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The Prophetist

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Northern Michigan University

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THE PROPHEISIT

By

William Robert Davie

THESIS

Submitted to
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SIGNATURE APPROVAL FORM

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ABSTRACT

THE PROPHEISIT

By

William Robert Davie

The novel (the first ninety-two pages are included) is about the timeless mystic connection of civilization's past and the present, and the cycle of recurring events, both anthropological and natural, that replay on a cosmic stage; for example, feuds and wars in the Middle East and natural events such as climate change, floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The theme involves religious organizations or societies with oral or written traditions that call for belief in ancient prophecies such as the biblical Apocalypse, or the "End of Days," an earth cleansed by natural disaster at the culmination of the Mayan calendar on 12/21/2012.

The principal character is Sarah St. Mark, whose mother, Summer Katchonga, a Hopi Indian, leaves the reservation in the 1970's to attend the University of Arizona. Summer meets and marries Sarah's father, Sam St. Mark, now a U.S. Army research scientist, attached to the Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Sarah develops a consuming desire to devote her life to understanding her mother's tribal ceremonies and validating the oral history and prophesy of the Hopi people. She intends, through her work as a professor of archeology, to confirm the Hopi's urgent message of peace, harmonious healing and spiritual preparation for the coming age which involves the culmination of several cycles, dating back to 10,860 BC. Without Earth's natural balance returned, the Hopi prophesy says a time of purification will occur that may cause a world destruction. Sarah and her team are in a race to stop it.

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This thesis follows the format prescribed by the *MLA Style Manual* and the Department of English.

PREFACE

It's been said, *people throughout the world share a collective unconscious*. This concept was advanced long ago by spiritual mystics, sometimes called a cosmic consciousness or universal mind. Although there is not complete agreement among philosophers and theologians, there is acknowledgement of some kind of connection. The Hindu term is Akashic Record; for Muslims, it is direct illumination through the Prophetic Path; to the Jewish Cabbalists it is the Magic Mirror of the Universe, an etheric realm where all thoughts, past, present and prophetic, are stored. Today, the collective unconscious has also become recognized in psychiatry and medicine. It is referred to as the collective psyche.

In the last half of the 20th century, reoccurring themes from the collective unconscious have been expressed in art, movies, and literature. Many of these themes deal with ancient civilizations, connection with alien beings, mysterious crystals, objects of magic, and cataclysmic events preceding a messiah and a new age of enlightenment. The question is — are these merely people's random thoughts of myths and legends or do they reoccur so often because they come from a more profound place, a place where the creator's thoughts mix with our own? It is said, *the collective unconscious speaks to us all*; it just speaks louder to some than others.

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The Prophet

Chapter 1

Damascus, Syria

He paced slowly in front of the picture window and thought of the dangerous mission ahead. He wore his traditional dark green suit, a tribute to the highest spiritual color of Islam, but had taken off the jacket and tie. From the fourth floor, he stared out between the buildings to the old city of Damascus. Helping restore its sacred sites was another of his missions, one that filled him with gladness and hope. He also wondered if anyone out there had a bullet for him today. He felt somewhat safe because of the double paned bullet proof glass, but it wouldn't stop a Hellfire missile. They'd never fire one into downtown Damascus, he thought, but they were good at stoking the fires of fear. So am I. He turned his anxiety to anger and felt powerful again. He said a short prayer to Allah's angels. As he turned back to the conference room, he felt assured; this mission would be a success.

It was a splendid room, a high domed green ceiling with a blend of gold geometric patterns. The walls were light rose with dark red-patterned vertical stripes every twelve feet, between the stripes hung historic swords and shields of ancient wars. Archways with wrought iron designs at their peaks stood at two ends. An immense Persian rug was centered on the rose-colored marble floor and a large cedar table sat in the middle. There were twelve black, high-backed director chairs around it. The exterior of the building was made of sand-colored stone and designed to look like a fortified castle. The imposing structure was square covering four acres with a large courtyard of trees, ponds and fountains in the center. On one side, the view from the top floor offices

was a panorama of the new Damascus, with libraries, museums, twenty-four story hotels and office buildings along a wide boulevard lined with cedar and palms trees. The view from the conference room side was of parapets, minarets, Christian church towers and domed mosques of the old city of Damascus. Founded seven thousand years ago, it had eight hundred and fifty sacred sites.

Looking at the building from the street, a tourist might think it was a museum, university or government agency, but this was the worldwide headquarters of Hez-al-Haq, the Party of Truth. Around the conference table sat six men opening white envelopes marked *Allah's eyes*. This was a meeting of the inner council, al-Mohaqoom, The Judges.

As he walked from the window, he began the meeting. "Allah has provided us with the moment we have been waiting for," said Abdul-Baqi bin Muzafa.

Known to his followers as Baqi Shah and to his council simply as, Baqi, he built a religious organization that successfully delivered the word of Allah throughout the world. He was the son of poet and Sufi philosopher Adras bin Muzafa, who emigrated from Kabul, Afghanistan, to Sussex, England, in the 1970s to write numerous books and poetry about Sufi spiritualism. Under pressure from the Mujahedeen and then the Taliban, practicing Sufi teachings in Afghanistan were condemned. The Sufi of the Middle East had incorporated the Koran into their teachings, but their ancient mystic practices and independent thought were proclaimed heretical. So, Baqi's father moved the family — wife, brother and two babies, Baqi and Simi, to the morally corrupt, yet exciting and intellectually stimulating culture of the West.

From an early age Baqi had several prophetic experiences, which convinced him he had been called to deliver the word of Allah. After his education in England, he moved back to the Middle East and made a home in Damascus. From there, he established a radio and television network for, The Party of Truth, and established several religious development centers in various countries. For the first eight years his message was one of Muslim unity emphasizing a shared vision of tolerance, hope for the future and common values put forward in the Koran. But during the last eight years his prophetic dreams and visions began showing him a more sinister and destructive picture of the future, so he secretly began building an extensive intelligence organization to influence and advise Muslim world leadership. His organization's intelligence gathering skills are now sought by many political, military, and paramilitary groups. Now his message to the Muslim world was increasingly urgent, saying it is their destiny through prophesy to bring world order through world conversion. It is time to prepare for the prophesy of Mohammed when Jesus will return to the mosques and churches of the old city of Damascus and give authority to Imam Mahdi, the one who will lead the faithful against the al-Masih ad-Dajjal, the end of times deceiver, the anti-Christ, and world evil.

“My friends, you have been with me for many years,” said Baqi. “You know we have tried the peaceful way, but the non believers now threaten to build permanent bases for long term occupation in our sacred lands. We know they will try to remake our culture in their image. If they succeed, we will lose control of our future. But we know that is their nature and that is why they give us no choice.”

This sermon had served him well over the years. The West had given the world plenty of examples to demonstrate his argument, the holocaust of the American Indian,

the genocide of Pacific Islanders, the elimination of the Japanese Samurai culture and most recently the murder of at least one-thousand innocent civilians a week during the bombing campaign of North Vietnam. His sermons told, after their wars, of the materialist, capitalist conversion. The systematic change always began with zealous missionaries saying they had better beliefs. Then the profiteers came saying they could give the people a better life, while exploiting them as cheap labor and taking their natural resources. Then the re-education of the youth began through propaganda to emulate Western culture, attend Western universities and take up the corrupt excesses of materialism and chemical dependence. His own father almost lost his life to that corruption until he returned to Allah. Yes, it has all been too easy, he thought, to blame the West for the problems of the World.

“Even now,” said Baqi, “Allah’s eyes have shown us they have built a treacherous device to take our defenses away.”

As each man examined three 8x10 photos, Baqi poured a glass of ice tea from the pitcher on the table and thought how his heart had yearned for so long to unify the faithful. Now he believed, only, The Day of Judgment could save them. He took a drink and said, “What you are looking at is called a Terrestrial Energy Resonance Accelerator, a Terascope. It is a device so secret the U.S. government denies it exists, but we know of it by Allah’s will. It is a combination laser and particle ray camera. Larger camera versions are used in America to look through container walls for explosives at ports and border crossings. This one is different and can do much more. The U.S. Air Force will be testing this version soon in an aircraft that will fly over our lands and expose where weapons and nuclear materials are stored. While they say it will only take ground

penetrating photographs, we know it can also change the chemical composition of certain elements, and what's worse; tests showed it could detonate explosives behind hardened concrete walls. Very soon, the Terascope will be indiscriminately tested over our lands from Damascus to Bagdad and Tehran and I'm sure unexplained explosions will occur and the U.S. will deny any involvement."

Talk spread around the table as the Judges came to understand how this device could be used. It could set off explosives wherever they are stored, or set off planted explosives exactly when they want to from spy planes or even satellites overhead.

"I believe I can speak for the council," said Ala'al din, a graying Imam in a white turban and ruby-colored robe. "We must do whatever Allah allows, but what hope do we have against this thing?"

Baqi stood up and walked to a map of the Middle East on the wall. He pointed to Cairo. "We had little time, fortunately the events corresponded with plans already set in motion by our brothers of the Golden Dawn. The daughter of the general in charge of the Terascope project is among us in Egypt at Giza. She is here with little security to work on an archeological dig. Golden Dawn is eager to have the item the woman expects to find. Their motives are strange to me, but they have served us well with intelligence on this project. Once it's discovered, they plan to take the artifact, and help us by holding the woman hostage to make their escape. Later she will be transferred to a cell of Hez-Bollah. They will announce responsibility and communicate through Al-Jazeera TV. The daughter will be returned unharmed after the world learns of the plot behind the Terascope. If there is proof the Terascope is used, she will be killed. Hopefully, this will persuade the U.S. military to use this new technology for only peaceful purposes."

Baqi clasped his hands in a prayerful gesture. “Ahmed is not with us today because he will be overseeing Allah’s will on this project. We spend ten thousand dollars on an event; they spend ten million trying to prevent it. Eventually they will be bankrupt and in chaos. Meanwhile, Allah’s word will be spread, increasing the faithful, and the world will see the West again as a greedy, warmongering culture.”

Chapter 2

The Giza Plateau, Egypt

“I’ve got it, pull the conveyor, I’m coming out.” To the tourists looking across from the viewing platform, the shout came from below, under a large white canvas tent. The cover from the ninety degree late afternoon heat stood over the front of the massive ten foot high right paw of the Sphinx. Other shouts from the excavating crew followed as equipment was moved and men peered into a lighted tunnel dug four feet down extending twenty feet into the limestone under the paw. Suddenly, a woman’s bare arm thrust out of the hole holding a shiny triangular object. Project foreman, Jason Milliken took the treasure while security expert Jim O’Conner helped the woman out. Halim Haidar motioned everyone to a small table he had prepared with folding chairs around it. “Set it here,” he urged. People tended to follow his requests, especially since he was a member of Egypt’s Supreme Council of the Antiquities. The council, under the authority of the Minister of Culture, was the ultimate power of approval for exploration and excavation in Egypt. Halim was the Assistant Director of Antiquities, but so far, to everyone’s relief, he had not been overbearing at all. In fact, he was soft spoken and eager to help. The group seated themselves and began to examine the new find.

Sarah was offered the object first. Sarah St. Mark, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Arizona, was the lead archeologist on this dig. She was the one who persuaded the SCA to grant her a clearance, under the auspices of A.U., to perform excavation under the Sphinx. She had successfully discovered two similar objects in South America, just weeks before. The inscription on the last one she found indicated the

precise longitude, latitude and placement under the paw for this exploration. Even though ground penetrating radar could not confirm it, the evidence was compelling. The SCA was eager to see what developed.

The pyramidal object on the table measured about six inches high. Sarah, who continued to brush the dust off her tan tank top and shorts, took a seat and began eagerly studying the four sides of the capstone. She then scowled and set it back in the center of the table for others to examine. “I don’t see anything profound here. I expected more.” She looked up to catch the expressions of the others around the table, then after wiping the sweat from her forehead, she opened the cooler and took out a bottle of water. “I expected more inscriptions, more information like the others. This doesn’t look or feel anything like the others.”

Halim bent in, grasped the silvery stone and slowly rotated it around. “This looks very much like what we call a Benben. It is shaped like a pyramid and represents the mound that arose from the primordial waters where the creator god Atum settled. The Benben, named after that mound, was a sacred stone in the solar temple of Heliopolis. It was placed as a capstone on an obelisk. It was said to be the location where the first rays of the sun fell. We have similar stones at the Museum of Antiquities. Some are rock, others have a silver cover. I’d say this one does too. The hieroglyphics are much different, though. See here...two fish are carved on this side and on the opposite side, two wavy lines which often represents water.” He swiveled the small pyramid further. “This side has a sun with long rays inlaid with gold, traditionally that means the dark moon and eclipsed sun should be opposite, but look, this shows some kind of container with something pouring out from it. What do you make of that?”

Sitting next to Halim, Sarah could see what he was questioning. “Let me take a closer look,” she said. Suddenly, she felt startled with recognition. “I’ve seen this picture before in an illustrated Hopi Indian prophesy story. It’s a gourd spilling ashes.”

Halim winced, “What does that mean?”

“The gourd is a fruit, full of life, but when it is dried out and opened it’s full of caustic dust or ashes.” Sarah began to feel both elated and anxious. Here was a gourd, a symbol used in Hopi prophesy stories on an ancient Benben. What kind of connection could that have? Her breathing became deeper and more deliberate as a realization formed in her mind. “I’ll tell you what I think,” she said. “I believe this message is meant to be deciphered through the zodiac. It says sometime between the Age of Pieces, the fish, and the Age of Aquarius, the waves of water, the sun will become more radiant causing the Earth to heat up. The gourd could mean the effects would be drought and dust or burning to ashes.”

“What a comforting thought,” said Milliken. “Does that support the Hopi prophesy?”

Sarah knew the Hopi. Her mother was a full blood member of the Sun Clan. It was through the teachings of her mother, uncle and other elders of the clan that she had developed a devotion to understanding their ancient wisdom and prophesies.

“Some Hopi elders say the gourd of ashes represents the result of a nuclear war. Others say, it is a warning prophesy of the Day of Purification. We either live in balance and harmony with creation or the creator will take action to restore that balance and it won’t be considerate of our welfare in the process.”

“That’s all very interesting,” said Milliken, with a cynical tone. “But I’d say there’s fifty ways to leave your lover. My question is — the first two capstones you found that led you here were platinum, much more intricate in their etchings with much more information. It doesn’t seem right you were led half way around the world for this. That this Benben about a burning demise...is the journeys end.”

“I don’t know,” sighed Sarah. “If my interpretation is correct, it would be a profound calamity and one the world should prepare for and try to prevent.”

Milliken shook his head. “Like I said, we’re going to have to come up with a lot more than that to get the world’s attention. Did you thoroughly inspect the entire cavity when you pulled the Benben out?”

“There was nothing else in the chamber, but this bluish speckled sand.” She untied a small cloth bag from her belt and poured the contents on the table. “When I got to the chamber, it was surrounded by this different kind of limestone.” She held up a piece. “Once I broke through, this sand poured out and the capstone became visible.”

Halim took a pinch of the sand and rolled it through his fingertips. “This is like the sand found in the Queen’s Chamber of the Great Pyramid. It comes from the Sinai desert. It’s a mixture of metallic elements, turquoise and fine sand. An interesting side effect is that its properties have a way of deflecting ground penetrating radar.”

“That makes sense,” said Milliken. “It explains why we couldn’t see the capstone with conventional GPR techniques.”

Then Halim picked up a chunk of rock from Sarah’s bag. “This different kind of sandstone you found around the chamber is called Queen’s Sandstone, it’s harder than regular sandstone. It too has been found in the Great Pyramid.”

Sarah felt the effects of frustration churn in her stomach as she ran her fingers over the carvings on the Benben. “This message may be important, I’m not sure, but I have to agree with Jason, I too believe we were meant to find much more.” She studied the capstone as Milliken handed her a magnifying glass. She didn’t like it when Jason Milliken was too quick with his judgment, but he was often right and that’s why she kept hiring him. He had been a professor of anthropology in her department when they met. But then he was written about in *Discover Magazine*. He became a legend for his adventures while leading digs, finding valuable artifacts, and attending gala events around the world with women on his arm. Because of his success, he gave up the routine of campus life to work at archeology full time. The turning point, in her feelings for him, came when she hired him two months ago. She needed help to excavate in the Temple of Jaguars in Mexico. The highlight came when they discovered the second capstone. It was buried deep within a structure under the current temple site. Milliken left the subterranean cavern to go outside and call a Mexican conservator to register their find. When she was alone with two local diggers one came at her with a knife trying to slash her throat and steal the stone. She fought them, then everything went black. When she awoke, she couldn’t remember the fight except for fleeting images and an out of body experience. Milliken was holding her. He had cleaned up a bloody mess and the capstone was safe, but both men were dead and she began feeling nauseous and distraught. She still felt resentment when she thought about how she had turned to her friend, her peer, for emotional support and he had taken advantage of her. He had convinced her through his smooth romantic skills that she would feel better after the

passion. They had made love and now she regretted it. They both moved on, but here they were again, working together, and so far, he had respected the boundaries.

Now, she thought, his assessment seemed right. This can't be all there is, it's just not enough...not for all she'd been through. "Jason, why don't you and O'Conner try the GPR, anyway. I'd like to see if anything at all comes through, even a blur. And try the same spot on the left paw. Maybe we'll get lucky."

The men took the equipment, climbed the scaffolding and began to systematically perform ground penetrating radar scans over the front of the left paw.

Sarah sat back in her chair, kicked off her leather boots and ran her fingers through her black hair as she massaged her forehead. She was exceptionally sensitive to the energies of people and things around her, which she concluded was both a gift and a curse. Highly emotional events drained her. She constantly had to monitor her feelings or situations could be overwhelming. Sometimes, that meant blacking out — definitely something she fought against. She had come to understand her sensitivity was both inherited and practiced. Her mother was very empathetic. Her aura reading skills and healing talents brought several strangers into their home when Sarah was growing up. As a child, Sarah thought it was natural to see glimpses of blurred colors move around people. Now her talents were more refined, but they came with the price of exhaustion. Her urgent frustration convinced her that now she should use whatever intuitive skill she had to find the answer of the true capstone she was meant to discover.

As the sun slid lower behind the pyramids, the air began to cool. She pulled a thin maroon sweatshirt over her head, and excused herself as Halim took notes on the Benben. She sat in a chair by a table at the far end of the tent. Relaxing her muscles, she

closed her eyes and began to meditate. Immediately, her mind raced with blurred images, as if the pages of a picture book were flashing before her eyes. Then, an exhilarating power began to lift her consciousness out of her body. She was floating above the desert. When she looked down, she saw the Sphinx. On its left paw was a black jaguar scratching at exactly the opposite site of their discovery on the right paw.

“It is here,” she said aloud. Her words brought her back and she opened her eyes. She grabbed her briefcase from among the other aluminum cases on the table, took out her journal and began writing.

The Trail of the Cat, My Guardian Katchina (spirit guide) — I felt the power at the mountain, *Puma’s Claw*, at Michu Pichu, and at the *Palace of Jaguars* next to the Pyramid of the Moon in Mexico’s Teotihuacan, but I’ve never felt the kind of power I feel here. The sensation sits at the bottom of my stomach slowly coiling upward. It is ancient, longing and lonely with a sound like the Ethiopian Negarit, the drum of distant thunder, even the gods can hear. It says its name is Sun Catcher, much older than Kahfra. It is the one who pulls the sun from the underworld each day, waiting until it can give its secrets to another. What could they have known, the Greeks, who called her the riddler, the strangler, the Sphinx.

“May I join you Zara,” a man’s soft voice inquired. “Your crew is still working on the scans, so maybe we have some time to talk.” Sarah looked up from her page as

she finished writing. She liked Halim's Arabian name for her, Zara, meaning Bright Dawn. She motioned to the chair across from her.

"I wish my parents would have named me Zara. It reminds me of the sunrise ceremony. When I was young, my mother and father would get me ready fifteen minutes before the sun came up and together we would run on a dirt road by our house in New Mexico toward the sunrise. Then when the rim of the sun broke the Sandia mountain range we would stop, say a prayer of thankfulness and gratitude for the new day, turn around and run back. As I grew up, it has become one of my daily pleasures, but now my world travels have broken the pattern. It's been months since I've felt that freedom."

Halim placed two mugs and a thermos down on the table and sat across from her. Sarah's first impression of him was on the phone. He had called to ask more about her request for excavation. His tone was soft, but his words were energetic and encouraging. Now, face to face, she was even more impressed. His aura at this moment was a bright yellow with a shift to red. She felt his energy was creative, easy going, intellectual, philosophical and optimistic. She thought he had a good face, clean shaven, with a warm, infectious smile. She had noticed he stood about one inch shorter than her five-seven, but his dark eyes and expressive hand gestures were unusually focused and came right to the point. Sarah found that refreshing. She also recognized immediately he had affection for her. Even before they met, his e-mails expressed a fascination for her achievements and the quest she had undertaken. So she wasn't surprised by his warm greeting in person. Now, while she was alone for a moment, he had come bearing tea.

"I would like to share some of my heritage with you," he said, "and hopefully you will share some of yours."

“Sounds fair enough.”

“First, I wanted you to try my ancestor’s tea,” he said as he poured. “It’s really a dessert as well, great for after dinner, made with licorice root, tea of the Pharaohs. I believe my ancestors were Egyptian royalty, but so far, I have only researched my family back to the time of Christ with St. Mark the Evangelist in Alexandria, so when you told me your last name was St. Mark, I was intrigued and anxious to ask you how you came to have that name and what its history means to you. I don’t often get a chance to talk about religion, because my family is Christian in a sea of Muslims, and it is not wise to bring up the subject. Just the other day a man in my neighborhood was beaten by police because he announced to his co-workers that he was going to convert to Christianity.

Sarah frowned with concern. “I understand your feelings, Native Americans have been persecuted for their religious beliefs for six-hundred years.” Sarah didn’t want to bring the discussion down by complaining about how white society treated Indians. It could become a long and angry tirade, so she sipped some tea. “It’s wonderful, what are the spices?”

“A little cinnamon root and orange peel.” As they sipped, Sarah saw in his expression that he was searching for a proper lead into a deeper conversation. He began, “If you don’t mind me asking, when you wrote to us you said you are on a mission to validate your Hopi people’s oral tradition and prophesy. What little I know of Native Americans, they are not tall with green eyes and named St. Mark.”

Sarah smiled, it was a question she had been asked many times. “My eyes and my height I got from my father. His ancestors were Scottish. My mother is from the Sun Clan of the Hopi. They met when they were students at the University of Arizona. I

am their only child, raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico, but we visited the reservation in Northern Arizona many times when I was growing up. I have many relatives there.” She paused to organize her thoughts about the Hopi. She had so many stories to relate, but thought it’s best to keep the explanation simple. “The Hopi have traditionally been a very spiritual people. They have many ceremonies to celebrate and honor different aspects of life. I’ve only participated in a few of the summer ceremonies. What I’ve learned of the other rituals has come from my uncle. I’m very close to him. He still lives on the reservation. He’s a priest and medicine healer; all my family, on my mother’s side, are medicine people. So, even though I am a professor of anthropology at the University of Arizona, I feel I live in two worlds. But my heart is with the Hopi and their holistic religion of peace, a culture of balance and a covenant of service to the Great Spirit.”

“It sounds like a very broad belief system, but why do you believe you must validate your tribe’s oral history and prophesy?”

Sarah sat back in her chair and prepared to give Halim a short introduction. “The Hopi are not like any other Indian tribes. In fact we are not a tribe at all, but independent groups based on clan systems. Our oral tradition says, after the last world destruction of the flood, we came to South America on rafts from the west. After regrouping, Massau, the Earth god, told the clans to disperse. They were given the mission of migrated over both continents until they found the spiritual center of the new land. Around 1000 A.D, they all came back together in a spot where Massau was waiting, the Black Mesas of Arizona. It was there that the ceremonies of maintaining the balance of Earth and creation would have the most power. Because of the profound responsibility of the covenant with the gods and spirits, the traditional Hopi men were required to spend

nearly half of each month in prayer and ceremony. The rituals were not optional. The stories of three previous world destructions were vivid as all children were brought up hearing them many times.”

“Three destructions? Okay, I think there’s agreement on the flood, almost every culture has that story, but what are the others?”

“It is said, the first world ended when volcanoes around the world erupted in an all consuming fire. The second world ended when the poles shifted, continents moved and the earth was covered in ice. And the third world was destroyed by water. The Hopi’s message, the one I am validating through the discoveries I have made, is to show that world destructions are not just a myth. They should be taken seriously. The core of the Hopi message is we are now living in the fourth world, but moving into the fifth. The term world refers to our holistic universal environment, not just planet Earth. I believe what the Benben is telling us is as each new world system evolves into being it brings with it a new intensity of energy. The Sun has begun to resonate at a higher vibration. That changes everything, from the core of our cells to the core of our planet, both spiritually and physically. Earth’s people must be made to understand that if we don’t live in balance and harmony with the new energy of the fifth world, we may witness another devastating cleansing destruction.”

Halim leaned forward and spoke in a lowered tone. “Your words are like a flood in my mind. I want to know much more. Would you join me for dinner tonight?”

Sarah paused and touched Halim’s hand. “I’m sorry; I don’t think I’m up to it tonight. I wouldn’t be much for conversation. My mind is still spinning with what we found today and what more there is to find.” Her words trailed off and she looked across

to the left paw. Turning back to Halim, she said. “But, I really want to thank you again for all the work you’ve done to get me a clearance for this excavation. I thought my mission was lost when I heard about the new Egyptian law forbidding independent digs.”

“Yes, the Secretary General of Antiquities is furious with countries that will not return our treasures. So, our legislature has given him the authority to close off everything until 2012, so we can make sure proper security will be maintained. Exploration by foreigners can continue, but only if the Antiquities Council approves and staff are included. We have lost so much from the careless disregard of fortune hunters.”

“When I was approved there was no explanation; just show up on October seventh. I had five days.”

“The Supreme Director is very restrictive with anything that will obstruct the appearance of our monuments. He wants excavators in and out, no extended work plans. However, most intriguing to us was your discoveries of ancient capstones in South America. As I said, we have similar objects here, but none with carvings and information you found. And what has been so curious, is together they pointed so convincingly to something protected by the lion’s paw with the coordinates of the Sphinx. This, coupled with the symbols of star charts, indicating a great message is waiting to be revealed. Plus, the warning that all this must occur before the Age of Aquarius. The Benben you discovered today does tend to reinforce a prophetic message. Maybe that *is* what the Earth’s people need to understand.”

Sarah opened her palms upward. “There is something more, I’m sure of it.”

Halim’s tone became cautionary and sympathetic. “I’m afraid, the council will require proof to allow you to continue. You have no idea how many wild theories we get

to justify excavation — secret chambers, passageways and even underground cities inhabited by aliens.”

In preparation for her arrival, Sarah had studied the latest ground penetrating radar (GPR) scans in the Egyptian journal of *The National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics* (NRIAG). It showed open areas all across the plateau. All of these, the article concluded, appear to be deeper than four meters and thus beneath the rising water table. She persuaded her father, a research scientist and Army General at Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, to run a three dimensional computer scan of the GPR images with their Red Storm computer. She had hoped it would reveal any objects inside the submerged caverns, but it came back negative. The original GPR scans were just not good enough. Her father assured her if she could wait just a few more weeks he would have something developed that would be much better to aid in her discovery. She couldn't wait. The time she was allotted was running out. Still, she was convinced there was another capstone, the one the other stones had foretold, the one that would hold the key to some major new and important information mankind should know.

“I assume,” said Sarah, “some of the wild theories you're referring to deal with the hidden hall of records beneath the Sphinx.”

Halim refilled the cups with the remaining tea in his thermos and said, “I wanted so much to believe...” He sounded remorseful as he watched the setting sun disappear behind the pyramids. “My father was a conservator with Antiquities when the son of the Sleeping Prophet, Edgar Casey, came here hoping to reveal his father's prophesy. While hypnotized Casey said a hidden room existed under the left paw of the Sphinx where all Earth's ancient historical records are stored. But after test borings confirmed everything

would be below the water table, his son left convinced there was nothing here. Still others keep coming, arguing we just haven't looked hard enough. The recent GPR scans of the plateau were paid for by a Belgian and Polish group. They were convinced we had to dig up the whole plateau to discover what they thought were many rooms and passageways. You've seen the scans, there are some interesting holes in the sandstone, but water could have easily made them. Of course their conclusions unleashed a firestorm of requests from new age mystics and self-styled archeologists. We had to shut the whole site down. Now we are going back, reassessing all our major ancient sites and coming up with a plan to limit access and secure our treasures. The legislature gave us until 2012 to complete and implement this plan. What's interesting though, is Edgar Cayce started all this back in the 1930s with his psychic readings. In my heart of hearts, that's why I took this job. I believe as you do, there is still much to reveal."



It was dusk when the silhouettes of two men approached from the far end of the tent. One yelled, "We've got something." Sarah jumped, but her surprise immediately turned to excitement. She recognized his voice — O'Conner. At age sixty two, he was tall, powerfully built with a thick neck and a rosy complexion. Sarah marveled at how he never slowed down; he was always agile and quick. Comparing the two as they walked toward her, Milliken was about six feet, slimmer, tanned, more sophisticated, close to forty. He was muscular, but in a health spa sort of way, not by any hard physical labor.

In her undergraduate days at AU, she would have sized them up as the difference between a line backer and a wide receiver, although Milliken would never have made the sacrifice for team sports. Those were the days she dressed for attention, tight clothes, just the right amount of makeup, an hour on her hair every day, trying to lure the most eligible. She learned through some sad episodes that with the attraction came certain expectations and the men she attracted were all about their needs. After graduate school, she almost made it to the altar, had a miscarriage, and decided to rededicate herself to becoming strong and independent. She stayed in school and earned her doctorate. Today at thirty, she was still attractive; some would say striking with her bright green eyes, olive complexion and long thick black hair parted in the middle. As far as male attention, now she dressed in a natural take-um or leave-um sort of way and wore no make-up. She had not given up on romance, she was just more particular.

“We’ve got something interesting, Sunny,” he repeated. O’Conner had a pet name for her too. They met when she was five. He told her that her father asked him to be her godfather and look after her when he traveled on his job. She proudly told him she didn’t need a godfather because she was a Hopi, “The People of Peace.” The Sun was her father and the Earth was her mother. He quickly learned that education with this child would be give and take. The nickname Sunny seemed right to O’Conner. He was married, but had no children of his own and this little girl radiated a bright happiness and made him feel good. He enjoyed taking Sarah with him when his paleontology club went on field trips looking for fossils. They uncovered, not just ancient bones, but shards of pottery and carved stones from long abandoned pueblos. At ten, Sarah had learned to interpret the markings which she said were Hopi in origin. One of the highlights of his

life was at her graduation ceremony when he was allowed to present her with her diploma as a Doctor of Anthropology.

O'Conner had just retired from a long career as chief of security at Sandia National Research Lab. Sarah's father had asked if he would provide protection for her on this mission and he jumped at the chance. The general had given them both secure satellite GPS cell phones and told them to stay in touch.

Scanning the surroundings, O'Conner set the GPR control unit on the table. "Let's run this image into the computer and see if we can enhance it. Based on our findings of how the sand diffused the image of the first capstone, we looked for a blurred section that should otherwise have been sharp."

They plugged in to the computer, got an image on the screen and began running software that enhanced and color coded differences in the sandstone makeup. As the image appeared, O Conner pointed to a small brown circular blur in an otherwise yellow picture. Millikan said, "If it's there, that's got to be it."

Sarah jumped excitedly. "That's great. Halim, you've got to set up an appointment for me tomorrow with the SCA."

"Yes, I have already done that, nine o'clock in the morning. They want to see the stone you did discover and hear your interpretation. As you know, I will need to take it tonight for security. Be prepared to offer your reasons tomorrow, should you want to take it out of the country."

"But, Halim, it's the new excavation I want to talk about."

"You must be patient. I will try to have them in a receptive mood when you arrive. But you must admit this scan you have is very little proof of anything.

Meanwhile, you are all my guests for the Giza light show this evening. We can have some food brought here while we wait. Park security will be on guard all night, so you can put your equipment in the shed by the wall.”

“I want to see Sarah safely back to the hotel,” said O’Conner. “So, how late are we talking here?”

It was almost six-thirty, the eighth of October. The temperature had been ninety degrees that day, but was falling quickly. The prediction that evening was for the mid-50s. As the sun slipped away, the sky’s color turned a mixture of burnt orange and smog grey. The crowds on the viewing walkway by the Sphinx had thinned out and Halim studied the sky.

“The show may be delayed a little, I’m afraid we’re having another inversion tonight.”

Sarah blinked, “I know, my eyes are beginning to burn.”

“I’m sad to say, our great cities, Cairo and Giza, eighteen million polluters. It’s like so many places, air unfit to breath. When it cools off, pollution is trapped, can’t escape. The air will look like fog soon, but the breezes should take it away by about nine.”

“I’d like to see the show,” said Sarah.

“I would too,” said Milliken, “but, O’Conner, if you want to pack it in for the day, I can walk Sarah back to the hotel. I’ve been in Egypt for the last year. You guys are still fighting jet lag and a full day’s work.”

O’Conner stretched, “I think I’ll take you up on that.”

The crew was staying at the historic Mena House Hotel, a short distance from the Sphinx. Built as a palatial hotel for royalty in the 1890's, it had become Milliken's favorite hangout. Its lounge was always a good place to hear the latest rumors of secret chambers and ancient discoveries. He looked forward to later that evening when he would be the center of attention, recounting the discoveries they had made that day.

But for now, the crew was watching the day quickly change. The air became darker and thick with smog. The work lights came on automatically with the darkness, but the banks of display lights had yet to shine. O'Conner was watching Sarah as her expression changed showing a definite concern. He had come to trust her uncanny instincts.

“What is it?”

Sarah's voice became low, forceful and measured. “Someone's coming and they don't have good intentions.”

A pickup truck with a park insignia turned toward them slowly moving up the access road about fifty yards away. Its parking lights were on, but it was hard to see who or how many were inside. As a lone park security man approached, the truck sped up narrowly missing him. Sarah and O'Conner exchanged quick looks. He lunged for one of the aluminum cases on the table. He flipped the snaps open revealing two black Uzi machine guns fit snugly into foam rubber packing.

Jason yelled, “Give me one of those!”

“This is my job — the rest of you, under the table.” O'Conner dodged chairs and tent poles and started running straight at the truck as it gained speed. He didn't hesitate. He brought both guns up, firing one into the windshield and the other into the grill. He

knew with this much firepower he could disable the truck before it got close to the tent. Then an awful thought struck him; what if this was a diversion? He flashed a look back over his shoulder. He could barely see through the smog, but there they were, shapes of two men running toward the back of the tent. He looked again at the truck as the driver rolled out of his door and started running away.

The vehicle kept coming. Then it exploded in a blinding flash, a deafening roar and the force of concussion, and then as if in slow motion he saw a piece of metal fender coming straight at him.

Sarah stood up to see where O'Conner was and a man grabbed her from behind and began dragging her out of the tent. Another man with a gun, pointed at the others, put the capstone in a bag secured across his chest and ran to help subdue Sarah. As she squirmed, they picked her up. She fought them, struggling as they tried to run with her. One began forcing a strip of black tape over her mouth. She had one chance, she screamed.

“TU-JU!”

Milliken and Halim were up, ready to help, but one man still managed to wave his gun at them during the struggle. They stopped. Then through the haze they saw a strange apparition began to envelope the wrestling threesome. A swirling semi-transparent black form, almost ghost-like, moved with blurring speed around the abductors. There were white flashes, ripping and growling sounds, the smell of wild musky animal, and resonating fear...fear so paralyzing no one made a sound. In seconds it was over. Both men lay motionless on the ground, blood spraying in a pulsating mist from their heads. Sarah fell away, exhausted as the apparition faded.

Milliken and Halim didn't know which direction to run. Sarah looked okay, but O'Conner was in bad shape. Halim dialed 911, shouting for police and an ambulance at their location as Giza Park security drove up with their own emergency vehicles. Soon spot lights, armed men and sirens invaded the soft cool air. Halim bent on a knee and held Sarah as she sat propping herself up on one arm, shaking on the hard limestone floor. She looked up into Halim's worried eyes and over his shoulder to the face of the Sphinx shrouded in smog...timeless, impassionate, and inscrutable.

Chapter Three

New Mexico, USA

In the clear bright morning, a black B2 Stealth bomber using terrain-following and avoidance radar, skimmed the surface at four hundred miles an hour, just two hundred feet above the red mountaintops of eastern New Mexico.

A female voice broke the cockpit silence. “This is Kirtland control, AV8, B2 Spirit, we’ve got your beacon at two hundred miles out, you are clear on runway one. You’ll be met at our climate controlled hangar, that’s number three, third on the right, third door, west side — over.”

“Will you be meeting us control?” said a smiling Major Jeff Palmer, mission commander.

“I’d love to AV8, but someone’s got to keep everyone else out of your way. Advise sixteen thousand feet on approach from ninety miles out. You don’t want to scare the women and children—over.”

“I’ve got to meet this woman,” said Palmer, off mic to Captain Darren Sims, his pilot and Technical Specialist.

“Yeah, like you’ll have time for that,” said Sims. “She’s probably a Tech Sergeant, anyway, and you’ll get another report in your file. Best if you just check the lights for computer malfunctions. We’re goin up to 16... hey and if you look quick, you can see Las Vegas, New Mexico, at four o’clock. The original Vegas, ‘The Meadows,’ it’s the legendary hideout of the Dodge City Gang of 1879 and their leader, Justice of the Peace, Hoodoo Brown. Many historians call him, ‘the baddest cowboy of them all.’”

“Yippi-ki-yae,” said Palmer. “Set the way back machine. We’ll swoop down there and clean ‘em up.”

B2 flights could be downright boring because computers were programmed to do most everything, so to keep themselves alert they would often research trivia about sites they’d see on their journey.

The men had become close friends during their training at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs and then had requested in their orders to be stationed together. They ran missions in the B2 during the Iraqi invasion of 2003. Palmer was in his mid-thirties, two years older than Sims. Both had convinced each other to volunteer and become test pilots and astronaut trainees. Whenever they could, they enjoyed extreme maneuvers, pushing their machines to find any flaws. The week before, they put their plane through a test, dropping eighty, five hundred pound smart bombs on separate targets in twenty-two seconds. It had been an amazing demonstration. The exercise proved that, using only half the weapons of Global Strike — all allied planes and missiles — ten thousand targets could be attacked almost simultaneously. The next test mission scheduled would have had them demonstrate what they could do loaded with one hundred ninety-two SDBs, Small Diameter Bombs, but a change of orders put them on their way to Kirtland Air Force Base at Albuquerque.

The color-coded lights on the cockpit controls went from dim to bright as the runway came into view. Air speed dropped to two hundred miles per hour and the computer system guided the aircraft on a circular pattern around Albuquerque. Then, after clearance, they began a slow glide into the vector of approach. Touchdown... and the force of full flaps and breaks jerked them forward.

“It’s nice to feel a little adrenaline again,” said Palmer. “I was starting to dose off.”

“Yeah,” said Sims. “I was about ready to make an omelet.”

Palmer chuckled, “I keep telling them, the kitchen in here is nice, but we’ve got to have a barbeque next time they upgrade. We’ll call it the B3—barbeque, beer and bombs.”

After slowing to taxi speed, Palmer steered the plane around the loop and back to the climate-controlled, pristine hanger designated for billion dollar aircraft. They were met by an Air Policeman next to a tan desert camouflage Humvee. As they stepped from the plane carrying a change of clothes in light duffle bags, the AP saluted and introduced himself while handing each one of them a large manila envelope.

“I’m Sergeant Johnson. I’ll take you to transit housing and you can change. Then I’ve been instructed to see you get our best Kirtland hospitality at the Officer’s Club for lunch.”

“Thank you, Airman,” replied Palmer.

They threw their bags in the back, got in and rode off the flight line toward their temporary apartment.



Major General Sam St. Mark watched the B2 arrive through binoculars while standing on a distant outcrop of sand and rock south of the Air Base on the Sandia Tech-Four testing range. That was his plane. He felt exhilarated to see its sleek, almost

invisible, thin form land so gracefully. He thought about how his project and that plane could change the world.

Sandia National Research Laboratory is on Kirtland Air Force base land in Albuquerque and covers 4.4 square miles. Employing about eighty-five hundred people, it is one of the county's foremost testing labs for the U.S. Department of Energy, Homeland Security, and Defense. Managed by the Lockheed Martin Corporation, different multi-million dollar divisions produce and test everything from robots to nuclear weapons devices to biofuel experiments for both military and civilian application.

Most of St. Mark's career had been spent in the Nuclear Weapons Division with pulsed power technology. PPT is used to generate and apply energetic beams and high-power energy pulses. Today's demonstration will show the latest in advanced weapon systems and surveillance technology. The event will take place outside, for the first time. The audience will be a select group of scientists, politicians and Pentagon officials.

The wind was light out of the southwest and the sun hung bright and warm in the clear October sky. It was the kind of day the General had ordered. He always enjoyed it when God gave him the days he asked for.

The dignitaries would be arriving soon and he felt a bit anxious, so he walked alone away from the test site to a small hill overlooking Tech Area Four. He watched the crew finish putting up a large tent to shade the guests. He thought about how the demonstration would be the most important culminating event in his long career. He said a prayer of gratitude. His wife, Summer, had reminded him to say his prayers daily and he could hear her words now: "Make sure you say a prayer of gratitude, they are the most transforming." He thought of his good fortune in meeting Summer. How unique she

was. He thought of how they met on their morning runs at the University of Arizona, how they schemed so she could come with him when he was accepted to West Point, their wedding at Prophecy Rock on the Hopi reservation, his master's and doctorate degrees at Columbia. His passion had been the study of fusion energy and free-electron lasers. He remembered what truly motivated him, testing theories that appeared to be part science and part magic because they couldn't be fully explained. That's why he found his wife so interesting. She helped him understand the basic wisdom of tribal medicine healers. He used this knowledge effectively as he pushed his creative experiments past the thresholds of science and into metaphysics. She had told him, "The old ones say, all things have *hikwsi* and must stay in balance. What they mean," she explained, "is all things are endowed with energy and that energy has a frequency. When the energy is in balance, it resonates with the Creator and is good; when that energy is out of balance and impure, its frequency disrupts the harmony of energy around it. All energy seeks perfect resonance with the Creator and we must help through our ceremonies and prayers to maintain it."

So often she had been his sounding board, balancing his energies and opening his vision, giving him a clarity that had become lost in the world of scientific skepticism. He thought of the day when he had proposed. She said there was something important he must know first, because it might make him change his mind. He always enjoyed remembering their conversation that day.

"Do you believe in witches?" she had said.

"You mean like the fairy tales, Snow White's queen or the Wicked Witch of the West?"

“Something like that; magic witches who can put a spell on you for good or evil.”

“I’d have to say, I don’t believe it.”

“Well, there’s your problem. Once you don’t believe in something, you shut the door to all the possibilities about that which you might discover.”

“What’s that got to do with us?”

“One reason I left the Hopi was because I had been branded a witch for demonstrating knowledge of what the Hopi call Yayawimpkia or Yaya magic. When I was eighteen, I healed an elder of stomach cancer. The cure came to me from a Katchina dream. It was like a month after I performed a forbidden fire ceremony for the elder in the sacred kiva at Hotevilla. The spirits told me to mix several plant leaves, some were poisonous, with plankton from a ceremonial spot at the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon. I dried and burned the plants. The elder inhaled the smoke in a daily ritual for nine days and was cured...Do you believe me?”

“Well, I want to. It may take me a little time to understand this. Can you tell me more about the ceremony, what did the Katchinas tell you, what leaves did you use, could you make it again?”

“Whoa...it’s important that you know something first. The elders of my clan had taught me from an early age, that healing power comes in circles. First you prepare yourself, then you ask, then you wait, then if your heart is pure, and your motives are good, you get the right answer. Then through ceremonies you send back prayers of thanks and gratitude, the energy flows around. I can only reveal the wisdom I have received if you are properly prepared to respect it.”

Then, with a twinkle in her eye, she smiled and hugged him saying, “It may take a lifetime of training, but I’m ready to get started.”

He had been amazed by the clarity of her wisdom. Their conversations were like a light switch. He felt turned on, intellectually, emotionally, passionately.

“So, I take it that’s a yes?” Yes, his life had truly been interesting with her. In their thirty-three years together she had secretly healed and helped many people from senators to homeless veterans and Sam St. Mark felt truly blessed... Then his satellite cell phone rang.

The caller ID read Summer’s number.

“What’s up?”

“Your daughter just called.”

He could feel the tension and concern in her voice. “Is she O.K.?”

“Yes, but she’s distraught and very worried. She’s with O’Conner in a Cairo hospital, he’s unconscious with shrapnel wounds. Someone tried to abduct her at the Sphinx a couple of hours ago. O’Conner shot out their truck, but it exploded. She just finished giving her story to the Egyptian police and the FBI. They will be guarding her now.”

The General’s voice rose in urgency. “Do they know who they were — what they wanted?”

“No, one got away in the dark and the two who grabbed her were killed. That part of it the police are having a problem with, but they’ve let her alone to be with O’Conner now. She’s trying to focus and get herself composed; as soon as she does, we’re going to perform a *hikwsi* ceremony for him.”

Both Summer and Sarah were masters at reading and balancing the life force in people. St. Mark had personally experienced the power of their cooperative energy work for healing after a lab experiment almost blinded him several years ago. Once again, he had become a believer in their ancient wisdom. But now he felt helpless. Sarah needed his reassurance and support and he was tied up, half a world away, giving a demonstration.

“She knows you’ve got your hands full right now,” said Summer.

“I’ve got to call her anyway. And I’m going to make sure the FBI e-mails me everything they find out. Text me if anything new comes your way, okay? I’ll talk to you soon, love you, bye.”

He called Sarah, but her phone went into message. He called his secretary and told her the news and asked that she contact the FBI office in Cairo and request the latest on the investigation. Worried and determined, he made his way back to the test site, distracted, but committed to giving everyone a good show. Maybe I could arrange some things, call in some favors with the flight exercise to help her, he thought. I’ve got some leeway here and I’ll use it.



After a shower and change of clothes, the B2 pilots were ready to eat. All they’d had that morning was an energy drink and a power bar. The warm sun and the thin dry air were invigorating as they climbed back in the Humvee for their next destination, the Officer’s Club and a martini lunch.

“General St. Mark is expecting you at 13:30 gentlemen,” said the Air Policeman. “I’ll be back at 13:10 to drive you out to the test-site in Tech Area 4 on the Southern Sandia range.”

As they had lunch, Palmer sat quietly reading the contents of his envelope, which was only a one-page schedule of events for the demonstration that day. He pursed his lips and raised his left eyebrow. “The who, where and when are spelled out, but how about the - what and why? Can’t you give me a hint,” he said to Sims who was pushing a mound of French fries into his mouth.

“Need to know, Jeffery, my man, some of us - just a little higher on that list.” Sims as Technical Officer on this assignment had been briefed before the mission. He had to memorize a two-inch thick manual for an entirely new Department of Defense surveillance/weapon system.

“Oh,” said Palmer, “I thought it was because it just takes you longer to get stuff through that thick gnarly head of yours.”

“That, too.”

“I suppose, I’ll thank you for knowing all that later.”

“You will worship me for the Nubian Prince that I am.”

“Either that,” said Jeff grinning, “or watch you screw up and they’ll march your tight ass back to Nubia.”

The pair finished their lunch, deciding to forgo the martinis until this evening. Palmer signed the complimentary check and they made their way to front of the building and the waiting driver. After winding south across the desert and going by a series of small installations, they came to a dirt road that took them toward a white building about

the length of three football fields. They turned again and passed several other small buildings until the driver finally turned coming up to a circular area with a large camouflaged tent. The structure had its side flaps down, but a door was open in front. Two small busses and a few other cars were parked on the side.

As Palmer and Sims left the Humvee, they were met by civilian security agents who examined their I.D. badges and letters of introduction. Then they had to check their cell phones and other electronic devices that might be used to record any of the demonstration. After clearing their pockets and getting a quick metal scan, they made their way to the viewing area. A small mountain range rose up in front of them about a mile away. The terrain was only populated by what the locals called scrub brush, a term Palmer had always found amusing. To the northeast a small hill was covered by several buildings, some domed, some round, some square. The most prominent structure was a circular chrome building with an array of chrome metal pieces projected out of an opening in the top.

Sims pointed to it. “That would be the satellite killer, the Starfire Optical Range.”

Palmer nodded in agreement, he had heard of it; an Air Force facility testing lasers to disrupt satellite communications. Many countries, both friendly and hostile, were developing them, so now the U.S. had to build new, better shielded military satellites or risk being deaf and blind in the sky.

A young woman met them at the tent door. “You must be Major Palmer and Captain Sims. I’m Katherine Carin, assistant to the Deputy Director of Nuclear Weapons. General St. Mark said he’d like to see you both before the demonstration begins. He’s standing next to the TV screen on the far side.”

The men maneuvered through a mixed crowd of about forty people. High ranking officers of all branches of the military were represented. Palmer recognized the chairs of the military affairs committee for the House and Senate. Sims nudged him. “Isn’t that the Secretary of Defense?”

“Yeah, we look like the only nobodies in the room.”

General St. Mark was standing next to a large flat screen TV monitor set on top of a six foot high black metal cabinet. As the men approached, St. Mark acknowledged them and motioned to the woman he was standing with. “Good afternoon, gentlemen, I’m General St. Mark. I want to introduce you to my boss at Sandia, Jean Phillips, Director of Nuclear Programs. She and I go way back to when we just started fusion development in the seventies.”

The pilots introduced themselves and shook hands as St. Mark continued, “You boys will have the opportunity to witness the result of some of our work today. Let me give you a preview.” They excused themselves and followed the general to a device sitting on top of a low flat trailer. There were three donut shaped objects stacked on top of one another, each about six inches high and six feet across. They were covered in a crème colored ceramic material. In the center a shiny blue tube connected them to a platform on top with two thin vertical wheels, each three foot high and three foot apart. In between, the wheels were connected to an array of mirrored components pointing out through an opening in the center of a flat square, covered with dozens of domed crystals. The whole assembly was connected by a thick orange cable to the black cabinet the TV screen sat on about twenty feet away.

“This will be your friend for the next few weeks,” said St. Mark. “This is the Holy Grail, Shiva and Vishnu, Alpha and Omega. Don’t let me intimidate you, but you men are to become legendary like Helios and Amun Ra. With this machine in your B2, you’ll have power like the sun at your command. After the demonstration, we’ll brief you on your mission, but now we’ll show you what it can do.”

Katherine Carin stood at the microphone. “Would everyone please take a seat.” Chairs had been lined up in rows on the right side of the machine about fifteen feet away. After introductions of attendees, Sandia’s president welcomed everyone and introduced General St. Mark, who walked to the center microphone stand.

“This has been a remarkable journey for me and my team. We’ve been working on this for most of our professional careers. It is no cliché when I say what you see before you will change the world. It is more than we ever imagined it would be, but really, it was literally one stupendously funded foot in front of the other that made it a reality. I would like to thank all you who believed in and continued to fight for this project.”

St. Mark took the wireless mic off the stand and walked over to trailer. Gesturing toward it with his hand, he said, “We call this the Terascope. A Terrestrial Energy Resonance Accelerator. It’s a variable field, pulse-powered gamma ray laser with a synchronized continuous spectrum multi-lens particle ray telescopic camera. It’s powered by a break through in fusion energy. The three round stacked modules are actually a fusion reactor that delivers up to ten yottawatts. That’s not spelled y-o-d-a as in Star War’s Yoda, it’s y-o-t-t-a. Ten yottawatts is the closest any device has come to duplicating the luminosity of the sun, which is three hundred eighty-six yottawatts.

Speaking of Star Wars, the Terascope is no planet killer, Death Star laser, but it can do some amazing things.”

“Now, I’d like to introduce another member of the team who has provided endless creative optimism the whole way, Doctor Jen Cheng, from Taiwan. She will tell you more, as physicist Doctor Gary Howell and I prepare to run the Terascope through its paces.”

“Good afternoon,” said Cheng, a tall slender woman with energetic eyes and a manic rapid speech. Fortunately for her audience, she learned to speak with a perfect western American accent in order to be understood. She began by pointing to the array of objects sitting on top of the fusion reactor. “The carousel you see with the vertical wheels can be positioned like a gyroscope to direct and focus the laser beam through the series of reflectors between them. Unlike previous lasers the Terascope can project a beam to target as small as a pinhole or as wide as forty feet across. What’s even more significant is it can be set to accelerate elements at various depths. The beam can be pulsed from one to fifteen shots per second for up to three seconds at a time. Doctor Howell is programming the carousel to a target half way up the mountain about a mile away. The center square, covered with crystals, forms the lenses of the telescopic camera. The camera is programmed to receive three dimensional images of certain elements. There is also a linear real time targeting camera sitting on top. The monitor has a picture of what Doctor Howell is entering on his computer.”

A green screen appeared with a check list of dozens of elements. Howell was standing at a large black metal shelf attached and supported to the side of the black equipment cabinet. He tapped on the keyboard while staring at a small monitor screen

before him. Next to his computer was a small metal box. The box was attached by a cable to the reactor. The monitor showed that he checked uranium 238, plutonium and tritium. He then set the coordinates through the Global Positioning System for the locator pulse to check for depth. He opened the lid on the box, grasped a lever, like an automotive gear shift knob, pushed in the button on the side with his thumb and pushed the lever forward. The Terascope fired a millisecond pulse, invisible and inaudible. Momentarily, white numbers appeared on the monitor screen, 6,460 feet to 6,500 feet. The monitor switched to real time imaging as the camera began to zoom into a large sliding metal door at the end of a winding dirt road halfway up the mountain.

“That pulse gave the range of the elements we selected. Now what we expect to see, when we fire incremental pulses,” said Howell, “is not the physical objects themselves, but the photon energy auras that surround them after their protons and positrons have been excited. The camera is synced with the laser to photograph the energy auras at the frequencies we program. The decay is rapid and falls off sharply leaving no residual waves, so the photographs must happen simultaneously.”

St. Mark continued, “What we have done is based on the principle that everything is energy and each thing vibrates at its own particular frequency. The laser excites elements within the field which causes objects to give off glowing auras. The camera is programmed to recognize the images and the frequencies we want to see.”

The crowd was silent watching the monitor as Howell set additional parameters for the laser that included wood, chrome, plastic and steel. He pushed the knob forward again. St. Mark was reading calculation on another connected computer screen when his satellite phone began vibrating in his pocket. He pushed two keys for a programmed text

message saying he would call back soon. He cleared his throat, "It will take a few moments for the computer array to render the images." No sooner had he finished speaking, than a scan came on the large monitor. Clearly visible was a glowing cone shaped object with items glowing in different colors inside it. It rested on a glowing pallet next to the glowing outline of a table. By comparison, the cone was about two feet higher than the table top.

"As you can see," said St. Mark, "the images are rendered in three dimensions. That's the benefit of firing multiple pulses and using a multi-lens camera. Only the chemical composition of the programmed items shows up. That's why they appear to be suspended in a void. Does anyone know what we're looking at?"

Palmer's face lit up. "That's a MIRV warhead, possibly a Trident W-88."

"Very good," said St. Mark. "It is a MIRV, a multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle. The outer casing photos are grey in color, the uranium-238 is radiating in yellow while the plutonium glows in reddish orange. The computer detects subtle energy differences from the camera images and enhances the colors so we can see them better. The tritium gas in the upper center of the cone shows up as green."

Cheng walked forward and St. Mark handed her the microphone. "This was the main mission of the Terascope project, to safely discover and monitor nuclear devices and their components around the world. But we discovered it could do much more. When the laser is focused at full strength on a specific object, it has the capability of altering its chemical make-up. We can literally make materials annihilate themselves and turn into plasma, an accelerated energy state. Also, in nuclear weapons we have the option of keeping the neutrons separate or allowing them to chain react setting off the

device. It can also detonate conventional explosives as well. Obviously, you are all sworn to secrecy with this knowledge, because if the world finds out it will make a lot of people very nervous.”

The audience appeared stunned at what they just heard and seen. A senator from the Armed Services Committee spoke. “Two questions, how will this be delivered to the target and what are its peace time capabilities?”

“I’ll take that one, Doctor Chen,” said St. Mark. “Positioning the Terascope in a satellite would be wonderful, but currently they are too vulnerable to ground-based laser disruption. I’d like Major Palmer and Captain Sims to stand.” The men looked at one another and rose slowly from their chairs. “These two men will be the first to wield the power of the Terascope. This model has been created to fit in the bomb bay of a B2 Stealth Bomber. However, we’re not just going to let them loose with it. We will be in communication with them at all times and there are fail safe events that must occur during programming and firing the device that make it necessary for redundant approval before it can be used in any capacity.” The audience eagerly applauded as Palmer and Sims sat down. “Now to the peaceful uses, Doctor Cheng.”

“First let me say what you must all be wondering — how does the laser affect people. In its wide dispersion mode, it’s like getting a full body MRI. In its tightly focused form, it’s like...well, it’s like the wrath of God. It could boil a lake, start raging forest fires, ignite volcanoes and vaporize a city. However, those things are not on the menu. On the human improvement side, it can annihilate cancer cells, pathogens and tumors in a non-invasive way. And... it can even keep your skin from aging. Those experiments are just beginning. We’re configuring a new Terascope for medical use. So,

what we're looking at is nothing less than the potential of eternal life...or the 'End of Days.'" A buzz of conversation erupted from the visitors as several hands went up. Cheng continued, "We will take your questions after the demonstration. Now, Doctor Howell has something more to show."

"How about we look at one benefit far less grim," Howell shouted, as he typed in new parameters which showed on the large monitor. "The action I'm requesting now is to look for the presence of a hydrous phosphate produced from copper and aluminum in the mountain due east."

The targeting carousel spun left toward the middle of the rising slope. A depth from one hundred feet was set in a window forty-by-forty feet square. The targeting camera zoomed and Howell pressed the lever. Within about twenty seconds, rock formations in small veins glowed over large sections of the screen in three dimensions.

"We had a suspicion it was there," said Howell, "turquoise — too bad we're on a restricted government installation."

St. Mark walked from his terminal up to the Terascope and faced the assembly. "I hope you'll agree what you've seen here today will change the world. Our first priority, and I'm speaking from the clear vision of our president and the military chiefs of staff, is to stop nuclear proliferation. We want to know what weapons rogue nations have and stop them. Second we believe we can save lives by performing underground geological surveys to detect and stop possible earth quakes and volcanoes and finally we want to see if we can affect storms. Then, after our two pilots here have done all that, we can look for precious minerals and oil. We start tomorrow. That concludes our demonstration...Thank you."

The group stood and pressed their way forward to get a closer look at the Terascope and ask questions of the three presenters. Palmer and Sims moved away from the crowd to an open area of the tent. They were both quiet, staring at the animated crowd. Palmer turned to look out the tent door at the empty desert landscape. “It’s going to take me a minute to absorb all of this. What the hell are we in for?”

Sims moved closer. “We take it one wrath of God at a time, like we always do.”

That brought a smile to Palmer. “You’re right, but I’m the one with my finger on the trigger.”

“They’ll talk us through everything, you heard them. Six layers of redundancy.”

“Yeah, just so long as it ain’t six layers of errors.”

Jen Cheng approached with a smile. “Your driver should be returning shortly. He will take you to the mission briefing room. We will be joining you as soon as things break up here.”

The men looked out the door to see their Humvee coming up the dirt road. They walked out and waited, got in back, and settled in. As Palmer looked out the window he said, “I still feel like I’ve entered some altered state of reality. I’m not glowing am I?”

Back in the tent, it looked like general’s row by the Terascope, as the men and women chattered excitedly. After a few minutes of what ifs, St. Mark excused himself to place a phone call. He walked back to the rise he had stood on before and dialed Summer. She answered right away. “He didn’t make it... I’m sorry... There wasn’t anything anyone could do.”

“How is Sarah?”

“She’s performing a passing ceremony for him now. They’ve left them alone for a few minutes.”

“I’ll call soon. If she calls back tell her — O.K.?”

“O.K.”

“I’ll be home by six.” And he pressed the red key.

Chapter Four

Abaseya Hospital, East Cairo, Egypt

Milliken and Halim had just sat down in a waiting room across the hall from O’Conner’s room. They were both concerned for Sarah and wanted to be there for her when she finished the parting ceremony for her friend and Godfather. The pungent smell of wood smoke filled the area. Sarah opened the door carrying her prayer feather and a small bundle containing sage and a three inch round copper plate with ashes on it. She had smudged the room, a process of purifying an area by sending prayers and invocations to the Creator with sage smoke. She smiled wistfully, seeing the two men get up from their chairs and come to join her. She had been with O’Conner, through his surgery and hopeful recovery, but she couldn’t save him. Now she tried to subdue her seething anger at those who would waste his life. “It wasn’t his time,” she told them. “He didn’t want to go. I reassured him it would be all right and to let go. He finally accepted...and he’s passed on.” Her eyes watered in sadness and a tear slowly made its way down her cheek. “We will meet again.”

Two men approached from both ends of the hall. They wore khaki suits with sports shirts and no ties. They were familiar, from the legal attaché office of the American Embassy in Cairo, in reality, FBI agents. They were part of a worldwide network, in some seventy international cities, to assist with crime and terrorism. Sarah and her friends had already spent nearly two hours answering their questions about the night’s events. The agents had concluded by saying their office would provide security for her until she returned to the states.

“Sarah,” one of the men called. “Agent Sears. I just got off the phone with your father. He wants to call, but didn’t want to interrupt your time with O’Conner.”

“I’ll call him now,” she said.

“Before you do, we want to share some information. Everyone has gone over the scene in detail. One thing we can’t explain is this gold lapel pin that looks like a radiating sun rising from the horizon. On the back are some hieroglyphics or something. Why don’t you take a look?” The agent handed the pin to Sarah and both Halim and Milliken crowded in.

“Part of it looks Egyptian,” said Halim.

“It’s a mix of symbols,” said Sarah. “It starts with Sumerian, then Egyptian, then Jewish and ends with Christian. It says, I will or all will – pray or bow - to the golden or radiant – sun or dawn.”

“All will bow to the golden dawn?” said Sears. “We’ll run everything that might fit and see what we can find.”

“I may know something,” Halim stammered. “I’m not part of it, you know, but I provided a tour of the temples at Giza to a man who said he was Chief of the Second Order of the Golden Dawn, Robert Uriah MacGregor. We had quite a discussion about ancient Egyptian magic. He said he takes his orders for the organization through channeling the dictations of the Chiefs of the Third Order, those who have transcended to a higher plane.”

“How long ago was he here?” the agent questioned. “Could this be his?”

“It’s possible, it’s been almost a year now. If he lost it then, I would think someone would have turned it in or kept it.”

“Hard to say, what kind of group is this?” Sears continued.

“Actually there are several groups in the world today with that name. Most are based somewhat on the original organization started in England in the late eighteenth century. It’s a mystical, magic society whose concepts are derived from Christian mysticism, Jewish Cabala, the religion of Ancient Egypt, Freemasonry, Alchemy, Theosophy and most anything else that fits their philosophy.”

Sears frowned. “It sounds like they’re really out there. Could they have been involved in this?”

Halim paused, folding his hands together and pressing them to his lips. “If they knew what Sarah was after at the Sphinx and imagined it had magical powers, they might have had a motive. But, why try to abduct her? Why not just take the capstone and be done with it?”

“That’s the question we’ve been working on,” said the second agent.

“Why is the capstone worth killing for?” said Sears.

Sarah felt a sense of dread, thinking of the Mexico experience. “Well, if they thought it was like the other two I found.”

“And why is that?”

Sarah paused. “They’re made out of platinum. The going rate for five pounds is around thirty-two thousand dollars apiece. The one we found yesterday was different, it had a thin silver finish over stone. Its worth is more historical. However, collectors might pay much more for any of them.”

“People have died for much less,” said Sears. “But still, in this case, it would seem there must be more. It’s not consistent that a spiritualist organization would be fencing artifacts.”

“The problem is,” said Sarah, “No one except those closest to me and the Egyptian Antiquities staff knew anything about my excavations.”

“Well, we’ll work on the Golden Dawn link. Meanwhile the coroner is mystified as to how those two who grabbed you died.” Sears studied their faces. “Does anyone have anything to add?” All three remained stone silent. Then Milliken spoke. “As Hamlet said, there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

“Yes, something is rotten, indeed,” said Sears. “So, if Shakespeare here can help us we’d be grateful.” Another long silent pause ensued. “Okay then, Dan and I are going to stick with Sarah until our replacements arrive. So, Mister Haidar and Mister Milliken, we need to keep track of you, as well.” He handed them a business card. “Here’s my cell, let me know your location at all times. Right now it’s just past 3 a.m., you could all use some rest.”

As they walked down the hall toward the elevators, Sarah thought of how she could have explained the deaths. She now knew what caused them. No one but her mother and uncle would believe her. She wondered what Milliken and Halim were thinking. They must have seen something, but said nothing. The realization she could summon such a power was awesome, delicious and even humorous. Milliken would think twice about taking advantage of her again. The bully girls from high school would really be surprised. They had even called her the catty bitch. Then her mother’s words

came back to her with crystal clarity. It had been the day she completed her Hopi ceremonies and received her power animal katchina, the wild cat. It came to her as the most sacred animal of the Mayan, the jaguar.

You have taken your place, to use again the power of your soul's progression. You have joined the heritage of our family line, to live as our grandmother lived at the emergence to the fourth world. You will be outcast, to follow behind your people, to live at the edge of their world, feared and loved but never accepted. You do not use your powers, they use you. Make sure you keep a pure heart and your powers will never be abused.

Then her satellite phone rang. She took a seat on a cushioned bench across the hall. "Hello Dad, I just left Jim." Her lips began to quiver and she broke down crying. Her words came out in sobbing breaths. "He's gone, it's my fault."

"No, listen to me," her father instructed. "He was where he always wanted to be — next to you — protecting you. Don't blame yourself. We'll catch the real killers."

Sarah wiped her tears and took some deep breaths. Then she spoke scornfully in a low measured tone. "Yes, I wish I had that truck driver here in front of me now."

"You've got to let the FBI do their job. You just stay safe."

"The FBI is with me, now, they said they'll stay with me. They have just one clue, a lapel pin from a group called Golden Dawn. I just thought of something, remember when the Dhali Lama visited the Hopi and you and Mom took me to see him. There were some other people with him. One of them recognized you. When he came over he said he was there with Robert Uriah MacGregor of the Golden Dawn. He acted surprised when you asked who that was."

“Yes, that man works at Sandia as a project auditor from DoD, Desmond Morianton. I can’t figure out a connection, but I’ll check on him, be sure to tell the FBI, as well.”

“Dad...this event caused the Egyptians to shut down excavation at Giza indefinitely. I’ve got to get back out there. I still haven’t found what I’m looking for. I know it’s there, I just can’t prove it. And the Antiquities Council said they won’t let us continue if all we have is speculation.”

“I’ve got some good news for you then, we will be sending a surveillance plane over there tomorrow as part of a Middle Eastern run. It will have a new GPR technique that will bring your capstone into 3-D clarity, if it’s there. In fact, we’ve scheduled a complete scan of the Giza Plateau. It’s interesting how many top brass want to know about that. But, my real concern right now is that you’re safe.”

“I’ve got two guards round the clock.” Her voice lowered as she turned away from the others in the hall. “And tell Mom that Tu-Ju protected me. She’ll know what I mean.”

“Okay. I know you think you’re super woman and maybe you are, but don’t do anything risky, all right?”

“Don’t worry. I’m going back to the hotel and get some sleep. I’ll call tomorrow...love you... bye-bye.”

Chapter Five

Sandia National Laboratory, New Mexico

The general was worried. He had kept the war game scenarios in his imagination to a minimum, but a few would always creep in when nothing else occupied him. His worst fears were that his family would be used to get to him — what he knew, what he had and what he could give in exchange. He knew what the prize would be, but how did the Terascope fit into all this, and why? And what could Morianton possibly have to do with it? The man had the highest clearances, besides the abductors were Egyptian. I will look into it, he thought, as he made his way back down the slope to the parking lot where people were climbing into the buses and Howell and Cheng waited for him. Others began taking the tent down and attaching the terascope trailer to a truck. An air-tight metal cover was clamped down over it. St. Mark got in the white SUV with the others and drove back to Kirtland.



Palmer and Sims sat together on one side of a conference table reading parts of a technical manual on the Terascope. Flipping pages, Palmer said, “The way this fits in the bomb bay makes me think of the flying saucer in *Independence Day*.”

“I was thinking more about the robot in, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, the way the tanks were annihilated.”

“*Star Trek* too, their lasers made things disappear.”

“So, what do you think,” said Sims posturing in his chair like Rodin’s sculpture. “Do people imagine these things into existence or do they already exist somewhere and we just tune them in remembering how to put them together.”

“I feel myself slipping into that altered state of reality again,” said Palmer.

“Maybe it’s just a parallel universe you’re slipping into.”

Palmer fought off a yawn. “It’s probably where we’ll end up if Yoda’s reactor implodes on us at twenty-five thousand feet.”

“Hey, you’re the one who talked me into the wild blue adventure of being a test pilot.”

Palmer put his head down on his arm at the table and closed his eyes. “Fame and glory,” he said. “Someone’s got to do it.”

The door opened and the General marched in bring the men to their feet. “As you were — well maybe not exactly as you were. Get something to drink. Do a few push-ups. Miss Cheng and Mr. Howell need to spend about an hour with you. Then you can take a nap. I need to do some research at personnel. I’ll join you in the hangar later.” Cheng and Howell sat down across the table as St. Mark walked out, shutting the door.

As he made his way toward the SUV again, he punched the speed dial for Chief of Security; O’Conner’s number for twenty years. He felt a sudden plunging sadness in his chest. “Wayne, this is St. Mark. Did you hear about Jim?”

“Yeah, I just read the e-mail. Killed while providing security for your daughter in Egypt. What can you tell me?”

“No one knows who or why yet, could be an Egyptian terrorist group. I need your help on one thing though. I need clearance to review the records of Desmond Morianton. I’m on my way there. Can you e-mail personnel on that?”

“Better yet, I’ll meet you at their office with the clearance.”

“Great.” Then he called the personnel office at Sandia. “This is General St. Mark. I need to review the personnel records of one Desmond Morianton. The chief will have the clearance. He’ll be with me. In about ten minutes.”

“Yes sir,” came the reply.

As he drove through check points, showing his badge, he pushed his thoughts, trying to organize the events; a truck with explosives, would they have driven it into the tent and killed everyone, damaging the Sphinx? Why? A tragic diversion not intended to kill anyone, except Jim did his job too well, likely. Abduct Sarah, why? Stop the excavation, why? Who knew what she was doing? Is there a connection to me and our work here? Who could know about it in Egypt, how? Sarah doesn’t know anything. A mystic religious group, Golden Dawn, what could they want with Sarah? Maybe she’s on the trail of something much bigger. I’ve got to start with the microcosm and work my way out, he thought.

Wayne Gabel, Chief of Security, was waiting at the counter in personnel when St. Mark arrived. He was no stranger. He had been O’Conner’s deputy for the last eight years. An ex-marine with a perpetual frown, he took everything seriously and was especially grim this time. He took St. Mark by surprise by giving him a sympathetic hug. Then he handed him the file.

“Thanks for your help, Wayne. This should only take a minute.” They walked to a small table and sat down. The general opened the file and began reading the personal part of Morianton’s history — leads a youth choir in the Mormon Temple of Albuquerque, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, where he also serves as a deacon, see travel. On the vacation leave page trips were listed as religious research and retreats: Salt Lake City; Elfers, Florida; Hotevilla, Arizona; Toronto, Canada; Oxford, England; one family trip to Istanbul, Turkey, one there alone just two weeks ago; three to Cairo, Egypt.

St. Mark pondered the information. Salt Lake I can see, not many Mormons in these other places. What’s all this in the Middle East? He checked the family history section. Morianton was a second generation, Egyptian. Religion – Christian; Father - doctor of orthopedics, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Nothing glaring here, he thought, how about FBI notes in the clearance section. He scanned the column. Highest clearance. Interest in occult sciences. Entertained study groups in his home, 114 Hidaway Lane, SE. Albuquerque. That caught his attention, O’Conner would have lived right across the street. Further information included a copy of a magazine article with a picture of Morianton and Robert Uriah MacGregor standing by a Hebrew sign *Har Megido* with a caption, *Hill of Megiddo - Our Last Stand*. The headline read—**Genealogy Search Reveals Ancient Connections. Mormon Revelation of Joseph Smith Confirmed.**

The article went on to say that Mormon founder Joseph Smith’s interpretations of the golden plates an angel delivered to him included names and places in Egypt, Palestine and Syria that he could have had no knowledge of in 1827. Some of the psychic

information he received confused Smith and his wife, who transcribed it, so they left it out of the original Book of Mormon. Morianton and MacGregor studied the newly discovered notes, kept at the tabernacle in Salt Lake City. Their research in Egypt and Syria showed the content of some of those transcriptions pre-dated or expanded on scripture in the Bible. MacGregor stated he was divinely inspired in making the discoveries and Golden Dawn would be making a presentation in Salt Lake City soon.

“Wayne,” said St Mark, “There’s something going on with Morianton. Can you get the FBI to K9 him, he needs to be sniffed out and dogged for a while. We may have a major breach or it may be nothing. I’ll have a formal request with my concerns to you yet today.”

“You got it.”



Cheng and Howell plus an Air Force Colonel and Pentagon strategist, Rene Le Frent, confirmed flight patterns for Palmer and Sims’ first run in the Middle East. Howell said, “The obvious choice in Syria will be al-Kabir. In Iran, you’ll begin with Bushehr and end at Darkhoyen. You’ll also be flying over some targets in Pakistan and Afghanistan for both nuclear and conventional explosives. We’ll be programming exact coordinates during your flights. For that mission you’ll be flying out of Al Musnana air base in Oman.”

Cheng continued, “General St. Mark introduced an additional sortie that could in reality provide some interesting new information. He queried the Joint Chiefs today on

giving the Terascope a chance to provide some archeological information to Egypt in exchange for refueling at the Almasa Air Force Training base in Cairo. The Egyptian government believes we are only testing an advanced ground penetrating radar device. In addition, Egypt and Israel are close to signing a new peace treaty. To sweeten the deal, the U.S. is offering the sale of twelve McDonal Douglas 15E Strike Eagles and six Lockheed F117 Stealth fighters for the Egyptian Air Force. You will have an opportunity to provide a training session to Egyptian military commanders and student pilots on the basics of stealth technology. You'll be spending the night across the road at the Sheraton, where coincidentally, you'll be meeting St. Mark's daughter, Sarah. She gets one copy of the Giza Plateau scans. Halim Haidar, Assistant Director of Antiquities who has been working with her, he will get the other. Any questions?"

Sims frowned, "You mean the standard stealth power point training presentation with video and not an open door invitation?"

"Correct. Thanks for clarifying that. No internal tours. They have an air conditioned hangar for you and they've told us that security will be doubled. They wanted to know if the bird was hot and we told them nothing armed, just research equipment."

"A couple questions," said Palmer. "We're obviously not going to use the video camera you had set up for sighting in the demonstration?"

"No you'll use the same onboard targeting camera you're used to and everything will appear on the heads-up display just as before."

“My second question is, what the hell happens if we have to ditch her. I don’t know a lot about fusion reactors, but a fission reactor going down might have us parachuting into a mushroom cloud.”

“A worthy question,” said Howell. “That is the second part of our briefing. As near as we can tell, and we haven’t blown up a fusion reactor yet, but it appears impossible for any fusion reactor to undergo a large-scale runaway chain reaction. This is because direct contact with the walls of the reactor would contaminate the plasma, cooling it down immediately and stopping the fusion process. Besides which, the amount of fuel contained in your fusion reactor chamber will only be two grams of tritium, enough to sustain the reaction for four hours maximum. A fission reactor needs to contain much more radioactive fuel. You will only be firing up the reactor for short bursts, then shutting it down.”

“Tell us more about the tritium,” said Sims.

Cheng continued, “If tritium were released, being lighter than air, it would rise up into stratosphere where it would soon dilute to concentrations far below the natural background radioactivity of air.”

“And you’ve tested that,” said Palmer.

“Computer simulations,” said Howell.

“But we’re convinced,” said Cheng. “It won’t be long and we’ll be powering everything with fusion reactors.”

“You’ll have to excuse Mr. Palmer, ever the inquisitor,” said Sims. “It’s just we’ve found that things don’t always behave the way their supposed to on the battlefield.”

“Point taken,” said Howell. “And we hope you boys will show us some new tricks, once you’ve got it fully operational.”

Cheng rose from her chair and slid it under the table, saying, “If there are no more questions, we need to go to the hangar and run through the installation with you.”

The pilots stood, stretched, and all walked from the briefing room out into the evening air toward hangar three.

Chapter Six

Party of Truth Headquarters

Damascus, Syria

Baqi stood behind a wooden lectern at the head of the conference table. He rested his hands on an open copy of the Koran and stared transfixed just above the heads of the Judges. An emergency meeting was about to begin. Baqi lowered his eyes and surveyed the room.

“Ahmed will be given glories in heaven,” he said, “glories that await us all.”

“Ala’al din showed his usual worried expression of displeasure. “What news do you have?”

“All did not go as planned. Ahmed had to take the place of one of our brothers of the Golden Dawn. Allah’s ears have told me he was killed in a very mysterious way. No one has an explanation for it yet.”

“The event, though unfortunate, has been in Allah’s design. The Terascope will be within our grasp tomorrow night.” He walked to a map of Cairo and Giza on a side wall. Pointing to a section of eastern Cairo, he said. “Here at Almasa training base, the Terascope will arrive in a U.S. bomber tomorrow night. I have been given a prophetic vision, the path has been laid. I am personally flying there to oversee this mission. Two guards at the base are Hez al Haq warriors. We will have six others from the trusted core of Al-Gama al-Islamiya, two are airline mechanics. They will supply two trucks and a fork lift. One truck will be driven by holy martyrs to block any pursuit. The other will be driven into a shipping container and loaded for passage to Syria. Once we are clear of

any pursuit and on open water, a helicopter will take the device to a warehouse in Palmyra. Again our fates have brought us together with our brothers from the Golden Dawn. They have been excavating at the site of Solomon's temple for the last six months and have made arrangements to close off the Castle of Fakhr-al-Din, the perfect place, they say, to position the laser. From there, we embrace our destiny. As the judges we must all pray for the vision of Allah's will. Our prophesy will soon be realized. The Terascope will show us Solomon's riches beneath the temples when the ancient city was called Tadmor. With it we will rebuild that temple, and the old city temples of Damascus, we will restore the holy sites for the Judgment Day and Mahdi's return. This is my vision, brothers. You will soon be able to go back to your people and make it their vision as well."

Chapter Seven

Sheraton Hotel, Cairo, Egypt

Sarah woke from a dream, hearing someone at her door. “Miss St. Mark,” a voice repeated; a soft knock, then a louder one. “This is agent Schultz. Halim Haidar is here to see you. Are you ready for visitors? He says he can come back.”

Sarah held her forehead. “It’s too early,” she muttered. She tried to remember her dream. She had been running effortlessly alongside a jaguar on a leafy path through the jungle.

“Just a moment”, she shouted, trying to hold on to the euphoric feeling she was experiencing. “Just a moment.” Sarah looked around the room. It took her a moment to get her bearings. The FBI had moved her from the Mena House Hotel in Giza to the Sheraton in Cairo because it was easier to protect her there. She put on a dark purple floor length hooded robe and opened the door.

Halim gasped, and caught himself. “You look beautiful, like a Pharaoh’s priestess in that robe... I’m sorry. I can’t help but admire you no matter the situation.”

“Thank you, but I don’t feel all that beautiful. In fact I feel like the back end of a goat...one of my grandfather’s silly, but accurate descriptions.”

“Can I come in?”

“I’m sorry, please come in. I’ve been so self-absorbed since I got here. I only wanted to complete the excavation and decipher the stone. I’ve had a singular vision for the last six months, one I felt I could control, now, all that’s thrown into chaos.”

Sarah could feel Halim's emotions swelling as his caring, helpful blue aura shifted to logical, structured brown. His tone was remorseful. "I was summoned to a meeting this morning with my boss and the Minister of Culture. The Council of Antiquities is very concerned. They have issued a letter they wanted me to give you. They regret the death of Mr. O'Conner and the trauma it has caused. They feel, until there is some resolution and greater security measures enforced, you will have to suspend your exploration. The Council feels the risk to you and the Sphinx is too great. Had the explosion been any closer to the right paw, the damage could have been catastrophic. And of course, we're not sure the other capstone even exists.

"I understand." Sarah's tone was flat with disappointment. "Did you get any word on a surveillance plane from the U.S. that will scan the plateau? My father said they were getting permission."

"Oh, yes." Halim's voice grew more excited. "I was told the plane would be scanning with a new GPR sometime late this afternoon."

"What if it proves the cap stone is there?"

"Just what kind of scanner could do that?"

"It's top secret. My father said a 3-D picture will be produced. I don't know how, but it's supposed to be pretty amazing. If it proves the capstone is there, do you think the Council would reconsider letting us continue?"

"I will try my best to change their minds."

"Say, would you like to have some breakfast?" Sarah asked, as she walked to the desk phone. "I'm going to call room service."

"Just some tea, I've already had breakfast. I couldn't sleep much last night."

“Oh, I did,” she said yawning. “I was exhausted and now I’m famished.” She punched up the room service extension and ordered whole grain cereal with peaches, grape juice and coffee.

Halim pulled up another chair by the desk and sat down. He paused and looked at Sarah. “I want you to trust me. I want you to find the other capstone. I believe as you do that it’s very important. I must ask you though...what happened last night...those men? I don’t understand what I saw...now I don’t know what I saw, if I saw it at all. Can you help me out here?”

Sarah looked away thoughtfully for a few moments then returned her gaze to Halim. “If I tell you, you have to promise not to reveal it in anyway. If you do, I will deny it and no one will believe you, anyway.”

Halim nodded in approval. “I understand, sometimes truth is stranger than fiction and much harder to believe, but I’d like to try.”

Sarah continued, “There is a ceremony among many native societies. It often occurs along with the transition to adulthood. It’s called a vision quest. The person gets in touch with the spirits and forms a bond with their power animal. It is a life changing experience. Among many tribes the holy men have lost the wisdom to conduct the vision quest thoroughly. Sometimes the pupil’s energy is too impure and unbalanced to achieve any results. I say this because there are many factors in success and just having the ceremony is no assurance anything will happen. On the other hand, sometimes things happen far beyond our understanding. When I took on this sacred mission of validating the Hopi oral history and prophesy, my uncle, a Hopi Priest, took me through ceremonies to prepare me to receive the power of the Katchinas. These are spirits who have

ascended beyond the wheel of life and taken positions of service to the creator on our behalf... Are you still with me?

“Yes, the Buddhist would say the Katchinas have become masters of their karma and transcended time and space, no longer required to re-incarnate. Is that right?”

“Yes, many belief systems have recognized this truth. For the Hopi, it is not just human souls who transcend, but animal souls as well. In my case, my power animal comes from the group soul Katchina of the wild cat. It has come to me as a jaguar. Tu-Ju is its name. My mission required the most powerful animal to guide me in South America, one who was revered by the Mayan, Toltecs and Aztecs, one who could lead me on the trail of the cat. What you saw, when I called its name, was the Jaguar Katchina descending into the physical plane to protect me. The jaguar kills by sinking its fangs into the skull of its prey. No doubt, because of my mission, the jaguar was aided in its power by other ancestral Katchina who have given their energy for this task. It was Tu-Ju who directed me in locating the first two capstones, one in a hidden cave in the mountain Puma’s Claw at Michu Pichu and the other in the Palace of the Jaguars at Teotihuacan, Mexico. That’s where she protected me the first time. That location required extensive excavation because it had newer structures built over it. I found both capstones inside prayer alters, underground in kiva type structures. Two of the contractor’s men were with me at the second discovery. One workman took out a knife planning to kill me and take the stone. They are now sealed in the chamber.”

“I hear your words, but I’m still bewildered. If I hadn’t seen it I would never believe it could happen. It must have terrified you the first time.”

“No, actually, I had an out of body experience during the event. A Katchina spoke to me with a calming reassurance. I was taken to another place and woke up when it was over.”

“Could you direct Tu-Ju to attack just anyone?”

“Its power directs me, not the other way around. I would never try to use it for an evil purpose. Part of the reason I’m telling you this is because I want you to understand how profound my mission is. Something much greater than you and I, the Antiquities Council and the Minister of Culture is at work here. I must be allowed to continue.”

“Yes,” Halim said convincingly, “you must.”

Chapter 8

Sunrise, B2 aircraft above Kansas, Flying to Whitman AFB, Missouri, USA

Home of the US B2 squadron

Both Palmer and Sims were listening to radio transmissions as they flew at twenty-thousand feet above the green-checked farmland of Kansas.

This is Gary Howell at Tech-Four. Time to run a test, guys. You are on course for Whitman. Slow to minimum. We're sending you the computer coordinates now for the target. Verify a trajectory of 65 degrees, surface to forty feet square and punch in these indicators: lithium 6 and beryllium. Do you have visual yet?

"No," said Palmer. We just crossed the Missouri line. We should see the target any minute."

"I've got a lock on target," said Sims. "We're at 47 degrees...55 degrees...60 degrees...firing the locator pulse...we've got the fix...firing the scope."

"We've got an image. Do you see it?" said Palmer

Yes, we got it. It's clear. We're running the Red Storm computer, give us a minute and we'll tell you what we've got, said Howell.

Palmer and Sims high-fived, as they looked at the cockpit monitor screen. A familiar sight flashed on the display, rows of bombs stacked neatly in racks. The full assortment was plainly visible.

Tech-Four back. You probably recognize this picture. We see ten B61 thermal nuclear Mod 7's, twenty- B83 Mod 4's and twelve nuclear tipped Tomahawk Cruise missiles.

“We’ll never be caught with Texas chili on our WMD face again,” said Sims.

“Yeah, this thing could have already saved us a trillion,” said Palmer.

Good morning, this is Jen Cheng with another job for you.

“Good morning Dr. Cheng,” said Palmer. “What’s your pleasure at this fine hour?”

We’ve sent you coordinates for New Madrid, Missouri.

“The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in New Madrid, me thinks,” said Sims.

Laughter came over the headphones.

You’re absolutely right. We want to try the scope out on some geology. New Madrid, Missouri had two of the largest earthquakes in the continental US in 1811 and 1812. The town is at the epicenter of a 200-mile long fault line that produced some recent Earthquakes in the region.

“Our ETA shows us at 10 minutes,” said Palmer.

We’re going to try an incremental layer scan of the earth. We can set the scope from here. It will take a look at forty-foot blocks of Earth, every mile down for six miles. What we need from you is to slow to a minimum and set the firing sequence from 80 to 100 degrees as you fly over.

“That’s shooting straight down,” said Sims. “That’s a pretty rapid sequence.”

Will it work? That’s what we’re here to find out, said Cheng.

“What indicators are you asking?” said Palmer.

No indicators. No locator pulse. We want to see whatever shows up. As you can imagine, this is going to be a huge file. It will take some time to analyze. We'll be committing the Thor's Hammer cluster computer on this one.

"Target acquired," said Sims.

"You've got it," said Palmer, as they flew over New Madrid and the winding Mississippi River. The Terascope flashed numerous textured images on the screen in the cockpit. Palmer couldn't make much of them and he wondered what this serene valley would look like if it ever pulled apart in giant earthquake. The river would go crazy and so would all the towns along it. And what if the fault split further? You've got Lake Michigan sitting there...all that water.

Another beautiful run, guys, said Cheng. The pictures showed the fault and some definite magma activity. We'll let you know the details later. We're going to run the same scan in the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. New coordinates should be showing up now. So, sit back and relax. We'll check in periodically. Tech-Four out.

"Well," said Sims, as he swiveled around in the seat and grabbed a small bag behind him, "time for another butt numbing ride. Just because they built this thing to go six thousand miles without refueling, doesn't mean we can."

"I'm going to take us to fifty thousand, turn my satellite radio to the Chill channel and ride the jet stream."

"And I brought a DVD of *Mars Attacks* and a box of chocolate raisins, said Sims.

"Have a good nap."



Computers automatically ran a couple of short scans while the B2 flew over the Atlantic. Now they were flying over the Mediterranean Ocean passed the islands of Sardinia and Sicily. Crete was visible in the distance to the left.

“Okay,” said Sims. “How about I jump out over the town Hora Sfakion on Crete’s shoreline, stay a few days at the Vritomartis Hotel and you can pick me up on the way back?”

Palmer stretched, twisted his torso and sat up in his seat. “Sounds like the only responsible thing to do. Of course, you packed your Speedos?”

“No need, this hotel is natural all the way.”

“I can see it now, you parachuting on to the beach au-natural.”

“What better way to arrive.”

“Should I call a press conference? What a photo op. You can tell them you’re just an over worked American jet jockey taking a few days off from your hectic schedule of laying a heavy dose of gamma rays on the middle east. That should play well on CNN.”

“Exactly. You did shut off the mic to Tech-Four, didn’t you?”

“Hmm, I don’t know...”

Gentlemen, this is Tech-Four, are we clear?

The General’s resonating voice made both men jump. Palmer keyed the mic.

“Yes, you’re clear, Tech-Four. How do you read?”

Good. We've set your flight path over the Giza Plateau. Same scenario as New Madrid, several scans in forty foot squares starting at surface level. You've got to initiate the firing sequence. A plot will show on your screen. Each plot on the grid will light up when the coordinates are locked. You just push the lever. We would like you to circle the target at twenty-five thousand feet or whatever in that range is acceptable with other traffic. Remember, only six grids can go at a time, then a minute to recharge the laser. Rodger that?

“Roger,” said Palmer as he pushed the button to warm up the reactor and the Terascope.

“Scope coming on line.”

Sims began slowing the B2 down and called for Cairo air traffic control to guide their flight pattern at twenty five-thousand feet and keep them clear of military and commercial traffic.

“Wow,” said Sims. “Look at those pyramids. You could home in on those from outer space.”

Palmer was also staring at the view. “That’s one theory. Some say the ancient astronauts used the pyramid of Khufu to guide their space craft in to a landing pad in Lebanon.”

“Sort of a giant control tower, huh?”

“Yeah... maybe that’s why the original pyramids around the world were built. Control towers for the gods.”

Sims smiled broadly. “And today we’re the gods. Maybe this thing will solve some mysteries. Get ready.”

Palmer opened the box containing the Terascope lever. A mapping screen from the targeting camera came up with a visual of the terrain and an overlapping grid. All Palmer had to do was hold the lever in the on position and the laser would fire each time a grid section lit up. The first grid showed squares around the three major pyramids and a pattern between the largest one and the Sphinx.

“We’re on target,” said Palmer and pushed the lever forward. A rapid sequence of lights began to show on the heads up windshield display. The Terascope fired every half-second for three seconds.

“Six squares accomplished,” Palmer shouted. “This may take awhile.”

St. Mark came on the speaker. *It’s looking good. Keep an eye on the tritium gauge. If that slips below two-thirds we have to quit. We have a four hour supply for the reactor and we’ll need three of that for our main mission.*

“Roger that,” said Palmer. “So far the gauge has barely moved.”

Scans were taken over the front part of the Sphinx, beneath it and directly behind it. Also parts of the causeway and the funerary temples of the pharos Khafre and Khufu. After the last grid was shot, St. Mark came back on the speaker in an uncharacteristic jubilant tone.

Hey guys, we’ve got some very interesting photos here. Settings were entered for three dimensional images of everything including empty chambers. I’m going to fax these back. You won’t believe this unless you see it. You’ll need some space to layout the images. I would suggest taking them to my daughter, Sarah’s room, four-twenty-one at the Sheraton across the boulevard from where you’ll park for the night.

Meanwhile you'd better get on the ground. Your emergency fuel lights should be going off right about now.

Palmer looked at the center console just as the fuel lights began to blink.

"I'm glad the Egyptians are filling the tank, it's going to be a thirsty one."

"I'm on the Amasa Airport channel now," said Sims. "We should get the go right away. Nothing has been coming or going from there all afternoon."



After landing, Palmer brought the plane to rest in front of a large hangar. They both stayed in the cockpit while a towing vehicle hooked up and pulled them inside. The onboard fax machine began to whine in the galley area behind the cockpit and pages of eight and a half by eleven photos emerged. After a pile had accumulated, the fax stopped. Palmer picked up the pages and put them in a briefcase. They slung their duffle bags over their shoulders and made their way out of the plane.

In the hangar were about a dozen military people assembled to greet them. As they introduced themselves, Palmer motioned to Sims. "I'm relieved they've got armed guards to watch over her tonight. I was prepared to sleep in the plane if security didn't look right."

Palmer led the Egyptian officers on an external tour around the plane, explaining the stealth design and answering questions. He concluded the demonstration after twenty minutes and made an appointment to conduct a full orientation session for all invited

personnel the following morning at ten o'clock, back in the hangar. A junior officer said he would be available to go with them for the rest of the day and evening if they needed anything. The Egyptian told them he was assigned to the room next to them in the Sheraton and hoped they would enjoy their stay. The officer then led them to waiting car and they rode across the boulevard and checked in at the Sheraton. After changing into civilian clothes, Palmer rang Sarah's room. She answered on the first ring.

"Hello."

"Hi, this is Major Jeff Palmer with a special delivery for you."

"Oh, I'm so relieved. I just got off the phone with my father. He said to expect you. Can you come to my room right away?"

"We'll be right there."

"I've told the FBI to expect you. You may have to show some I.D."

"We're used to that. I understand you've been confined to your room. Can we bring you anything, besides the two bottles of Grand Canyon wine your father said you might enjoy?"

"That's fantastic. I'll have room service bring up three orders of Ful Medames. It's a national dish, have you tried it?"

"After the day we've had, we could eat a camel."

"I don't see that on the menu, pigeons are popular, though."

"Ah...I think we'll go with your choice. Mr. Sims and I will be right up, room four twenty-one?"

"You'll know it by the two guards sitting in the hall."

"Okay."

Sarah looked the room over and put some of her things in the closet, straightened the papers she had strewn across the bed and opened the door to put a tray of dirty dishes out in the hall.

“I’m expecting two visitors,” she told the FBI men who were reading sections of the evening Cairo newspaper.

“Thanks for the heads up.” They stood and stretched.

As Palmer and Sims approached, they were asked for I.D. and asked to open the brief case. “U.S. Air Force?” said Agent Sears. “Are you going to fly Miss St. Mark home?”

“Haven’t got that order right now,” said Palmer. “Do you think the bad guys will come after her again?”

“Well, they didn’t get what they wanted the first time. We still don’t know exactly what they did want. We think it was what Sarah was digging for. Taking her in the process, doesn’t add up. If you come up with anything, let us know.”

Sarah heard the conversation in the hall and opened the door. “Come in, come in.” The men entered. As Sarah’s and Palmer’s eyes met, she felt a jolt of recognition, a strong yet distant connection. She was sure they had not met before, but she could tell from his expression, he was feeling it too.

“Have we met before?” said Sarah.

Palmer had a wide grin. He couldn’t take his eyes off her. “I know, I was thinking that too, but I’m sure I’d have remembered. I’m Jeff Palmer, this is Darren Sims.”

“We’ll have to talk about that later,” said Sarah. “Right now, you have something for me?”

Palmer took the stack of papers from his brief case and Sarah began placing them in a large open area of carpet. She began to fit the images together like a puzzle. Then she screamed.

“The capstone *is* under the left paw. The antiquities council will have to let me continue after they see this.” She showed the men a blow-up within the left paw of the Sphinx and an enlargement of a small triangular item in the center. “This has got to be what I’m supposed to find. The Terascope is amazing.”

“Your tax dollars at work,” said Sims.

Sarah began placing more sheets together on the grid around the Sphinx. She shrieked. “Look at this. I’d heard of speculation about a second Sphinx and here it is. Look directly behind the Sphinx, it’s an outline of a second Sphinx facing the other way. Only the front paws look fully formed. The construction looks like it was just beginning or had been torn apart leaving only the base. After the Muslims overran Egypt in the six hundreds, they tried to destroy some of the monuments claiming they represented false gods. That’s one theory about how the Sphinx lost its nose, but it also might explain the destruction of the second Sphinx.”

There was a knock on the door. “Room service,” came the muffled reply.

“Chow’s on,” said Sims. He walked over and opened the door. A cart was wheeled in and Sarah signed the receipt. Palmer moved a small table out from the wall, set the food on it and everyone pulled up chairs.

Sarah continued to stare at the formation of images that made up the two Sphinx. “What is it with these layered images under both Sphinx.”

Studying the pages closer, Palmer said, “The Terascope is giving you images of layers up to forty feet down. It goes right into the water table, so some of the overlapping images may be hard to make out.”

Sarah exclaimed again with excitement, “These must be rooms below and corridors running off in two directions. There are some cave-ins along this corridor, but look at the room under the left paw of the second Sphinx, it has objects in it. It’s too hard to make them out, we’ll need a blow-up. This is going to keep my friend Halim and his boss busy for some time. He’s my contact at the Egyptian Antiquities Council. What I’m really excited about, is now they’ve got to give me authority to excavate under the left paw. This shows precisely where we need to go.”

“We’ve got an appointment to run a training seminar tomorrow morning from ten until noon,” said Palmer. “But maybe we could come with you when you show the council these images. In cases they have any questions.”

“That would be wonderful,” she said. “Any support would be helpful.”

Sarah stopped looking at the scans. She was intrigued with Palmer, she saw red and orange colors around him. Her father often had that aura when he was younger—physical, energetic, competitive. That was military. Now Palmer’s colors were shifting to green and blue, a more sensitive, caring emotion. This is magical she thought. I haven’t felt like this before. All of this coming together is making my head spin.

“Let’s eat.” She said. “I’m feeling a little light headed. Either I’m succumbing to Mr. Palmer’s charms or my blood sugar is a little low.”

“I’d go with the blood sugar,” said Sims. “Being around Palmer always makes me hungry too.”

“I’ll remember that,” she laughed. Setting the pages aside, they all began to eat. An animated discussion followed about what the Terascope showed and what it meant. The two bottles of Grand Canyon wine were almost empty and Sarah found herself really enjoying these two new friends. She needed to laugh. Then Palmer’s cell phone rang. He flipped it open.

“Captain Palmer,” General St. Mark’s voice was agitated. “You’re not on the plane are you?”

“No, Sir, we’re with your daughter, finishing dinner.”

St. Mark’s tone became more urgent. “In that case, you’d better get over there. Our sensors indicate we’ve had a breach. I called Amasa security headquarters. They said everything was fine. They told me they doubled the security and the hangar was quiet. I told them to go in anyway and call us both with any news. I’ll be standing by. Ah! I’ve got a call coming in. Stay on the line.”

“Roger that.” Palmer dropped his fork on the plate and looked at Sims. “We may have a problem. I’m holding for the General’s order right now. There may have been...and St. Mark cut in.

“The guards were gassed through the air conditioner. They said the B2 bombay doors were open and it looked like something was taken off the plane and driven out. Security is in pursuit. The locator shows the Terascope is moving. I told them to proceed

with caution and not get in a gun battle. We don't want the scope destroyed. They don't know what they've got there. I told them to send a car to pick you up. Get back to the B2 and give me an assessment."

"Yes, sir." Palmer punched out. "Let's go Sims, someone broke into the plane and took the Terascope."

"WHAT?"

"Base security is after them. We've got to go see what damage they did."

"What can I do?" said Sarah.

Palmer touched her hand. "Stay here, we'll call when we know more." They grabbed their flight jackets and left.



In the hanger, the doors were open. Several fans were sitting on the floor blowing air out. Lights were flashing from two emergency vehicles. Medical personnel in uniform were attending to six men lying on the concrete.

Palmer and Sims ran into the hanger hearing a radio speaker relaying the events of the chase in progress.

"We're gaining on the truck... It's going over the 6 October Bridge... The traffic's getting heavy... They're slowing...They've stopped...We are going in on foot...We should get them now...One man just ran from the truck and jumped off the bridge."

Sims was a half a step behind Palmer as they reached the plane and looked up under the bombay doors to see an empty cavity where the reactor and Terascope once were. Catching his breath Sims said, "I just hope that truck doesn't explode. I've been doing a little more research on the reactor. It seems there's also lithium in there and that burns very hot. If they feel cornered and see no way out, they may become martyrs and destroy the reactor. If they do, a lot of people on that bridge are going to die."

Palmer nodded, he was already on the phone to the general. "Sir, it's gone, both the reactor and the Terascope. We've got radio contact with security people chasing the truck. They have them stopped and are closing in on the 6 October Bridge."

"Now we're picking up a second locator beacon. The truck they're following may be a decoy. Can you put me on to them?"

Palmer ran to a paramedic next to the truck with the radio. "Can I talk to the security vehicle?"

"Yes, sir," the medic responded. The radio's on their frequency. Just press the key."

He grabbed the hand piece, depressed the key and spoke. "This is Major Palmer the pilot whose plane was robbed. I have mission commander General St. Mark on the phone. General, I'm putting the phone next to the radio microphone. Go Ahead."

"Tell your men, the truck may be a decoy. We have a second beacon headed for the port of Suez on the Canal. Don't take any unnecessary risks, we'll take it from here. Copy that, security?"

"Yes sir, the men have opened the truck. It is empty. We'll pursue the driver. If you need help at the port, let us know."

“Will do...Palmer, are you there?”

“Yes, General.”

“I’ll bet they’re going to ship the Terascope somewhere, probably in a ship container. Two battery operated locator devices have been disabled, but we still have one more, so unless they have very sophisticated devices, they’ll never find it. We should also know the second they turn it on, so we’re going to stay loose on this. We want to follow the trail and see who we come up with, plus we want to keep the scope intact, but if we have to we can destroy it from here. But for now, it’s a special-forces operation. We might use you for recon later, so nothing for you to do now, but enjoy Cairo, give the Egyptians some training as planned, and help my daughter find her capstone.”

Meanwhile Sims was busy asking questions about what happened. He jogged back to Palmer to give the General a report. Taking the hand mic he said, “They took out the guards with a gas, quinuclidinyl benzilate, QNB. That’s like the stuff the Russians used against those terrorist in that school a few years ago. They’re starting to come around now, but can’t remember a thing.”

Palmer leaned in to talk on the mic. “I wish we could do more, I can’t stand it. They just walked in here and took the Terascope. Who are these guys?”

“They’re in our sights Major and believe me, I can’t wait to pull the trigger. Over and out.”

“Over and out.”

Palmer called Sarah to share the latest developments and told her they’d be by in the morning.

Chapter Nine

Next Morning in Cairo, Egypt

Antiquities Council conference room.

Halim greeted Sarah and the pilots, introducing himself to Palmer and Sims and then introducing them to the members of the Supreme Council of Antiquities Board of Directors. He explained the board governs six sectors: The General Secretariat Sector, The Egyptian (Pharaonic) and Graeco-Roman Antiquities Sector, The Coptic and Islamic Antiquities Sector, The Antiquities and Museum Financial Support Fund Sector, The General Projects Sector and The Museums Sector.

The President of the Council is the Minister for Culture. He is the sole legal representative for the SCA. The Heads of the Six Sectors form the executive core of the Administrative Council. The Head of the General Secretariat Sector is called the General Secretary, he acts as the Executive Head of SCA in running its every day functions, and directing all sector operations and activities. This was Halim's boss and one of Egypt's most influential men.

The Minister of Culture stood behind his chair and asked everyone to be seated. He told the three guests to take chairs at the far end of the table. "We have called this meeting because we understand you have some new information for us regarding your excavation and results from a new ground penetrating device developed by the U.S. Military." He motioned to Sarah to address the group. "Please explain, Miss St. Mark."

Sarah stood holding a square brown box about three inches thick. She invited the pilots to help her and they walked to a large open space with marble tiles on the side of the room and began placing sheets of paper from the box on the floor.

“These are from a grid scan yesterday of the Giza Plateau. I have numbered them so we can quickly lay them together to make one large image. I am only going to show you a portion of what was scanned for now.” As they completed laying the first batch of prints she said, “If you would all come over, I’d like you to see what’s been hiding from you all these centuries.”

Everyone walked from their seats. Those who reached the large display first gasped as they saw the foundation of the second Sphinx behind the first. She continued, “What we have are images in forty foot squares of the Sphinx area. The images are in layers that, in some cases, overlap things below them.” She pointed to a room below the left paw of the second sphinx. “In this room, you can see several objects, some stones strewn about, but definitely other objects. Close-up scans are being made and I will have a set for you, but first I have a sample of a close-up.” Sarah held up a 3-D view of a triangular object beneath the left paw of the Sphinx. “I think you’ll agree, the resolution is incredible...this is what I’ve been after...this is what my journey has led me to and all you have to do is allow my team to continue and you’ll see this for real tomorrow.”

The group broke out in applause and the Minister of Culture spoke. “Is there any objection from anyone for letting their excavation continue?”

The General Secretary looked concerned. “I’m still not sure we can protect this project.”

Palmer spoke, “I received an intelligence update a few minutes ago from everyone involved in the investigation. It is now believed the first attempt at Sarah’s abduction was about the Terascope, the device we used to make these images. Sarah is the daughter of the Army General in charge of this project. The scope is very good at finding nuclear material. Certain countries do not want us to look in on their nuclear stock piles or research projects. Unfortunately, it became vulnerable at the Amasa training base and was stolen last night. These are very well connected people with good intelligence. Since they have the scope, there’s no reason to believe they would attack the excavation crew again. Captain Sims and I will also provide additional guard duty for the project.”

“That sounds acceptable, said the SG. “And make sure everything is done in daylight this time.”

“I have one set of complete scans for you,” said Sarah. “This should keep you very busy for a few days. Every section has some surprises.” She motioned to Palmer. “I think we better get busy if we’re going to clear the stone before nightfall.”

They left the meeting. Sarah returned to her room to change, call her crew and begin again at the Sphinx. Palmer and Sims headed for Amasa Air Base to give their training presentation.



The sounds of drilling and sawing rock, the pounding of wedges, sandstone cracking and a conveyor chugging to bring out pieces of rock, Sarah loved those sounds.

They were back digging under the Sphinx. She loved the sandstone dust, the noise, the activity. She had even given Milliken a hug when he returned.

“I just signed up for a dig in Syria,” he said. “I thought we we’re through here. Of course I came right back when you called.”

He held her just a little too long for a friendly hug and she had to point him in the direction of the new excavation.

“There’s your lover for the afternoon,” she said.

He knew what she meant; get deep in the tunnel under the left paw of the Sphinx. Before long, the temperature was ninety-two degrees again and the job was getting messy. Laborers were carrying water around for everyone. Palmer and Sims were now on duty and Palmer had his shirt off, helping take the stones off the conveyor. A tunnel four feet high was dug into the sandstone directly in front of the paw. They had moved their tents over to provide some small relief from the sun. Sarah sat watching the men work. She hated just sitting, but there was nothing she could do at this point. Had it only been three days since all this began, she thought, it seemed much longer. And even with the lack of sleep, her senses were sharp. She began focusing on the tourist above on the viewing walkway, looking for blackness in their auras. She felt excited yet on edge. This must be what it’s like to live in many areas of the Middle-East, she thought. You can never relax.

“We’re getting there,” shouted Millikan. “The stone’s surface is changing, like last time.” The excavation slowed as the tedious task of preservation began. It was four o’clock. The last part might take an hour. Sarah put her phone away after getting an update from her father. “I can take a shift,” she said, as Milliken climbed out covered in

sand. “We called him the sandman at the University of Arizona, he thrives in it,” said Sarah to Palmer. Milliken took a water bottle and poured it over his sweaty, sandy head and said, “Sand is where the money is — oil, gold, platinum. How about we lease the Terascope for a week? We’d all be rich.”

“There’s already a long line for that,” said Palmer. “But first we’ve got to get it back.”

Sarah motioned for the men to come closer. “I just got off the phone with Dad. Egyptian military just boarded a ship at Port Said. They said a container was flown off by helicopter somewhere along the canal last night. And, they just lost the last tracking device. Dad believes they had to have a schematic. Now, they’re going to have to wait until they turn it on to find it.”

“All we can do is keep busy,” said Palmer dejectedly.

Sarah slid down and crawled into the lighted tunnel. At the end of the twelve foot corridor, a vertical shaft went up four feet. She stood easily to work on the last block, hopefully holding the real capstone. She put on the sound dampening headphones and goggles and pressed the button on the core drill, used to create four inch openings in the limestone.

As she drilled, Sarah wondered if the information on this capstone would be worth more than the others. Why did the other two lead her first to yesterday’s questionable find? She believed she would have been content with just deciphering the first two capstone inscriptions. They supported an oral account that Hopi clans had lived in Peru and Mexico and migrated from those places. Their symbols and words supported the claim that Hopi priests had instructed the tribes they came across about the need for

peace and balance and to wait for the true white brother's return. But here she was, she thought, still digging. Digging for what? She was excited and remorseful. She hoped no one else would be harmed on this adventure. After drilling several holes in large circle, the Queen's Sandstone gave way and fell to her feet.

"I've broken through," she yelled. Sand started pouring out. She scooped with a frenzy. At first the darkness looked empty and her heart sank. Then a flash of reflection from the tunnel lights and she knew it was there. She gently wrapped her hands around it. "I've got it. I'm coming out." She scrambled along the rock surface, careful not to scrape the capstone. As she reached the opening she held the capstone high to cheers and applause. The only one not engrossed in celebration was Sims. He did not divert his eyes from the spectator's gallery. Palmer had told him what he did not tell the others. There was still a high risk of being attacked. The investigators believed Golden Dawn still wanted the capstone and would do anything to get it.

Sims carried a standard M16A4, lightweight assault rifle with a twenty-eight round magazine, plus a nine millimeter holstered hand gun. He watched for any unusual interest by the tourists. Two light haired men wearing ball caps leaned on the railing and stared. They couldn't see under the tent, but all the commotion had drawn their attention. Sims walked over by the tent where the crew was looking at a pyramid shaped object on the table. He stared back at the men above. They casually walked on.

Sarah grinned broadly as she ran her hand over the etched surface of the eight inch high platinum pyramid. "We've got the real deal here."

Milliken handed her the magnifying glass. "It's loaded with information. Everything's in miniature," she said. "The etching is so perfect, like scrimshaw, it almost looks like it was made by a machine." Everyone stopped as if to ponder that statement.

Halim pushed forward among the group; the General Secretary close behind him. "Please, may we have a look?" Everyone separated allowing them to sit down. After studying the stone the GS said. "There is nothing I've seen to rival the workmanship. I can make out some of the symbols and wording, mostly Sumerian, I'd say. May I have the glass? He took it and rotated the four sides slowly around. "This side appears to be a map with mathematical references." Lifting the cap stone to reveal the bottom, the GS froze.

"What is it?" Sarah said frowning.

"It looks like a face. Not just any face, but that of a pharaoh. It could be the face of the Sphinx, but what it really looks like is...and he paused at the suggestion he was about to make...it looks like the face on Mars."

Chapter 10

Palmyra Cham Palace

Palmyra, Syria

The Chief of the Second Order of the Golden Dawn, Robert Uriah MacGregor sat at a small walnut table by the open curtains of a large window overlooking two clear swimming pools within a walled courtyard. He ran his fingers through his shoulder length prematurely grey hair and then locked his fingers together on top of his head. He leaned back and closed his dark brown eyes for a moment, eyes that could pierce your soul, he was told, or softly look at you with a sullen glaze suggesting he was somewhere far away. He sat up and projected a determined jaw as he looked up from the laptop screen he had been studying. He gazed out at the pools, the palm and cedar trees around the perimeter, to the tan colored desolate hills of the desert beyond. His stare focused on the farthest hill. At its top sat an imposing structure called the Castle of the Chief of Maan. Baqi Shaw also sat at the table looking at the lap top screen. He took the wireless mouse and scrolled down on diagrams and took some notes. “Excellent work, MacGregor. Because of this schematic, we’ve disabled the remaining locators and should have no trouble getting the Terascope up and running in the castle by the end of the day.”

“Thank Moriaton, he’s come through on everything we’ve asked for except the fiasco at the Sphinx.”

“It turned out in our favor,” said Baqi. “We’ll have the means to fulfill our dreams.”

“I still believe what the woman was digging for will have great power if used in the right way.”

Baqi looked confused. “I’ve wanted to ask you. What is it with this woman and what kind of power could an ancient capstone possibly have?”

“First, the woman came to our attention a few years ago when I accompanied the Dahli Lama to the Hopi reservation. He met her and I overheard him tell his assistant to write down her contact information because she had a very old, advanced soul and would play a great part in world destiny. We kept tabs on her after that. As for the capstones, she discovered, they are not like the copies the Egyptians have in their museums. The ones that guided the Indian woman to the Sphinx and the one she may indeed find today are something else. I can tell you what I have learned, but the secrets I say must not be repeated. Do you understand?”

Baqi lowered his head and looked out over his reading glasses. “I can’t say I understand, but I will honor your request.”

“These types of capstones are referred to in mystic scriptures and traditions of the most ancient civilizations. Their secret powers were known only to a few. The high priests brought one out for specific ceremonies. When they were placed on a pillar or an obelisk in the center of an energy vortex they became receivers of the gods.”

“Robert, you have been a good ally. We have much to gain by our mutual interests, but I must confess you leave me bewildered by your belief in such things.”

“My world requires an open mind, for I have seen things no one would believe. Let me explain further.” He pulled out an American one dollar bill. “Do you think it was an accident that the capstone, with an all seeing eye, is featured on U.S. currency? Why

do you think the Washington monument is shaped like an ancient ceremonial obelisk with a capstone on top. Have you ever wondered what happened to the capstone on the pyramid of Khufu? It was said the Ark of the Covenant was built to carry one. It is also said that in the eighth century B.C., an African Nubian king name Piye, who would otherwise be looked at as only a slave in Egypt, was able to become a pharaoh, the first of five who would lead Egypt for sixty years. That's because he came up the Nile leading his armies holding one of the original capstones. The Nubians understood the power of the capstone. They built one hundred and eighty pyramids in its honor, twice what the Egyptians built. One who controls a true capstone has the authority of God, that's why I was willing to take it and if the Indian woman is successful in finding a real one at the Sphinx, I must try again."

Still confused Baqi tried to grasp the meaning of it all. "Hold on a minute. What do you know of the abilities of these stones. What do they receive and who is doing the transmitting?"

"These are still mysteries to us. All I know is great care was taken to construct the pyramids so once a capstone was put on top, they would become giant receivers capable of tuning into the gods from great distances. Some of the pyramids of Mexico were lined with minerals that could better conduct radio waves. The substance of a true capstone is gold or platinum, the highest quality materials for reception and transmission, but ask yourself, who could have made them? The process was not available to ancient civilizations."

"You mean aliens?"

“There is no other explanation, either aliens or an older advanced race from this planet that chose to live elsewhere.”

“Elsewhere? Forgive me. I’m trying to keep an open mind, but...”

“Ah, my Baqi Shaw. If you had been a student of the mystic school you would have known the Pyramids of Giza are positioned like the stars of Orion’s Belt. A vision corridor was built into the Khufu pyramid so one could view the stars as they received their transmissions in the center of the structure. If you could step beyond the world of Mohammed for a moment and listen to my world, you would hear of whole communities built around my ability to channel messages from beings in other star systems. You would hear from others channeling spirits of Earth’s higher kingdoms. The gods who brought us through the deluge into the age of Taurus, who left us in the age of Aries, who saved us again in the age of Pisces, wait for us on high. They wait for the coming apocalypse that will take us all into the golden age of Aquarius. We can be instruments of their will. Your prophesy of the Mahdi has shown that vision. Mine has as well. All things will come to us. We are the chosen ones. We are the ones they will save with a rapturous beam of light, taking us up into their ships on Judgment Day.”