomach lining, penetrating both small and large intestines.

Paul tried to twist the sword as it entered but the fall was higher than he anticipated and he landed hard on his feet. He rolled with the collision but still absorbed much of the force.

Rasputin fought with his hands to remove the sword as the handle protruded from his mouth. He doubled over, stumbling about grabbing and fumbling at the handle. In his madness Rasputin forgot about the sword and he went after Paul who was trying to get to his feet. Rasputin kicked him in the ribs. Paul moaned rolling over. He tried again to push himself up on all four when he felt the wrath of the boot again. This time the power of the kick lifted him off the ground. The wind left Paul’s lungs and he again fought to get his feet beneath him. Multiple shots rang out as Ruth emptied fifteen rounds into

Rasputin's back. This took his attention off Paul who was crawling away. In his mind he was thinking "Just give me one moment, one moment."

From every wall and even from the floor the snake people manifested themselves. Dozen of boney faced fragile figures with shiny scales for skin arose for battle. They converged upon Rasputin swarming him with unmerciful brutality. Paul rolled to his back and rose to see the frenzied scene. The sword was yanked from Rasputin's throat and fell to the ground. Paul crawled recklessly toward the sword. Though he was stepped on by the mob more than once, Paul retrieved his sword. It felt like life in his hands and he was almost completely and instantly re-energized.

The snake people dragged Rasputin by the hair while he kicked and screamed wildly. A hole materialized in the wall large enough for a man to go through. Rasputin was taken into the hole and it closed behind him.

Chapter 45

"Life must be rich and full of loving--it's no good otherwise, no good at all, for anyone."

Jack Kerouac

Jamison was running out of stories to kill time. He now was giving Ben and Kate a complete dawdling tour of his and Lora's home. If this did not take enough time for the children to return he had plans to show them the grounds and if that didn't do it, he was going to buy them airline tickets for a later flight and take them out on the ocean in his boat.



Ben and Kate were in awe of the enormity of the home and the accumulation of assets. They gazed star struck at the vaulted ceilings and decorative cherry crown moldings. Lora was in love with the cherry finishes and much of the home though contemporary was trimmed in cherry. The two spiral staircases were something only Hollywood would have imagined. Kate fell in love with the Rosa aurora marble counter top in the kitchen and the stainless steel appliances. With twelve bedrooms the tour could take a while Jamison thought. Plus he thought of his car collection which should keep Ben occupied for a long while.

The house included stained glass and crystal chandeliers. They had European style furniture flown in after seeing it in a catalogue. Jamison had paid way too much for a holographic TV, and had added a library of acoustic infinidiscs. Lora had a small indoor domed greenhouse constructed where she planted seeds. They had agreed on a dream room where they installed a room sized Hastens mattress and several plush Eiderdown pillows, mirrors, lights, and an omnisound system. On the walls of the dream area, Lora placed surrealistic art, including some metaphysical motifs. She had added some seven thousand hard copy books to their library.

Three Velux electric sky lights allowed sunlight into the entertainment room. On the ocean side of the room a great picture window made of a single sheet of solid transparent diamond opened the room up for a spectacular view of the waves. In the middle of the study, several golden chairs surrounded a conference table made of pure crystal that glowed with a rainbow of colors.

The house swallowed the inhabitants but Jamison and Lora believed they deserved a castle after all they had endured. Though the home boasted decadence and enormity it still managed to exert a comfortable hominess and companionship.

The dining area was a six sided dome room where another massive cherry table sat in the center with twelve high back chairs. Jamison's personal library, another office, another studio, and another exercise area, had been built at the far end of the home so that Jamison would not be disturbed. Inside, the large central dome (Atrium) Lora had designed a lovely flower garden, at the center of which is a pristine large fountain of white marble and brass, surrounded by benches, floral bushes, and play and conversation areas. A number of smaller fountains surrounded the main axis of the room, and wide leaved plants, as well as pools, completed the natural desire that she had gone for. The crystal clear, diamond sheet ceiling allowed the sun to bless the plants each day. The floors were remarkable made of agate, sardonyx, alabaster, jade, malachite, and red and yellow jasper. The walls were elegantly paneled with rich teakwood and different shades of cherry. Practically every room was draped with oversized silk tapestries, and outfitted with gold incense burners.

Hardly ever did they throw parties or show off the house in any way. Today they simply used their castle to stall for much needed time until the children could be returned.

“This house is absolutely unbelievable Jamison. I knew it was really something but I never dreamed you had a castle.” Ben said genuinely complimenting him.

“Sir Edward Coke said For a mans house is his castle, & domus sua cuique est tutissimum refugium; for where shall a man be safe, if it be not in his house?” Jamison quoted.

“Wow, I see you been using that library of yours.” Ben joked.

“He probably saw it in a movie. He remembers more movie quotes than quotes from famous authors.” Lora said as they all laughed together.

Jamison and Lora gave each other a look of concern for time was running short. Any moment Ben and Kate were going to say they needed to be leaving.

“When do you have to be back in the States.” Jamison asked.

“We have three days to get there, why do you ask?” Ben wondered.

Jamison didn't know what they would do if the children did not make it back safely today but he knew he couldn't let Ben and Kate attempt to leave tonight.

“I tell you what; why don't you and the kids stay at least one day more. I can take you out on the boat tomorrow.” Jamison smiled as if this was the grandest thing in the world.

“What do you think Kate, would you like another day in paradise before we head back?” Ben asked his wife.

“As long as you have some Marezine or Dramamine, I am in business. We would love to.” Kate said thrilled with the invitation.

“Excellent then, let's check out the garage, I'll show you some cars that I recently purchased. You are going to love the 2009 Dodge Viper Graphite ACR with the black center band and the red driver's stripe; it is a sweet piece of machinery.” Jamison said as slapped Ben on the back. There was still much to see including the heated “Neptune Pool” patterned after the Baths of Caracalla in Rome. The greatest attribute to the home was not the material things but the two humble people that resided in the home. The tour that Jamison and Lora conducted was not hedonistic, nor did it boast a rich couple's ostentation, rather it was their way of saying, "What is mine is yours."

Chapter 46

Ah, how good it feels! The hand of an old friend.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Lord Nagdev and a half a dozen snake people had remained behind in the room with Paul and Ruth. Ruth dropped her gun magazine and slipped another one in and chambered a bullet. Even though she held the pistol down toward the floor with both hands she was ready to use it.

Paul got to his feet. “So you have him?”

In a pleasant harmonizing voice Lord Nagdev gave the children direction. “Do you wish to return home?”

Both children looking more like their age and less like the warriors they had grown into nodded yes. “Then go to the thrones that we have provided and simply close your eyes while thinking of the land that you love. These are hand-carved Snake Wood thrones. Yes isn’t it ironic that a Snake People would use such a wood. It is also called Letterwood.” Lord Nagdev said as he gazed upon the royal court snake symbols carved into the back of the chair.

Paul returned the sword into its sheath and he and Ruth made their way to the thrones and sat down upon them. The spring tied seats and deeply cushioned backs were upholstered and double piped on both sides in a heraldic jacquard of aristocratic gold, burgundy and navy. The cushions were remarkably comfortable and both children immediately closed their eyes.

Lord Nagdev bid them farewell as they dreamed of home. Their parents were the first thing they thought about then they prayed for their normal lives to return to them. The children held the arms of the chair expecting some sort of amusement park ride but the ride never started. There was no aerodynamics of the fourth dimension sensation, no extreme acceleration, no lateral, negative or positive G-forces; they experienced no Boomerang

effects, not even a corkscrew. They were not jarred or shook there was no wind in their face or sound of guide wheels on the track. They locked themselves into the dream world without a speed bump or even a first drop. When they opened their eyes they were sitting in Jamison and Lora's house in the study facing one another at the Jacobean style double sided desk.

"Are you o.k.?" Paul asked.

"Yes are you?" Ruth teared up.

"I am good. We are back. Let's pray that Jamison and Lora are here and safe." Paul reminded Ruth of the abduction of the spiders.

"Lock and load sis." Paul said standing.

Paul and Ruth began to comb the house in stealth mode looking for anything odd or out of place. They heard voices down the hall so they ducked into the laundry room. Paul put his ear toward the hall and he began to distinguish the voices. It was Lora telling someone that she would be right back. She was headed their way.

Paul listened for footsteps and when Lora got close he whispered "Pssss...Lora." The airy voice even though quiet made Lora jump and she instantly realized it was Paul so she swallowed the scream that had came up in her throat. Lora darted into the laundry room and wrapped her arms around the children. They squeezed her in return with incredible affection and adoration.

"How? What happened?" Lora asked.

"Long story short, we won. He's gone." Paul said.

Lora realized that she needed to address the children's current wardrobe. She could not have them seen with all of the heavy metal on. She took them up a staircase in the back of the house away from their parents and there they made their way to their rooms where they showered and changed clothes.

Lora returned downstairs and to Jamison's relief she announced that the children were showering and would be down momentarily. She specifically made sure that Jamison understood that they were well and the ordeal was

over by saying “The children are taking showers; they are very excited that you are here. They were very well behaved and lived through the experience of being our guests unscathed.”

Ben and Kate laughed at Lora's comment, not realizing all it implied and the terrible

dangers they had all survived.

When Paul and Ruth joined everyone there were hugs all around. Ben and Kate decided to stay an extra day and Jamison kept his promise. Everyone ended up out on the ocean in Jamison and Lora’s boat “Soul Sabbath.”

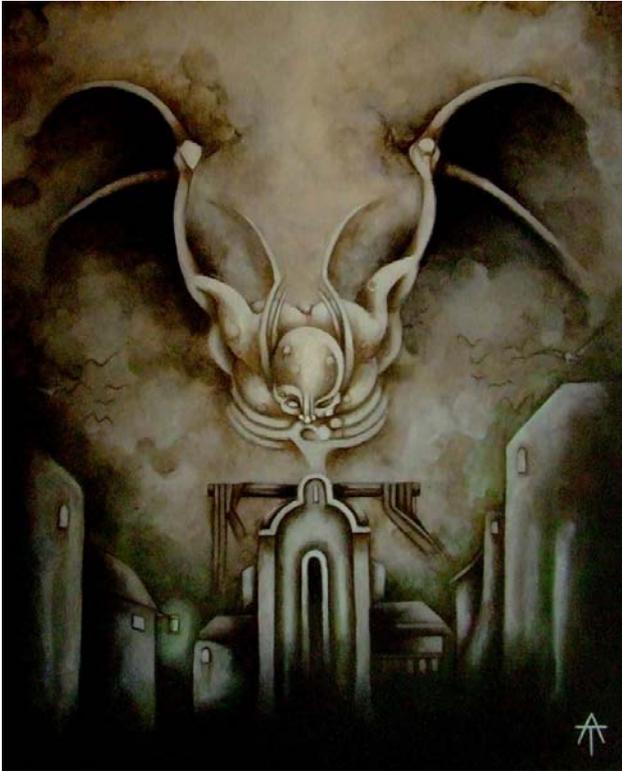
Behind them was an adventure that no one would believe unless they have lived through it. They were finished with the adventure and madness that came along with it. The former unknown worlds and leaping through space and time through wormholes was a memory. Feeling at home in the present, in the here and now, gave them great satisfaction. Although they would bury the depths of evil they had encountered far back in the recesses of their minds, they could never forget their epic journey into the heart of God's perfect Garden.



Chapter 47

“It's no wonder that truth is stranger than fiction. Fiction has to make sense.”

Mark Twain



Six years later a nineteen, almost twenty year old, Paul Avery was driving along Thompson Road; a two lane highway surrounded by woodland on either side in Wachusett Massachusetts. His radio was tuned in on an FM radio station that played Classic Rock. My Chemical Romance's song Black Parade was blaring from his car speakers. The cool fall air was blowing through his open windows while the moonlight painted the landscape a ghostly pallor.

Paul loved the smell of nature. The land included a stand of

predominantly Oak, White Ash, Red Maple and Eastern White Pine. He recognized the pine smell. If he could see into the woods he would see the Mid-State trail, the streams cutting through the forest and plenty of wildlife.

Paul sang out of key bopping his head around and keeping beat on the steering wheel with his hands. Out from nowhere there was someone standing in the middle of the road. Paul slammed on the brakes. He pressed as hard as he could. There was no time for swerving. He had time to do three things. First he shut his eyes tight; secondly his hands grasped the steering wheel in a death grip and third his foot pressed the brake pedal to the floor. The master cylinder practically exploded under the force. The front of the

car dipped down and in a dramatic deceleration, with skidding, the car abruptly stopped without Paul hearing a thud.

Slowly opening his eyes, swallowing his heart back down from his throat into his thoracic cavity and ungluing his hands off the wheel he forgot to put the car in park or to release the brake pedal. He sat staring ahead wondering why his high beams were not shining on the person that he saw. Where were they? Did he hit them and just did not feel it? He had never run over a human being before. He had hit small rodents but never a person. Maybe with a person there is no thump or thud? Realizing that the car was still in drive he pushed the shifter forward into park and took his foot off the brake. He turned his head to the left preparing to step out of the car when his heart virtually stopped again. Standing beside his car was the person he had almost collided with.

Paul let a small yelp escape his mouth and he pushed himself reflectively away from the person.

It was a man with a pale white face and red lips dressed all in black. He had a sharp nose, enormous ears and fangs. His face had gorilla type features but this was a person, maybe not human, but a person nevertheless.

“What the heck were you doing standing out in the middle of the road? Paul said as he rolled the window up. For a split second the window appeared to flash a million images. Paul thought this is the only window to the outside world. Then his mind came back to him.

“I was stopping your car.” The man said with a Spanish accent.

“Well you did that alright. Any reason you wanted me to stop?” Paul asked thinking about dropping the shifter back into drive and speeding away.

“I have something of yours that you will need.” The man answered.

“Who are you?” Paul asked confused by the whole scene.

“I am Camazotz from Whitby England. Incubus sent me.” The man said as Paul rolled his window back down.

“Something for me?” Paul could not imagine what this vampire could have for him, or how they found him.

Camazotz reached into his pocket and produced a smooth stone. He handed it to Paul through the window. Paul knew what it was right away. This was the stone that Ruth his sister had launched into the head of Rasputin in the Garden. The stone had lodged there and Paul thought it was lost forever.

“How did you get this? Paul asked.

“All of your questions will be answered soon.” Camazotz informed him as he suddenly revealed wings from his back. Bending his knees and with one flap of his wings Camazotz shot into the air and quickly vanished from sight.

Paul sat for a moment rubbing the smooth stone with his finger tips and wondering what was going to be required of him. The thought frightened him and excited him all at once.