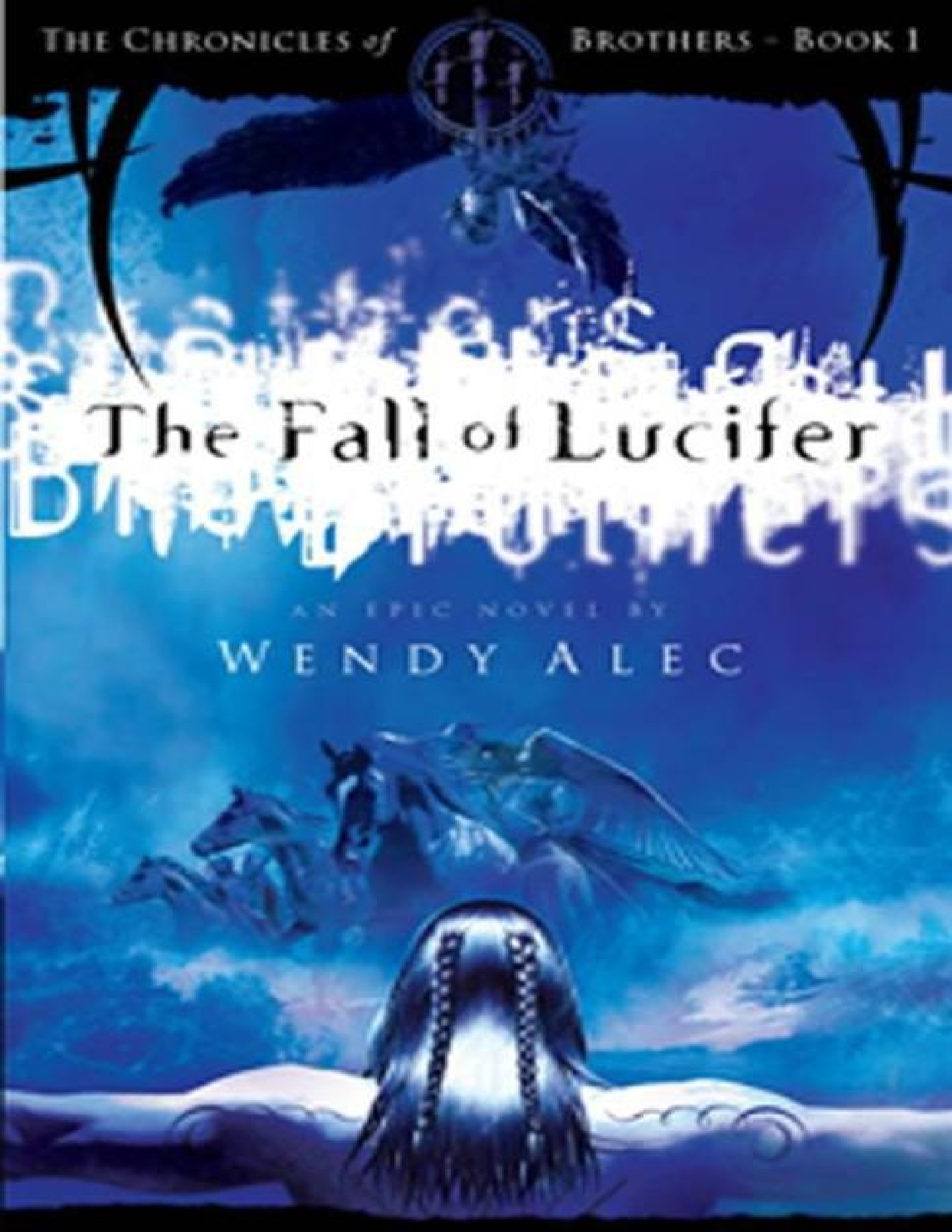


THE CHRONICLES of

BROTHERS - BOOK 1



The Fall of Lucifer

AN EPIC NOVEL BY
WENDY ALEC

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Warboys Publishing

The Fall of Lucifer: The Chronicles of Brothers – Book 1

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Dedicated to 'Doc' Koefman,
my beloved earthly father
in his ninety-second year

Dedicated to Yehovah,
my beloved heavenly Father
for whom this book is written
to tell His story

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the
morning!

Prologue

Petra – 2017: The Lower Temenos – the Great Temple

The tall, frail figure, his entire weight leaning on the antique silver cane, limped slowly through the semidarkness under the white hexagonal pavers and past the triple colonnades, until he stood directly over the entrance of the latest excavation site of the Lower Temenos, in Petra, Jordan. Following him at least ten feet behind was a young Arab boy of not more than ten.

‘Hurry.’ The man’s educated British tones were soft but compelling. ‘Hurry!’

The command to the excavators became more intense. He watched the five Jordanian excavators with ill-concealed impatience, then beckoned to Waseem, who swiftly attached a harness to a rope around his waist.

Discarding his cane, the Englishman started to ease himself down into the main shaft. Then he clenched his jaw to stem the sudden, intense tide of pain.

‘Malik . . . !’ Waseem cried.

The Arab boy leaned forward over the shaft, clutching at the Englishman’s linen jacket in horror.

In that split second the dim lights over the excavation pit flickered momentarily back on, suddenly illuminating the Englishman’s face. Nick De Vere was young – extraordinarily young, not more than twenty-six – and would have been handsome if his pretty, chiselled features had not been so frail. He sighed and brushed the blond fringe back off his forehead, revealing serious grey eyes with long black lashes. He frowned intensely at the boy. ‘Waseem,’ he sighed, ‘are you my mother?’

The boy scowled and loosed his grip on Nick’s jacket. ‘You are sick, Malik. You should not be doing this.’ A weary smile flickered across Nick’s mouth.

He turned his back to the boy, suddenly shivering violently. Sweat poured from his temples. He felt in his pocket for his silver pillbox and, with trembling fingers, tried to open it.

‘Waseem . . . ’ His voice was hardly audible. Waseem grabbed the pillbox from Nick’s hand as the grey eyes started to roll back. Nick hung from the rope

in the centre of the shaft, semiconscious, like a dead weight.

The Arab boy pulled on the rope, hauling Nick back into the cavern. He prised open the pillbox and thrust four of the gel capsules into the back of Nick's mouth. 'Swallow, Malik . . . swallow.'

Nick gulped and slumped to the dirt, his head in the Arab boy's lap. Waseem sang over him softly . . . like a mother.

*

Much later, Nick edged his body down . . . down . . . six feet, then twelve feet down the scaffolded sides of the eastern shaft. Waseem followed, lowering himself down . . . down . . . down, until they were both face-to-face with the second party of Jordanian excavators, deeper than any excavation party had ever dug before in the history of Petra. Nick's eyes fell on the small patch of golden metal glistening from beneath the ash.

Zahid, his trusted chief excavator, an old Bedouin, stared up at him, his ancient eyes aflame with wonder. 'The two men of fire, Malik . . . ' Zahid uttered in his thick, broken English. 'Maybe they tell truth.'

Nick's breathing was shallow.

Zahid motioned to the excavators to be silent. They fell back as one. He placed his ancient nut-brown hand over Nick's, pushing his hand down into the dirt on top of the golden metal.

'Maybe, Zahid . . . ' Nick murmured under his breath. 'Maybe.' He started scrabbling through the dirt impatiently. Waseem joined him, their hands flying over the patch of gold.

'Whisk, Zahid,' Nick said tersely. Zahid thrust a soft bristle brush into his palm. Gently, Nick brushed the superficial dust away from the metal with small expert strokes until the centre was completely cleared, revealing a perfectly formed engraving the size of a dinner platter.

Nick held out his hand. 'Waseem . . . ', he whispered.

Waseem handed him a scroll of yellowed paper. Nick snatched it from him and, trembling, laid it out across the metal next to the engraving.

'The men of fire, Malik?' The ancient Bedouin's hands were shaking. 'They tell truth?'

Nick put on his eyeglass and leaned over the golden metal as Zahid and Waseem watched with bated breath. Slowly Nick looked up, his face burning with ecstasy.

'Zahid!' He kissed the old man on both cheeks fervently. 'Let them dig!'

*

Later

It was past one in the morning by the time the casket was fully visible, and another two hours before it rested under the walls of white hexagonal stone of the Lower Temenos. It was four feet in width and two in depth, and of an almost translucent gold embedded with a vast array of rare jewels. The casket strongly resembled the ancient Hebrews' sacred relic, the ark of the covenant, with its intricately carved golden cherubim and seraphim, except that it was smaller and had, etched in the very centre, a large, beautifully engraved insignia, with three smaller engravings etched directly beneath it.

Nick caressed the engravings. 'The royal crest, Zahid,' he whispered, 'of the House of Yehovah.'

Waseem pointed to the three smaller engravings. He frowned up at Nick, his dark eyes wide with wonder.

'The seal of the three chief princes.' Nick looked down at Zahid, who was rocking back and forth on the ground. 'The big men of fire . . . three archangels.'

Zahid's eyes grew wide with apprehension.

Nick was studying the engravings intently. He traced the coat of arms gently with his forefinger. 'Valour and justice,' he murmured. 'The great Prince Mikhail.'

Waseem pointed to the third seal excitedly. 'Jibril! Jibril!' he shrieked.

Nick nodded. 'Gabriel . . .', he whispered, ' . . . the revelator.'

Zahid stared, transfixed and trembling, at the third engraving. Slightly larger than the other two, it had one magnificent deep crimson ruby as its centrepiece. His rocking grew agitated.

Nick gently ran his finger over the ruby. 'And I expelled you, O guardian cherub,' he whispered, 'from among the fiery stones.'

Nick and Zahid exchanged a long, apprehensive look. Nick took a deep breath. 'And now, for what we have come for . . .'

With the aid of a mechanical jack, Zahid prised open the lid of the casket wide enough to wedge two long wooden beams into the aperture. With one more turn of the jack, the casket's stone hasp fell in two pieces onto the ash floor. Nick looked back at the other excavators, huddled together and staring, petrified, at the third engraving. Like frightened animals they scuttled off, leaving the three alone in the gloom.

Nick nodded. The three leaned over and slowly raised the heavy lid. Immediately the cavern was flooded with a blinding, iridescent light that rose up as seven columns of blazing white flame, illuminating the entire chamber.

Zahid and Waseem fell prostrate into the ash.

‘Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar!’ they cried in unison. Nick stumbled to his knees, his arm covering his eyes from the searing heat.

Gradually the columns settled, and as the white mist faded, two huge, golden-bound codices became visible in the upper compartment of the casket.

Very gently Nick reached over and drew the top codex out. ‘The angelic writings . . . ’ he murmured in wonder.

Slowly he opened the codex, moving his finger along the lines of strange golden text. As he did, the angelic writings seemed to take on a life of their own, glowing, dancing in the shafts of light emanating from them.

‘The most ancient of ancient angelic writings,’ he whispered to Zahid, who still lay prostrate on the ground, his face to the floor. Slowly the old Bedouin lifted his head to the codices, staring in wonder at the pulsing angelic script now in Arabic. Nick traced his finger along the title, the glowing Arabic lettering instantly transforming to English.

‘The Secret Annals of the First Heaven . . . The Fall of Lucifer.’ His voice fell to a whisper. ‘As recorded by Gabriel . . . the revelator.’

Aftermath

2028

Lucifer stood, an imperial figure. His monstrous black war chariot, riding on the shafts of thunderbolts, the huge silver wheels sprung with the sharpest war blades, was pulled by eight of his finest dark-winged stallions, their manes intertwined with platinum, caparisoned as for war, glistening black as the night.

And then, for a fleeting moment, the sun's rays broke through, the clouds dissipated, and Gabriel could see Lucifer's lips moving incoherently with the incantations of the damned. Gabriel did not turn to him, but saw his stallions' shadows on the clouds as the war chariot thundered past, the crimson emblem of the infernal flame on hell's flag flying proudly.

He passed so close that Gabriel's white mare trembled and snorted at the putrid reek of his satanic wizardry. Gabriel turned his head from the damning presence.

The scarred, misshapen features were now masked behind the battle helmet, the soulless sapphire eyes imperious, his bearing still kingly. He held his head high, his long raven hair gleaming and plaited with platinum and lightnings, his fist brandishing the cat-o'-nine-tails menacingly.

Lucifer was all glorious, and all terrible as slowly he surveyed the valley before him. A thick red mist of human blood mingled with the reek of burning human flesh that rose unendingly from the valley of slaughter. Millions of massacred soldiers – Chinese, European, American, Arab, Israeli – floated next to drowned horses and half-submerged tanks and other armoured vehicles in a vast quagmire of blood and mud 1,600 furlongs long, all that was left after the assault of the massive 200-million-man army.

Hundreds of thousands of griffin vultures, their wingspans over nine feet long, blackened the crimson skies, circling the killing fields while massive swarms of raptors gorged ravenously on human flesh. On the outskirts of the valley of Jezreel, on higher ground, bodies, severed limbs, and decapitated heads lay in random piles.

A holocaust.

The eerie silence hung heavily over the valley. Nothing stirred but the blood-curdling screeching of the vultures.

Lucifer waded through the bloody quagmire, which reached up to his dark

stallions' bridles, towards higher ground. A smile of approval crossed his crimson mouth. Then, sensing a presence, he turned the war chariot around.

Several lengths away, at the edge of the gorge directly opposite Lucifer, a regal figure mounted on a splendid white Arab stallion surveyed the valley.

Michael took off his golden helmet, his long corn-coloured hair falling to his broad shoulders. His green eyes gleamed with nobility. He raised the Sword of Justice, his jaw clenched – the only sign of his blazing fury.

A wry smile played on Lucifer's features. He turned and mockingly saluted. 'Put your sword away, brother!' Lucifer's voice shattered the eerie silence.

'It is not yet time.'

'The Judgment hastens, Lucifer!' Michael's noble tones rang out across the valley.

Lucifer lifted his visor with one sharp movement. He pulled on his stallions' reins, his impatience thinly veiled. 'Even Michael cannot pre-empt what is written.'

Across the valley Michael waited, fierce, silent.

Bareback on his white steed, Gabriel came into view behind Michael on the horizon, his long platinum locks falling past his shoulders, his face and head uncovered, his silvered crossbow hanging at his side.

A fleeting vulnerability crossed Lucifer's countenance.

'Gabriel . . . ,' he whispered softly. Then a strange, evil smile glimmered. 'One for Eternity!' he cried.

Gabriel drew a sharp breath and bowed his head.

'Brothers!' Lucifer's cry echoed . . . tormenting. His eyes glittered black as he brandished the cat-o'-nine-tails menacingly. 'I will annihilate the whole race of men before I am done.'

He drove the panther tails embedded with sharp steel violently onto the lead stallion's back, drawing blood. The horse's eyes flickered red, and he snorted in pain, sending flames and sulphureous smoke billowing from his nostrils.

'I will take my vengeance!' Lucifer cried.

He and his Mephistophelean stallions took off on the burning white crest of the black hurricanes and rode the thunderbolts, disappearing into the darkening crimson skies.



My tormented brother, Lucifer, you return my missives unopened.

The nib of Gabriel's pearlescent quill pen scratched tirelessly on the heavy linen paper embossed with his crest, Prince Regent.

A full millennium is passed yet still you are silent. Our Eternal Father grieves deeply for you, as do Michael and myself.

We urge you to repent.

I know you think of me still, for even this past eventide your tortured countenance haunts my sleeping and waking hours. I rode this dawn across the lush golden meadows of the eastern plains of Eden you loved so ardently, and I recalled those balmy days of the First Heaven when we spent our moons in horseplay and swordsmanship – and triune brotherhood.

Gabriel laid his pen down and pushed the long golden locks away from his brow. A terrible suffering clouded his features.

'And I remembered back to the time, before the shadows fell across our world.'

His voice was barely above a whisper.

'When we were just brothers . . .'

[[GABRIEL IMAGE]]

Our laughter rang out across the Sea, echoing far across the First Heaven's coral horizons.

Gabriel dipped his quill in the sepia ink and continued writing.

And it seemed that in that moment, there in the celestial chambers, life and harmony between the three of us and our Father were perfect.

*If we had only known the shadows looming on our perfect horizon . . .
Shadows that would herald a fallen universe.*

[[GABRIEL IMAGE]]

From that day forth Lucifer's words troubled my very being. And as the dreamings intensified so indeed did my turmoil. I could find no respite for my soul.

And what happened next did nothing to allay my fears.

They did not know that I saw them fight that day – that I saw that shocking altercation between them that was the beginning of the end to all that we knew as normality.

Their swordplay began as usual, at the twilight of the sixth moon, in the upper turret nearest the throne room wing, where Michael and Lucifer would fence and practise their swordsmanship. They fenced with vigour, as they always did, pitting themselves against each other – and as always, they were well matched in strength and swordsmanship. They had parried for aeons each dusk, but this was to be a different night . . .

[[GABRIEL IMAGE]]

The shadows had fallen . . .

[[GABRIEL IMAGE]]

And so the lineage of mankind was saved, and Lucifer's terrible evil was thwarted.

But gradually, as the aeons passed, men's hearts again grew cold as they fell to depravity and vice, to selfishness and greed.

And they once more forgot their Creator . . .

[[GABRIEL IMAGE]]

Through all the millennia of all the universes, past and present, that day is engraved forever on my soul.

The day that He became one of the race of men.

The silence – oh, the heavy, unrelenting silence – overwhelmed the First Heaven. There was no sound, no movement. All was still.

And then I heard the sound.

As I approached the throne room, it became louder.

I found the cherubim and seraphim prostrate on the ground in obeisance. The four living creatures were in the midst of the throne and around the throne, the lion and the calf and the man and the eagle, their six wings covering their multitude of eyes. All of these were silent. The twenty-four ancient monarchs were fallen down prostrate on the sea of glass that glistened as crystal, their golden crowns cast before the throne – silent.

And yet there was a sound.

I stood in front of the seven burning lamps, the seven spirits of Yehovah that burned before the throne day and night.

I will never forget that sound. No amount of waking and sleeping throughout eternities, throughout the Second and the Third Heavens, will ever erase the imprint of it from my memory. It was neither angel nor man. It was neither cry nor scream. It was neither agony nor ecstasy. But at the same time . . . it was all of these.

It was the sound of Yehovah weeping.

Epilogue

Petra – 2017

Nick turned the last page of the angelic writings. For the hundredth time that morning he photographed the strange angelic hieroglyphics. He unscrewed the exciter filter from the quartz crystal lens of his camera and carefully replaced the golden-bound codex into the upper compartment of the jewelled casket.

‘Waseem!’ His tone was terse. Urgent. He removed the camera from its rostrum, thrusting it into Waseem’s hands. ‘Get this to Mansoor at the palace museum.’

Waseem nodded earnestly. ‘Mansoor . . . the curator . . . ’ Nick explained painstakingly.

‘Yes, Malik.’

‘Take the motorbike,’ Nick said.

Waseem took off, his lanky olive legs kicking up clouds of dust as he ran into the harsh daylight.

Nick followed, stumbling out of the Lower Temenos, weary and unshaven but elated. He shielded his bloodshot eyes from the blinding Jordanian sun, staring after Waseem, who was now showing off the camera smugly to a shorter Arab boy.

‘Yallah! Yallah!’ Nick shouted, gesticulating frantically.

Waseem grinned, a wide toothy grin. He jumped onto a bright red dirt bike and placed the camera carefully into the sidecar. He kicked the throttle, waved vigorously to Nick, then roared down the dust road towards the desert highway, following the signs that read *Amman*.

Nick fumbled for his cell phone and pushed the dial button. ‘Mansoor, it’s Nick. Waseem is on his way with my camera. Get the photographs developed as soon as he arrives.’ He shaded his eyes with his hand, watching the red bike’s trail of dust disappear over Wadi Araba’s mountainous desert terrain. ‘Increase the development time. I need a higher contrast black-and-white negative.’

Zahid rushed over to Nick’s side, holding out a bottle of fresh water. Nick grabbed it with his free hand, pouring the icy liquid down his throat. He grasped his phone between his ear and his neck, rubbing the surplus water over his dirt-

streaked face with his palms.

‘It’s greater than we could ever have imagined,’ he said. ‘Tell the princess that the royal household of Jordan holds the greatest discovery of modern civilization.’ Nick gazed up at the towering hills of the rust-coloured sandstone that surrounded Petra. ‘The mystery of the universe unveiled.’ His face lit with a strange elation.

‘The *origins* of evil.’

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– Book Two –

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[[GABRIEL IMAGE]]

That dusk is still imprinted in my memory. The dusk when the sign of the White Rider of the Apocalypse hung in the Egyptian skies over the sweltering desert plains. The Son of Perdition coming forth to rule in the Race of Men. For the breaking of the First Great Seal was surely to herald the beginning of the devastations of the End of Days.

And as I stood with Jether, observing the waxen apparition, my mind raced back two thousand years earlier to a different dusk. And a different sign that had once blazed high in the Eastern skies. A sign that was to terrorize the soul of my brother Lucifer, King of the Damned. For the chilling events of the coming moons were about to change eternity in the world of the Race of Men as we still knew it. And plunge the armies of the First Heaven and the Fallen into a cosmic battle that would reverberate throughout a hundred aeons.

Beyond Megiddio.

Beyond the termination of the world of the Race of Men.

Culminating in one final battle. Between my brothers.

Michael and Lucifer.

A thousand years in the future.

At the White Gorge of Inferno, on the eastern shores of the Lake of Fire.

But it was here, aeons before, that our tale begins . . .

. . . For it was to be a different dusk . . .

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