

The Angel

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About the Author

The Author feels that his physical details are unimportant, yet wishes the reader to know about his spiritual state as it is applied to the writing of this book.

My Salvation experience some 25 years ago, had miracles involved to where there wasn't a question about whether I had found the Lord. Yet, even with this ingrained, and unshakable as knowledge, my walk with Him has been a roller coaster of ups and downs to where I am "on fire for the Lord" for a while, and then ignore Him and go back somewhat . . . to the old ways, but always to a lesser extent than before I knew Him.

In trying to discern the inputs that were causative of "back slidings" (to blame it on anyone or anything but myself), I came to find myself confused in trying to specifically assign these inputs to just my physical changing reality, in relationships, places, finance, or whatever.

Looking at the inputs coming from the Holy Spirit on the other hand, and those from my own sinful nature ably abetted by a Master Psychologist who hates me, cleared things up for me. To where *perhaps* . . . I now look at things considering too much that there is a spiritual value that can affect or be assigned . . . to or from . . . every action or non-action in our lives.

Perhaps . . . however . . . one cannot look "too much" at things in this way.

Prologue

The candles at the five points of the pentagram flickered, as a foul smelling breeze pervaded the attic. A swirling shadow began to take form between the rafters above.

Evelyn knelt in the center of the design drawn on the floor of the dimly lit musty space, which she had transformed into a shrine of sorts, to her dead son James.

The old papers and musty tomes that had directed her in her grief, to go to this extreme in an effort to communicate with the dead, lay discarded about, as her chanting reached a crescendo.



For an hour or more, Evelyn had been chanting in a supplication resulting in her having fallen into a hypnotic trance. As her conscious awareness faded, so did her few reservations about the course of action upon which she was engaged.

Just the year before, she had been happy to be secure in her belief that pretty much all was under control in her world. As Jews, that extended to where both she and her husband Ivan felt themselves to be of the “Chosen” by God. They had prospered financially, continuing to abide by the laws governing their beliefs. Yet, both had occasion to wonder whether the Christ of the New Testament, was really the Messiah as the Christians believed, or just another prophet, as Jewish doctrine portrayed Him to be.

Recently, Ivan and Evelyn had agreed with one another that they felt

an unexplained impetus from within which was directing them to question this important issue.

This was before disaster struck . . .

Their son James, so full of life and vigor, was also of course, considered to be of the “Chosen,” and had been likewise personally content to ascertain that he was Heaven bound at birth, simply because he was a Jew, whether or not his way of being merited such an assumption about his after life destination.

The crushing blow of his untimely death aroused in his father and mother, a questioning and despairing kind of anger at their Lord.

Ivan’s method of dealing with the pain and seeming unfairness of their loss had been to apply himself even more in his study of the Holy Scriptures.

He had also been continuing somewhat less diligently, in his studies of the New Testament. Unfortunately, a bit more indifferent in his caring to discern whether the Gospels reflected truly, that Jesus of Nazareth was in fact, the Son of God.

Evelyn however, had over the past year withdrawn from almost everyone, while maintaining anger focused directly at her Lord. This Lord being the mayhap grim “eye for an eye” stern God of the Torah (Old Testament).

Her current reaction to her son’s death was a view that it better not be true . . . that Salvation came through asking forgiveness of God with a humble and repentant heart, and having to acknowledging this Jesus person as Lord also, then asking Him in to your life.

She was even going to the extent of praying somewhat, that the whole Jesus/Salvation thing was nothing but a lie.

Traditional Jewish belief held that Jesus was only a prophet in any event, which was the belief that she had been raised with. Besides, she was too hurt and angry in the knowledge that James had never had this “Salvation Experience.” So, to agree with the New Testament, and in Jesus as Lord, The Holy Ghost, and all that, was in her eyes an admission that her son was lost to hell.

That, with her current mindset, wasn’t about to happen.

This resulted in her anger on one hand having her bitterly accusing her God, while in the same breath she asked Him for a token, or some

sign from Him that would give her direction in resolving her heartbroken turmoil.

Then in a contradiction of her prayers of putting it in His hands, she had (just in case) committed herself to trying to reach the “afterlife” in whatever way that she could.

Since shortly after James had died, she had gone to psychics and so called spiritual mediums, and tried other occult means of speaking with spirits, in attempts to reach her son. She had kept her efforts secret from Ivan, venturing only in her quests while he was at work.

The failures in result from trying these charlatans had resulted in her becoming even bitterer as time went by.

Though Ivan had tried everything in his power to cheer her up, she had steadily become more secretive and withdrawn from him and the life that they had shared. He would have been horrified to know of her efforts at supernatural communications with their dead son, but even more so at the latest course of action she had finally resolved upon.

Her quest to find the spiritual whereabouts of her dead son had resulted in a demonically enhanced obsession to where she did not care from whom or what the truth about him was obtained. If God wouldn't tell her somehow, nor a medium or psychic help her, she then reasoned . . . she would try to deal with the Enemy himself, if there was any way of doing so.



With the advent of the sulfuric stench pervading the attic, the form coalesced above the women.

Baloth had orchestrated Evelyn's tortured path to culminate in this moment. He wasn't about to let a lesser demon enjoy the fruit's of his victory by taking possession of the receptive vessel below, though it could be said that a demon of his stature in Satan's realm, had better humans to fry.

Gleefully, he invaded her, subjugating her in a furtherance of her accidental self-imposed hypnosis, into an even deeper unconscious state.

Then he allowed her an awareness of his presence, so to provoke ter-

rifying dreams within her sub-conscious. He fed on her resultant nightmares, taking delight in the miseries in her mind.

Baloth chuckled grimly within her as he animated her to arise from her kneeling posture. If she only knew, as he did, that her son's death had heralded an opportunity in spiritual warfare, though her son had only died as it was simply his time, and not a premeditated part of demonic strategy. Yet, it had been known through demonic observation, that Evelyn and her husband had been seeking the truth from Scripture, and were leaning towards their Salvations, which was cause for evil spiritual alarm. So, Baloth might have planned their son's death if he had thought of it, seeing as how things were working out so nicely with Evelyn.

Satan's master game plan called for the Jew and Christian to be at odds in their beliefs, and divided from a united front. To this end was Baloth directed, and so far in this case, had prevailed. The woman's obsession having been ably abetted by demonic intent resulting in her being receptive to possession, exceeded Baloth's expectations, and so was cause for his chortling glee.

Though no fallen angel/demon or even true "Angel of Light" could read human minds, yet all over time became well versed in human psychology. Plus, they were able to be everywhere to hear man's speech and see each individual's actions, which pretty much brought them knowledge of the states of the minds and hearts of men, via their long familiarity with man's ways. They had real experience in knowing what buttons to push.

This was true for The Lord's Angels, or for Satan and his demons. When in possession though, as Baloth, the host's thoughts did become fairly clear to the possessor. This was now the case with Baloth's ability to enhance and enjoy Evelyn's fears and nightmares.

Baloth walked the body of the women down the stairs, and out of the home. He even closed the door behind her/him. Within their entwined self, he decided to further assail her dream state with the knowledge that her son had not had his Salvation from the Lord, and so, was lost in his sin.

He anticipated, as he walked her away from her home, and towards a bus stop, that as she had stayed lost to Salvation through her preoccupa-

tion with the loss of her son, so too would her husband stay lost through his preoccupation with the loss of her.

No potential Jewish/Christian ministry would occur through her and/or her husband's possible Salvations, and so, an important part of the master plan would be served.

In the end times 144,000 Jews might become Christians, but it was the demonic nip it in the bud time for now.

This spiritual battles prediction: God-O . . . Satan-3.

Chapter I

The Seraph shook his head at the mass of humanity bustling about on the beach strand below. No thought seemed to be given that the world as humans perceived it was but a shadow of the real and eternal spiritual heavens that were all encompassing.

Beautiful and not so beautiful women preened, while some of the men exercised, and each vied for the lustful appreciation of the others.

Skaters and joggers raced or paced, while surfers and swimmers hoped and prayed for a good wave to ride, so they could impress those whom they thought counted.

All, of course, seemed to pray to the god of “let me have a good time.”

Flitting darkly among the masses were many spirits. Unseen by humans, hosts of demons were at work spreading seeds, and encouraging seeds already sown.

As most of the humans below were in varying stages of undress, the spirits of “Lust” seemed to be chief-most among them. “Envy” and “Jealousy,” as well as “Pride,” “Prejudice,” and “Hate,” were some of those who ran rampant among the predominantly spiritually oblivious humans below.

Those few Christians in evidence were particularly assailed by the demons, as bastions of light in the spiritual darkness. They, as well as small children and babes, glowed with the love of the Lord.

The innocent younger children though, the demons gave a wide berth.

This was as the children were attended not only by the spiritual glow

attending the presence of the Holy Spirit, but also by lesser Angels than the warrior who observed.

This was as a demon might dare to send a corruption against a child through the obsessed, possessed, or simply ignorant sinful natured adult humans below.

The ethereal countenance of he who sadly observed all within view, was stone like, and almost without expression, yet was belied by a vast inner sorrow at that which the Lord had created him to have power over, yet forbade him to use at his will.

Jon marveled at how much more those lesser Angels right down in the thick of things must crave to strike out at the enemy minions, yet forbade.

Certainly, most of the spirits below, as well as those in the air and heavens above this section of beach, were aware of Jon's hovering presence, and questioned his purpose in being there.

Jon reflected that most Angels were simply the Lord's will made manifest in a creation, whose very being was to be of service and worship to the Lord.

Jon was that, and as the Lord sometimes willed . . . more.

As a Seraph, and one of the Seraphim, he was of the highest order of Celestial Beings, even higher than the Angels in the Heavenly Hierarchy, though considered by most to be of them, and thus for this world (and this tale's) purposes, so considered himself.

He had been of the loyal Spiritual Beings who had served the Lord in that long ago rebellion by Satan against the Father, and would again be called upon certainly, when the Son again came into His own.

Meanwhile . . .

This particular day he had been drawn to this specific area through no seeming volition of his own, yet he could discern no clear leading of the Lord in his coming there either.

He was a messenger with no message; a warrior with no purpose.

Oh how he would love to burn the enemy minions with the Light of Heaven, and scatter them. The humans would surely have to rejoice at the burdens lifted from their hearts, placed and maintained by the hosts of wickedness. It would perhaps, be a shielding unknown to them since they were protected children themselves.

Some of them would no doubt attribute any uplifting of their human spirits to the last drug or beer that they had consumed, suddenly producing a state of euphoria. A natural or unnatural high, versus the truth of a spiritual high brought about through the lack of demonic presence and oppression.

The Christians might suddenly think themselves to be in an enhanced state of Grace, wondering perhaps, why the Lord had inexplicably chosen that moment to bless them so.

But, Jon sighed inwardly; the time for a major confrontation with the enemy was not yet upon them.

The patience of Job, (see Book of Job) was as nothing to that of any Angel, all of whom had existed for millennia, and had, with few exceptions, been patient with man's failings, and with having to take a back seat to the actions of the enemy.

These fallen angels though, were not "on hold," as Jon. Now was their time, their time in human history, when they were given free reign by their Master, "the ruler of this dark age," to test and oppress humanity.

And this they did with a disgusting glee, delighting in the torment of mankind. As all of them hated man, as did their master, Satan.

Of course, all was in God's will, as man had a choice of who he would follow. Unfortunately, the majority's choice could be seen by the fact that in the masses below, there were indeed, few Christians to be seen.

The radiant glow of the Holy Spirit shone from and in them, as It did from the children, yet it was easy to see by one such as Jon, how the demons spiritually targeted and assailed these few with temptations.

One type of demon hovered as a many faced cloud above them. The evil spirits of "Self-Condensation" strove to ambush their resolves towards a "Christ-like perfection." As this state of being was an impossibility, except by Jesus Christ Himself, it was one of the most difficult of temptations for the Christian to overcome. That being to give up striving for that which imperfect man could never be, a state of sinless perfection.

This was especially true for those new in Christ, as they were but babes in the concept of spiritual warfare, and could be led to believe that changing their very natures, was an effort in futility.

So why bother to try?

In and of themselves, Jon reflected, it would be futile, but with the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God, which promises that you become new in Christ, they could prevail toward the goal.

Then each successful triumph over their sinful natures and self doubts would help to establish a momentum towards a maturity and strength through faith, thus enabling them to be effective spiritual warriors in defense of themselves, and hopefully eventually an instrument for the Lord in their leading of other men.

But, if the enemy could keep even one such Child of God off balance through self-doubt or self-condemnation, it was a victory for the evil ones. As when a Christian's faith became hamstrung in such a manner, he or she was of little use in the spreading of God's Word to anyone else, and so at best was only a potential spiritual warrior, without weapons or ammo . . . so to speak.

As Jon reminisced in this vein, all he pondered about the immediate goings on in the microcosm below, and was also aware of the spiritual fluctuations within a far greater sphere of influence.

A one-sided battle was raging world wide, as the enemy consolidated his vast holdings on the lives of the overwhelming majority of mankind. This, while continually assailing any new bastions of Christianity that might seek to bring any more sheep in to the Lord's fold.

Only pitifully few Christians even seemed to realize that there was a concerted battle going on, calling for a continual united effort by those in Christ, in return. Most of these were hard pressed to just defend against spiritual attacks specifically directed at them individually by the enemy through the people, things, and problems of the world, never mind pray and go on the offensive. The enemy strove in this way successfully, to keep them off balance.

Individually, they would rarely think to attack in return to bind the enemy from assailments, or better still, press through prayer and faith, to overcome a specific kind of demon assailing them or their immediate loved ones. Never mind range abroad, and evangelize to fight in return, as warriors in what should be the concerted fight of all mankind . . . especially the 'Christian kind.'

They were more likely to ask the Lord's help in dealing with demon-

orchestrated adversity. Kind of like asking for help in dealing with the pain of the whip lash, rather than turning around and binding the hand which holds it from administering the blow, in the first place.

That is why fellowship was so important. Demons wouldn't "play" fair. They would gang up on the lone ranger Christians in a heartbeat.

If Jon had his way, the spirit's specializing in self-doubt and self-condemnation, would be his first direction of attack.

A human might bind one of them through prayer and faith, but Jon would flat just love to have the Lord's leave to drop kick a couple of them to the Sun or thereabouts.

Thinking about it was grounds for grim amusement to Jon. If his stern countenance could smile, he would have done so at the thought of it.

On those few occasions when Jon had transformed to walk among men, he could and did assume all of man's visual attributes, and could seem somewhat identical in character and manner as a man, to humans.

To them he seemed to be just another man, yet to spirits his light shone blindingly through, unless he cloaked it within his human form deliberately, to confuse the enemy.

Jon could and did smile then as he walked among man. Almost invariably though, when disguised as a human, it meant that he was sent to do something by the Lord, and the average demons would usually run from him, giving up for a time whatever evil pursuit occupied them, as the Light of The Lord was usually allowed to show.

They ran, just in case they should for some reason, get in the way of his mission. Or worse still, be the object of the mission itself. For surely, when allowed to be in the guise of a human, Jon's focus would be of the Lord's, and directly standing in the way of the Lord's will was just asking for a serious Heaven sent chastisement.

In his personal Angelic form, Jon was as a man in also having been created somewhat in God's image, yet his features were pretty much as chiseled in stone. Some of the Lord's angels bore no resemblance to mankind at all.

Grim was his visage, as grim was his warrior purpose in the order of things. Smiles weren't meant to be for him usually, or for most of the

angels that he knew of, yet he did have facial mobility if he so chose, and could certainly speak and form words as need be.

For assuredly, some of his Seraphim brethren sang exaltations continually to the Lord, which was their sole joy and purpose.

Yet, in Jon's angelic form his eyes never blinked, nor did his features frown. It was, perhaps, a personal characteristic of his individuality. Yet blinking and frowning is the least of what he knew he would be doing were he observing those below while in human form. A thundercloud would be upon his brow.

How could they just ignore the futility of it all, he pondered? With eternity and infinity to consider, would they not question their momentary fleshy existence against the potential of eternal life? Can they not conceive that they are but embryos in the shell, of what they will become? They certainly know that death, as they perceive it, has no harbor for that which they struggle so hard for in the things of this world.

Good looks will fade, and all the property that they rat race to obtain, will be left behind when their bodies die.

A period of some few hours had elapsed since Jon had first arrived to kind of take up station at his current location. He ruminated on what was, what had been, and what the future portended. This pretty much was the sum of his current existence, and had been so for a long, long while, though angels didn't necessarily count time as humans did.

Dusk had arrived, and with the advent of night came a lessening in the crowds below.

There was still no sign or leading from the Lord as to why he had been drawn to this place, yet his awareness was suddenly piqued by a swirl in the eddy of human, and demonic movement below . . .

In the incessant babble and bustle of movement that he generally ignored, came a sound and sight that drew his attention.

A woman was in the process of falling to her knees, apparently having come onto the strand from an alley that intersected with the beach strand's main-thoroughfare. Enemy spirit's were chittering and gesturing all around her, yet none seemed to be clinging to her.

If she were simply on drugs or under the influence of alcohol, she would be a swarm with clutching enemy spirit's specializing in those chemicals. These spirits were so named in regards to their fields. With

an alcohol abuser would come an obsession by the spirits of alcohol. Cocaine had spirits devoted to that obsession, and so on. Each spirit, good or bad, had its own true name of course, as Jon's was Jon, of the Seraphim, which was one of the highest orders of angels.

One might, or perhaps should, address a fallen angel cum demon or spirit by differentiating between their different specialties. For instance, Jon might warn one specifically so oriented: "You there spirit of lust, get you gone," before actually lifting a hand, or forcing the issue. In the main though, Jon didn't have to threaten. Again, if he merely approached . . . most demons would scatter; the less powerful ones surely. They were afraid of his ethereal powers, and the Creator that he served.

While Jon watched, the woman stumblingly made it to where she came to rest against one of the concrete light posts, whose bulbs were just beginning to glow as their mercury vapor elements were photo-censor activated by the advent of night.

Jon drifted closer, now feeling that his focus was not all of himself, but that the Lord must have given him to observe for the moment, this portion of the microcosm of the world, this section of beach, and seemingly in particular . . . this woman.

For Jon knew that surely, no other reason could exist for him to be drawn to her. For her plight, for whatever reason, even unto her physical death, could not be dissimilar to the countless other births and deaths he had witnessed through the millennia.

Jon's drifting closer to the woman had, by his mere proximity, had its effect on the enemy spirit's about, but not as usual.

The demons were warily eyeing him, and backing away at his approach, but they did not run in a panicked rout, as was more the norm, but shook their fists and cursed him, as if wanting their bravado to be seen or reported to someone.

Who would care if they thumbed their noses at me, Jon wondered briefly at their bravado? (But go ahead fallen, one day I'll have the Lord's leave to just swat you like flies.)

The woman meanwhile had slid down the light pole to collapse in a heap leaning at its base.

Jon could easily discern that she was slack jawed, with spittle drool-

ing from the down side corner of her mouth. Her blue eyes rolled in her head, while inarticulate moans and sobs issued from her.

Considering her dishelved state, she was yet somewhat fashionably dressed. Designer jeans and brown sandals, contrasted with a fairly neat and clean light blue cotton blouse to complete her wardrobe.

Scratches were visible on her face, neck, hands, and the exposed areas of her feet.

Her blouse had lost its top button, and contributed evidence to where she might have stumbled or fallen through some bushes, perhaps. This would also account for the scratches on the exposed surfaces of her skin.

Her fingers and toes had been polished in the not too distant past, and a modest diamond wedding ring gleamed on her left hand's ring finger.

She would be attractive and even featured, if her face wasn't so frozen in a tortured kind of expression. Even in the short time of his appraisal though, her cries and moans had begun to subside.

Unknowingly, Jon had approached her very closely indeed. As he became aware of his proximity to her, he overheard some of the comments that the nearer demons were nervously laughing, hissing, and whispering to one another.

"He can't do anything for her, she doesn't even know her own name now," one of them said.

Another one giggled in response, "Even if he could do something, he wouldn't unless he was told to, and given permission to act."

Grunting his agreement, the first demon again remarked, "She is ours anyway. She isn't a brat or a Christian, so it's not any of his business to interfere."

Snickers, hisses, and hoots, greeted other demonic ribald and lewd comments about the impossibility of Jon's presence having even an iota of impact on the seemingly demented woman's status.

Despite their negatives, Jon could see that his proximity, radiating the power of the Light of the Lord, had a soothing effect on the woman.

Even that accidental surcease though, (he somewhat brooded), was

not for him to deliberately do, unless the Lord willed it for him to provide to the woman in His service.

Unfortunately, the demons knew all too well that the Lord's angels were bound by rules dictated by the Creator. If this were a game of chess, and Jon was a knight, all the other pieces knew that he could not move diagonally, like a bishop. Hence the derision by the enemy at what they perceived as only a feigned 'illegal' move toward her who they considered to be one of their pawns.

For, though Angels had, been known to make a feint, or to threaten by sudden moves, an overt response to when a demon might come too close to overstepping boundaries set by the Lord, they were not often known to take full blown offensive initiative on their own.

It just wasn't done . . . at least not often in the present age.

But . . . who could tell if an accidental smiting or two might occur during a "feint"?

The sun had set, and it was now fully dark, except for the harsh false light that came from the streetlights.

During the course of time since the woman fell, a couple had come towards her to see if she was all right, and then had disgustedly shaken their heads, walking away from what they perceived as just another someone blitzed on drugs or alcohol.

If they had cared enough to take the time to look past the superficial and immediate coatings of dust and dirt, and ignored the odd twig and leaf in her hair, they would have seen as Jon, that this was no human derelict, but a person who had cared about herself and her appearance until fairly recently.

Yet still, Jon hesitantly drifted closer . . .

Chapter 2

Ivan Seranovich was beside himself with worry. When it had come time for prayer the evening before, which his wife Evelyn hardly ever missed, he had shrugged and gone on with his prayers in spite of her absence. Afterwards he had asked everyone at the synagogue whether they had seen her, but to no avail. Since then, a turmoil filled night had passed by without her returning home.

Ever since that devastating day the year before, when their son had had a fatal accident on his motorcycle, she had grown more and more withdrawn from him, but still usually always had come to prayer. It was now getting toward evening of the day following her disappearance, and still no trace of her was to be found. The small seaside community of Scarsdale had been searched and repeatedly traversed by friends and relatives. Not a trace or clue as to her whereabouts had resulted from the efforts.

Well, that wasn't exactly true, he reflected . . .

Ivan had been shocked by what he had discovered in the attic of their home when he had searched the house for Evelyn. He had known that she was still distraught over the death of their son, but not to the extent that was made apparent by the contents of that small vaulted space. His wife had turned the attic into a virtual shrine to their dead son, James.

The boy's pictures and trophies Ivan had finally put away, so Evelyn would not have visual reminders of their loss, were all to be found in that gloomy little room. Letterman sweatshirts were tacked to the underside pitch of the old roof, while football helmets and baseball hats hung from assorted nails, screw, staples, and whatever else she had found to put them up with.

What upset Ivan most about the hidden shrine-like aspect of the room was revealed on the floor. A pentagram was in (Lord he prayed) red paint, drawn on the old oak flooring. Around it, some of his grandfather's old research books and papers were scattered. Candles had been placed to correspond in some kind of pattern to the pentagram. They were melted to the floor, and appeared to have gone out on their own. Ivan could not believe that Evelyn would willingly have just let them burn down to where they could have set the house on fire.

He recalled that the feeble light that filtered through the louvered vents in each gabled end of the attic had scarcely been enough to see by, when he had discovered his wife's secret. The gloom, even in broad daylight, had made it all the more eerie and disquieting to him.

He had looked briefly at those books and papers that seemed to have been most often used or read, judging by the scraps of paper tucked in between the pages for bookmarks here and there. Then he had found his wife's notebook, which upon his brief perusal seemed to detail her studies and interests in regards to what she had been reading.

While Ivan had been up there, a growing sense of uneasiness and foreboding had assailed him, to where with Evelyn's notebook in hand; he had retreated back down the stairwell. He'd inadvertently closed the attic door with a resounding slam as if to authoritatively lock away the bad feelings that just being in the enclosed space had brought to him.

That one of the opened old tomes on the floor had been the Satanic Bible, had done nothing at all to allay his fears.

Since then, Ivan had remained home. The phone had rung incessantly at first, as friends and relatives called for updates, and reported on their failures in canvassing the community looking for her, but he'd finally had to ask them all not to call, so to leave his phone free for incoming calls from the police, or hopefully, from Evelyn herself. That is of course, unless the caller had news of her.

This subsequently prompted a continual flow of visitors who felt that he must want company to console him, though what he really needed was time to reflect and study his wife's notes. Ivan felt sure that Evelyn's disappearance was linked to, or dictated by, whatever was meant by what he had found in the attic, and that the clue was to be found in the notebook.

He did not though, want to divulge what he'd found up there to anyone. Not until he knew for a fact that airing that which he knew would besmirch his wife was something he deemed necessary to discovering her whereabouts. Not telling the police when asked if he had found anything unusual at home, was a close call in ethics. For now though, they were more than satisfied to take a tentative missing persons report, her description, and then supposedly keep an eye out. They explained to him that she would probably show up within a few days, as their experience showed usually happened.

Ivan wished that he were as sure himself, that that would be the case.

Chapter 3

Morty Stevens and Ben Rawlins were doing their usual evening exercise run up and down the beach's bike paths, when they saw the woman sprawled by the light pole.

They were both recent college graduates, who found a shared belief in the inherent goodness in people. This similarity was in fact, the grounds for their decision to jointly rent the small beach house that they now lived in, after they had graduated.

Both had majored in the humanities, and they both enjoyed giving of their time and resources to such things as charity events, and they spent a lot of their spare time helping out at senior citizen's centers, and in hospitals as volunteers. They were also no strangers to the homeless, or at the area's missions. Fortunately both of them also had well to do easy going parents who allowed them a vacation after graduation, to decide what they wanted to do with their lives now that they had their diplomas.

In any event, it was with a mutual unspoken consent that they stopped jogging in an effort to find out if they could give some kind of assistance to the woman.

Morty knelt beside her and asked, "Are you all right, ma'am?"

When no reply except a strange sort of mewling sound came from her, Ben also crouched down beside her. Their closer inspection revealed what the shadows had hidden . . .

"Man," Ben said, shaking his head. "She is really out to lunch!"

"No, I don't think that's what's up." Morty responded, realizing that his friend assumed the woman was on drugs, drunk, or both.

“Look how she’s dressed,” he said. “She doesn’t smell like booze, and she flat out doesn’t look like a druggie.”

Ben noted her vacant expression, but quickly came around to Morty’s point of view when he factored in that she was apparently in her late thirties or early forties, married, judging by the ring, and simply yet expensively dressed.

He reached out and gently nudged her shoulder. He was gently careful, so as not to upset the somewhat catatonic balance of her half lean, half lying posture against the light post.

“Ma’am, are you hurt?” He questioned her by shaking her shoulder a bit harder. . . . still . . . no response.

She remained slack-jawed, with a kind of drooling fixed facial immobility that defied their efforts to communicate with her.

“O . . . kay,” Ben drawled thoughtfully. “We best call in the troops, because she needs more than we can do for her.”

Morty began to reach into his belly-bag, where along with keys and wallet he habitually carried his small cell-phone. As his hand closed around it, he paused to turn toward the source of a loud belligerent voice.

“Hey, watcha’ got there bro’?” he heard. Then a large meaty hand grasped his shoulder and spun him around to face his questioner.

Morty winced, not so much from the force of the hand, as from the hundred proof breaths that accompanied the question.

In the few seconds that followed, and through the alcohol fog that attended them, he observed that a group of local tavern dwellers, some still exiting from the bar nearby, had erupted from the noise within to boisterously take a breath of fresh air, and perhaps to “score a babe or two to hang with.” This being the gist of the remarks that was to be overheard from stragglers of the group who were still arriving.

The ringleader of the group appeared to be he who had spun Morty around, who now proceeded to belch loudly with yet more flammable breath.

“Well, (*&%?#!<*), answer me you (*&%?#!<*),” belligerently demanded this over sized individual, who the others were addressing as one “Ralph.”

Ben meanwhile, had also gotten to his feet, taking a protective

stance between the woman and the new arrivals, which as their numbers swelled, grew to surround the original threesome.

Words were exchanged within the group in muted mumbling and laughter, none of which seemed complimentary in the least about Morty or Ben.

At six foot three inches tall, Ralph towered over the much smaller Morty, who pluckily faced the leering fume-breathing giant.

“Sir,” he stammered . . .”Something is wrong with this lady and we stopped . . .”

With a sweep of his right arm Ralph brushed Morty aside, totally ignoring what he was saying, to advance past him.

The big man did this, while loudly ordering both he and Ben to, “Shut up, you (*&%?#!<*s)! Trying to keep all the babes to yourself, huh?”

The group of inebriated had swelled to some eight or so followers of the drunken Ralph. Ben not knowing which way to turn tried to address the group at large, who had continued to voice suggestions and comments, though now turned ugly in reference to Morty and Ben. Some of the men had only seen the lolling woman against the light post, while the two who crouched by her were touching her. As they perceived themselves, they in like manner perceived the motivations of others, which in this case led to a very uncomplimentary supposition on their part about the two joggers.

“Hey, just a minute,” Ben protested, seeing which way their minds were going. “We just got here ourselves and she was like this when we arrived.”

Catcalls and derisive comments greeted his words from the drunken group.

“Well, well, now,” Ralph interjected . . .”we got us a couple of perverts takin’ advantage of some poor broad, who is too dumb and loaded to defend herself.”

This miscarriage he had boozily slurred, all the while giving Ben in turn a shove that sent the so accused into the hands of the now grasping clutches of the circle of men. Two of them held him when he tried to free himself.

Morty too, found himself held by strong hands among those who he believed had somehow mistaken his and Ben's intentions.

Unknown to the two do-gooders, was that this game had been played before by most of these men, but in other circumstances. Like at a party, where one of them might accuse some unfortunate outside their group, of improper advances toward a member of the opposite sex. Then, having pretended knowledge of similar other wrong doings by the accused, they would join to goad the unfortunate on his way, leaving the field clear for them, so to speak. They united in these efforts, and in many cases would ply women with drugs and alcohol to the point of being the more pliable to their intentions, singly, or as a group. They were predators in this and other regards, and the demons cultivated them as their pawns, while hating them as they did all of mankind.

Unknowing of the depths to which these men had gone in the past in search of their proclivities, Ben and Morty were flabbergasted at the turn of events. From simply trying to help the oblivious woman, they found themselves accused of trying to take advantage of her, or even worse, maybe of being the authors of her condition. As they tried to describe to the men around them what had really been the case, they were rounded on by Ralph who told their captors to "keep ahold' of them," while blearily warning the two yet again, "to shut the (*&%?#!<*) up!"

In righteous indignation they did so. Concern for what they might expect at the hands of such unjust men, playing no small part in their decision to hold their tongues.

They, as most people in the current age, had their experiences with dealing with drunks, and the unpredictable responses somehow inspired by virtually anything as an input.

Ralph meanwhile, lowered himself unsteadily to his haunches before the now totally silent woman, who had still not moved. He peered at her, and an evil grin cracked his coarse features.

"Hey Babe," he tried to say in a sympathetic voice, "Tell us what these two yo-yos' did to ya."

"What?" He leaned closer still, pretending to have heard a response. With his ear close to her lips he nodded his head, aping an understanding of what wasn't told to him.

"O.K. Honey," he drawled, "I'll get you home and fixed up."

“Well, fellas,” he grunted as he swayed upright, “We got here just in time. It seems these two,” he pointed vaguely at Ben and Morty, “were just now kind of patting her down like, when we got here. Trying to be good Samaritans and all . . . no doubt,” he continued as he leered.

“Pickin’ . . .” He made a show of rolling his eyes, “I mean patting her pockets for ID perhaps . . .”

“Right boys?” He addressed Morty and Ben, who knew for certain that the woman had not spoken, and that the charade needed no response. With just a side glance at one another, they were both aware that getting to the authorities was their move, if and when, they were let go.

“You boys are lucky that I’m in a good mood tonight,” Ralph growled when neither of them responded “The lady says she just copped a buzz, and nodded off a bit, when you two doughnuts came bugging her, like she ain’t allowed to rest upside a tree or post if she has a mind to.”

“I tell you what . . .” He started to say, then had a thought and sneered his mean looking grin at them.

He pointed to Morty’s belly-bag, and said, “Just let me see what’s in your little gay purse there, and I’ll show this gal so she knows you didn’t rip her off and stash something in that. Then, if she don’t want to press charges against you (*&%?#!<*s), I’ll let you go.”

While Ralph had addressed them they had been roughly pushed forward by their captors, who getting in to Ralph’s game, were laughing and smirking at them, as their leader continued to orchestrate the appearance of guilt from innocence.

Numbly, but with a quiet anger, Morty took off the belly-bag and handed it over to the big man.

Ralph snatched it from his hand, and began rummaging through it as he leaned once more over the woman as if again consulting with her. His back was turned to both Morty and Ben, when he unsteadily got back erect to turn toward them.

“She says the phone is hers, but that maybe you were going to make a call for her is why you had it?” He asked them mockingly, as if daring them to question what he pretended that the woman had told him. Then he threw the bag back to Morty, sans phone, though anyone could see the bulge in the giant’s shirt pocket.

Morty saw which way the wind was blowing by then. The phone was to be kept, to stop him and Ben from calling anyone for help right away.

“Yeah, whatever,” he responded. “We’ll just straighten it all out with her tomorrow when she feels better.” Though he knew good and well that neither he nor Ben had a clue as to who the woman was, nor where she lived.

Ben, with this same thought in mind, was trying to absorb every detail of the woman’s appearance, while paying likewise close attention to the thought of having to describe these men to the police.

His focus was primarily on Ralph, as the leader of the bunch. Boy, would he love to see what kind of tune the over bearing Ralph would sing with a cop in his face!

“OK fellas, let’s let em go for now.” said Ralph.

As the ranks of snickering men opened for the two, Ben cast one more glance at the woman, who he feared for at their hands. For a moment he thought he saw the outline of something strange floating in the air above her, within which stars seemed to twinkle, though only buildings were on the other side of her from where he now stood. Ben blinked, and tried to look again, but one of the men had given him a shove and for a few hurried steps he was hustled along, until he found he and Morty released some distance from the group, who had closed ranks again about the hapless woman.

“Come on,” Morty whispered. “Lets’ get to a phone.”

The two hurried along for a few steps, then Morty found himself alone as Ben had stopped when he felt them to be a safe distance away, to turn around with out fear of reprisal, and look back.

“Doggone it Ben!” Morty returned to where his friend had paused. “We have to go and get some help!”

“Look Mort, other people stopped for a minute during that fiasco, and figured that it was none of their business, or they didn’t want to tilt at windmills, or whatever. Those men are drunk, but don’t appear to be your average riffraff.”

“They’re well dressed and no one is going to suppose that they are up to no good. Or, at least no one is going to demand that a football

team's worth of apparently somewhat affluent middle-class men answer to them, so, it's on us for now."

"You go to a phone, and I'll follow them and do whatever I can. By the time you call and help comes, they'll be long gone, or somewhere hidden, but I'll try to stick with them somehow. Then at least we'll know where they are."

The two looked at one another for a moment. Demons tried to persuade them each to bow to their individual fears and self interests, while Doubt assailed them both to sway them to just leave it alone.

Morty though, knew for sure that he'd been robbed of his cell-phone, no matter what other grim deeds were or weren't intended, and no matter how it seemed a no win situation, he was dogged if he would just shrug it all off as more hassle than it would be worth to pursue.

Ben, on the other hand was single minded in his determination to take a hand in the fate of the woman, and the cell phone wasn't even an issue to him. The only doubt that held water in his mind was whether or not he and Morty's statements about events would hold up against what he had to project as the coordinated lies of such a group of men.

Yet, each of them had noticed individually, that he hadn't felt very fearful, while being held captive by the men. And, neither had felt hesitant at all when in the most peril while still encircled by the men, while they were still close to the woman.

Of course, neither of them knew that the awesome Seraph had inadvertently, by his close proximity, keeping the bulk of the enemy spirits at bay, when Ben and Morty had been under where the angel floated above the woman.

Yet, both were now hesitant, and questioning the rights and wrongs of the whole deal, and their part in it, just a short distance away.

"Look, they're leaving, and taking her with them." Ben said. "I'm gonna follow them, so you get going."

"O.K., I'm going to race home and call. I'll be right back," Morty called this last over his shoulder as he took off in a sprint for their house just a few blocks away.

Fear, Doubt, and Self Interest, figuratively shrugged their shoulders collectively, and for a moment gave up trying to sway the two do-gooder humans, from trying to interfere.

Chapter 4

Baloth, as one of the most powerful of demons, got his orders in the main, from Satan directly, or through his own begrudged Overlord, the Archdemon Overlord Torath, who was Prince of the North American Principality. Messengers flew between them as needed.

Satan relied on his many tentacles to maintain his stranglehold on the world. His minion's eyes and ears were everywhere, and like a spider in its web, he orchestrated through spinning yet more sticky strands to ensnare the humans he considered as bugs.

Unlike the Lord, whose Holy Spirit was everywhere, Satan had to rely on his network to communicate, and enforce his will.

One third of the "angels without number" had fallen from Heaven with him. From among that myriad third, Satan had chosen Archdemons/Overlords, and their Lieutenants, who though less powerful, were like-minded to himself. And so allowed to make their own calls out in the field of spiritual battle, subject only to their black desires, their Overlords orders, or directly or indirectly . . . the will of Satan himself.

One such Lieutenant was Baloth.

Attending lesser demons had swarmed aboard the bus within which Baloth animated Evelyn's body. His evil presence projected an aura of malice that he did not even bother to hide within the shell of Evelyn's body. When the other passengers had glanced up as was normal when a new arrival got on board, they were taken aback by the twisted mask of hatred that distorted his/her features, when Baloth/Evelyn had turned from paying the fare.

Having his fellow passenger's full attention, as well as that of the

demons about him, Baloth slapped Evelyn's face with her hands, first on one side then on the other.

Hard!

The slaps were like the sound of pistol shots, which could be heard clearly, even above the sound of the bus's motor.

"What the (*&%?#!<*) are you (*&%?#!<*)-heads looking at?" He snarled through her lips, as she walked to the back of the bus.

He then took every opportunity to slam her hips into the metal sides of the seats along the way.

The passengers aboard were stunned by the rage and madness displayed, while the demons chortled, attendant on Baloth's every move.

Normally, subtlety was the rule. After all, if mankind knew how much they were hated, and that demonic forces ruled their world through human ignorance, maybe they would really get busy and start choosing sides. And, as even the worst of sinful human nature inspired human-kind considered themselves to somehow be one of the "good guys," the demons carefully tried not to disclose their existence. Thus, not provoking thoughts about bad spirits, which would inevitably lead men to question about *all* spiritual things, could ultimately bring thoughts of God into their minds.

So, demons obsessed and tempted man subliminally, and not overtly obviously, through man's limited hearing and sight, abetted by his own sinful nature, but mainly through man's interactions with other people.

Demons were adept at fanning incompatibilities, jealousies, prejudices, or whatever, into a blaze.

A demon might even interpose himself between two like-minded compatible people, to where each felt, justifiably, a wrongness between them . . . a projection of anger or hatred, that had its origin in neither, but was perceived by each to be of the other.

They would perceive the spirit of hate for instance, but couldn't see it, and so believed the emanations to be from another man, and so, would hate and/or be angry in return.

Baloth stayed on the bus until the driver called out that they had reached the end of the line at a 'park-n-ride.' The bus, it turned out, had been a commuter which resulted in his now having brought Eve-

lyn quite a distance from the town of Scarsdale from which they had started. This worked well for his plans to lose Evelyn to where she would have a hard time returning home without help, or be found easily, and returned to her husband

Baloth had been hard at work since possessing her, in an all out effort to cause her to permanently retreat within her own mind to where she would remain in a disassociated somewhat catatonic like state, where she might find surcease in perceiving her inward withdrawal to be a cushioning from the terror of his presence.

A parade of demons followed the powerful fallen angel as he crashed the hapless woman through the too small gaps between the tall hedges bordering the parkway of the park-n-ride, where he had her exit the bus.

If he had his way, this “end of line” for the commuter bus from Scarsdale would soon herald the end of the line for Evelyn’s conscious awareness . . . permanently.

He zigzagged her again and again through the long row of bushes as he wended her towards an alley which intersected the street that the park-n-ride bordered.

Baloth wanted to hurt her to give her further cause to retreat within herself, but did not then want to cause her death. Her death, he felt, would not be as effective in his current plan as to just cause her physical and psychological harm.

His thoughts were that if she did happen to be found and was returned to her husband in a permanently withdrawn state, with her body bruised and battered to boot, her husband would have a daily reminder of how unfair life was, and how uncaring the Lord must be. This would fan the anger the man must still feel towards the Lord, over the death of his son.

Within the few blocks her body had stumblingly traversed he had scratched her nicely by going through the bushes. Then continuing on his route, he had bounced her off a mailbox and into several other pedestrians, who glared and muttered angrily at his hostess’s drunken seeming gait.

A great cluster of other demons had gathered to enjoy the spectacle of his possession. They chattered and gibbered, being further apprised

of Baloth's victim and his progress with her, by his bragging attendant minions.

As the horde followed her/him down the narrow alley leading toward the beach, Baloth decided to improvise on his course of action.

"Gather around and heed me." He directed his followers. "Humans must play their part now. I need some hard hearted men to be inspired to come to this Jewish (*&%?#!<*). Lust can play its part, but I want her taken away, and to remain hidden from the other men who will surely seek her. What is done with her or to her, does not concern me, just so that she lives, and remains hidden for a time."

When he had finished giving directions, Baloth withdrew from Evelyn, which without his stimulation of her motor control, caused her soon to slump to the concrete beside a dumpster in the alley. Again in demonic spiritual form, Baloth addressed his kind.

"Do as you have been bid, and report her whereabouts, and of your success . . . t o me. I've other humans needing corruption elsewhere."

"Let's go." He ordered his immediate, ever present attendant minions, as he took flight back toward Scarsdale.

Baloth would have been seriously enraged had he seen a diminutive spirit specializing in envy, swoop to Evelyn soon after he had left, to reanimate her body. She staggered upright, her body under even less control than that exerted over her by the far more powerful Baloth. Most of the other demons not included in Baloth's immediate entourage had arisen to descend almost immediately into a nearby beachfront tavern.

Alone, and enjoying himself immensely, Envy stumbled Evelyn to the corner of the building that stood facing the strand at the beach. As this particular spirit of envy had never experienced a possession before, he was totally occupied with stimulating her limbs with motor control, and only after several steps out on the strand did he notice one of the Lord's Seraphim idling above the beach.

Envy fled the body just an instant before that awesome angel noticed the stumbling Evelyn he had just left, careen into a light-post, her body still motivated by the momentum of Envy's will.

After back pedaling away from the human woman he had possessed, other demons joined Envy as he related to them about the presence of

the dread Lieutenant of their master, Satan, and then spoke of what little he knew of Baloth's mission in regards to the woman he had animated.

Envy boasted proudly of his possession of Evelyn, as his listeners looked at her hungrily, each desiring the thrill of possession and torture of a hated human. Each was given serious pause after also noting the Seraph so close by.

Some of the demons dispatched by Baloth to the tavern now began to return, expressing that they had succeeded in finding hard-hearted humans as they had been ordered. The success of their mission, and the waiting of the fruits of it, brought all of them to an expectant demonic glee.

Chapter 5

Jon's presence had kept the demons at bay. The ignorant men had been inspired by demonic intent in their arrival at the scene, but were pretty much only operating from their own sinful natures now, in conjunction with the alcohol they had imbibed. This was as most of the demons influencing them had stopped their subtle meddling because of Jon's presence, before the men's arrival by the light pole above which Jon floated, and by which Ben and Morty and the woman crouched.

These two men had been helped in their fearless facing of the group following Ralph, simply because of the demons wouldn't come near enough to affect them either, with Jon so close by.

Spirits of Doubt and Fear had gnashed their teeth in frustration.

While Jon observed the opposing factions interactions, around and about the fallen woman, which had culminated in the expulsion of the two good-hearted defenders, he marveled at his own interest which must be from the Lord. So he didn't feel it to be quite audacious of him to silently plea for mercy for her from the Lord and for the Lord's direction if he was granted to intervene.

By the time the men, carrying the woman with them, had reached their parked vehicles, they had decided to form a caravan with Ralph and the unconscious Evelyn in the lead truck.

When Jon had floated along behind the group of men to the tavern's parking area, so too, he noted, had followed one of the two do-gooders who had tried to help the woman.

When the caravan left the lot and headed down the street, Jon again pleaded to the Lord on the woman's behalf:

“O’ my Lord, grant me that it is in your will for my intervention on your behalf. Release your faithful servant to act for your glory.”

The Lord’s response took even Jon by surprise . . .

“MY WILL IS YOURS,” came the Lord’s blessing in a pulse of divine light, which momentarily bathed the angel.



Ben watched askance, as the last of the vehicles sped away. He came out from behind the parked car that he had hidden behind, at almost the same moment as when a blinding flash from above him somewhere, lit up the parking lot like a small nova.

With spots in his eyes, Ben turned toward the sound of the throaty growl of a powerful motor where a moment before he could have testified had been only an empty parking space.

“What the heck?” He wondered in alarm, fearing that the sound meant that there were more of the group of men that he had followed, in the big black four-by-four that rumbled there.

Its lights came on suddenly, pinning him in their glare. Then the truck began to move slowly towards him. Girding himself, the would be rescuer refused to give in to fear, and stood his ground when the huge one ton pick-up truck pulled up beside him in a purring rumble of power.

The tinted side window on the driver’s side smoothly rolled down.

A clean-cut man of about thirty, who Ben did not recognize as of Ralph’s group, calmly, and it seemed somewhat mischievously, regarded him.

“You are Ben. I am Jon.” The driver informed Ben.

“Now how in the world do you . . .” Ben began to ask, wondering how this fellow knew who he was, but Jon interrupted him.

“If you would follow those who have taken the woman, my will is as yours. Please believe that, and enter this vehicle.”

Ben stood for a moment in indecision. The sure knowledge that he could trust this fair haired stranger in his all black truck, came from he knew not where, but in response to the stranger’s words he raced around the front of the truck towards the passenger side door. The truck had

those huge tires, which called for him to have to climb up a hanging chrome step just to get inside. This he did and slammed the door just as the truck roared to life in pursuit of the caravan, as if it itself reflected the impatience of its two passengers.

“Who are you, and how do you know my name?” Ben immediately had to ask the well dressed stranger who piloted the truck.

He was rewarded with an angelic smile, as he was in return asked by the driver, “First let me ask you, O’ Ben of the heroic heart, do you know the Lord thy God, and of Jesus, His Son, thy Savior?”

“Buh . . . wha . . . whats’ that got to do with it?” Ben sputtered.

Jon did not answer his passenger immediately. He negotiated a series of turns, handling the vehicle with the ease of seeming long familiarity, though just a few minutes before he had no clue about how to drive. The path they followed was clear to him, though those they pursued were out of sight, and had been so since before he and Ben had left the tavern’s parking lot.

As the tail end of the caravan came in to view again, Jon saw that a swarm of demons were as a cloud within and without the vehicles ahead.

Jon pursed his human lips at the sight of the demons and glanced over to meet the oblivious, yet questioning eyes of the young man beside him.

Jon tilted his head to indicate the caravan he was overtaking in front of them, and Ben faced front and put his questions on hold as he amazedly viewed the vehicles ahead.

Ben knew that by the time they had begun their pursuit, he and the stranger beside him had little chance of catching up. That only luck would find them on the same roads taken by Ralph and crew, as the caravan had been out of sight since long before they had even left the parking lot.

How then, he wondered, had Jon been able to unerringly follow and close to where their quarry was now in sight?

Was he a cop? But then what about the Jesus questions ?

“Be of good cheer O’ Ben.” He was told by Jon. “Miracles of the Lord are at hand to smite the wicked, and turn them from their course.”

Ben was then aghast to see Jon let go of the steering wheel of the

truck, and turn toward him with a twinkle in his eye, and a smile upon his handsome, strong features.

“Let us pray, Ben.” Jon intoned with a lowering of those twinkling eyes, which again, as at first, seemed to amusedly regard his flustered passenger.

Ben saw the steering wheel turning of its own accord somehow directing the speeding truck on its course, as with bowed head and lifted hands the driver began to pray.

A glow began to suffuse the truck, emanating from within Jon, as the light of Heaven was allowed by the angel, to suffuse the cab of the truck with the love and peace of the Lord.

Ben, who like most normal people from his walk of life, had certainly been exposed to the scriptures at one time or another. Now though he suddenly found himself confronted by evidence of the Burning Bush It/Him-self, so to speak.

He might have been able to talk about “St. Elmos Fire,” or some such nonsense, if things were different, but as it was now . . . well . . . the Small Voice that he heard sometimes, became as that of a Heavenly choir hammering home to him the exalted power and glory of the Lord.

He was immediately humbled by the knowledge of his unworthiness to stand before his Creator, no matter how good a person he thought of himself as being.

“Oh!” he cried out first in an expletive of surprise. This was followed by a more muted, “Oh . . . my Lord” as he closed his eyes, and was brought to bow his head to the peace of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord’s Spirit of Peace and Grace humbled him with an awareness of the vast unearned and undeserved Love of the Lord that was his to be had simply by believing. He accepted Jesus as his Savior, and asked forgiveness for his sins, as he had heard and ignored so many times before when he and Morty had worked in the missions.

The indwelling Holy Spirit gave him knowledge which caused Ben to realize that in spite of his sins, the Lord loved him, which had him again asking for that forgiveness, repenting fully from the heart and not just by using the words, right there . . . in the truck, while a tear wended its way down his cheek.

While the Holy Spirit was working to make a new man in Christ from the Ben of old, Jon beside him sang unknown praises in an unknown tongue, in a “joyful noise” unto the Lord.

Soon the angel’s praises faded, as did the light of the Lord also fade from mortal view as Jon cloaked himself again to appear as only human. The Seraph reflected that it only took a moment for the Lord’s Salvation, yet humans would live their lifetimes without seriously considering how to be humble and repentant enough for just the few moments it took to ask the Lord into their lives.

During the time that it had taken for Ben to ask for and receive his Salvation, their vehicle had closed to within just a few car lengths of the caravan they followed.

Jon turned once again to the man beside him who was just recovering from what (rightly so) should have been a world shattering revelation to him.

“Now, do you know the Lord thy God, and have Jesus His Son, as thy Savior?” He once again asked the Christian beside him.

“Yeah, oh yes . . . thank You Lord . . . thank You Jesus!” Ben responded with a full heart in acknowledgment of the shining truth and faith fully blossoming within him, as the new indwelling Holy Spirit of The Lord took up residence within his heart, and a peace overcame him.

Jon turned his attention back to the controlling of the vehicle with a totally human air of complete satisfaction, while Ben brought himself also under control, both emotionally and spiritually.

They followed the vehicles ahead in silence as Jon asked for the Lord’s guidance in what course of action that the two should take in regards to their quarry, but also of what truths could be revealed to the new Child of God beside him. Questions would surely soon begin to flood from Ben, for even now Jon knew himself to be the subject of intense scrutiny by his new found Christian passenger.

In an effort to forestall some of these, Jon spoke to Ben’s unasked questions . . . “I am the Lord’s angel.”

He turned to Ben with a cheerful, yet somehow wolfish grin, “I am Jon of the Seraphim, and we go to do battle with the enemy, if and as the Lord wills, and allows.”

Chapter 6

After reading Evelyn's notebook, Ivan leaned back in his comfortable recliner, with a weary sigh. Not one normally to allow despair to cloud his awareness, he was finding the two-fold blow of first his son James's death, and now his wife's disappearance, a bitter pill to swallow.

"Why me?" He asked of no one in particular.

Their lives had been blessed, surely, as evidenced by their prosperity and standing in the community. But now, as he read through Evelyn's notes, he found himself wondering what they had done to be so cursed. How his wife could have even begun to follow the path of thought resulting in the actions she had taken as documented in her notes, was beyond him.

Psychics? Mediums? *What junk*, he thought to himself.

One thing pretty much a constant, he reflected, all men and women of God had one thing in common, no matter their dogma, doctrine, or whatever, and that was an aversion to occult practitioners, and so called psychic mediums.

What boggled his mind the most though, was that he and Evelyn were supposedly in good standing with God, if for no other reason than that they were just simply good upstanding people, and pillars of the community. Never mind the added factor that the eyes of the Lord should look favorably on them as "the Chosen", being of the Jews.

He pondered whether Jehovah was angry with he and Evelyn for their questionings about Christianity.

Their comparatively new neighbors, Josh and Ellen, were Christian, and in developing a friendship with them, good natured debates had occurred between the two couples about their beliefs. These

debates of course centered on whether Jesus was the Messiah, or just another prophet.

Ivan and Evelyn had both been impressed by the Christian couple's knowledge of Scripture, and their use of Old Testament prophecies to prove their points. But it was more the way that the Christian couple carried themselves in their walks in life, combined with their peaceful countenances that were never more apparent as when they spoke of the Lord, and of course . . . about Jesus, that witnessed to the Jewish couple.

Ivan and Evelyn had stood their ground. Or rather, still professed to maintain that no real proof existed that Jesus was the Christ or "Messiah," during their debates, but they had to admit to one another in private, that it was only through faith that the Old Testament was Law to them. So they in turn, had to at least entertain the concept that the New Testament was simply a matter of faith also, and that it was unfair to demand proof as a criteria for belief in either Testament.

Josh and Ellen had told him and Evelyn both repeatedly, that once the Jewish couple embraced the idea of Jesus as the Messiah, the Holy Spirit would surely speak to their hearts to confirm the Truth.

As the Jewish couple's lives had revolved around and been dictated by their beliefs, this subject had been of paramount importance to them, and it was easy for Ivan to see why Evelyn had sought spiritual redress for her psychological turmoil. It was her methods that left something to be desired.

Like for instance her presence, he thought to himself gloomily.

While he considered what had led up to her disappearance, he had been growing more and more impatient about taking no action. He finally rose to his feet.

"I've been waiting long enough without doing anything." He mumbled to himself, while desiring to do anything at all that would be a positive step towards Evelyn's return. Just contemplating his navel, while waiting for a phone call or other information about her, wasn't getting it.

He guessed that his next option was to inform the police about the mess in the attic, and let the chips fall where they may.

The headlines would read: "Prominent Jewish leader loses wife to Devil Worship."

It would just be too good a story for the cops to keep quiet about, and the press would have a field day.

One thing he hadn't done yet with any truly dedicated effort was to pray.

He remembered just then, the words of his neighbors, who in quoting Scripture had said something about "where two or more are gathered in His Name, so will He be there in the midst" He thought about the quote for a bit, and what it implied. Not that he assumed that God wouldn't hear him if he prayed alone, it was just that he figured why not get the added benefit of other's prayers in conjunction with his own. Kind of like rocket boosts in shooting the prayers to Heaven, so to speak. With mixed feelings, not to mention very tentatively mixed beliefs, he picked up the phone.



Josh and Ellen had been one of the first of those questioned by Ivan about Evelyn's disappearance. They had immediately become alarmed and concerned, and had been of those who had driven all over looking for her. At Ivan's request, they had not contacted him after reporting to him that their initial search had proved fruitless, as he had expressed his apparent belief that his wife would turn up, in mimicry of what he had heard the Police advise him as was the "usual case."

Ivan had told them nothing about what was in his attic. The two couples lived in a quiet neighborhood, and it was only that Ivan had told the Christian pair that there was no sign of foul play, such as in a forced entry, that had somewhat mollified Josh and Ellen. Concern was amplified by the fact that Evelyn's car was still in the driveway, which was unusual as their neighborhood was a bit removed from the center of things; most of the local shopping or business destinations, being somewhat past the point of a casual stroll.

Josh and Ellen had prayed for the well being of their neighbors. They had lifted up both Ivan and Evelyn to the Lord, and stood in agreement that Evelyn was in the Lord's hands.

The couple had been confident that in speaking and witnessing of their faith in Scripture, and in Jesus as the Son of God in particular, they

had been winning over the Jewish couple towards serious consideration of Jesus as the Messiah.

That for several months Josh and Ellen hadn't been able to schedule a barbecue or get-together with the Seranovichs had not been lost on the Christian couple. They had especially noticed a recent marked reservation on the part of Evelyn, which was a sorrow to them, though they knew that the "enemy" would always try to orchestrate something or other to turn anyone from hearing words, or "The Word," that could lead to their Salvation. It was kind of a "standard operating procedure" for the enemy to throw demonic monkey wrenches as chaff, in the way of Salvation ministry.

That Ivan and Evelyn would be assailed in this manner, was a fore-gone conclusion in any case, as ever present demons would have been aware of Josh and Ellen's continual witnessing and ministry to the Jewish couple.

If the Christians had really thought about it, they too would have realized, as the demon Lieutenant, Baloth certainly did, that more than Ivan and Evelyn's Salvation were at stake in the Jewish couple's potential as modern day Jewish leaders converted to Christianity.

A big spiritual bulls-eye was what the event, or non-event would entail, for whichever side won.



"I'll get it," Josh called to his wife when the phone rang. He noted that it was a little after seven PM as he grabbed the kitchen phone on his way to see what new goodies might lurk in the fridge.

"Hello," he answered on the third ring.

"Hi Josh, it's Ivan. I hope I'm not disturbing you." Ivan began somewhat tentatively.

"No, no . . . not at all. How are things? We have been praying for you guys over here." Josh questioned and stated all in one breath. His concern for Ivan and his question about his missing spouse, a confused jumble of thought in his mind.

"Oh, well . . . I'm all right, but I still haven't heard from Evelyn yet . . ." Ivan hesitated and then decided to take the bull by the horns.

“To tell you the truth, I kind of really didn’t . . . I mean . . . I didn’t really tell you the whole truth about everything yesterday,” Ivan stammered.

“Quite frankly, there were things that I didn’t tell the police, or anyone else. Do you think you and Ellen could come over? There is something that I want to show you, and believe me; the sight is worth a thousand words.” Ivan kind of held his breath awaiting Josh’s response. He knew that his neighbor would frown upon knowing that he hadn’t been truthful in the first place, but would be even more displeased when knowing about the attic, and the fact that Ivan hadn’t spoken in warning about what could be a threat to others in the neighborhood.

Well, he had to tell someone, and he had to admit to himself that his reasons for calling Josh and Ellen were somewhat selfish, as he was motivated to some extent to share with them simply because they were not Jews. He figured that had he called someone at the Temple for spiritual counsel about the matter, word would spread like wild-fire through the congregation, and he just couldn’t see airing dirty laundry to the world at large.

Not yet, at least.

Josh’s voice interrupted his reverie, “Uh, just a second Ivan, I’ll ask Ellen, but I’m sure there won’t be a problem.”

Ivan heard the muffled hollow sound as the mouthpiece of his friend’s phone got covered, and he could barely make out that there was a garbled conversation going on next door.

Then he heard his neighbor’s voice as the phone was uncovered, “OK,” Josh affirmed to his relief, “We’ll be right over.”



The three of them stood in the huddle by the door that the cramped attic space dictated if they were not going to stand on the design on the floor, or among the books and candles and such that were scattered about.

Mutely, Ivan handed Josh the notebook detailing his wife’s all too apparent obsession. The “Oh Lords” and Oh mys,” that the Christian couple had been exclaiming since first seeing the pentagram and various

accoutrements, lapsed into silence when they began to read from the notebooks pages.

After a few minutes of flipping through its pages, Josh looked at Ellen with a puzzled frown. “Honey, I don’t know about Ivan, but I feel the need to do some serious praying right here and right now.”

“Amen to that!” Was Ellen’s immediate and emphatic response, as she sank to her nyloned knees right there on the dusty attic floor.

Josh looked to Ivan as he in turn got to his knees facing the scene before them. The shrine-likeness of it all, in conjunction with the horrible red pentagram festooned with candles at its five points, was gross enough indeed, but it was an ambiance of the feelings of attendant bad and/or evil things that just made them cringe in their spirits.

The same bad vibes, or feelings, that Ivan had felt when he had first seen the shrine, returned in force, to assail them all.

Ivan in turn, sank to his knees, realizing that without even asking the couple to join him in what they called a “prayer circle,” their immediate response to what he had shown them, was to pray . . . with, or without him.



“Lord, we come before you in Jesus Holy Name . . .” Josh began fervently.

Chapter 7

Morty had arrived breathless at their beach house. He charged through the small white fence gate guarding the approach to the somewhat set back little house, and panted his way up the porch steps to the entry. Fumbling with his keys, he kept mumbling “hurry . . . hurry” to himself, in a muted sing-song.

The door opened at last to his efforts, and he literally threw himself at the cordless phone perched on the coffee table. He dialed 911, and expectantly waited for an answer on the other end.

“What is the nature of your emergency please?” Came a coolly impersonal voice.

“Hi, there’s been a kidnapping or something . . .” Morty began, stumbling all over his meaning and his words, in his haste to impart the wrongs he had perceived, but not exactly sure what would inspire the police to get them to respond the quickest.

“Sir, is there a crime being committed right now, and if so, what is the location?” Came the 911 operator’s response, now reflecting a great deal more interest.

“Um, it’s only been a few minutes since I was there, but it’s where Stanton intersects with the strand . . . uh . . . a half a block north by the alley.”

“Sir . . .” came the insistent voice . . . “Is a crime in commission right now at that location?”

“I don’t know about right now!” Morty almost shouted in exasperation. “My roommate and I were trying to help this lady, and then all these drunks showed up from this bar, and started accusing us of all kinds of

stuff. They took our cell-phone so I couldn't call you right away, and Ben stayed behind to try to help, while I came home to call you."

"OK sir, we'll get a unit on the way. I need your name and a little more information. You initially said that there was a kidnapping. Who was kidnapped, and by whom were they kidnapped?"

"My name is Morty Stevens, and my roommate is Ben Rawlins." He then went on to give his address, phone number, and the number of the stolen cell phone.

Morty proceeded with an explanation of the events leading up to his call. Even while he was describing what had happened, a police cruiser that was close to location that Morty reported, was dispatched to the now vacant alleged scene of what could be construed as a "supposed" crime.

Information between that unit and dispatch was exchanged, while Morty was placed on hold. The upshot being that he was told that there was no evidence of a crime having been committed, nor was there one then in progress at that location.

Would he like them to have a unit come to his house and take a written report?

"Well, I've told you all that I know, and until Ben checks in with me I don't know what else that I can tell you." He responded exasperatedly.

"OK, sir. We have your telephonic report on tape, and I've made a note of what you've said in the log. If anything else occurs, or you would like to sign a complaint about the theft of your phone, we will send a unit."

"Boy . . . yeah . . . I guess. OK, I'll call you as soon as Ben gets a hold of me."

"That will be fine. Thank you. Goodbye." The dispatcher hung up at her end.

Morty headed back outside, and began jogging down the strand back toward Stanton Street. He looked all around, and called Ben's name and waited for about twenty minutes for his friend to show up, but to no avail.

Shrugging his shoulders in exasperation, he concluded that he would be more likely to hear from Ben waiting at home, as at least he had the house phone to be reached at now that his cell phone was gone.

Resignedly, he headed back home.

Chapter 8

Ralph's sinful human nature being that which ruled his actions almost without hindrance from any "Small Voice" or conscience (if you prefer), was being enhanced by a spiritual gang of unseen passengers who rode with, over, and upon his truck.

One of the men in his group owned a cabin out in the country. It wasn't far, yet it was far enough from any neighbors to where the men had thrown many a wild get-together, to where no one was around to gainsay their actions. A party had been going on there for most of the week in fact, and had slowly swelled with the ebb and surge of the coming and goings of the partiers who left, then brought back re-enforcements.

His armrest which doubled as a center console in the truck, divided him from Evelyn. Ralph looked at his out to lunch passenger and maliciously grinned at the thought of the fun that he and his crew were going to have at her expense.

As he had been driving he had glanced at her often, waiting for some sign of awareness from her, but so far she had remained in the same sprawl as she had slumped into when he had not too gently shoveled her into the passenger seat of his truck.

Most of the men he knew were avid hunters. Most for the thrill of the kill, rather than out to stock their freezers with game to eat as their fathers and grandfathers might have done.

One thing that they also enjoyed as a group, was babbling over the CB radios that all of them had installed in their vehicles. Ralph had turned his CB down; as some of his buddies' drunken bantering was interfering with his already alcohol befuddled thought processes. Now

though, he began to focus on his name being insistently called, which he barely heard above the music he was blasting.

“Hey Ralph, you (*&%?#!<*), answer the (*&%?#!<*) radio!” Came a muted holler that he was able to hear, once he turned his radio down.

Ralph cracked another can of beer from the twelve-pack that he habitually carried behind his seat in the extended cab section of his truck, turned up his CB volume, then reached for the microphone.

“Whatcha want Gus,” he asked after recognizing the voice of one of his friends.

“Hey deaf and dumb, I been trying to get you to answer me for five miles!” Gus complained. I think someone’s following us, cause since we left town and even before, these same headlights been back there, and I know that I was the last of our guys to hit the road.”

“Well, pull over and wait for whoever to go by you, and then call me back if it’s the cops.” Ralph ordered. Then he thought a bit and said, “Or do you think it is the cops . . . cause if you do then don’t pull over cause it might look suspicious.”

“Nah,” Gus said, “it’s a truck. Maybe some semi tractor, judging it by the height of its lights, but the (*&%?#!<*) thing seems to be hanging on our tail whatever the (*&%?#!<*) it is, so I guess I will fall back for a look-see.

“It don’t matter much either way,” Ralph slurred, “we ain’t doing nothin’ wrong anyway . . . or, at least not so’s you could notice. But yeah, go ahead and check em out.”

Upon which statement Ralph had built up an enormous burp which he felt he just had to blast out over the air waves.

The responses were varied, but the names his buddies called him were a positive response in Ralph’s effort to always be the biggest, ugliest, and the most gross of the bunch he ran with, in a kind of negative badge of honor. Kind of a reverse culture to where bad became good, and where the best at being the worst became the leader.

“You’re a real pig Ralph.” came one response.

“Hey, did ya lose anything solid when all that hot air got lost from ya?” another of them asked, though none expected a coherent answer from Ralph in response, as most knew how hammered he was.

Gus meanwhile, had pulled over to await the vehicle he had noticed following them.

Some of the demons who swarmed on, in, and around the caravan had also stayed behind with him. They did though, as Gus, wonder who or what followed them, and they had good reasons for wondering.

The demons had felt and seen the flash of the Lord's power when it had erupted behind them, just after the caravan had left the parking lot of the tavern. They had cringed, as it was all too rare in recent millenniums, for the Lord or his angels to actually take a direct hand in things. They did not know exactly what the Lord had done, but that this group of demons had been in such close proximity to the event, brought them fearful forebodings of what the flash of divine power portended.

A human such as Ben, saw the bright light of the Lord, attributing it perhaps to lightning, but in the spiritual realm, the heavens had been rent asunder as God's mighty hand had transformed Jon into a human, and provided His Angel of Light with a modern day chariot.

A further manifestation of the Lord's direct action, was that though the demons had been questioning the who, what, and why of the display of might, none of them had been able to penetrate the mystery of what had actually been done during that Heaven sent moment.

Messengers had been sent to both Baloth and to the dread Master himself. This is as no one man, Angel of Light, or demon, knew when the second coming of Christ the Lord was to occur. So, if and when God's angels began any offensive move, it was to be reported immediately. Far more imperative though, was if the Lord was to take a direct hand in events of the world, as seemed to have just happened.

For all the demons knew, a Theophany could even have occurred.

Demons had also seen the much smaller second light of the Lord brightly glow behind the speeding caravan.

So though they knew of the Lord's angel that some of them had initially kept their distance from at the beach as having seemed more than merely curious about their actions, they were not aware that that same angel was cloaked and transformed into one of the two men following the group comprised of Ralph and his cronies.

At least not yet they weren't.

Gus watched the headlights approach from his vantage point. He

had pulled in to a deserted small country store parking lot which bordered the two lane road down which could be seen the fast fading tail-lights of his buddies in the caravan.

The moon had risen to bathe the countryside in a twilight enhanced by twinkling stars.

Gus had swiftly pulled in and parked to where the oncoming vehicle's lights would not blind him as it neared, so that he could get a good view of it, and hopefully see its occupants. He was pretty sure that unless it was one of the rare high-lift trucks or 4x4s that county sheriffs used, it wasn't a cop.

"Uh-Oh," Gus said to himself as the black truck which had initially approached his position at speed suddenly whipped into a side-ways spin to screechingly slide on four wheels into a perfectly executed sudden stop, pinning Gus within his own truck in its head-lights.

The surprise maneuver had caught him just after he had popped his head up from the slumped position he had assumed to hide from the possibility of being seen by those in the pursuing vehicle. All that he had had a chance to see was that though he was somewhat of a truck aficionado, he could still not make out what kind of truck it was before it spun expertly to catch him spying out of his own 4x4 at it. One thing he knew though, it wasn't any kind of police vehicle that he was aware of.



Ben had been struggling to assimilate with any measure of matter of fact aplomb that he rode in a truck driven by an angel. Hard on the heels of having received his Salvation, here he found himself in a kind of fantasy situation to where his ability to digest what his senses dictated as being some kind of dream, he had to now swallow as reality.

He was just getting ready to ask some of the mind boggling questions that anyone would want to know about God, Heaven, and creation and such, when he was thrown against the door panel as the truck came to a sliding halt.

Directly in front of them was a light brown truck with the driver trying to shade his eyes from the glare from Jon's truck headlights.

“Hey, I recognize that dude.” Ben said, pointing at Gus.

“Yes, he is of those who have taken the woman.” Jon replied.

Jon eased right up to the other trucks front bumper, so that the two trucks were virtually head on to each other. Now both Jon and Ben could see that Gus was holding a microphone to his mouth and was speaking into it while gesturing towards them.

“Well, what are we going to do now?” Ben asked of Jon. “I don’t see that lady in there with him.”

In response Jon opened his door and began to get out of the truck. “We will confront this man with his unrighteousness, and strive to convince him of the error of his ways.”

The angel stated this with conviction as he paused for a moment to glance at Ben, who noted that his eyes were burning once again, with a Heavenly glow.

When Ben began to also get out of Jon’s truck in response to the angels disembarking, excitement welled up within him, but he also felt a peace come over him. It was like he felt sometimes when he and Morty were doing something for the poor or homeless. He knew now where that feeling had come from, in his new awareness of the Lord.

It was that the Holy Spirit graced those who were about the Lord’s business, in the doing of good works.



Gus watched the two strangers approach. He had tried to back his truck up when they first drove right up to his bumper, but then cursed his stupidity at having parked to where he had no room to maneuver in reverse, as he was backed up almost against the store, in one of its parking spaces.

He had called Ralph and company on his CB radio, and told them that the people following them weren’t cops, and also let them know that he was kind of boxed in for a minute. But not to worry, as he had Ol’ Betsy with him, and all the guys knew that that meant that he had his .357 Magnum under his seat, as usual.

As Jon and Ben came up to his truck, Gus rolled down the power window on his side, which was the side that Ben was on. He gave Ben

a truculent look, and asked, “What the (*&%?#!<*) do you want? Get your piece of (*&%?#!<*) truck out of my way.”

He said this as he held his gun by his side, yet down out of view unless someone looked directly down into the truck.

Just as it appeared that the yo-yo who he had addressed out the driver’s side window was going to respond, Gus was astounded by his passenger side window suddenly rolling down of its own accord. He looked down to see if he was inadvertently pushing the button, but found that that wasn’t the case. When he looked over again to his passenger side, he found that the second of the two men was leaning against the outside of his truck, leaning down to peer in at him through the window.

Something is wrong with this dude, Gus thought to himself, observing that the man was swiveling his head in every which direction, as if he saw things to observe all around him that were to be considered more important, or of more interest, than Gus was.

Gus finally got tired of the two as yet silent weirdoes, and brandished the magnum at the head swiveler.

“Look” he growled, “You two wingnuts better get the (*&%?#!<*) away from me, before I have to shoot some holes in ya.”

Jon immediately stopped looking at the enemy demons, and addressed Gus in response.

“Greetings, O’ man. We come to you to sway you from your course of doing the enemy’s will, as that is what you do in your heeding of your own sinful nature. Know you that you are but a puppet of Satan, and that you are even now attended and reinforced by an assailment of a host of his minions?”

This Jon stated and questioned with a quizzical expression, and an accompanying uplifting of his eyebrows, as he found expressions to enhance the sound of voicing, with a visual aide to reinforce what hearing might not discern alone.

Gus and Ben both looked around them to of course, see nothing. But Ben felt the presence of evil that was kind of how he remembered he had felt when he and Morty were first assailed by “Doubt” and “Fear” after the episode with Ralph by the light pole.

Of course now as then, he didn’t yet know about the enemy enough to discern and beware demonic influences. The difference now was that

though he was aware of the disquieting presence of those thoughts and influences in some way coming against him, they could not penetrate the brand new “Helmet of Salvation” (Eph. 6:10) that protected him.

Though of course again, he didn't currently know his Helmet of Salvation from a hard hat. But still . . . he would not be brought to question the sense of peace that came with the rightness of his actions now, as he had been subtly influenced before to do.



When Jon and Ben had driven up to the area where Gus had parked, the demons that had stayed behind with Gus had noticed with a gnashing of teeth, that both of the two new arrivals were Christians.

The light of the Holy Spirit permeated Ben, and the demons immediately tried to test his resolve, as he had exited Jon's truck.

Jon, on the other hand was an enigma to them. A “Shield of Faith” protected him, far stronger in nature than any of the demons in this particular group had ever encountered before. This was why they had waited to attack what appeared to be the weaker of the two Christians until he was somewhat separated from his companion after they exited the vehicle.

That both were men of God was known by the light of the Lord's Holy Spirit that emanated from them. That one of them was totally unassailable, and even virtually unapproachable, was grounds for yet another winging away of a demonic messenger to apprise Baloth of events.

This had all occurred before the two ‘Christians’ had reached the cab of Gus's truck.

Now, after the initial dialogue between Jon and Gus had taken place, the demons found themselves with new cause for alarm.

“What did he say, what did he say???” One of the demons asked of the others.

“He knows we are here.” snarled another. “Something is not right about this man,” he continued as he tested a spiritual resistance approaching that of a powerful binding, which held him from approaching Jon.



After looking around in a quick reflex at Jon's words, the gun wielding Gus had decided to assert the authority that he felt his possession of the gun should give him.

"Look, you two clowns had better just take your butts back to your truck and get the (*&%?#!<*) out of my way, before I have to kick some serious (*&%?#!<*)."

Hate and Pride were working on Gus to the best of their not inconsiderable ability. They strove to produce in him a mind-set to where he would not listen to the words of the two, but have a deaf ear to anything that they said, no matter how calmly or logically their message might be spoken.

It need hardly be said that Gus's sinful nature was more often in tune to being receptive to demons persuasions than it was to the "Small Voice" of the Holy Spirit that he ignored with such exceptional regularity.

Jon, perceiving this, yet still cloaking his true being from the watching demons, tried yet one more time to appeal to the ability of man to discern virtue, even in one who was as apparently as hard-hearted and callused as Gus was.

"O' man, look within you for the sense of rightness that should dictate your life now, and will certainly be shown in afterlife to be what you should have followed. Heed the Small Voice within you. Stand against the evil one . . ."

Before Jon could finish his last appeal, Gus interrupted him in a blast of demon enhanced hate and pride.

"Look, I've had it with you two. Your gonna move your truck right now, or I'm gonna push the son of a (*&%?#!<*) outta' my way.

I'm also going to call the cops and tell them that you two were going to assault me, and lucky for me I had Ol' Betsy here, and had to shoot out your tires just to get away from you. So, you got you about five seconds to move it, starting right now!"

As Gus finished his threat, he shifted his gun to his left hand and turned the key in his ignition to start his truck. The rumble of his V-8 rewarded his efforts.

“Five, four, three, two, one.” he said as he dropped the shift lever into drive and rolled the few inches to take up what little slack remained between their two bumpers after Jon had pulled up to his truck.



Ben had been just a bystander to the repartee between Jon and Gus during the few minutes of the short verbal exchange.

When the rude driver had brandished the gun, Ben had fallen back to stand about four feet back from the door, rightly assuming that with an angel for a companion, he shouldn't have to be too worried about what the driver of the strange truck would do or say, but he thought it best in case bullets started flying, that he being mortal, shouldn't tempt fate.

“Duh . . .” he'd thought to himself wryly upon completion of that train of thought, as he stepped a bit further back from the gun wielder, and his truck.



When the tan truck rolled forward to nudge against his truck, Jon was considering what the Lord's will was now that this particular confrontation was escalating into something that might call for him to reveal angelic power.

But...besides all that, and perhaps still having to “tip toe thru the tulips . . .” for some reason . . .”Lord,” he silently started off a thought to the Lord, “the enemy is just taking too many liberties in their uses of demonic powers . . .”

Chapter 9

Ivan listened for a moment to the beginning of his neighbor's prayer before he too sank to his knees on the dusty attic floor. Josh and Ellen had immediately begun to pray what from their discussions Ivan knew to be "The Lord's Prayer," as far as the New Testament was concerned. These were the very words that the couple had shown Ivan and Evelyn to be how Jesus said to pray, and that they had said they used often as a preface to whatever specific that was being prayed about.

Ivan listened, and chimed in where he could.

"Our father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, for Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory forever . . . amen."

When the couple had obviously finished, Ivan looked up to see Josh and Ellen both watching him intently. He began to get to his feet . . .

"Hold on just a second, Ivan," Josh said. "Look, if prayer is going to work, you have to believe in the power of the Lord being made available through Jesus."

"You know I believe in the same God as you do. Isn't that enough for our prayers?" Ivan asked.

"No, quite frankly, it's not." Josh responded. "You have heard the Word, and I believe you know enough to reach out humbly for Jesus. He is both Evelyn and your Salvation, and as a Christian you can intercede with Father God through Jesus, with far more authority than Ellen and I can, as Evelyn is your wife."

"Let me look up something for you," said Ellen, thumbing through

her Bible, while Josh grinned and interjected a “She don’t leave home without it,” in reference to her ever present Bible.

“Here it is,” said Ellen. “First Corinthians 7:14; ‘For the unbelieving husband is made acceptable to God by being united to his (Christian) wife, and the unbelieving wife is made acceptable to God by being united to her Christian husband.’”

The couple looked at Ivan expectantly.

“Okay,” Ivan asked, “What does that do for me?”

“Ivan,” Josh declared, “If you are a Christian, Evelyn is sanctified by your Salvation, as she is ‘one’ with you. Old Testament Scripture is the same in that respect, right . . . where two are joined to become one?”

Ivan mused, looked exasperated for a moment, and then brightened as hope and resolve mustered within him.

“Okay” he said, “I’m willing to ask this Jesus into my life. I sure feel humble, and I pray about my sins all of the time, so to repent is nothing new in any case.”

“All right!” Josh exclaimed. “Let’s pray about it all right now.”

“Lord, we come before You in the name of Jesus, Father, with our brother Ivan, who believes that Jesus died for our sins, and wants you to come into his life . . .” Josh urged Ivan, “Go ahead Ivan and pray to Him now.”

“Uh . . . Lord . . .” Ivan began timidly, and then seemed to square his shoulders in resolve as the Holy Spirit worked with him . . . “I mean . . . um . . . Jesus, I ask You into my life, and agree that You died for my sins, I repent of my sins with all my heart.”

Then as he opened his eyes which had been shut during their prayers, the grim aspect of the attic came home to him, and tears began to run down his cheeks as the Holy Spirit of Love and Peace filled him.

Josh and Ellen had kept up a steady litany of “Praise You Lord(s),” and “Thank You Jesus(s),” as the Holy Spirit had moved them to give utterance.

Josh resumed his prayer that he had begun before allowing Ivan to beseech the Lord for his Salvation, “Lord, we stand on Your Word which promises that Evelyn is now sanctified by Ivan’s Salvation. We claim victory over Satan and his hosts, and bind them from harming

her by the power of your blood shed on Calvary. This we pray in Jesus Holy Name.”

Ivan opened his eyes and said, “Whew, so this peaceful feeling and knowledge of that I’m doing the right thing for once, is from the Holy Spirit, and the Love of the Lord and Jesus?” while looking to the couple in wonder. “Truly . . . praise the Lord . . . I mean Jesus. I just wish Evelyn were here to receive Salvation as well.” He said wistfully as they all arose from their knees.

Josh responded, “Ivan, addressing God, as God, Lord, or Jesus, all gets to the same address, the deal with Jesus is that your Salvation could only come through him, as he specifically died on the cross for our sins. We have told you this before, that there is a “Triune God” thing happening in Christianity and now you need to read the New Testament to find out how it all works for you. Suffice it to say, praying to the Lord will be heard by not only Father God now, but Jesus, and the Holy Spirit as well.

“Look, Ivan . . .” Ellen began, “neither Josh nor I are exactly versed in witchcraft or spiritual warfare as concerns actual possessions and such, but one thing we do know is that demons exist, and séances and such are dangerous.” She waved her hand to encompass all the things that the attic held, which emphasized her point.

“I know, I know,” Ivan responded, “My grandfather and father taught of evil spirits and demons, and those old books, and that upside down crucifix on the pedestal (he pointed them out) are from my grandfathers studies in black magic and witchcraft. My granddad used to always say that you should know your enemy.”

“Boy!” Josh said grimly, while looking over all the stuff. “I don’t think we should touch any of this till the cops get here.”

He paused for a moment, and then frowned, “Ivan, you’re going to call them now, aren’t you?”

“Yes, I guess I better give them a call. It’s been the twenty-four hours that they told me I needed to wait, anyway.”

The three trooped downstairs to place the call, and had no sooner reached the living room when the sound of breaking glass came down clearly from the attic.



Baloth was raging. The numbskull imp of a minor demon that he had left to watch over Ivan had done just that . . . watched. When Baloth and his fawning attendant demons had arrived, the worthless imp had jabbered the news of what the three hated humans had been doing.

“You mean you floated there, and watched known Christians come over here, carrying a Bible no less, and you didn’t think to send word to me?!” He roared, while dealing the offending imp a mighty buffet of his taloned hand.

“Now what,” his voice shook in flaunted rage, “I suppose I’m going to find out that the Jew got his Salvation, I suppose?! Someone tell me no!”

Not waiting for a response, which he wouldn’t have believed anyway, Baloth passed through the walls and floors to look in for himself, on the three humans. He flew back up into the attic in an insensate rage to with one hand grab the offending imp, while his other arm materialized on the physical plane to grab and squeeze an eight by ten picture of the dead son, James, which was made puny in his enormous hand.

He crushed it into shards . . . silver frame and all.

“Aarghh!” he simultaneously howled in both worlds, in response to having seen the Light of the Holy Spirit suffusing all three humans below.

“What was that?” Ellen half screamed as she jumped in alarm at the sound of Baloth’s roar accompanied by the noise of glass breaking.

The additional racket made by a thrown crumpled picture frame, was her only response, as both Josh and Ivan had frozen for the second that it took for both of them to gather themselves and lunge for the stairs.

“Dial 911,” Josh yelled to Ellen as he followed Ivan up the stairs. Ellen raced for the phone on the end table by the couch . . . Ivan and Josh, with Ivan in the lead, went up the narrow staircase two steps at a time. Ivan cracked the attic door, and peered into what appeared to be an empty room, but both men sensed that someone or something—was within.

The attic had darkened considerably as evening had descended, and the little light that filtered in through the dusty gable end windows, made it difficult for the two to see clearly. In their haste to get to the

source of the noises they had heard, neither had thought to turn on the light at the foot of the stairs.

They both heard a crunching noise, and then a giggle followed by an authoritative evil voice, that seemed to drip hate from every syllable.

It said, "Quiet and vanish . . . they're here!"

Then Ivan slammed the door the rest of the way open. He and Josh heard a pop like that of air being sucked into a vacuum, but no one was to be seen as the rest of the room came in view. Both men stood in the doorway of the now topsy-turvy room.

A lot of the clothing that had been in chests and boxes was blown about the attic as by a hurricane. The pentagram area itself was strewn with broken glass, while the crumpled metal picture frame was evidence that more than wind had been at work.

The difference of what the two men now beheld, from what they had left the attic looking like just a few minutes before, was amazing. Even in the gloom, it looked like a small army had been at work destroying it (as indeed one had).

The top hall way light suddenly came on and disclosed even more wreckage, and then Ellen stepped breathlessly through the door behind Josh and Ivan.

"Okay, they're on the way," She said, still panting a bit from her fright, but also from the run up the stairs after she had placed the 911 call.

"I thought maybe you guys could use a little light up here." She added, then noticed the wreckage and exclaimed, "Oh my goodness!"

"I don't really think 'goodness' has anything to do with what is going on here at all," Josh replied.

Chapter 10

Deputy Sheriff Joe (Tiny) Bradford was cruising east on Locust Street, when he got the call from dispatch about apparent prowlers or burglars at the Seranovich address. It was about two miles from his current location. He turned on his overhead lights, and poured on the gas to try to race over to the address given, without his siren, so as not to announce his arrival to whoever might still be at the scene committing a crime.

It was standard practice for officers to respond to a 459 (burglary) call without sirens, so suspects wouldn't hear their approach.

Tiny, was a six foot, four inch huge man, who was so called not only because of his height, but his impressive girth as well. He weighed in at two hundred and sixty pounds, most of it in his torso.

He was a fourteen-year veteran of the Sheriff's Department, and had seen a lot of things he would rather forget during his lifetime, not the least of which were experiences he could recall from a four-year hitch as a U.S. Marine serving in Vietnam.

Originally, after the service, Tiny had joined a big city police department, but some of the unwritten codes by which he had been quietly informed were standard practices of that agency, went against the grain of his personal beliefs. Things such as the deliberate looking of the other way by officers towards law bending or law breaking by other peace officers within the department.

To Tiny this seemed to encourage the breaking of the law "in the name of the law."

Tiny couldn't condone that, no matter how bad the bad guys seemed to be. Perjury, lies, and false evidence were unofficially sanctioned at the PD where he had begun his law enforcement career, and so he had

applied for and been accepted at the small Applewood County Sheriff's Department which had its headquarters in Scarsdale.

The Lord, via His Holy Spirit, had been enhancing Tiny's convictions of what was right and what was wrong, though it was unknown to the big man that his name was written in the "Book of Life," before the creation of the world.

During a murderous crossfire in Vietnam that his patrol had been caught in, Tiny had beseeched the Lord for the first time in his then young teen-age life. Not having had any serious enough humblings before then to inspire him to reach out for God, didn't detract from the fervor of his prayers to the Lord in asking for help and mercy when he and his fellows had been in that surprise enemy assault on their exposed positions.

The Lord had responded all unknowingly to the members of the patrol, to their various prayers as bullets from every direction had targeted he and his fellows, in a provision for their safety.

Tiny had not been the only one of them to promise the Lord a life of service if only He would help them make it through. But the "Thank You Lord(s)" immediately afterwards while still out in the field after they came through virtually unscathed, had been followed by "Boy was I lucky(s)!" in their telling of the story to other service men afterwards.

No glory was given to the Lord then, for their miraculous delivery from almost certain death after their return fire had supposedly finally beaten off their attackers.



Tiny didn't realize, as he sped through the outlying Scarsdale streets towards the address given on the 459 call that the Lord was about to exact from him the life of obedience to His will that Tiny had promised Him long ago in the jungles of Vietnam.

Baloth watched the trio from his vantage point at about dead center of where the now demolished shrine had been in the attic. He floated half in and half out of the room, balefully watching the humans while he continued to squeeze and shake the hapless demon imp still entrapped in his taloned grip.

In his time, Baloth had authored more than one demonic appear-

ance, but the Master frowned on demonic manifestations in the physical world. It just wasn't wise to let humans know that spirit's were real and ever present.

It got them thinking too much.

But still . . .

Baloth let one of his huge red rimmed horny browed eyes become visible on the physical plane. The pupil was coal black and gleamed malevolence.

Ellen noticed it first.

"Oh Lord help us!" she cried lifting a trembling hand to point.

Josh and Ivan had barely a chance to focus on the baleful eye before it slowly started to fade to where only the wall could be seen where the picture of James had hung.

The eye had suddenly appeared floating in mid air, and just as quickly was totally gone from view as if it were never there.

The three stood transfixed, for just before it had disappeared they had heard a deep chested grunting snarl in the same timbre as the howl of rage that they had heard initially, from downstairs.

"Well, that's something that you don't see every day!" Josh exclaimed, while Ellen behind him prayed, "Lord, help us and guide us."

Ivan meanwhile continued to stare where the eye had been with his mouth open in flabbergasted surprise.

"I . . . I think we'd better get out of here," he stammered, beginning to back pedal and turning as he did so.

Ellen stepped neatly out of Ivan's way as he blundered past her to the top of the stairs. She and Josh followed Ivan down to where he had paused in the foyer after his headlong rush to leave the attic behind. All three of them were visibly trembling when they stepped into the living room.

"OK, take some deep breaths and let's figure this thing through," Josh tried to advise with as calm a voice as possible.

At that moment, red and blue flashes heralded the arrival of Tiny, who had snuck up on the house with his headlights and overheads off for the last two blocks. He had sat in his cruiser and observed that quite a few lights were on in the house. After a few moments of being wary for prowlers, or visible signs of forced entry, or sneaking shadows moving about the neighborhood, he thought it best to announce his arrival to

the occupants by turning on his overheads, and show them that the law had arrived, so they wouldn't be afraid when he knocked.

"Well, thank goodness," Ellen exclaimed, as they all hurried to the front door.

Tiny's practiced eye took in the three, and he could see the fear and stress that was plainly written on their faces.

"I'm Joe Bradford with the Sherriff's Office . . .," he began.

"It's upstairs in the attic!" Ivan interrupted, waving his hands and pointing up above them, while Josh and Ellen wordlessly nodded in frightened agreement.

Tiny had already advised dispatch that he had arrived at the location, but upon hearing that there were still apparently bad guys present, he immediately lifted his portable radio, while raising his own finger to his lips to make the universal signal for silence to the three occupants.

He gestured for them to go out behind him on to the front porch, and then drew his service revolver, while protectively placing himself between them and the interior of the house.

With his lights still flashing out front, Tiny was pretty sure that any suspect would be aware of his presence, and he didn't want to be involved in a gabfest to where he couldn't hear movement, while disclosing his own location by the sound of their voices.

Before keying the microphone on his radio though, to ask for back up, he wanted a bit more info as he was not one to cry wolf when any back up he might be able to summon, would probably have to get out of their beds.

"How many are there?" he whispered to the three, while his eyes roved, and his ears tuned in, to catch the slightest sounds from within.

"We don't know officer," Ivan whispered in return.

Then Ellen quietly stated, "They aren't people."

Tiny had been about to key the mike on his radio to report in anyway, with a possible request for backup, when Ellen's statement made him freeze with his mouth open, thumb poised over the microphone button.

"Now, what's that supposed to mean?" He demanded, lowering both gun and radio. "Is someone up there or not?" he eyed the three of them with a view toward ascertaining whether their 911 call was another one of

those bogus calls where people, usually alone, thought they heard something somewhere in their home, and let their imaginations run wild.

But, these people didn't seem to be of the fabric that was given to flights of fearful imaginings.

As the officer had turned his attention from inside the house, and turned back toward them, Josh realized what thoughts Ellen's statement must have inspired within him.

"Officer, I don't think anyone is up there right now, but we did see something just a few minutes ago. You have to see what's up there, and then maybe we can describe what we saw."

"Let's all go," Ivan put in.

"I think I'll just stay right here and pray," came from Ellen tremulously.

Tiny looked hard at the three, and came to a decision.

"Car six to dispatch," he spoke into his radio.

"Dispatch." Immediately came back in a woman's voice.

"Be advised that I am in the house at the 459 location. Occupants are present, and report unusual sounds, but no current activity. I do not, repeat, do not request backup at this time, and am going to investigate further. Car 6, out."

"Ten-four, car six."

"You folks just stay right here," Tiny ordered as he moved across the living room towards the stairwell. The lights were still on as none of the three below had thought to turn off the stairwell light, nor the attic light in their hasty retreat. (It could also be reasoned that at that point they would rather have all the lights in the house on rather than any portion of it a lurking darkness.)

His ears perked to hear any sound from above; Tiny began his ascent up the narrow stairs. His bulk caused a loud creak that could be heard for a mile, he thought to himself with chagrin.

"Man, you got to lose weight one of these days," He muttered to himself under his breath as he had tried to move cautiously and quietly, but to no avail.

There now being no use for it but to throw caution to the winds, so to speak, he clomped up the remaining steps with all the speed he could

muster, which was pretty fast considering his bulk. He had returned his radio to its case which hung on his belt, to in turn pull his flashlight.

It had been known to happen that a suspect would turn off the lights and catch anyone unprepared, with what could occur to the lightless one, in the dark.

At the top of the stairs, he turned his light on for additional illumination and looked through the still open attic door. With his revolver drawn he warily entered the room. A quick scan revealed that no one was in the vaulted room, but just to be sure perpetrators weren't hiding behind boxes or chests, he ducked his head to clear the lower parts of the slanting ceiling rafters, and looked around until he was satisfied. Glass crunched underfoot, in some places muffled by old clothes strewn about.

Having seen a few things in his time, Tiny didn't actually do a double-take over what he saw, but his investigative eye had him study briefly, the shrine area. He noted the pentagram and candles, now mostly unanchored from where he could see that they had been melted to the floor at the points of the pentagram.

"Well now what do we have here?" He mumbled to himself. He observed that there was no other way to gain access to, or egress from, the attic. Then he came back down the stairs to take a quick look through the rest of the house.

Having accomplished that within the space of just a few minutes, he returned to the living room and addressed the trio who awaited him on the front porch where he had told them to stay.

"Well . . . no one's up there, or anywhere else in the house that I can find," He began with an interrogative frown, and a questioning upflitting of his eyebrows.

"Now, what's the deal with all that mess upstairs?"

While Tiny had been on his exploratory mission, Ivan, Josh and Ellen had quietly concerned themselves with the probability that he would come up empty handed, as far as a human suspect was concerned.

That they had seen a demon was their consensus, but how to broach the topic to the lawman without sounding like a bunch of kooks, was going to be a hard roe to hoe.

Ivan ran a hand through his thinning hair in a characteristic ges-

ture that he often did before trying to teach or explain his thoughts in answer to a tough question or problem.

“Officer, this is going to sound kind of strange to you, but I assure you we aren’t religious fanatics.”

He gestured toward the neighbor’s houses, where several of them stood on their porches, or were peering out of their windows in response to the still flashing lights of the patrol car.

“Perhaps we should go inside to discuss this further, and the three of us will do our best to tell you what we think that this is all about.

Chapter 11

The caravan had arrived at the secluded cabin. The surrounding countryside had borne witness to the many boisterous get-togethers that had been held there, but never like the sinful nature demon inspired one that had begun almost a week ago, and had built into this circus of revelry.

The bunch of regulars, with Ralph as their leader, had mostly been without any inhibitions in any event, (at least in their private lives), and here they could publicly do their thing. Booze flowed freely, while ecstasy and cocaine were just a few of the drugs being used.

Evelyn had been left in Ralph's truck, still limp as a rag doll in her vacant comatose like state.

"Let's have some fun with the broad," Ralph said shortly after their arrival, and started to wend his way between the haphazardly parked vehicles and numerous partiers back toward his truck. Ralph had just taken a massive snort of cocaine up each nostril. He jerkily staggered disjointedly on his way, while demons sunk their wishes into his mind and heart in a reinforcement of his obsessions.

Several of the other men had followed Ralph, laughing at the way he was walking, with coke fighting the booze for supremacy over which affected him more.

"Hey Ralph," one of them said, "Your lookin' pretty spastic there!"

"Yeah," said another, "Your wastin' good booze gettin' all wired up like that."

"Shaddap," Ralph sputtered in response, wild eyed in the throes of his high.

Demons flew over the group heading toward Ralph's truck. Behind them, came some yells and gunshots as some from the caravan joined

others already there, and fired their guns in the air, in a contest of whose gun made the loudest bang.

A demon of fear flitted ahead toward Evelyn. It reached out affecting tendrils to the supposedly defenseless woman, only to recoil from the new sanctification of Ivan's faith, which extended somewhat in a Covering over his wife.

A hurried demonic consultation resulted in yet another messenger being sent to appraise Baloth of Evelyn's Covering. (See 1 Cor. 7.14)

Gus was asleep at the wheel of his still running truck. Jon had finally decided on putting to sleep the demon-assailed driver that he and Ben had confronted.

"I knew something was not right with that man," one of the demons who had influenced Gus said, as he was forced away from his now sleeping victim by Jon's order, "Be gone demons, by the power of The Lord!"

Jon chaffed a bit at the Lord's restraint, which he knew had been to continue to conceal that he was an Angel of Light, yet he was allowed to pray and act as if he were a powerful Christian warrior, given authority by The Lord.

Binding demons was something men could only do when given the power of the Lord, to do it in the Lord's will.

So that in itself didn't give him away to the demons who still watched from a distance, but putting Gus to sleep was a bit more than most men could do to another without being a hypnotist with a pre-prepared subject.

Still, the Lord wanted Jon to wait, and as truck bumper had been to bumper . . . with Gus ready to step on the gas, well . . . options had been few.

Ben had immediately taken advantage of Gus suddenly nodding off, to reach in and grab the gun, and shift the tan truck into neutral. Then he shut off the ignition. As the motor died, he also removed the keys.

"Just to be on the safe side," He remarked to Jon with a grin.

"Careful not to verbally give away that he had more than human knowledge of the Lord's will while the demons were watching and listening," Jon responded.

"I believe the Lord wants us to wait on his leading for a time. Why

don't you try some prayer to address the situation here, Ben. I don't think it will need to be a long one . . . if you don't choose it to be. Remember also, that the Word of God says in Romans 8:26: ' . . . the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us . . . '

Then with that now familiar twinkle in his eyes, Jon added, "Besides, you can use the practice . . . can you not?"

Sheepishly, Ben responded, "Well, yeah . . . I sure guess that I can. But, by that quote do you mean that I don't have to be specific in what I pray about? Cause, to be sure I don't have much practice, nor do I really know what to ask for about this dude." He waved a hand indicating Gus, then continued. "And, I really don't know what the Lord is willing to do about the woman that they took."

Jon nodded his head thoughtfully, then tilted it to one side as if pondering the will of the Lord, himself. (Which is exactly what he was doing).

"Ben . . . I am not the Creator, but a creation as you are, yet, I believe that the Lord *is* doing something, and part of that something is our presence here, prayer now, and staying in His will . . . always."

Leaning against the front fenders to where they reached to clasp their hands together across the hood of Gus's truck, Ben began to pray.

"Oh Lord, I don't know how to pray so good but . . ."

Chapter 12

Satan, the Master puppeteer, and “Ruler of this Dark Age,” brooded on his throne.

Messages had been received by the Archdemon, Torath, who with others of his ilk were Overlords of Lieutenants such as Baloth. Torath was the final authority over demonic activity on the North American continent, accountable only to the dread Master himself.

Baloth’s area of endeavor being the west coast of Torath’s principality put him directly under the Archdemon.

As with human authorities, they had a chain of command. Also as with human authorities, “Power corrupted, and absolute power corrupted absolutely.” Of course the very nature of demons is that their primary function was that of corrupters of mankind through tempting man to follow his own sinful nature, so saying demons were corrupt or corrupted, was stating the redundant.

But, could not levels of skillful rottenness be the odor of the day in even such as these?

Torath had received second hand, the messages sent regarding the Lord’s activity and reports of some kind of angelic action by one of the Seraphim Angels of Light, in particular. He was apprising his Master of what little he knew of events in his jurisdiction, cursing expletives to himself about his ignorance of just what exactly Baloth was up to.

Torath was now forced to stand before his Master with only the bare facts of the matter, but with no explanations or knowledge of the cause of them, or even if it was Baloth’s activities that were causative.

But surely they were, he seethed to himself.

Satan's appearance took many forms, depending on his whim of the moment.

Torath had made obeisance with his head to the floor before the black throne upon which currently sprawled the figure of a vaguely humanoid shaped golden red dragon, complete with folded leathery membraned wings. Reptilian yellow eyes appeared to be admiring the sharp taloned claws at the end of his scaled arms, as Torath related events, as he knew them.

An elongated snout and jaw issued steam and hisses in what only could be called a Luciferian punctuation of Torath's information, as his Master digested his imparting.

Satan intently regarded his talons, while clicking them together in a rhythm which speeded as the story unfolded.

His Master let Torath conclude his report uninterrupted. Then shifting his gaze from what seemed a fascinated regard of his current form's fingernails, he regarded Torath. The cat-like vertical pupils seemed to bore right through his henchman, as he let him squirm a bit under the power of his gaze.

Satan might be somewhat bored of the fawningly fearful sycophants who were allowed to even address him, but he still had to have them perceive him with a god-like fear in conjunction with adulation, in lieu of adoration, for his personal satisfaction.

The Archdemon's obvious ignorance of his own underling's actions, and further ignorance of why God and/or His angels were taking an interest in those actions (if indeed that was the case in the first place, and not just an autonomous action, not taken in response to Baloth's activities at all) was irritating.

"Torath . . . Torath . . . Torath . . . (Click . . . click...click . . .), your tale seems to be related to me to be as that of one of woe for us. What I hear disturbs me, only in that you are disturbing me with it. (Click . . . click . . . CLICK!)"

"If the three letter Name (here he paused to point one taloned finger up) . . ."If He has chosen for some reason to lift His hand, then as it was in your kingdom, you should know at least what has transpired, if not the why, before disturbing me. You know I am really occupied at getting all of the animals . . . Christian, Jews, and Muslims specifically, to hate

and kill each other in the Name of . . . (here again he pointed a talon upward). That effort is so much more amusing and rewarding than your half knowing impartings.”

Here the golden figure stirred into a more attentive posture from his formerly indolent sprawl, and stabbed an accusatory forefinger claw at his cowering underling.

“I appointed Baloth, but he is supposed to be under your direction, and only operate with your sanction. I expect reports, but you do not even give me the details of what ‘we’ are doing, never mind what ‘they’ are doing.”

As Satan pointed out the short comings of Torath’s tale, he had spoken in a soft, menacing low voice dripping sarcasm, while steam issued from his golden snout. Then his quiet reasonable tones rose to a rumbling roar, which shook the dark throne room.

“You will find out personally what you should already know. If I must do your job, then the enormous voice faded to a whisper . . . then, it will go very, very bad for you indeed!”

“You will withdraw from my presence now,” Satan hissed, and dismissed the chagrined Archdemon.

Torath again made obeisance with head to floor, backed out of Satan’s throne room. The massive portals closed behind his retreating form with a resounding crash, narrowly missing him, which he knew to be a deliberate punctuation of his Master’s displeasure.

Seething in anger, Torath eyed the lesser demons in the anti-chamber where Satan’s attendants and personal messengers awaited any summoning to serve their ruler’s pleasure.

“You and you,” Torath eyed a pair of preening court sycophants and grated, “summon any of my Lieutenants who are around the palace, and tell them to gather to await my commands, as the Master wishes.”

“You,” he pointed out a messenger he knew to be in the service of yet another Archdemon like himself, but of an adjacent principality to his own, “inform your Prince that I would consult with him at his earliest convenience.”

Those indicated took one look at the Archdemon’s anger filled countenance, and raced off to find those of his Lieutenants who happened to be in attendance around Satan’s current dwelling place.

The halls and rooms of Satan's palace were in the spirit realm, but the layout varied, in that Satan fabricated his chambers wherever he chose to headquarter at any given time. Often, he picked earthly mountains and caves to provide reference points to how he built his palace in the spiritual realm.

Within all of the surfaces of the ghostly palace as adornments, could be seen diminutive human forms writhing in the hellish agonies of lost souls. Tortured wails and screams punctuated by cries and sobs were allowed to be heard by Satan and his minions, as one would enjoy music.

The walls, doors, and floors, were nonetheless solid to any demon, for as their Master visualized them, so they came into being in the unholy realm.

Such was their Master's power in being first among them all.

The gathering of those of Torath's Lieutenants, who happened to be within call, began to build and swell into a powerful demonic host, comprised of not only those summoned, but their minions and attendant demons as well. Other demons not even directly under Torath swelled the host even further in their curiosity of what was happening, and to find out why the gathering was occurring.

Jankh arrived at Torath's request, in a flurry of pomposity. The kindred Archdemon was bejeweled as was his wont, and reeked of the perfume of fire and brimstone.

"What do you need of me, Torath?" he demanded imperiously, full of his own importance, and well aware that Torath was out of grace with their Master through his own spies, and from the messenger who had brought him Torath's request.

Torath groaned inwardly.

The only way Jankh kept his station was that the principality of which he was Prince, was a scarcely populated relatively backward area, comprised in the main of islands and water. The Christian movement was so small its presence might as well be virtually non-existent.

The human populations in some cases, still even worshipped pagan idols.

Torath's principality, on the other hand, hosted such centers of spiritual conflict as Washington D.C, Los Angeles, and New York. All three seats of human and spiritual power were in constant turmoil.

One was a political world center where corruption ruled as absolute power corrupts (ultimately) absolutely.

The next, via its entertainment industry, which reached out and touched virtually everyone through music and visual imagery, was a demonic stronghold where subliminal messages underlined and undermined, and where sex, wealth, and power were revealed continuously to sway the watcher and listener from ethereal pursuits.

The last of the three was the center of world economic power, which as wealth became synonymous with power in its ability to sponsor politicians into office, was the true harbinger of political corruption. World leaders sprang from, and/or were weaned and nurtured from this womb where dog eat dog avariciousness was the order of the day

Christians throughout the world prayed for or against events hosted at these three centers. Not that other areas of the world didn't have their focuses as well, but it took intense demonic effort to keep the three in Torath's realm satisfactorily corrupted, for the prayers of the saints fought the demons efforts at every turn, to sometimes succeed in positives where negatives were the rule.

Torath eyed the bloated, puffed up bejeweled pile of inept Archdemon before him. He knew that if this offal had had any serious challenges in his principality, he would have failed and been demoted long before now. Torath had even considered authoring such a challenge from behind the scenes in Jankh's kingdom, just to take the pompous idiot down a notch to where he might turn to Torath for guidance. Then he would be beholden to Torath for effecting succor. But . . . Torath just hadn't gotten around to that particular machination yet.

Torath didn't want the dummy demoted really, as his replacement might aspire to supplant Torath, envious of Torath's authority over the most powerful of the principalities.

No, Torath didn't need another like his other neighboring Archdemons, who all each would see himself given Torath's seat of power if they could, which made him first among all of them, by virtue of it's current pre-eminence over other worldly human authorities.

"Well, Torath?" Jankh questioned, stamping a polished green hoof in impatience as he had awaited Torath's response during his reverie.

“Uh . . . Oh yes, Jankh . . . I have good news and bad. But it amounts to an incredible opportunity for you to please the Master.”

Torath’s vaguely wolf-like features kind of grinned vulpinely, if with all his teeth anyone could tell an evil grin from a snarl in any case, as he warmed to his conniving . . .

Chapter 13

Tiny had concurred with Ivan's request that they go into the house to discuss what had happened.

"Give me a minute to shut off my lights," he said, indicating the overheads, which still continued to inspire lookyloos' from among the neighbors.

As he walked to his patrol car, he was already composing his report in his own mind along the lines of:

"As I stepped into the attic I noticed what appeared to be a pentagram drawn on the floor, and there was other evidence which suggested that there had been satanic worship of some sort . . ."

As he unlocked his patrol car, and shut off his overhead lights, he mused that he really didn't want to 'go there' in his report.

Well, let's hear their statements first, he thought to himself.

Josh spoke to Ivan, "Here he comes . . . Why don't you go ahead and tell him the whole story from Evelyn to now. You have to take the lead in this anyway. Ellen and I will help you convince him with what we know."

Ivan had just agreed with Josh's game plan of how to convince the lawman to their way of seeing things, when Tiny stepped back into the living room.

The three had remained standing. They weren't comfortable with the thought that there still might be a demon lurking in the house, whether at the moment they could see or hear one, or not. Besides, what had happened to Evelyn could happen to them, whatever that was.

They relaxed a bit when the big sheriff came back in, though.

Ivan said, "Why don't we all sit down officer. This is going to take a

minute or two, because I had already called your department yesterday, whether you know it or not, and I might as well begin the story there.

“I don’t suppose you know anything about my call, do you?” He asked.

Tiny responded, “No, I hadn’t heard anything. Go ahead and tell me about it.”

“OK, yesterday afternoon at prayers, my wife Evelyn didn’t show up down at the temple. I called here and got no answer, but that in itself is not unusual. At least not lately . . .” Ivan trailed off gloomily. “She has been kind of strange for quite a while though. For months actually,” he qualified. “Our son died last year . . . maybe you saw his picture upstairs?”

“Yeah, I saw a couple of pictures still intact, and I saw a crumpled up one.” Tiny scratched the stubble on his chin as he pondered.

“Is your wife a big, strong gal?” he asked.

“No, she is pretty petite actually. Why do you ask?”

“Cause somebody was able to twist and crunch a pretty solid looking picture frame. It would have taken a lot to do that.”

Tiny flexed one of his big ham like hands reflectively, wondering if even he could have mangled that frame like it was, using both of his hands.

“I think we heard that happen tonight.” Ellen stated firmly.

“We’re getting ahead of ourselves.” Ivan cut back in quickly, trying to keep the story in some kind of order.

“OK, so . . . It was Evelyn, right?” Tiny questioned.

Getting Ivan’s nod in response, Tiny continued.

“So, Evelyn didn’t come to prayer, and you called us . . . then what?”

Ivan knew that the story was going to be hard enough to tell with points that would strain any listener’s credulity, so he wasn’t to be hurried with laying out the facts to support what would soon seem mere supposition on their part. He composed himself, and continued.

“I got no answer. When I came home and saw that her car was still here, but couldn’t find her, I checked with the neighbors, and called everyone, but no one had seen her.

“By the way,” Josh interjected, “I am Josh Campbell, and this is my wife Ellen. We live right next door over there.” Josh pointed toward their house as he spoke.

“Okay,” Tiny flipped open his notebook, which he habitually carried in his front shirt pocket. “I thought you lived here too.”

Pulling his pen from his shirt pocket he asked them, “How do you spell your last name?”

Tiny began writing, as Josh spelled his last name then added he and Ellen’s address and phone number.

“All right . . . now go ahead. You couldn’t find your wife . . . ?” Tiny prompted Ivan.

“No, and then I went up to the attic. It’s the last place I would think to look.” Ivan admitted ruefully. “We hardly ever go up there, but I thought maybe . . . well . . . just to make sure she didn’t go up there and have a heart attack or something . . . just to be sure she wasn’t here anywhere, before I make a big deal of it. But when I saw all that stuff up there, I got back on the phone and asked everyone to help me look for her.”

“I was getting pretty frantic. You know . . . that devil worship stuff and all.” he trailed off in reflection. “You can’t imagine how I felt.”

Ivan looked at the open honest face of the officer, and then over to those of his friends.

Ellen encouraged him with a nod, while Josh said, “Go on Ivan, tell it like how it was, and felt then, so this officer will understand a bit about how we felt tonight.”

Ivan pondered for a moment.

“I don’t know exactly what it was I felt, but I had to get out of there. Kind of like swimming in the ocean, and suddenly a picture forms in your mind of a huge shark somewhere coming at you. But I didn’t have a thought of a monster from old movies, or anything to picture. I just had this fear and sense of an evil presence . . .”

“I really don’t quite know how to explain it. . . .” he trailed off.

Then, “Do you know what I mean?” he asked the lawman.

Josh and Ellen nodded encouragingly, while Tiny shifted uncomfortably, remembering the nameless dreads and fears that the dank jungles of Vietnam had inspired in him.

“Yeah . . . kinda’ . . . Go ahead . . . I’m with you so far.” was his gruff response.

“Well, I ran out of there and called 911 to report that Evelyn was

missing, but I also initially intended to tell about the attic. But . . . no sooner had I told them my wife was missing, then I was asked how long had she been gone.

I told them it had only been for a few hours, and then they asked if there was anything unusual that led me to believe that a crime had been committed . . . or words to that effect,” he reflected. “I thought about it, and just then didn’t want to go into what I’d found up there. I know I should have . . . but you know how it is . . .” he appealed to them all. “I just didn’t want to have everyone know about up there.”

As he spoke he pointed up.

“Yeah, well . . . OK, that was yesterday,” Tiny looked meaningfully at his watch.

“Well, then the operator or whoever the 911 person was, said that I needed to give Evelyn at least 24 hours before they would actually take a missing persons report, so I let it go at that. By last night when I fell asleep, I’d called everyone I could think of; even her mom and dad up in Montrose, Colorado. No one had heard from her. After that I fell asleep in that chair there by the phone. I woke up today and I’ve been just staying home in case she calls, or someone calls who has heard from her. I’ve been reading this notebook that was up there.” He indicated the small black cover spiral tablet that Josh had put on the coffee table when the trio had first come downstairs from the attic, after Ivan had received his Salvation.

Josh had been listening through this recital with half an ear while being somewhat inwardly focused in trying to figure out what the Lord might expect of him in such an instance. When he heard his friend mention the notebook, he came back in to focus and excitedly snapped his fingers. “Right, I forgot. There you go Ivan. There’s the notebook for him to check out what we are talking about, and why we see things as we do.”

“Thank you Lord, that we have some kind of proof in writing.” He added a bit sheepishly, when Ivan and Tiny kind of gave a start at his sudden outburst.

“Let me see what you have there,” Tiny ordered, as Josh, still excited about having some kind of written proof, jumped up to retrieve the notebook from the table.

Tiny began to read silently from where he had just flipped the notebook open haphazardly somewhere near the middle of it. He had inadvertently opened it to an incantation that as he read it, seemed to be some kind of fawning supplication to invoke, or enlist the help of a spirit.

“Who is Beelzebub?” he asked the three, with his brow furrowed in distaste.

Tiny found that he had unknowingly been making a grimace as he read. A sense of wrongness about what he was reading pervaded him as the “Small Voice” of the Holy Spirit tried to make known to him that satanic verses were not to be borne without protest by the Lord . . . not without a twinge or two of discomfort at least.¹

That Evelyn had fallen prey to demonic influences during her satanic studies was due to her vehement over-riding and ignoring of that same Small Voice crying out to her, against her black magic endeavoring.

Tiny continued flipping through the notebook, as Ellen and Josh exchanged meaningful glances, culminating in Josh trying to clarify things for the perplexed lawman, whose brow was knitted in concentration about what all of what he’d heard and read, was supposed to mean.

“What your looking at there seems to be a record of Evelyn’s studies to reach . . . to communicate with spirit’s about James, their son who’s picture you saw upstairs,” Josh informed the baffled Tiny.

“Beelzebub, if I remember my scripture correctly, was the name of an Old Testament idol, and the name is used in context as a pseudonym for Satan in some places in the New Testament.”

Tiny’s eyebrows shot up as he listened while he continuing to flip through the notebook. At the end of it were drawn diagrams with notations. Some of the diagrams were like what he’d seen on the attic floor upstairs.

Ivan, Josh, and Ellen, over the next few minutes, imparted the rest of the events leading up to Tiny’s arrival, while Tiny sat and listened with a patience that he didn’t think previously that he could display while hearing such a tale.

Ivan concluded with, “That’s about all there is to it that we know of. The cliché ‘You had to have been there,’ kind of applies here . . . we know.”

Josh and Ellen murmured words of encouragement and support of that hopelessly redundant statement by Ivan.

Tiny had been pulling at his stubbled chin in contemplative reflection ever since the three had gotten to the part of the story where broken glass sounds, and howls of rage, were described to him. He'd been tempted to butt in with questions, but the trio was butting in on each other enough without his help in their peer-reinforcements of each others imparting of the tale.

"All right now, let's see if I have a few things right," he finally interjected. "You heard all that and you were right here where no one could come down the stairs and sneak by you, and then you went up there, and everything was in order . . . this shrine deal, candles and such.

"Then crash, crunch, and snarl, and up you go to a big mess. Then you hear voices. Then you see an ugly monster's eye, which fades as you hear a grunt. Then you call 911 . . .

"Do I pretty much got it right?" He asked as he made a kind of two-handed gesture of incredulity with his palms up, though one hand still held the offending notebook of Evelyn's.

"We know it's hard to swallow," Josh responded. "But you've got to believe us. We saw and heard what we told you, and we are not in the habit of lying."

"Please believe us," Ellen earnestly implored of him with such a tremulous haunted sincerity, that Tiny felt his skepticism somewhat dissolve. Unknown to the big lawman was that the Holy Spirit had also been preparing him to be receptive to the tale of the three Christians, by a softening of his heart, and an opening of his mind to believe their story.

"All right . . . OK . . ." Pulling at his chin furiously, Tiny decided to go with his gut feelings, (or from wherever they came).

"Lookit' here though . . . No matter how much that I want to believe you people, I can't tell my department that I'm reporting that demons are on the loose . . . The primary suspect being a gigantic eyeball with horny eyebrows."

With this extrapolation, Tiny rolled his eyes in mimicry of what he knew would be headquarters response if he dared to report the facts as the three had told them to him.

Seeing their disappointment, though he did detect an easing of their fear, which he had encouraged with his little light hearted effort of how

a simulated imparting of such a tale by him would be received at his headquarters.

But then he explained himself a bit further.

“Look, I don’t know why exactly, but something is telling me to believe you folks. Right now, I don’t really know what I can do for you.

“I do know the muckety-mucks downtown aren’t going to let me pursue the idea of demons as suspects. Yet you certainly have a missing person situation that is valid, and you do have evidence of foul play involved, judging by the mess you have upstairs.”

Tiny scratched his chin reflectively and added, “I guess what we can do is report this as a follow-up on the initial missing persons report, and we’ll get forensics to check the attic out. Let me think for a minute . . .”

While Tiny was weighing the pros and cons of things over in his mind, he personally felt that the song and dance that forensics would initiate, would be fruitless from the standpoint of identifying a suspect, or suspects, but he knew he had to let the professionals in forensics take their shot.

“Let me get the ball rolling. Get some people over here, and see what they come up with. Then we can talk some more about what we can do, in addition to what they’re doing, and . . . while were waiting for their conclusions.” He added after moment of thought, reflecting wryly that since any conclusions would have to be sheer weird speculations.

So, it would probably take longer for forensics to get someone brave enough to sign any “conclusion” than it would to formulate it.

“Now, hold on for a second . . .” He forestalled their possible responses to what might on the surface seem to be a stall by him.

“I’m going to personally, and if need be, privately . . . go with you on this. I want to know about this Beelzebub character, and I want to know what the Bible says about all this kind of stuff.”

“Sir, we are all Christians you know.” Ellen stated quietly.

Tiny glanced at the diminutively statured, yet powerful in prayer housewife, bemusedly.

“Yeah, you pretty well covered that when you two went into how you

got here and your prayers and such . . . and his conversion or whatever,” he responded, pointing at Ivan.

“What I’m trying to say,” Ellen continued pluckily, “is that witchcraft, demons and possessions . . . are real.”

“Yeah, I gather that’s your belief, but you got to realize, that for every point you make from the standpoint of the supernatural, someone will come up with a natural explanation.”

“But, I’m personally willing to look into your beliefs as having a possible answer, but you can forget about a sanctioned official investigation into demon perpetrators.”

“I mean, they’ll look for prints, and no doubt with the evidence, they will have to look into Satan worshipers, or worshipping . . . as the case may be. But if they don’t lift someone else’s prints besides Evelyn’s, or one of you three, then your wife is gonna get smeared with being a devil worshipper, who just ran off somewhere. You’re not gonna come out of this smelling like any kind of rose even if she was to show up in the middle of it all.”

While saying this, Tiny had been pointedly addressing Ivan.

“I guess I don’t have any options left now,” Ivan replied with a helpless shrug.

“That’s right, so if you can just let me use your phone for a minute, I’ll get the ball rolling.” Tiny said as he grunted to his feet.

“I’m going to call this in, and while we wait for forensics, we’ll talk about all of this some more.”

Josh had quickly gotten up to hand the lawman the cordless phone which had been on the end table right by him.

No sooner had Tiny began yet another small study in how to use other people’s phones when he heard a small thump from upstairs, followed by an eerie gloating voice, which echoed down the staircase and raised the hair on his arms, as the words became clear.

“ . . . and we are the rulers of this world . . . You have no power here.”

Chapter 14

Another booming crash from above also brought the sound of a smack, followed by a whimpering yelp.

Baloth had appeared to backhand the impudent lesser demon who had dared to manifest in the physical world without his permission, simply because during his rage in the same room a bit ago, he had allowed his followers to wreak a little havoc on the physical plane before.

Tiny dropped the phone and sprinted for the stairs.

Then Baloth's deep grunting snarl came.

"Back off, human!"

Tiny was pounding up the stairs only to have the heavy solid core attic door slam in his face. The deep voice was again to be heard through the closed door stating somewhat plaintively, "Oh, how I tire of these games of hide and seek. Truly, I lust to reveal myself, and rend all the humans before me!"

A cold sweat broke out on Tiny, as the echoing other-worldly voice chilled him. He froze in place with his gun drawn. The spirit of Fear wrapped its tendrils around him, and he began to back slowly down the stairs.

Then came a voice that shook the big man to his core.

"That's right son, don't mess with things that don't concern you. Go and play somewhere else!"

It was the voice of his grandfather that came in the same dry humorous tone that Tiny remembered so well from his childhood.

"Oh, Jesus help me!" Tiny uttered in reaction, and paused speechless for a moment.

“You can’t call me bad names like that, son.” replied Baloth in Tiny’s long departed grandfather’s voice.

The three Christians below knew that there would-be protector was in trouble.

Initially, when the voices came again from upstairs they had frozen, as fear again clutched at their hearts.

But Baloth had overplayed his hand.

Someone Else knew that he was out of line.

As Baloth’s henchman specializing in fear, an amorphous tendriled blob of floating evil, had grown to encompass all four humans in its sphere of influence, the Holy Spirit with and within them, had responded.

Within moments of Tiny’s outburst, Farol, an Angel of Light who the Holy Spirit had summoned, appeared on the spiritual plane within the living room.

Divine power coruscated from Farol to shield the three from Fear, though the mortals couldn’t see him or his protection.

As the Word of God promises that man will not be tempted by more than he can withstand, so too it could be construed that Christians should not be assailed physically by undue spirit manifestations on the physical plane.

Again, the chess pieces had to abide by the rules.

The reasons for this were many, but it was all part of a system of checks and balances that over time became part of the rules governing spiritual actions. Ultimately, it was part of God’s plan that man be tested, tempted, and assailed, so that hopefully even the proud would be humbled enough to seek Him.

Sometimes though, the overstepping of boundaries by the fallen angels cum demons, because of their hatred of mankind, zealously went too far.

Farol had bound the spirit of fear from the three believers, but his covering deliberately did not extend to the non-believer Tiny, who was now doubly assailed as Doubt combined with Fear at Baloth’s urging, to attack him.

As Fear was lifted from their hearts, the trio was given to know their mission right then was to be prayer warriors. They felt no earthly com-

pulsion to race to assist Tiny in a futile effort at physical assistance. But rather the Holy Spirit within them gave them the conviction to drop to their knees and pray for Tiny and against the “Principalities and powers of darkness,” as they surely knew that they were not “wrestling against flesh and blood” foes, but against “spirits of the air” (See Eph:6).

In the moments that it took for the angel Farol to appear in response to the demonic attacks and shield the Christians below, Tiny had felt an eternity go by. As he had backed down the staircase hammered by Fear reinforced by Doubt, the Holy Spirit caused his spiritual life, (or rather, his lack of a spiritual life) to pass through his thoughts in the blink of an eye. This unfortunately said something by its brevity, about his spiritual life’s history.

The same sense of foreboding and helplessness like that which had occurred to him in the jungles of Vietnam, came over him. Again, as then, he fervently prayed for the Lord to help him. The sincere brief “Oh, Jesus help me . . .” that he had uttered right then on the stairs was not received any the less by the Lord because of the shortness of the prayer, or because he didn’t have his Salvation at the moment, nor really know Jesus as his personal Savior.

Josh took the lead in the trio’s prayer response to the attacks of Baloth and his two henchmen. All three had felt the momentary spiritual cloud of doom and gloom when attacked initially for the seconds that it took before the Holy Spirit within them flared in the summoning of the Angel of Light, who in turn protected them from further demonic intent. They felt the surge of the peace and love of the Lord calm them anew, and give them direction. There was no subtlety in either the attack, or the covering. It was like the light was turned off for a second, accompanied by a sense of dread . . . to be immediately turned back on accompanied by a sense of peace and love.

If demons would overstep and hammer ugly at the Lord’s own, then the unsubtle angelic response was justified, and the attending Angel of Light was more than happy to oblige.

When Tiny paused on the stairs with his short prayer, he heard Ellen’s cry of joy in relief from below, followed by Josh’s plea in prayer.

“Oh thank you Lord for your peace! In Jesus holy Name we ask for a covering from the enemy over Officer Bradford,” Josh prayed loudly.

Ellen chimed in with, “Yes Lord, thank you Jesus,” while Ivan silently prayed in agreement.

Tiny felt better immediately, as his own prayer was reinforced by the heartfelt prayers he heard from below him. In those seconds he knew with a certainty that the Lord was for real.

“That’s right . . . that’s right!” he said fervently as he felt the conviction of the Holy spirit reinforcing his new found belief in God, and that through Him the lawman could overcome his fears and doubts.

So, thus spiritually bolstered, Tiny re-entered the fray.

“This is the sheriff,” he called loudly to the perpetrators, whether human or not. “Come out with your hands up!”

Then he added as an after-thought. “Or I’m comin’ through this door with my gun . . . AND . . . with The Lord!”

Baloth had vented some of his anger on the demon who had revealed himself, by taunting the four humans below. Most of his rage though, had been inspired by the information he had received from messengers who had apprised him of all the things that had gone awry since he had left Evelyn in the alley by the beach.

And just what part in all of it did the Seraph Angel he’d been informed of play, he wondered? Then that flash of Divine Power he’d heard about, but worse . . . that that had to be reported not only to he, Baloth, but to the Master himself. And . . . he gnashed his teeth in rage, by way of his own Overlord, Prince Torath.

Baloth’s initial plan had been to present a feat accomplished upon success of his efforts to stymie the rise of a Jewish/Christian leader, and/or ministry. Whatever the means of his doing so, would not have been questioned after the fact.

But now? He knew his keeping Torath in the dark about his methods, was going to result in his getting his butt chewed, if not flat kicked.

That is . . . if he was not booted out of his authority altogether.

Meanwhile, this blundering human cop was in his face with his puny gun, while some minor Angel of Light had his demons of Fear and Doubt, sniveling in his ear.

Though minor demons were assigned to specialize in some, or even most cases, to assail their mortal victims with whatever their individual aptitudes showed them most capable of, those of Baloth’s stature were

versed in encouraging all human vices and sins. Like any general though, he usually had to designate, as it was a fact that he couldn't orchestrate his overall plan, and yet participate personally in every assailment around him as well.

He had to "give some to get some," like-any other being not omniscient, as only The Lord God of Hosts could be.

Best laid plans though, having certainly run awry—his anger got the best (or worst as the case may be) of him.

"Be gone!" he roared at his inept minions, laying about him with taloned fists to buffet all away from him.

As an elemental wind he blew open the attic door and with hurricane force bowled over the loud mouthed human on the stairs before rushing upon the Angel of Light to deal that interfering entity a surprise blow, which somewhat caused Baloth to carom in deflection from that worthy's hastily raised shield of light.

Of course the surprised Farol had known about Baloth, but had in no way thought that the demon's reaction to the covering of the Christians would extend to where he would dare to assault an Angel of The Lord.

The shield over the hapless Christians had been more than sufficient to thwart the minor spirits of Doubt and Fear. But Baloth had broached and shattered the covering before ricocheting off the angel, and then careening off into the night, with a long drawn out howl of fury, which was heard on both the immediate physical and spiritual planes.

The impact on the Christians had been amplified in Tiny, by the lack of any angelic covering over him, while a cold chill and foreboding of gloom and doom had been felt by all four humans. But Tiny had felt despair penetrate to the core of his being, though the prayer covering from the three Christians below, and his own small prayer to Jesus, had helped ward Baloth off.

He still laid asprawl at the foot of the stairs where he had tumbled head over heels, with teeth chattering in fright. His gun had been ripped from his hand as fear and dread had gripped him.

The three Christians rushed to his side, worried that he was injured. The momentary chill and disquiet in the fabric of their beings was gone

as the Holy Spirit flared yet again within them, ably abetted by the strongest shield that the now grim with purpose Farol, could generate.

“Are you all right,” Josh asked Tiny, reaching out to steady the lawman as he rose shakily to his feet.

With a long indrawn breath, Tiny was about to vent a few unsavory expletives, when he caught himself, heeding the admonishments of “The Small Voice” dealing with him, and giving him newfound convictions.

“Yeah . . . yes, I guess I’m okay now. Nothing seems to be broken.” Meanwhile, he eyed the devastated living room which now looked just about as blown about as the attic.

“I guess I’m in better shape than the house is.” He addressed them ruefully.

“Well, I’d say . . . we don’t have to keep trying to explain what’s been going on now,” Ivan replied, with a quizzical expression. “If a picture is better than words, then I think you just got the big picture.”

“I sure got something all right,” Tiny agreed.

“Well, now what do we do?” Ellen asked.

Josh meanwhile, had been listening with more than just his ears. He, like the others, didn’t feel that nameless dread about the house any more, but he was intent in his questioning his spiritual and physical senses before he pronounced the results of his questing.

“I think maybe the coast is clear,” he stated without any absolute certainty in his voice. “But still we better just get right down and pray about it.”

“I was afraid you were going to suggest something like that,” Tiny put in. “I haven’t been roped into prayers much.” He admitted with chagrin.

As he spoke, he retrieved his gun, which still lay on the floor.

“Not since I was in ‘Nam anyway . . .” He trailed off in an introspective journey into remembrances of the past, where he now distinctly recalled those humbling events that had him making one sided deals with the Lord for his succor, if only God would save him from the Viet Cong. Something told him now, on hindsight, that he surely was the one who had reneged on those deals.

“Look, Officer . . .” Ellen interrupted his reverie. “Just pray with us

and hear what we say and ask of the Lord. Then you can tell us what your experience tells you we should do, and we'll pray about that too."

"All right . . . I suppose it can't hurt, and right now I really don't know what to advise you folks to do. I surely don't know what to report to headquarters, or . . . even if I should report anything about this stuff at all." He admitted sheepishly.

"By the way . . . unless other officers are around, you can go ahead and call me 'Tiny,' if you want."

"Tiny," Josh acknowledged, nodding at the big man.

"Okay, I'm new at the Jesus part of prayer myself," Ivan said. "So, if Josh and Ellen will lead us with what they think needs to be prayed, I'm surely hoping that the Lord will guide us somehow to Evelyn."

"Oh boy, I hope you're not trying to say that those eyeballs and things have got your wife somewhere, and now we're supposed to pray about some kind of divine revelation about mystical perpetrators?" Tiny asked, shifting uncomfortably at the thought of what kind of pot-luck investigating of the situation that that entailed.

"Hey, let's hold on about what we say here," Josh interjected quickly. "If there is one thing we do know about prayer, it is that our negative, and positive words, can have power. So, we can undermine what we pray about if we sit here before the fact and discuss what's to be done or not done, because we go into prayer with a negative mindset. Lets go into prayer standing on knowing that our prayers will be answered, and be positive rather than negative about the Lord's response."

"Yes . . . please . . . , let's just pray, and lift up ourselves and Evelyn to the Lord. I feel we need to do it right now," Ellen stated firmly as the Holy Spirit moved within her. She began without waiting for any response from the others, with the prayer Jesus had directed in Scripture as how to pray:

"Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come . . . Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Then came the request for the sustenance to nourish our physical and spiritual needs:

"Give us this day our daily bread, . . ."

Followed by the strongly worded admonishment about our "daily"

need for forgiveness, with more than just a hint of how that forgiveness worked best in the Lord's view:

“ . . . and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Then came the asking for relief from the inspirations of our sinful natures, and the power of the Enemy: “and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.”

Ending with the acknowledgment and praise of the Lord as the one and only God of all Creation :

“For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen”

Though Tiny had heard the words many times before, they had never touched him as they did now.

Ivan, whose Salvation experience was fresh in his mind, thought to himself, that the big lawman beside him could use a few moments to quietly digest the meaning and intent behind the Lord's prayer.

The Holy Spirit worked in them all as Ivan stated, “Lets' have a moment of silent prayer before we continue.”

Accepting silence greeted him as the Holy Spirit directed Tiny to Jesus as his Personal Savior through His death for our sins, and to his total embracement of the Triune God. Peace and love washed away the burdens of sin from the big man, as his own silent communications with the Lord were reinforced by the three beside him, who were praying with all of their hearts for his Salvation.

The big man was moved to say aloud without coaching, “I'm sorry Lord, and I do believe Jesus died for me.”

After a few minutes with head bowed in silent worship, Josh peeped an eye at Tiny. The tears rolling down the peace filled countenance of the big man, was all the answer that Josh needed.

“Praise You Lord. Thank You Jesus!” Josh gave heartfelt thanks.

Ellen, whose brow had been furrowed in concentration with the fervor of her prayers for Tiny, Evelyn, and the situation that they were all in, opened her eyes to see Ivan rise to give the sheriff a warm empathetic squeeze on the shoulder.

“Amen . . . brother,” was all Ivan felt that he needed to offer verbally.

Ellen felt some of the burden for prayer lifted from her. She knew that the Holy Spirit had placed it there as it was in the Lord's timing for Tiny Bradford's Salvation. She smiled at the joy of the occasion, yet knew there was still a lot of praise and prayer to be done.

"Now we're a quartet instead just a trio!" She happily informed the men.

"The more . . . the more the merrier." Josh agreed with a paraphrased quote and a smile.

"I'm very happy for Tiny, But 'merry' isn't going to happen for me until Evelyn is home safe," Ivan decreed, as his own small smile faded.

"You know folks," Tiny began, "the Lord is apparently doing big things here. There has got to be a lot more than just what we saw here, going on elsewhere too. Since 'Nam, I've kind of been on the lookout for proof that God and those other guys, like the eyeball you saw, exist. I've been sort of straddling the spiritual fence, thinking that if there was anything to hear in proof about God, or the other side, I'd know about it sooner or later as a sheriff.

"But, I can safely say that this kind of thing just doesn't happen much, or I'd have heard about it. In fact, it seems this is a flat rare occurrence from the legal standpoint, unless someone's been sweeping sightings and such under the rug, and hiding things like this."

Tiny scratched his stubble reflectively before adding, "kind of like UFO's. You know that enough smoke means a fire, but people keep fanning away the smoke, cause they don't want to admit to the fire."

"Well, I don't want to go off on a tangent," Josh responded, "but let me say that the Old Testament prophets, and John in Revelation, described plenty of UFO's. Somehow, those initials meaning unidentified flying objects, got equated in most minds to mean that they are aliens from outer space every time.

He explained further, "You hear and read all of the time how things such as crop circles or ancient designs on the land that are geometrically exact, that can only be seen from a plane could not have been done by man, and so . . . must be from aliens. Why couldn't these sightings or markings be, or be things be done by Spirits of the Air?" See - ing Ellen's look, Josh hastily concluded with, "Who knows what manifests sometimes on the physical plane from the spiritual plane, whether

authored by the Lord and his Angels of Light, or by the fallen angels come demons, who love to confuse us.”

“Okay, Josh,” Ellen arched an eyebrow at him, “can we finish praying now? Some of us are still on our knees you know.”

“Sorry, honey,” Josh responded sheepishly, as he and Ivan moved to kneel to where they all joined hands in a prayer circle.

“Ivan,” he directed, “you go ahead and pray for Evelyn, and we’ll follow your lead.”

He glanced at Ellen apologetically, “Sorry honey, but just one more bit of information real quick.”

“Ivan, Tiny,” Josh advised the new Christians, “There are no professionals at prayer. Whether new, or supposedly mature in Christ, God knows our hearts even if the words don’t seem to flow right. We, Ellen and I, mostly pray in Jesus name, as it is only by his sacrifice, and our having been washed clean through His shed blood for us, that we are made acceptable to the Lord.”

Ivan had known of what Josh spoke through previous discussions and theological debates with his two neighbors, but now he discerned that asking and praying in Jesus name was a good formula to go by in prayer.

“O . . . kay,” he took a deep breath, and began to pray from the bottom of his heart for his wife.

“Lord, I lift up Evelyn to you. I ask for her to be protected from harm, and I ask this in the name of Jesus.”

“Yes Lord,” Ellen added, “Again, we claim her as sanctified through Ivan’s Salvation, and ask you to encompass her with your angels.”

“I agree,” Josh put in, “Father God we stand on Your Word, and thank you for Evelyn’s safety.”

“God,” Tiny ventured, “I don’t know what you will do, but I agree with all of what these folks ask. What I’m flat asking for though, is to know where she is, and how to get my hands on her to bring her home.”

Tiny thought a moment more and asked, “Also Lord, how do we fight these demons and stuff in Jesus Name?”

Tiny had added the last part, as his combat, PD, and sheriff experience made him inclined to go into conflict with some ammo and weap-

ons. Tangible or intangible, he needed to get at the nuts and bolts of this fight, and get armed and armored for it. Wryly, he reflected as how so far he had been bowled over by literally every (pardon the pun) “Ill wind that blew,” and it surely went against the grain for him to be a pushover for anyone.

“Yes Lord,” and other words of agreement and praise came continually from one or another of the Christians as each reinforced the prayers of all.

Their prayers were heard, by the awesome Triune God of All Creation, before whom all should tremble . . . lest he lift his mighty hand.

Chapter 15

Jankh was abrim with the possibilities of the opportunity presented by Torath. After a brief consultation with the dark Overlord Prince of North America, Jankh's initial disdain of the apparently out of grace Torath, had turned into that of the role of a co-conspirator.

Having had dominion over the relatively minor principality of the Earth comprised of nations and islands within the world's Pacific Ocean, he literally drooled at the thought of his authority being extended to cover the west coast of the North American Continent.

He knew the borders of principalities to be flexible. They changed as human centers of power changed, and as mankind had spread over the globe since man's creation.

When man had been few in number, and were centered close to the Garden Of Eden, even Archdemons perhaps, had only a single human city for a principality. The numbers of men in even one of the current age's major cities would account for what used to be mankind's entire population in ages gone by.

So, Torath's suggestion that Jankh share with him authority over the western part of the United States, with a view toward Jankh's permanently annexing it into his own principality, was a huge possibility for the Prince of the Pacific.

Torath's had divulged that the dramatic increase of his principality's human dominion and influence over the other worldly human powers, had made him hard pressed to maintain an appropriate level of corruption within them, and so he was inclined, with Satan's permission, to narrow the field of his endeavors.

Now, if Jankh was to take a hand in resolving what currently appeared

to be a “relatively minor spiritual altercation” in the proposed area that he might get to annex, he might surely be looked upon with favor by Satan, with Torath’s co-signing, to assume permanent authority over it.

This was the gist of Torath’s “confidential” meeting with Jankh. Torath had said to not let the matter be made known, as then other Archdemon Princes would apply to the Master for the territory. Specifically, the adjacent southern hemisphere Princes, whose areas of endeavor they could claim as suitably under control, corruption-wise, politically, though they really had no economic or political world powers within them.

Those dastardly Princes could claim as well, in lieu of Jankh’s limited experience, that they already had had vast successes in their perverting of the Latin speaking entertainment mediums. This was attested to by the continual bombardment of their viewing public by virtually naked human bimbos prancing on the screens on most of their shows.

Then there was Granch, Prince of the Atlantic, who might suggest that Torath should focus on his troublesome western area himself, and let that avaricious unworthy annex the east coast instead, which would also solve the problem if Torath had more on his plate than he could chew.

“Of course,” Torath had informed Jankh, “that would leave you out in the cold, and give more authority to that scumbag, who I do believe you bump heads with???”

Jankh had gnashed his teeth at the thought. The land masses between him and that particular rival ocean Prince, were all that kept them from each other’s throats as it was.

If that slime were to control the east coast of Torath’s principality as well as his own Atlantic kingdom, he would have authority over far more of the world’s population and centers of power than Jankh. Then the dirty dog would easily rank above the Prince of the Pacific, in the order of demonic hierarchy.

Jankh had zoomed away to his realm, to immediately marshal some of his Lieutenants, who shortly thereafter mustered their own hosts. Three strong, these powerful demons and their attendant minions followed Jankh toward California.

This, Jankh wasn’t about to delegate such an important task to his subordinates, to handle on their own.

Torath, meanwhile, was orchestrating for himself a situation where he could not lose. The Lieutenants in command of the rest of his principality other than Baloth's west coast area, that he had ordered gathered after his abrupt dismissal by Satan, he had covertly instructed to have some of their hosts inundate the already demon infested southwest coast of California.

"I want to know everything that What's His Name, and His angels are up to." he had commanded.

"I want an eyeball in every nook and cranny of Baloth's stomping grounds, and I want to know what that blundering " *&?%#!<*" has been doing that I don't know about, that has the other side making moves."

"You," he pointed to Sinath, one of his Lieutenants, "go to Baloth, and tell him that for reasons he is unworthy to know, I am placing him under the authority of Jankh for the time being."

"That should bring him down a notch." He added in satisfaction at his own duplicity.

"If anything outside our normal activities needs addressing out there, let Jankh and Baloth try to sort it out. Then, if and most probably when, they fail in their bumbling, we will step in and squash what they manifestly conspired behind my back to orchestrate just to make me look bad in the eyes of the Master, in the first place."

Here Torath winked conspirationally. "Or, so it will seem."

Torath certainly knew that this was not really the case, as he knew Jankh to be too stupid to conspire effectively, and he also knew Baloth to be too smart to go against him. Certainly, not without a better partner than Jankh.

But Baloth being a direct appointee by Satan himself had always chaffed Torath. That the Master had chosen one of his Lieutenants personally, was probably why that piece of dung Baloth thought himself above keeping Torath apprised of his actions in the first place.

"This is my . . . our," (he slyly amended) "kingdom, and if you're asked by any of these nosy busybodies around here why we gather or what we're up to, tell them nothing. I will send word to the Canadian Lieutenants, and have them marshal their hosts to the north. Have your own hosts ready to saturate Baloth's kingdom from the west, but I want us in there in force as observers right now anyway."

He pointed again to Sinath, “As your kingdom is adjacent to Baloth’s you will be my Captain for a time, all of our efforts, as I will be otherwise engaged. Gather what information you can, and formulate a plan to replace Baloth’s forces if need be, with my other Lieutenants, who I order to submit to your direction. When you marshal the hosts to invade Baloth’s area, find the focal point of his activities and gather there. Do not move until I contact you, but be prepared for my command.”

“I don’t care if you leave your own kingdoms shy of forces. Man has gotten pretty well able to keep himself corrupted, without much help from us anyway.”

“Except the east coast, I want it left strong. I don’t trust that Atlantic scuzzball Granch.” Torath amended grimly.

After Torath’s Lieutenants, minions, and hosts, scrambled to do his bidding, Torath planned as did Jankh, to get right into the thick of things. Besides, Satan had so directed him, and he needed to cover his butt in case of mishap.

Subsequently, in the privacy of his own chambers, he shrank his bestial form, and compressed and contained his evil spiritual aura of power and authority, to assume the humble shape and persona of that of an insignificant messenger imp demon. He practiced speaking in a tiny, monotone subservient voice, as messenger imps were wont to speak to avoid blows from general principles, and thought he had his undercover disguise down pretty pat.

His self congratulations ended however, as he moved down a well traveled demon route, and flew right into a warrior demon, who had not hastily moved aside at the approach of the dread Prince Torath.

“Got to remember that I’m a nobody now,” he adjusted himself mentally.

Assuming an apologetic demeanor in response to the huge warriors glare, Torath began to duck and dodge all who were above the station of the disguise he had assumed, as his apparent insignificance was what would allow him access without question in demonic spheres of influence, without report, or question.

Beneath notice, Torath continued on his way to see what there was to be seen, stopping often to listen to the gossip, as he approached Baloth’s kingdom on the west coast of his own principality.

Chapter 16

“What do you mean, Sinath . . .” Baloth roared and sputtered in indignation. “I am to be under Jankh?”

“Where is Torath’s head at?” he questioned the evil grin mocking him from Sinath’s visage.

Baloth knew Jankh as Torath did . . . to be too full of himself to pay attention to what was around him, and too inept to handle anything complex, if it arose and bit him on his own behind.

He eyed the central plains’ Lieutenant who was obviously delighting in being the harbinger of such tidings to him.

“Let’s see if I can get this exactly right,” Sinath replied, dripping venom from his fangs, “You are to place yourself under Jankh . . . , and here I quote Lord Torath himself . . . ‘for reasons you are too unworthy to know.’”

The scene of this imparting of information was at a gathering of Baloth’s henchmen, not far from the place where Baloth had been informed that God had shown His hand, or that a possible Theophany had occurred.

Baloth had been investigating his source’s reports, and assimilating the additional information about the two strange Christians, and also about the Covering which Evelyn had somehow had manifested over her.

Her Covering he thought he knew to be probably from Ivan’s Salvation, and no doubt from he and his Christian friend’s prayers. But the rest of the events needed more time and information for him to figure out, so he could factor in his responses.

He’d just been pondering about it all when Sinath had tracked him down and lowered the boom on his autonomy.

Baloth knew he was, to say the least . . . unloved by Torath, and he certainly had nothing coming from this pile of smug defecation, who had brought him Prince Torath's orders.

The bum was nothing but a 'Yes Man' for any boot Torath wanted licked, and as usual with demons, he aspired to covet anything that another had . . . (there being no love lost between any demons anywhere . . . anyway.)

"Very well," Baloth replied to Sinath. "If and when Jankh gets here . . . if he doesn't get lost trying to figure east from west, I'll go with his program. But . . . now that you have been such a nice messenger boy . . ." He derided the Lieutenant before him with the fact of the function beneath his station which he had just performed.

"Now . . . what else are you directed to do in my kingdom?"

"Oh, nothing. I'm supposed to get back to my own kingdom where all is as normal."

Sinath lied with a duplicitous glee, while throwing another barb about the problems in Baloth's kingdom. His glee came from the thought of his temporary appointment to Captaincy over the other Lieutenants who were secretly massing their hosts in preparation for his return to take overall command, after this meeting with Baloth.

He should have paid more heed to the thunderclouds of rage wrinkling Baloth's brow.

"That's what I wanted to hear," Baloth answered Sinath agreeably.

"Now, let me help you get started . . . messenger boy!" Without warning, Baloth launched a kick at Sinath's hind-quarters, which lifted that surprised unworthy about fifteen feet in the air.

Sinath spun for a second, then turned furiously back toward Baloth, after righting himself from the effects of the west coast Lieutenant's kick.

"Oh, you're going to pay for that," he hissed from above the gathering where all could see his belittlement, and from whom he knew word would spread like wildfire about his treatment at Baloth's hands (or foot, as it were).

"Go and lick another boot . . . messenger," Baloth responded. "Or better yet, I see I wasn't hospitable correctly in my helping you on your

way. You went to the west from my right foot, so I best try to help you back to the east with my left foot now.”

With these snarled words, Baloth began to rise threateningly toward Sinath, his huge taloned left foot exaggeratedly drawn back to administer the promised directional help.

Sinath took flight eastward, followed by the jeers of Baloth’s henchmen, who marveled at their lord’s cavalier treatment of his peer, though some of them had overheard the message and manner in which it was delivered, and were not surprised at Baloth’s response, knowing his propensity for rage.

No sooner had Baloth settled down to focus on the impact of Sinath’s imparting message, in conjunction with the other bad news input he had been receiving, all the while nursing his big toe and grumbling about how “Sinath’s butt must hold his brains, as it was mostly bone,” than another messenger arrived to befoul his temper.

Groveling, as it was well known in Baloth’s kingdom how he reacted to news he didn’t want to hear (especially in view of what had just occurred), the messenger maintained a respectful distance while reporting.

“O’ lord Baloth, the Archdemon Jankh . . . with a great host, has entered your domain, and even now has usurped your authority in Los Angeles and San Diego.”

“(*&%?#!<*),” was Baloth’s response.

Yet more messengers began arriving. They each told the same tale of how Baloth’s domain was being inundated by yet more swarms of the adjacent kingdom’s demons. The majority seemed to be from Jankh’s principality, yet there was more than a sprinkling of reports about hosts from Baloth’s neighboring kingdoms under Torath, flooding in as well.

“Well, what are they doing here?” Baloth finally asked. “Did not any of my dip-(*&%?#!<*) Captains or mayors see fit to question some of them so as to report their intentions to me?”

One of the numerous messengers timidly responded, “Lord, they say they are here to observe what goes on in your kingdom, and report back to their own Captains.”

Another messenger piped up, “There are some Captains from other kingdoms here as well. Haspeth tried to question one, and he was told

that they were here by authority of Prince Torath himself. But, he wouldn't say what their mission was."

Baloth had appointed Haspeth as demon leader of Sacramento. Designated to control towns, cities, or other human centers, these leaders came to be snidely known as "mayors," in an aping of the human political hierarchy. In most cases it was apt for them to be called thus, as they were to directly try to control the human political government under them, which would put their focus on obsessing and influencing the mayors and other human politicians.

"Captains," on the other hand, were leaders of hosts, or appointed heads of any size group of demons, whether large or small. Baloth was a Lieutenant under Torath and ultimately . . . Satan, but if he led a host he "Captained" it. Any demon who led, was Captain of his followers and minions.

Baloth glared balefully at those gathered, who now awaited his commands.

Something wasn't right here. The pros and cons of the two Jew's Salvations, potential ministries, a Theophany, or whatever. ., just didn't justify all of this activity.

All this happy horse(*&%?#!<*) was Torath's doing, of that he was sure.

Coming to a decision, he gave orders and appointed Captains to lead groups.

"Go see what you can influence to provide stumbling blocks between the Jew finding his wife." He directed the Captain of about half of those assembled.

"You, he singled out the Captain he'd chosen to lead the second half, "I want the humans who have the Jew's wife, to orchestrate her death. You will assist in that accomplishment."

"Plant the idea in their feeble minds, that her survival will surely bring them to be judged in a human court. They are all ours from what I've heard, so that shouldn't be a problem, with alcohol and drugs already ruling them," he advised.

"I want that Jewish (*&%?#!<*) dead, just like her (*&%?#!<*) son," Baloth snarled. "That will slow down any praises from the husband, and might even turn him away from his path toward righteousness," Baloth

grimaced as the distasteful word came off of his tongue. “It might even get him mad at the Man upstairs.”

Baloth thought a minute, and then addressed the first group again pointedly.

“Then, if any of you wanta-be bad(*&z%?#!<*s) look to be a mover and a shaker with me, figure out how to drive a wedge between, or otherwise separate, that cop from the Jew and his undamned buddies.

“Divide and conquer . . . You know how it works,” Baloth pumped them up with a well known strategy of demonkind, or humankind for that matter. Then added, “I’m off to deal with Jankh, and see what that yo-yo is up to. Advise me about your efforts, and let me hear some wonderful human misery success stories.

“Now . . . haul (censord)s!”

Chapter 17

Time, being relative, had passed quickly during Ben's prayers with Jon. Once he had broken the ice, Ben was surprised at how many issues and loved ones he had thought to pray about, and how he had felt to pray about them.

When he and Jon had finished their Amens, Ben saw by his watch that hours had passed since he and his angel (as he now thought of Jon) had first clasped hands over the hood of Gus's truck.

Ben had initially prayed for Evelyn, though he didn't know her name. He'd stumblingly and haltingly tried his best to pray over her circumstances, but at the point to where he had began to wind down in prayer over that specific issue, Jon had encouraged him to continue with all that was on his heart. His roommate Morty, his relatives, all he could think of to lift up to the Lord in a frozen moment that lasted hours by the world's clocks.

Jon knew that a strengthening of Ben's surety of resolve in Christ was needed, and focused communion with the Lord through prayer was the path. During Ben's prayer, Jon had received divine knowledge that dictated that he must leave the new Christian very soon, to be on his own for a time.

Held at bay at a respectful distance by Jon's binding presence, the demons who had watched the hated prayers of the two, awaited a weakening of their resolve, or a crack in their "Armor of God," as it were. They still didn't know what Jon really was, or they would have cast aside that game plan.

The infusing of the power of the Holy Spirit had melded within Ben, to where his armor was bright and shining with the Light of the Lord.

It was well that it was. Jon knew that at the very moment of receiving his Salvation, all the burdens of sin had been lifted from Ben, which in turn meant that all “separation from God” had been resolved at that second.

Yet, as all men had sinful natures and could not maintain a sinless state, an ongoing need for recognizing, confessing, and asking for forgiveness of each new sin, was a must, in order to maintain a close relationship with the Lord. Then what seemed to be hard for some humans to accept was that they were indeed . . . forgiven.

Sins caused/meant “separation from God,” and enough of them unconfessed and repented for, caused a barrier between man and his Creator. Fortunately, the Holy Spirit within man cried out at sin as it occurred, to convict the wrong doer of his folly. Some called that “Small Voice” their conscience, but the Christian knew that the indwelling Holy Spirit of God did not suffer sin without voicing disapproval in a conviction of the heart. So . . . their “good conscience” might also indeed be the “Small Voice” of the Lord.

Christians also knew that merely paying lip service by confessing by mouth, without an accompanying repentance of the heart, might not quite resolve the matter to the Lord.

Yet, if one ignored the Small Voice of the Holy Spirit, the separation would become greater and farther, until sin separated man from God to the extent to where as with the sleeping Gus, the Small Voice became tiny indeed. He could hardly be heard over the vast gulf of the accumulated separations of unconfessed and unrepented sins.

This was, to an extent, the nuts and bolts of how to stay close to God by man’s keeping himself as sinless as humanly possible, so his body was an acceptable “temple” for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

This, plus forgiving others as we would be forgiven, was a good formula, as indicated by Jesus in the Lord’s Prayer, for forgiveness, i.e: overcoming separations.

“I must leave you soon. You have received evidence granted to few through the ages, to strengthen your faith.” Jon began . . .

“But . . .” Ben tried to interrupt the Lord’s Angel of Light.

Jon raised a hand to forestall Ben’s objections, and continued . . .

“You must listen to, and be guided by . . . the Lord. I do not know

why He has allowed your knowledge of my presence to bolster you, and it is known by me that as one new in Christ, you are not exactly prepared for spiritual warfare, yet you have sure knowledge by what you have seen, where others only have “faith not by sight” to ward off doubts and fears, in their fight with the enemy.”

“Yes, but where are you going? Are you coming back . . . ? What do I do with this guy?” Ben indicated the now snoring Gus.

“I have not been given to answer all of your questions, Ben,” Jon replied. “A battle looms for us both by the enemy heretofore unseen by you. This I do know, and can attest to . . . that spiritual warfare has always been about you and within you, to whatever degree unknown of by you. Now though, you have become a Christian, and are a bigger focus for attack by the enemy.”

“So, theres’ things going on, and bad guys around right now,” Ben asked?

Jon smiled grimly in response, eyeing the many demons who still watched the two “Christians,” held at a distance by Jon’s bindings.

“That would be a big Yes. Yet know that Jesus Christ our Lord won the fight for you, and you must claim on-going victory through him, as you have already done initially by receiving your Salvation.”

“Well, they got nothing coming from me, however they try to bug me!” Ben glared around sort of puffed up by how strongly he felt his convictions would allow no doubts or weaknesses to sway him in the face of the bad guys. (Of course no evil input was currently affecting him at the moment)

Jon smiled inwardly at his protégé’s belligerent stance, and at the resolve Ben’s words implied, yet he felt a need to caution Ben further.

“The Holy Spirit grows strong within you, as you are recently cleansed of the burdens of sin by your Salvation. Your human sinful nature has not had opportunity to rear itself yet since then . . . that I know of.”

At Ben’s puzzled frown at the “meat” possibly given too soon to a new child of God, where “milk” would have been the norm, Jon explained his warning in what he prayed was simpler spiritual terms.

“I hold our enemy from you now, but when I am gone they will attack you through your sinful nature, to betray your relationship with the Lord, and they will attack with greater or lesser success. ., if you

don't hear or heed the Holy Spirit's direction, and stay in a state of Grace, through communion with the Lord."

"But . . . but . . ." Ben began to expostulate, totally confused as he had no prior knowledge of The Word of God in a spiritual warfare context, to give meaning to some of Jon's references.

'State of Grace' ????

In fact, Ben was pretty much adrift of knowledge brought by the reading of the Bible, period.

"But, but, but . . . ?" He tried to interrupt with questions.

"The Lord will not allow you to be assailed by more than you can overcome and withstand, Ben," Jon again over-rode Ben's sputtering.

The angel paused then for a second, head cocked attentively as if to listen. ., and then joyfully smiled.

"Know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose," Jon quoted the Word. Then added, "Stand strong yet for awhile, as others like you, in Christ, have been called to help you."

Jon began to glow after this last statement. Brighter and brighter . . . until Ben had to shield his eyes with his hands while peeping through his fingers to see that as the angel's Heaven sent Light of the Lord faded from mortal view, he was yet given to see a towering humanoid like form. Through which and within which, all the stars of the cosmos seemed to twinkle, where before had been a man-sized appearing Jon.

"I go now to seek the Lord's will . . . O' Ben of the heroic heart. Be prepared to do likewise." This was stated in a great voice vaguely discernible as the same as that of the man-like Jon of moments before, to reverberate in the ears of the awed new Child of God.

Ben thought Jon was going somewhere to pray in a somehow special Angel to God way.

With a rushing sound, the barely visible figure seemed to vanish, yet a streak as of a shooting star registered for a millisecond on Ben's retinas.

The light blur paralleled the ground for a hundred yards or so, before veering in a course change . . . it seemed, straight up.

The funny thing was, Ben mused, he thought he heard a couple of smacking sounds, followed by yelps of surprise, as the blur that he knew

was the angel Jon, had right angled from the horizontal to zoom upward out of sight.

“Boy, talk about UFOs,” he laughed to himself.

“Right on . . . right on!” he cheered “his” Angel of Light.

“I told you . . . I told you,” chortled the demon who had previously informed his fellows that “something wasn’t right . . .” about the man who had just proved him right by blossoming into an angel.

His gloating over his correctness of perception was cut short though, as he and his fellow observers saw not just any angel, but a warrior of the Seraphim, when Jon fully transformed to reveal himself.

“Uh-Oh!” one demon barely had time to say, before the Seraph flashed into the midst of the demons to “smite them hip and thigh,” (to quote a verse), and bowl all of them within reach of his trajectory, head over heels.

On the spiritual plane of course, what Ben’s limited human eyes had barely seen on the physical, had been intense coruscating rainbows of light, combined with a blast of ethereal sound.

Though compared to what the Seraph was capable of, the demons knew themselves to have gotten off very lightly indeed.

The demons had also heard the parting advice the Angel of Light had addressed to them in a great sonorous voice, as his smiting of their “hip and thighs,” literally seemed to land in buffets to their heads, rather than on their anatomy parts that the quote should have dictated.

“The man is under my protection! Beware the wrath of the Lord at my hand!” boomed the warrior of the Lord, as he zoomed Heaven bound.

The leader/Captain of the demon group immediately sent messengers to Baloth and to Satan’s palace to inform Torath.

Chapter 18

Torath approached the cabin, which hosted the wild party of humans. He had been directed by assorted babbling demons and imps, which he had encountered on his path through Baloth's kingdom, while on his way to this area where Baloth's efforts seemed to be focused.

Basically disguised as a minor messenger, it hadn't been hard at all to infiltrate Baloth's realm, especially as Baloth's hench-demons were becoming inured to the sight of the many new spiritual foreigners in their realm, there by virtue of Torath's own orders through Sinath and other Princes.

There was more gossip and concern about Jankh's arrival with his hordes in any event, for anyone to heed the passing through of what seemed to be just a lone messenger imp.

Torath had skirted the assembly of Baloth's hosts, which as he had passed close by had scattered to do the bidding of their master Baloth, before he had taken flight to L.A., to confront Jankh.

Torath had gleaned this from some of these mission bound unworthys. He had learned not only somewhat of Baloth's game plan, but where he, Torath, might find a place in the scheme of things in which to put in his crooked oar—so to speak.

Torath chortled at hearing of Baloth's confusion and rage over his own machinations, and orchestrations against his Lieutenant.

The party had gotten crazier by the minute. The men had called for reinforcements: female, alcohol, and drug-wise. Girlfriends, friendly acquaintances, and other like minded party goers/"animals," had arrived, with yet more on the way to join the bash now in full swing.

Evelyn had been carried within the cabin. She was still unconsciously

oblivious to events occurring around her. She had been propped in a corner like a rag doll. A left over New Year's Eve party cone hat had been affixed to the top of her head with its rubber band chin strap, and one of the men had propped a cardboard sign that someone sometime had fashioned, which had become a much used item of the cabin's party inventory. It stated "Out To Lunch," in big red lip-sticked letters. There usually weren't enough of these signs to go around as partyers fell by the wayside into stupors.

Those unconscious in "blackouts," were often surprised to find that their fellow party people could tell them of things that they did or said, that they had no memory of after the black-outs.

Those still lost to the Lord in their sins . . . even such depraved men as these, would not be happy to know what or who might have animated and inhabited their bodies sometimes, during these black-outs.

Again, demons did not often reveal their presence, lest the unaware man, in a natural revulsion to becoming apprised of having been a pawn of evil, should turn to God for succor.

Evelyn's state was a different case though, as Baloth had made himself known to her, and revealed the lost plight of her son, in his efforts to drive her to madness. She knew deep within herself, that she had been possessed . . . and who by.

Ralph had succumbed. No sign advertising him as being out to lunch, adorned his neck. Yet he was snoring in oblivion. He'd gotten himself so amped on cocaine one of his own pals had advocated that he "take a few downers to chill out."

"No problem dude," had been his response. Forty minutes later he'd had to send one of his cronies on a mission to his truck to get a little more "coke," to give him a "pick me up" blast. This was as he was starting to nod off in one of the cabin's few chairs, as a result of the sleeping pills.

By the time that supposedly mission-bound crony had returned with the coke, after having gotten side-tracked in route, Ralph's snores were being lost in the general din, as booze and downers mixed in him . . . to a big thud.

Torath had been of those who "came in to the daughters of men."

He was referred to as a "fallen" "son of God," in those days, who

saw the daughters of men as “beautiful/fair,” and he had “bore children to them.”

So, he could become as a man, just as he had done in the days of old. A bit rusty perhaps, as being a puny man appealed even less to him these days than being as that of the puny demon whose guise he still assumed.

As he approached the cabin, he maneuvered himself to be momentarily unsurveyed by any of Baloth’s minions, or any of the humans about, and in the blink of an eye became to appear as a man.

Just another one of those new human arrivals who had come to the party.

On the physical plane it was easy for him to blend in, just as it had been easy to be one of the demon crowd on the spiritual plane. But to condense his immense evil spiritual aura down to where his fellow demons would not guess him to be other than just another wayward unsaved lost human. . . . Yes, he marveled at his own cunning, that took a master’s touch.

This was as demonic evil and human evil, differed in range, scope, and power. Far easier to fool other demons that he was just a lesser demon, than that he was a totally different species of being, when the spiritual light or darkness of an entity was so easy to discern, in the spiritual heavens.

As Jon had had to cloak his Light of The Lord, from the watching demons, so too had Torath to cloak his dark aura of demonic evil.

Sam had been the mission-bound one sent by the presently busily snoring Ralph.

Not one to waste “manna” from Hell, or the breath of death, as it were, he quickly availed himself to inhale some of the aforementioned “pick me up,” that he knew Ralph wouldn’t miss. Thus zooming with pop-corn drug induced thought, he had a brilliant idea to try to awaken Ralph, by trying to get some of the white powder inadvertently inhaled with the big man’s snores.

This only resulted in the sleeping Ralph’s exhalations blowing the coke all over the floor.

Taking another snort himself, Sam, “dope-fiend” that he was, came up with a solution to the problem. He went to his own car and returned in just a few minutes with a small shaving kit. Going into the bathroom,

he pulled a diabetic syringe from the case along with a teaspoon and cotton swab.

Doing what needle users do, he quickly prepared and injected himself with a blast that overjoyed the demons who wished him such a good high that they hoped he would overdose himself to death. They knew that then he would surely be lost to God forever.

Sam knew little cognizantly right then, but he did know his own tolerances to drugs, so he disappointed the watching demons, somewhat.

Death, however, was literally the “order” of the day. Baloth’s command that Evelyn be caused to die, had become the focus of the demons helping to orchestrate the enhanced sinful natures of the partyers.

Sam was especially targeted.

Skyrocketed into a racing splintered susceptible mind rush, Sam didn’t know where thoughts were going to, or coming from, as the busy spirits of drugs focused on his sinful nature and helped him to formulate a furtherance of his original idea to awaken the sleeping Ralph.

“Ralph will kick my butt,” he feverishly mumbled to himself as he prepared another jolt of cocaine, and shakily drew it into the syringe. Somehow forgetting that such a massive dose might be lethal to someone with less tolerance than himself, he had prepared a “hit,” which would awaken a barbiturated elephant.

It need not be said what the effect such an amount directly put into the blood stream of a clean diminutive person with no built up tolerance would be.

Leaving the bathroom, his wild eyed gaze focused on the small form of Evelyn. Guided by more than his own volition, the obsessed Sam approached her with the crazed thought gleefully implanted that he would wake up the “sleeping beauty,” to the applause of his fellows, some of whom had individually tried during the course of the party, to get a response from her . . . to no avail.

Syringe loaded and dripping, but hidden from view, as he knew that even to such a group as these to whom drugs were an accepted norm, needles were frowned upon with disgust . . . Sam approached Evelyn. Someone would surely draw the line at letting him “shoot up” the woman, if he let his intentions be known.

He knelt by her, and unobtrusively unbuttoned her sleeve and

exposed the inside of her elbow. Syringe poised, yet hidden from view by any of the partyers who yet remained aware enough to notice, he felt in the crook of Evelyn's elbow for his target.



Cold cruel eyes black as death, bored into Sam's back.

A few demons cursorily appraised the man who stood in the doorway but were intent on watching the kneeling Sam. Word had spread through the spirits who were observing and influencing the party, that Baloth's wishes would soon be fulfilled. The drug crazed human would kill the woman that Baloth wanted dead.

The evil ones had clustered to watch the death dealt out by the obsessed Sam, when the sober stranger had appeared in the doorway.

Then the tall man took a quick cat-like stride into the room, and paused with his eyes never wavering from their boring into Sam's back.

A few demons flitted toward the man to try to sway him from his focused concentration, by distracting him through the manipulating of his sinful nature. This, just in case the man proposed to somehow interfere with the druggie's goal, and Baloth's wishes for Evelyn's demise.

Torath had heard second hand about some of Baloth's orders to his minions. He had discerned by their babblings, that the cabin and humans in and around it were somehow part of Baloth's strategy.

Initially, after God created man, Torath thought of women as beautiful, mostly because he desired what he perceived that he and his kind were deprived of. That being the pleasures of the flesh, which men found with their mates.

Yet those pleasures soon faded and succumbed to his overall hatred of man when he seemed to also perceive that they had supplanted him, and his ilk's favor, in the eyes of God.

As Torath had strode through the puny bugs of men and women, the vast majority of whom had overflowed the cabin to party outside, he gnashed and ground his teeth, in a seething hatred of them all.

He did yet feel a twinge of almost forgotten human like desire in his assumed man-like flesh, as he passed through the crowd and beheld a nubile barely clothed female form or two. But his sneering hatred

was projected to such an extent, that his visage displayed vicious evil, to where what was otherwise an acceptably form and featured man, became someone the crowd instinctively avoided after seeing his face.

The hardest hearted of the partyers turned away from him with a qualm.

The vein pulsed strongly under Sam's thumb, as he pricked the skin over it with the needle, and slowly slid it into Evelyn's arm.

Focused wholly upon his task, he did not notice the pausing in the ribald conversations around him that the daunting presence of the stranger had caused. The commanding presence filled the cabin to become a euphoria dampener.



"I can't sink a claw into him," one of Baloth's demons complained.

"This man makes these others look like choirboys," another of them marveled. "His heart must be hard as a rock as mean as he seems."

"He must have seriously blasphemed the One upstairs!" Said a demon of lust.

"If he messes up Baloth's program—Uh Oh—Stop him!" another demon exclaimed.



"What are you up to there, stud?" Came a wintry cold echoing voice, which froze Sam's finger on the syringe plunger just after he had "registered," by a slight pull that he was indeed at ground zero . . . on target in the vein, as a trace of blood in the barrel of the syringe showed.

Just a quick push now . . . Sam licked his lips, as a chorus of demons howled and screamed their support, unheard by human ears.

Sam began depressing the plunger. A quarter of the lethal dose of cocaine went into Evelyn's arm, when a vise like hand clamped on his neck paralyzing him, while a snarl of rage resounded in his ears. The syringe fell from his nerveless fingers, as an other-worldly strength

hauled him from his knees to dangle with his toes four inches from the floor.

“I addressed you human,” A dark hate filled visage snarled into Sam’s ear from only inches away, as he was turned like a puppet, still dangling, to be confronted by Satan’s chief Prince.

Second only to Satan himself in demonic power, authority, and strength, the Archdemon Torath never had the opportunity to be ignored. Whether as one of the “giants” of old who had walked the earth, or as Prince of the most powerful of principalities . . . he had been heeded one way or another.

Not knowing exactly what the man had been up to, but knowing of Baloth’s minions concentration on the man huddled in front of the woman, is what brought Torath to address the human in the first place.

Torath’s intentions were to throw a monkey wrench into any of Baloth’s plans that he could, while remaining under cover.

Discrediting Baloth in Satan’s eyes without it being known that he was instrumental in the doing of it, was his motive in being there, but he didn’t hate Baloth. He sensed a kindred evil angry nature in his Lieutenant, but he also knew Baloth to be ambitious, and needing to be knocked from contention as a potential rival.

But Torath surely hated man, though. He would no more willingly save a human from the death of those lost in their sins, as he would willingly help one of them to their Salvation.

Yet, his wrath and response to being ignored had possibly inadvertently caused him to do a life saving, if he could trust what his dismayed eyes beheld.

When he had snatched the man up from his knees, he saw the almost full syringe fall from its nerveless fingers, and he took in the sight of the blood trickling from the puncture wound on the female’s arm.

“OHHAAGHH!” Torath groaned and snarled in a breath, bug eyed with the thought that he might get accused of “right doing” as a result of his interference.



Then . . . the woman's eyes opened, as the evil drug stimulant, and the prayers of the four saints in Ivan's living room miles away, and the prayers of Ben, somehow "worked together for the good for those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

Chapter 19

Tiny had come to some conclusions . . .

Dispatch had called on his radio requesting his “twenty” (location), and had put an end to the prayer circle for a moment, as he had to respond. Fortunately, his shift ended at midnight, so he could factor that in as he formulated his reply to the query, as it was already 11:45 p.m.

“I’m winding things up here at the 459 location. It doesn’t appear that there was a burglary, but the owner informs me that he phoned in a missing persons report yesterday about his wife, Evelyn Seranovich. He tells me that she is still missing.” Then he added, “I’m following up on that now, as the twenty four hours have elapsed.”

“10-4, car six,” the impersonal female voice responded. “I’ll process it with her information on an APB (all points bulletin). I have the husband’s description of her from yesterday’s log, on file.” Then, on a more personal note the dispatcher asked, “Guess your going off shift now, huh Tiny? And we’ll get the follow up info on your report tomorrow?”

“That’s an affirmative, Dolores,” Tiny agreed. “Have a good night.

“Night, dispatch clear.” She responded.

“Car six, clear.”

As with most small Sheriff’s offices, it was standard for the off duty officers to keep their assigned mobile unit at home between shifts. They were always on call because of budget restrictions, via pagers and cell phones, even when off-duty, so as to flesh out the department’s needs manpower-wise during emergencies.

Having cars immediately available to field an off-duty officer was

deemed far cheaper, than having more staff on the clock all of the time.

When Tiny got off the radio he addressed the three expectant Christians, who were encouraged in that he was not only a Christian now, but as an investigative professional, could direct their efforts at finding Evelyn. He had already implied he was inclined to do so, even before the spirit manifestation, and his own Salvation experience.

“I’ve got some ideas, but you know I feel I think more clearly when I’m in my office out there,” he jerked a thumb, pointing toward his patrol cruiser in front of the house.

“There isn’t much else we can do here, so why don’t we batten down the hatches, and take a little drive while I refresh my memory about some things, and make some calls,” he suggested.

Though it was long past bedtime for three of the foursome who soon piled into Tiny’s patrol car, they were all wide awake and eager to follow Tiny’s promptings.

They soon drove to the intersection of what passed as a major cross street in the small town, some few blocks away from Ivan’s house. Tiny turned right, and pulled over at a bus stop.

“See there,” he pointed across the street to the bus-stop that served for the people going back the way they had just come from. “She could have gotten on a bus going either way right here.”

“Yes,” Josh agreed. “This is the only bus route within a mile of our homes.”

“Okay,” Tiny pulled at his chin reflecting thoughtfully. “If she walked she could have gone any which way, but if she caught a bus, it would have been here. Or . . . maybe she called for a cab.

“Course, she could have been kidnapped, or willingly been driven off, or even hitch-hiked too . . .” The lawman mused. “But, before we pound on your neighbor’s doors, which it’s too late at night now for anyway, let’s make some calls.”

Putting action to words, Tiny called the only available taxi company, which served the small community. Giving his name and stating that he was a Sheriff, he quickly gained access to the information that he wanted.

No, no one had been picked up from Ivan’s address. Nor did Evelyn’s

description, or the suburban area in which they lived match up with any “pick-ups” that were logged for the time-frames within which Tiny asked the cab company to check its records.

It didn't take long before the complete log of yesterday's fares had been looked through, as taxis weren't that much in demand in their community, where a bicycle would get you across town in about twenty minutes flat.

Next, Tiny called the local bus line service.

Again, small communities didn't have the clientele to have buses running the routes, but just every so often. Tiny asked for and received the schedule for the line which ran the street that the four were parked on.

“Every hour on the hour,” he was cheerfully informed. “Except for the shuttle which commutes between here and Seaport.”

“I'm trying to find out if a woman was picked up from this location yesterday,” Tiny informed the bus line official he had reached. “How would I contact the driver or drivers who worked these routes, and give them her description?”

“That's easy,” the usually bored and happy to oblige bus line spokesman replied. “First off, the same driver just goes back and forth along that route each shift, and the commuter to Seaport is the same, but it only runs every two and a half hours.”

Tiny then relayed the approximate time frame that it seemed would have been when Evelyn might have purchased a fare.

“Well, that makes it even easier,” was the reply. “Late afternoon to early evening is the same shift, as our drivers work tens, from two to twelve-thirty, with a half hour lay-over for lunch break.”

“Ya' mean they are just now getting off?” Tiny asked looking at his watch, which read 12:15 in the morning.

“That's correct. Matter of fact, both drivers should be in about now that worked this shift yesterday . . . and today. I'll see if I can round them up for you . . . Stand by.”

While Tiny waited, he told Ivan, Josh, and Ellen, what he had learned so far from his call.

“Pretty doggone lucky, that we might be able to eliminate public transportation, and that we're able to get a positive negative from the

taxi company as well, being what time it is now,” Tiny reflected in summation.

“I don’t think luck has much to do with it,” Ellen observed. “I’ve been busy praying back here.” She explained from her seat next to Josh in the back of the car.

“That’s right,” Josh cosigned. From now on let’s operate from the standing that the Lord hears our prayers, is right here on our side, and is putting his hand on our efforts.”

Farol, the discerning protecting Angel of Light, who the Holy Spirit had called to their assistance at Ivan’s, nodded in approval, as the human quartet in his charge digested Ellen and Josh’s words and became more spiritually focused.

To be strong spiritually, thoughts of the Lord needed to permeate their every move. The angel knew that in this way even so simple an act as a questioning phone call could be that which was of God’s will. The convictions and directions of the Holy Spirit of God were there to be heard, and became clearer as focus on what was the Lord’s will became the central theme to any effort.

A human thus focused on the Lord and in the Lord’s will, was given to be in a “state of grace” via the Holy Spirit’s filling them with love and peace.

Discerning the sense of well being that was a direct result of being Spirit filled, or in a state of grace, was an essential awareness for man. The obtaining of the grace of the Lord, and the maintaining of the Holy Spirit’s strong presence in man’s life which brought grace, needed to become man’s primary focus. Thus, a spiritually aware human could discern by a fading or enhancing of their state of grace, whether they were in the Lord’s will, or straying out of it.

It wasn’t a hard thing to do, as the Holy Spirit gave convictions of wrong doing all of the time to those with spiritual eyes to see, and spiritual ears to hear.



“Hello, this is Dan,” a voice intruded on Tiny’s pondering about what Josh and Ellen’s statements implied. That being in Tiny’s new found

Christian point of view, that the quartet were “on a mission from God,” which had immediately brought to mind an old movie starring two fictional characters who were supposed to be brothers who sang the blues, who claimed that they had the Lord’s leading in their efforts.

Even as he wondered which of those two characters in ‘The Blues Brothers’ he most resembled, he was chided by the Holy Spirit to focus on the truth in the couple’s words. Then his introspections were interrupted by the driver’s voice saying ‘hello’ from the phone.

“This is Joe Bradford with the Applewood County Sheriff’s Department. I’m trying to find a missing person who might have taken a bus during your shift. I’m looking for a female . . .”

“Well, hold on a second,” Tiny was interrupted. “Al is here too, that drives the other route dispatch said that you’re interested in what was running during the times you asked about. Let me get him on another extension.”

Tiny heard some mumbled conversation and a chair scraping sound in the background, before a click and a tired sounding voice said, “Yeah, this is Al Jorgensen.”

Tiny began to describe Evelyn to the two drivers. He hadn’t gotten far when Al interrupted him. “I picked up a gal like that yesterday, right here in Scarsdale, and dropped her off in Seaport at the end of the line. The reason I remember is that she was a nut bag who upset all the other passengers. Never saw such a hate filled person in my life!”

The obviously disgruntled driver paused for a moment, and Tiny quickly took advantage.

“Can we swing by and show you a picture of her to verify we’re talking about the same person?” he asked. “It will only take a minute or two to get there.” He added, so the end of shift driver wouldn’t mind too much not taking off for home right away.

“Yeah, OK, whatever I can do to help . . .” Al agreed, then added, “Someone better bring a tranquilizer for her though, cause she acted like she could use one. If you’re after the same gal I’m thinking of.”

“Hmmm . . .” Tiny responded noncommittally, “We’ll be there as soon as we can.”

He pressed the ‘end’ button on his cell phone as Ivan, who had

eagerly listened to every word, handed him a photo of Evelyn that he had just taken from his wallet.

“Boy, I’m sure glad you had this with you,” Tiny informed him, “cause normally when I’m looking for someone the first thing I do is get a picture.” He shook his head ruefully. “But with one thing and another, this time around I flat forgot to even think about it before we left your house. Must be cause of them eyeballs and things.”



By 12:35 in the morning, the four of them were at the bus terminal’s front desk, where Al Jorgensen readily affirmed that the photo was the likeness of the “nutbag” passenger he had spoken to Tiny about.

“Yeah, but she sure looks a lot nicer in this picture,” the driver remarked.

“What do you mean,” Ivan asked.

“Well, she kind of looked and acted like ‘Mr. Hyde’ when she got aboard, and in this picture she looks like the ‘Dr. Jekyll’ version.”

“I’m her husband, and I’d like to know exactly what you mean by that?” Ivan demanded worriedly.

“Boy, lucky you . . .” the driver began, but seeing Ivan’s hurt and worried expression, the sarcastic Al softened.

“Look,” he confided, “before she got aboard she was kind of just blank looking. Kind of standing there at the stop staring off into space. I could see her through the glass on the doors. Then, as I opened them, she looked up and saw me and just seemed to get angry all of the sudden. When she paid the fare . . . and by the way . . . she wasn’t too coordinated, she stumbled and fumbled up the steps, and then just threw whatever into the coin meter . . . including a crumpled up dollar bill.

“Anyway, she started mumbling, and I would swear . . . snarling! Then when she moved down the aisle towards the back of the bus . . . from what I could see in my mirror, it seemed as if she was slapping herself while deliberately running into the sides of the seats.

“Man, I don’t know . . .” the driver trailed off reflectively. “I tell you what, when you described her she was easy enough to remember!”

Al didn’t go into how nameless dreads and feelings of wrongness

had been his instinctive reaction when he'd looked into her eyes, and that those were the most memorable things about the woman they were asking him about. Normally, if someone just threw change into the machine it would just plug up, and then he would ask/tell the person to reinsert the money correctly.

As a matter of fact, Al mused, normally if a passenger acted up and annoyed other passengers, he would say something to them, and if that failed . . . order them off of the bus.

This woman though, small as she was, had scared him to where he'd hoped it wouldn't become necessary to confront her at all. That is why he hadn't said anything to her about how she had paid the fare.

After the four had thanked the driver, and obtained a bus schedule showing the route Al drove back and forth to Seaport from Scarsdale, they had a little meeting out by Tiny's cruiser.

"I've got to drive down there right now." Ivan started out saying, and then hesitated . . ."I know it's late, or . . ." he glanced at his watch, "early, but I couldn't sleep anyway, so can you take me back to my house to get my car right now?" he asked Tiny.

"Whoa' there." Tiny responded. "I guess you don't realize that we are all on a mission from God here?"

"Amen," came from Ellen.

"Emphasis on the 'we.'" Josh put in. "You're not on your own here, Ivan."

"I just thought that you guys might figure tomorrow is another day. Being it's so late and all . . ." Ivan looked at them hopefully.

"Well, tomorrow surely is another day, but Seaport is in Applewood County, though it's not where I normally patrol," Tiny informed him. "But I think a cruise down that-a-way is unofficially officially justified at this point in space and time though, anyway."

Tiny grinned at the three, once again trying to allay stress to where fears and doubts wouldn't cause his fellow 'new investigators,' to go off half-cocked in the process of their, what was now, mutual investigation.

Most notably, his concerns were about Ivan.

It was kind of like training three rookies, the big lawman mused.

"It's only about thirty miles or so, so let's pile in, and after we get

out of the city limits, I'll hit the lights, and show you how this baby can knock out thirty miles."

Ivan perked up. He was champing at the bit and wishing "Scotty" could just "beam" him over there, but this sounded pretty good as a real life option.

"You can do that even if you are off duty?" he asked, after they all got in and Tiny pulled the cruiser into the street.

A powerful surge threw them deep in their seat cushions, as the patrol cars high performance motor responded to Tiny's unspoken answer.

Quite a few speed laws, stop signs, and traffic signals, were bent or ignored by the time they reached Scarsdale's town limits. Then Tiny hit his overhead lights, and really floored the gas pedal.

As the cruiser's speedometer registered one hundred miles per hour, and they were racing down the virtually deserted highway, Tiny began to justify his actions.

"Here's how I figure it to be . . . Technically, I'm an off-duty police official who is officially on call twenty four hours a day. That's why my official clock doesn't stop, even when I'm off-duty . . . supposedly."

He grinned again at Ivan, who was seat-belted in beside him in the front seat. Then glanced at the rear view mirror to see that Josh was zeroed in on what the cruiser's dashboard speedometer was displaying, while Ellen just appeared calmly to be praying, but for some reason . . . with her eyes closed.

"So, I do believe that being an official in an official vehicle, who is unofficially helping to find an officially valid and logged missing person . . . means that I have the official right to turn on my official lights, and go over the speed limit and such."

Tiny again looked to see how this light hearted extrapolation was being received by his passengers, and saw a couple of smiles in response, though Ivan was still uptight looking, and Ellen's eyes remained closed.

"Besides," He glanced at his speedometer. "At one hundred and ten miles an hour . . . we are now on the mission from God . . . officially!"

"Oh Lord . . ." Ellen was heard to mumble aloud, and though the rest of her prayer wasn't audible to the three men, they knew the housewife was at least throwing in a prayer or two about how fast they were traveling, among her other prayers.

“Now, while we’re in route, someone tell me about this Beelzebub character. This eyeball and things.” Tiny demanded of the group.

“I’ve got to know how to deal with stuff like we ran into at Ivan’s house, in case we run up on that kind of thing again.”

“Well . . .” Josh and Ivan both began almost in unison.

“It’s a long story of possessions, and how to order or bind demons, is how I understand it,” Ivan said.

“Jesus is the key,” Josh added.

“We’ve got about ten minutes,” Tiny responded, as the cruiser hurtled toward Seaport, with its lights causing slower vehicles to pull over, as it rocketed past them approaching speeds of one hundred and twenty miles an hour.

Their attending angel easily kept pace with the hurtling patrol car. He listened as Ivan and Josh took turns in giving Tiny a condensed Bible study about spiritual warfare . . . as they understood it.

Chapter 20

Things weren't going well for Baloth in the City of Angels. The already demon-inundated Los Angeles was now occupied by Jankh's hosts as well. From the spiritual standpoint, the city could surely now be more appropriately called the city of "fallen" angels, by virtue of how the addition of Jankh's hordes to the already overwhelming numbers of Baloth's minions, caused it to appear more populated by demons than by humans, on the spiritual plane.

When Baloth had entered the county with his immediate attendants, any who knew him could see the thunderclouds gathering, as his horny ridged eyes and reptilian face reflected his rage, when he beheld the evidence of how the seat of his power in his kingdom, had been usurped by another.

Being no respecter of persons, demons, or really . . . anything at all, except perhaps the Master himself, Baloth was as a bomb ready to blow up.

Coming in from the north, he spied a gathering of two minor hosts, which from his vantage point high above the city seemed a likely information source to find out what Jankh had been up to on his turf. As he and his followers descended, he recognized one of his own loyal Captains, Naspeth, who was dubbed the 'Mayor' of San Fernando, confronting an as yet unknown other demon Captain.

"I've heard nothing from Baloth about your replacing me," Naspeth growled, "and so I'm not giving up (*&%?#!<*), unless I hear from him, or get direct orders from Prince Jankh, or Prince Torath, himself. So . . . (*&%?#!<*) you!"

"Thus spoke the rabble rousing Mayor of Los Angeles also," Jankh's

Lieutenant, Slithes, responded, with a mocking hiss from his double hinged mandibled mouth.

“Jankh bound him in chains and put him on the steps of a church, where . . . ummm . . . ughhh! . . . (Jankh’s Lieutenant had a hard time saying the word): “Christians . . . blechhh . . . walk over and through him all day!”

Grunts of dismay greeted this revelation from both fronts of the two opposing demon groups.

“(*&%?#!<*),” Naspeth groaned, awed that Jankh could display such awful creative evilness, when he had previously heard that that Prince specialized in paying attention to his own vanity, rather than in being much of an evil genius.

“I don’t care what you say though, he replied finally to Slithes, “Baloth will rule again as he is the Master’s protégée, and I’m not taking orders from anyone less than a Prince.”

“(*&%?#!<*) Baloth!” Slithes exclaimed with a snarl. “His authority is over by order of Prince Torath himself. If he shows up here . . . if he dares . . . he might just find himself in chains too.”

Slithes had puffed out his chest with his boastings at Jankh’s authority from Torath, which ultimately was the authority by which he, Slithes, now spoke.

“I think that Baloth’s reputation as no one to tangle with is a crock anyway. I’m a Lieutenant, just like him, and if I see him first, I might just spit in . . .”

Thud . . . crack! Slithes felt two horny feet slam into him just before his lower mandible crunched into the spiritual ground, which conformed to the physical at that spot, but was comprised of dead gray rock, versus the physical planes asphalt.

Either was hard enough . . . when Baloth was standing on your neck.

“What was that you were saying, worm?” A venomous voice asked in such rage as to be quietly deadly.

“I can’t hear you,” Slithes mumbled, as a great horny taloned foot ground his face into the rock, and in so doing partially covered one of his bat-like ears, while his other was being filled with only the sounds of the grinding of his face into stone.

A taloned toe was inserted into Slithes ear, and wiggled around a bit as some of Baloth's mass shifted to expose that membraned appendage, before an overly solicitous voice penetrated past the intruding toe.

"Now, I'll help you remember. ., from what I heard in passing, you were about to spit somewhere if you saw me." Baloth hinted and reminded the prone Jankh Lieutenant with a toe jiggle in the ear.

"I know that you have an upside down view of things from your current position in life and all, but . . . all things being somewhat even . . . like that we are both Lieutenants and such . . ."

Another toe jiggle.

"Isn't that what you said?! That you and I are just the same . . . equal and like each other?"

"(*&%?#!<*), Baloth" Slithes grunted out in a snarl. "Get off me, you big piece of (*&%?#!<*)! I'm here by authority of Prince Jankh, who was given dominion here by Prince Torath."

"Ah, well . . . OK," Baloth replied. "I had heard somewhat about it, but it didn't hurt me a bit to hear your version too. I trust that it didn't hurt you too much to tell me about it either."

Baloth stepped off of Slithes, and that Lieutenant sprang to his feet flapping his wings in fury. Brushing the grit from the side of his face which had been ground into the rock, Slithes glared over to meet the cold icy rage of the hulking Baloth.

"You go too far, Baloth!" he hissed with fangs bared. "Wait till Jankh gets hold of you."

"The only waiting I'm doing is for you to spit . . . worm!" Baloth advised ominously.

Seeing the uncowed, yet momentarily speechless Lieutenant not looking like he was going to expectorate right away, and knowing that the venom wouldn't dare be directed at him if Slithes did spit, Baloth turned toward his mayor, Naspeth.

"You did well, Naspeth. Until I verify with a Prince that I am under someone other than Torath, what these scumbag Lieutenants tell us means nothing. No one except a Prince or the Master himself is my equal . . . Certainly not this worm, who claims himself to be."

At this point Baloth aped becoming truly thoughtful. Putting his chin on his fist he made a "hmmmm," sound as if in serious contemplation.

All things considered, there was a serious decision to be made here

...

“EEenee Meenee Minee Moe . . .” He quoted, just before his decision was dictated by an impatience which launched his so far uninjured left foot to occlude with satisfactory impact on the point of Slithes still dusty chin.

That surprised unworthy was catapulted upward, just as the previous bearer of bad tidings, Sinath, had been before him.

“AAAuggHH!” Baloth howled, as his big toe advised him of how hard the undersides of Slithes mandibles were.

As the dazedly fleeing Slithes flapped off followed by the small host he was Captaining, Baloth snarled after him in a rage further accentuated by foot pains:

“Tell your Prince that I’m running out of feet, you worm-bat piece of (*&%?#!<*)” Then he snorted and grumbled somewhat to himself, as he limped and hopped, favoring his left foot now over the still smarting right.

“I shoulda’ known if his jaw would grind rock into powder, not to kick him on it!”

Casting a baleful eye after the fleeing Slithes led host, which was dwindling in the distance, Baloth launched himself skyward as well.

“We’ll follow the worm, for surely he goes to Jankh, and I have business with that foppish buffoon, if I can get him out from in front of a mirror!”

Naspeth and his group joined Baloth’s attendants, and followed the displaced Lieutenant.

Chapter 21

Jankh was indeed, at that very moment preening in front of a mirror. As a demon, he really didn't care all that much about his looks, but his be-jewelling himself was as a crown and scepter to him, much like was considered by the human kings and emperors of old. They were symbols of authority and power in his view, and as he considered himself the newly crowned Overlord of the west coast, he had added an enormous jeweled gold chain around his neck, in addition to the other baubles that he normally wore as Prince of the Pacific.

As he considered his porcine reflection, complete with boar like tusks, he considered how to consolidate his authority towards permanence, over the principality area that he had now been given temporary control over.

The enormous power to corrupt humans, that this headquarters of the entertainment medium represented, was worthy of any demon's lust to control.

The human mayor's private office bathroom, was filled on its spiritual plane equivalent, with the scent of fire and brimstone, as Jankh contemplated gold tipping his tusks.

"Oh well, wait until this authority is yours permanently." He addressed his reflection, while casting an eye about to approvingly note the rich appointments of the customized mayoral bathroom. In so doing he noticed that his hooves needed polishing.

He vacillated between formulating how to address the issues that Torath had indicated needed a firm hand, (most notably Baloth and whatever he had gotten himself into), and what to do about the appearance of his hooves.

He was interrupted by the arrival of his Lieutenant, Slithes, who had brushed aside those of Jankh's immediate attendant demons who were to formally announce that someone wanted an audience with him, to come directly unannounced into his presence.

Before Slithes could get a word out, the be-jeweled Prince wrinkled his snout in disgust, and said indignantly, "Why are you so full of dust and dirt?"

"Sorry, my Prince . . ." Slithes began but was immediately cut off.

"There is no excuse for approaching me informally, especially not if your dripping dust and dirt all over, which might get on me!" exclaimed Jankh indignantly.

"Yessss my Prince, but . . ."

"Go jump in the ocean or something immediately, and tell my attendants that my hooves are scuffed on your way out."

"But, I came to tell you that Baloth is here, my Prince!"

"Oh, well . . . we knew he was around here somewhere. . . now go clean yourself, and be announced when next you approach me."

Slithes rolled his eyes and twitched his bat ears in frustration, before again trying to warn his Prince.

"But, he threatened and belittled you!"

"OHHHHH . . . really . . ."

Jankh glared furiously with his little pig eyes. "Now, why didn't you say so in the first place?"

"Prince, he assaulted me too and . . ."

"I don't care about that, what did he say about me?"

"He said to tell you that he is running out of feet, my Prince!"

"Now, what the (*&%?#!<*) is that supposed to mean?"

"I don't know, but he tromped on me by surprise, and then kicked me!" Slithes complained with hissing anger.

"Did he know you were representing ME?" Jankh asked swelling with pomposity, and putting a huge emphasis of the word "me."

"Yesss, my Prince, but he stated to his underling in my hearing, that until he spoke to you or another Prince, or heard from the Master himself, he wouldn't recognize anyone else's relayed authority. That's when he kicked me when I wasn't looking," Slithes added, still trying to get the Prince to take umbrage at indignities done to his representative.

Slithes felt that he just had to again inject the last part so that Jankh would hopefully take some kind of action about the affront to his emissary/Lieutenant having been physically assaulted.

As far as Jankh was concerned though, only the part of the tale comprising a message to him, Jankh, was important. If Slithes got run through some kind of demon meat grinder . . . oh well, there were others just drooling to replace him.

But disrespect to Jankh himself, was another thing entirely.

The only thing was, Jankh couldn't figure out if he had indeed been disrespected of any absolute certainty. Nor, could he discern the threat that his Lieutenant said was implied, by Baloth's saying that he was "running out of feet."

The puzzle of it all was just taking too much concentration, he thought. There were immediate and important things to address, like the impropriety of Slithes approach to Jankh in the first place about all this. Then there was the dirty condition that he was in, when he knew better than to approach Jankh in such a manner. After all, anyone should know to look their best when coming into the presence of royalty.

And most important, Jankh wasn't prepared to hear anything or give anyone an audience, without feeling right about himself . . . to wit; his 'shoes' needed shining!

So, no matter the provocation, in Jankh's opinion . . . there was always time for someone under him, to do things the way he, Jankh, wanted them done.

Jankh knew, for instance, that he only attained his majestic image through hard work and careful preparation. And . . . he only did all that work for the benefit of his minions, so that they could have someone to look up to. (Or so he justified his efforts in his own mind.)

Jankh turned his back on Slithes, to contemplate his reflection anew.

"Your appearance is not appropriate for being my Lieutenant. Go take care of that first, and I'll deal with Baloth as need be."

Slithes eyed Jankh's bristly back, as that unworthy preened in the mirror, before he threw his winged arms up in frustration.

"Yesss, my Prince." He agreed, turning to leave.

"And make sure someone comes about my hooves."

“OOHHH yesss, of course my Prince . . . I’ll get right on that.” Slithes threw over his shoulder sarcastically, then launched himself through the human building’s wall, to spread his wings and dive-bomb angrily down toward some of Jankh’s personal attendants.

“Your master needs his (*&%?#!<*) shoes shined!” He roared at them before flapping his bat like wings in a course change toward the Pacific, in total disgust.

Chapter 22

Fallen angels throughout the palace area communicated in hushed whispers. The throne room anti-chamber demons cringed from the sounds that could still be heard even through the massive, now smoking portals between them and the Master.

A crushed messenger demon had just emerged from an audience with Satan a few moments before, and when the doors had opened it was like a blast furnace being vented.

The ‘crushed’ demon was not just crushed in the chagrined sense of the word, but literally. From entering at six foot tall, he had emerged at about four foot flat. His head had been slammed down halfway into his thorax bug like torso, and his upper leg members were likewise crushed upward into his body.

That the Master was displeased was an understatement.

The summoning bell in the anti-chamber began peal continuously, whereas normally a single ring would indicate that the Master had need of attendance in the throne room.

The green froglike bloated features of Slimeth, the demon who usually served as kind of a major-domo, went ashen as the portals began to swing inward.

Surely it was an invitation to some kind of unhappy event for him.

Fearfully he approached the opening and saw the dragon glaring at him from the throne, through a haze of shimmering heat and smoke.

Remembering the squashed messenger, Slimeth tried to keep his distance.

“Yes, O’ Master, how can I be of service?” He asked from the threshold.

Smoke and blue flames blew from the nostrils, and the reptilian yellow eyes narrowed.

“Enter into my presence toad.” Came a barely audible hiss.

Slimeth sidled in and immediately prostrated himself at the foot of the dais with his rubbery chins to the floor.

Lucifer clicked his talons rapidly as he contemplated his prostrate flunky.

The normally appeasing enjoyable wails of the lost souls were not providing surcease from what currently caused his wrath.

He had tried torturing them even more than usual with blasts of intolerable heat, and allowed the volume of their agonized screams and wails to escalate to what would normally have been a delightful symphony to his ears . . . but to no avail.

Heat wasn't always necessary. Variety was good. Satan had found that housing the souls in human like figurines with human like voice boxes that the souls could animate in reaction, was more pleasurable for him. After all, how could one see tortured expressions when a soul had no face? How could one see squirms of agony without a body to squirm with? Finally, how could one close one's eyes and just enjoy the symphony of pain, when the souls of the damned had no bodies to inflict, or mouths to utter sounds?

All the better for hated man to serve him just how he wanted, by pleasuring him with their spiritual, psychological, and physical reactions to whatever inflictions he chose.

With a snort through his elongated snout he ceased his reverie.

Too many messengers with unhappy tidings had arrived in too short of time about events in Torath's principality, regarding the Angels of Light. The reports had trickled through to the Master by way of his immediate palace underling, Tranth, who served him as kind of a chief of Staff.

Tranth's function was to field minor problems and handle them without disturbing his lord with trivialities.

Flashes of Divine Power, and angelic smiteings however, were not trivial, and Tranth had kept him informed, which was why Torath had been initially summoned and chastised.

Lucifer prodded the hapless major domo who was still prostrate at

the foot of the dais with a taloned three toed foot, by stretching out a double jointed long leg.

“Rise, Slimeth.”

The major domo stood up flinching and wincing in expectation of a blow.

“Yes my Master.”

“Go and find me Tranth and summon him to my presence forthwith.”

Hastily Slimeth turned to do the Master’s bidding, relieved that he was to serve a function other than that of a whipping post for his lord’s displeasure.

“Stop!” Came the dreaded command from behind him.

Slimeth turned, his head shrinking down between his rounded shoulders like a turtles going into its shell at the sign of danger.

“You get Tranth here and hasten, but on your way tell those worthless toadies who despoil my anti-chamber to prepare my steeds and chariot.”

Satan clicked his talons a few clicks, while the major domo stood still, knowing to wait until the Master gave him leave to go again.

The decision made, was not from any thought of need, but of appearance. It wasn’t often that he took the air and left his palace. Few of his underlings were granted an audience, and since the fall, not many more had even seen him go forth to take a hand in matters, “Have some of those fools also fetch and prepare my battle armor.”

After Slimeth had left the throne room and the double portals had closed, there were none except the imbedded souls to see the dragon like lord of hell transmogrify into the shape of a wonderfully formed and featured angelic being.

Satan became as the Lucifer of old; the most beautiful of the Lord’s angels.

Chapter 23

Jon had zoomed heavenward after leaving Ben, and giving a little not too subtle chastisement to the demons that his presence had bound from unduly attacking, while he had been with the new Christian.

He had heard the Lord call him from the pursuit of the men who had kidnapped the women, and he had received knowledge that the man, Ben, who had accompanied him, was to receive help from others of his own kind.

His summons to come before the Presence individually called, was gratifying, and was a very rare occurrence for he, or for any other angel of his station.

As Jon entered the gates of Heaven, the choirs of the angelic hosts of the Lord singing Hosannas to the Highest, were a peal of worship to and of, the glory of the Lord.

The pulsing living Light of the Creator of all things became blindingly bright as he neared the Presence.

All beings, except as given to those of the Elect, had no choice in their very natures, but to kneel and prostrate themselves before the Glory of the Lord God of Hosts. It was not possible, except for by Divine intervention, for any being to stand before God, because of the humbling awareness that overcame them.

Jon was no exception.

A deep pulsing of what comprised the fabric of the power of creation, manifested in the fibers of Jon's being, as he prostrated himself. This caused all aware beings to know their insignificance and unworthiness, except by the Divine Love and Grace of the omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent Creator of All Things.

As Jon awaited the Lord's will, he reflected again that man's exposure to the Creator was deliberately so limited in comparison to the full brunt of the magnificence of the Presence in Heaven.

If man could only be made aware of what the subtle Holy Ghost's Small Quiet Voice hinted at as the true reality of the awesome God, then they would surely put aside their sinful natures in fear of existence without the Presence of the peace and love of God in their lives for all eternity.

But the power of the Lord was not often revealed in the world to man. The Lord chose to only hint in the world, at what was the truth of the Heavenly Reality of Himself, and of how all things were in and of Him. Thus man would, or would not be, a heavenly oriented creature by faith, and by the Lord's changing the nature of the individual's self, to overcome the sinful natures that they had inherited from Adam, and on down from all of their forefathers.

It was not the Lord's will that they simply kowtow to the Lord, as they would to any other known earthly superior power, like a king, president, or emperor.

Or at least this was seemingly the Lord's will, as Jon or any other being could hope to understand or define it, concerning man.

"Is That What You Think . . . My Angel?" Came a powerful thought that superimposed Itself over Jon's reflections.

"O' . . . Lord . . . All praise and glory to You, My Father," Jon declared in response to the Divine thought, as any trace of other reflections or awareness' were purged in the wash of the overwhelming power of the thought/question of the Lord.

A needed diminishing by the Lord of His daunting divine power in communication, allowed Jon's individual thoughts as a being, to once again surface.

Jon felt that there was a little humor in the Lord's words as once again they were projected to his awareness.

"You Would That I Lifted My Hand More Often In The World, Would You Not?"

"Yes, O' Father."

"You Would Further Wish To Be The Instrument Of That Lifting Of My Hand . . . Would You Not?" Came another stentorian query.

“Only if your will is as mine, O’ Jesus, Lord God.”

Now Jon could surely feel a divine humor encompassing him before the Lord next spoke.

“The Enemy Only Has The Power That I Have Given Him, As You Know. He Knows ‘I Am,’ And He Knows He Only Is, Because . . . ‘I Am.’”

There was a significant pause, as if the Lord was encouraging Jon to speak in response.

But the Lord’s Angel of Light, Jon, was in such awe of his Creator, and of the fact that The Creator was deigning to address or comment on Heavenly issues at all to him in person, that he had no thoughts to think or communications to impart, he was basking in the Glory of the Lord and accepting to just simply be the instrument of the Lord’s will that he was.

Of course Jon was an open book to the Lord, and the Lord knew his angels and their forbearance in not smiting the enemy as they would like to. Also, as having been a man Himself in the personification of Jesus the Christ, God had the occasion to be subjected to the whim of the enemy, but of course . . . only as He had allowed the enemy the power to persecute Him.

Still, as God was omnipresent it required no stretch of memory for Him to know his own satisfactions in casting/chastising demons while trodding the earth in being Jesus the Christ. Little known was that one of His purposes in being born of mortal woman and subjecting Himself to mortality was to know firsthand what it was to be a man upon the earth. Thus having walked in the shoes of a man He could empathize, rather than only sympathize, with the plights of being mortal. The Lord knew all things, but then had subjected Himself to actually being man.

“Yet, You Were Also Created With Purpose. I Purposed You To Be, And I Purposed You To Be As You Are . . . So . . . My Will Is As Yours.”

Jon listened and understood the Lord as the Lord willed him to.

“The Enemy Is Known To Be ‘The Enemy’ Of Heaven And Mankind For The Corruption He Incorporates Himself To Be. His Efforts To Overstep What He Is Mandated For, Is Why He Is Who He Is.

“I Have Created You For This, From The Beginning.”

As neither Jon nor any other being was to know the alpha and omega

of all things, which knowledge was that of the Lord, he understood the Lord's message to him in the limited way that he was able.

It did seem that God was telling him that he was thinking what he was, and doing what he was doing on earth . . . as he was created to do. So, that meant that he was acting with the Lord's blessing, though the details might not always seem to Jon to be at the Lord's direction.

While Jon mused on his own seeming mandate and purpose from/ for the Lord, the Lord again 'spoke' to him for what he was given to know was to be the end of the divine audience for which he had been summoned.

He was also given to discern yet again, that the Lord was not without humor, and that he was in essence, seemingly, commissioning Jon to be an active thorn in the Adversary's/Enemy's side.

"You May Consider My Hand Lifted, And That You Are To Be The Primary Instrument Of My Will In The Lifting Of It. You Are No Longer Bound By The Restrictions Which Still Bind Most Of Your Bretheren."

"Praise You and worship You and all power be Yours for ever and ever, Lord!" Jon uttered as he found himself wafted from the Presence by divine winds.

He discovered himself once again at the Gates of Heaven, and there stood majestically, one of the most powerful of the Lord's warrior Angels.

A circlet of hammered gold gleamed around the forehead, holding long black hair from falling forward to obstruct the blazing emerald green eyes. A diagonal livid red scar ran from jawbone to right ear in contrast to the otherwise flawless features; a kept memento from battles of long ago.

The being was dressed in the garb of a crusading knight, complete with broadsword at hip. A trumpet like horn hung at his other side from a leather thong about his neck, while a shield with an embossed cross leaned against one of the gate posts.

As in a dream of the millennia long wishes that he had undergone on the world watching demons wreck havoc, he heard the deep booming voice of this awesome one of the Lord's hosts, address him.

"Jon, you have only to ask for me and I will come, for I await the second coming, but have always been unbound."

Jon raised a hand in mute acknowledgment to the exalted warrior of Heavenly and Scriptural fame, as he was wafted back toward the enemy's dominion—Earth.

In return, the Archangel Michael slapped a gauntleted fist to his armored chest, before raising his hand in a half salute of farewell.

Chapter 24

Ben climbed back into the huge black truck that ‘his’ angel had seemingly abandoned. It was a somewhat strange vehicle in that it didn’t have any gauges. No speedometer. No gas. No oil pressure. Just the steering wheel and brake and gas pedals. There was a spot on the steering column comparable to where a key should fit, but it was just a knob like protrusion which Ben assumed would start the truck. There were buttons for the power windows, and door handles of course, but all else seemed to be just featureless . . . unembellished by any adornments to persuade a potential buyer, or to aesthetically please a beholder.

But, Ben mused to himself, why should there be any interior incentives to please a passenger, if the thing had simply been made for camouflage. Certainly, the truck was sure enough a thing of mechanical beauty on the outside.

He tentatively grabbed at the knob which he suspected of as being what served as an ignition. No sooner had his hand touched the protrusion than the engine rumbled to life.

“Oh boy!” he exclaimed aloud. “I got me a genuine chariot of God going here!”

Now, how do I back this thing up, he wondered, with his foot on the brake pedal. No sooner had he thought it than he felt the truck shift into reverse.

“Whoa there boy!” he exclaimed, feeling the power straining against the pressure of his foot on the brake.

The demons who had been bowled over by the Seraph angel were muttering among themselves angrily. Their cavalier treatment at the hands of Jon, and his parting warning about the human (Ben) being

under his protection, had made them a bit leery about bumping heads with so powerful of a foe. But it was more that the angel had even attacked them at all, that had them worried.

“Why did he do that,” one of them asked?

“Who the (*&%?#!<*) knows, or cares,” another declared angrily.

“We don’t take orders from Angels of Light anyway.”

“Besides all that . . .” another of them said, “what about sleeping beauty over there? He is ours, so let’s get his happy (*&%?#!<*) up and at em.”

“Yeah,” a spirit of lust enjoined.

The demons moved in mass to descend on Gus’s truck. A spirit of rage and hate prodded the sleeping Gus with whispers of angry alarm.

Gus awoke to find himself a bit confused about what was going on, but the situation he was in he soon oriented himself to, when faced with the same black truck still bumper to bumper with his own truck, but now with only the one occupant behind the wheel.

He looked around trying to find where the other character was, who he recalled as having accosted him through the window, which had mysteriously opened, just before he had somehow obviously nodded off. He couldn’t see that other opinionated (*&%?#!<*) anywhere.

Musta blacked out there, he thought. It was all he could figure out to explain it. He muddled it through to be from to much booze.

“(*&%?#!<*)” He exclaimed, and looked around inside his truck in bewilderment.

“Where the (*&%?#!<*) are my keys? Hey . . . where’s’ my (*&%?#!<*) gun?”

“(*&%?#!<*)!”

He heard the other truck running. He had no idea what had happened while he was in what he thought was a black-out of some kind, yet surely those mother (*&%?#!<*)s had blind-sided him from one side or another, and knocked him out to get his keys and gun while he was out of it.

Rage worked on him some more, and he threw open his door. He stepped down, and reached up under his right front fenderwell to get the magnetic box that contained his spare set of keys.

Then the black truck's headlights came on and pinned him in a wash of illumination.

Ben didn't know what to do about the fact that the guy in the tan truck was awake, sitting up, and glaring balefully at him through the windshields.

Really, he just didn't care. The caravan had disappeared somewhere down the road, and his intention was to just take off that-away, and see if he could track them down. He figured that the Lord, and/or his angel, or maybe even another angel, would direct him in finding the kidnapped woman, and . . . maybe the Godmobile that Jon had left him would just drive where he was supposed to go anyway.

A big time cruise control slash automatic pilot shot would work just fine right now, he thought with a grin.

He had just figured out how to turn on the headlights after a bit of focused concentration on the trucks somewhat strange controls, when he saw Gus open the door of the tan truck and get out.

"Uh-oh," he mumbled to himself. What's this guy up to now? Ben felt by his side, where he had put the gun and keys he had confiscated from Mr. Personality, after Jon had 'shushed' him to sleep. He was comforted to find that they were still there, as he saw the angry hate filled scowl of the other driver directed at him.

"Well Lord, what exactly do you want me to do?" Ben prayed aloud, not really expecting any answer, but figuring that just in case, he would give the Lord a chance to direct him.

He waited for about a millisecond for divine inspiration, and then did what he was basically going to do anyway, which was to let his foot off of the brake pedal and let the truck back away from the stranger's menacing attitude.

Ben wasn't the lone ranger in this type of praying. Many people prayed for a revelation, and without waiting for anything remotely resembling a Heaven sent response, just went ahead and did what their inclinations directed, with perhaps . . . the hope that they were in the Lord's will in following their own will. This entailed a further assumption that the Lord's timing was the same as their own, as well.

The powerful 'Godmobile,' as Ben now chose to think of Jon's truck, backed out onto the two lane highway.

Ben saw the other truck's driver stand after bending over by his front fender, and shake a fist at him, just before he stopped, having backed out onto the road facing the direction that the caravan had taken. The black truck again shifted of its own accord, and even though he had barely touched the gas pedal he found himself pushed back into the seat cushions by its rapid acceleration.

Ben breathed a sigh of relief, glad that the Lord hadn't apparently chosen for him to confront the other driver for some reason, especially without the comforting presence of the angel Jon to do whatever Godly things needed doing.

He would have been an unhappy camper to know that Gus had an extra set of keys already in hand, and even as Ben sped down the highway in pursuit of the elusive caravan, was hastily climbing back into his own vehicle to pursue him.

"That boy's butt is mine!" Gus ranted to no one in particular, though he had a gleeful audience enhancing and attending his natural sinful nature's proclivities, who hung on his every move and word.

"Catch him . . . Kill him . . ." demons whispered to his mind.

"Hate, hate," raged one demon of hate and rage. "Look how they made fools of you. Look how they stole your keys and gun!"

"Them dirty sons-of-(*&%?#!<*s)!" Gus roared in response to the subliminal inputs.

He started his truck, shifted gears, and stomped on the gas. His custom built motor spun wheels into smoking black whirls, as he burnt rubber from the convenience store parking lot, to hurtle after the fast vanishing tail lights of the focus of his rage.

Ben was delighted at the responsiveness of the Godmobile. Who knew how fast he was going, being there was no speedometer, but he was surely zooming along. The empty road stretched before him, and few cars were out this late, so why bother to go slow . . . especially when he was in a Divine Godmobile, and doing the Lord's work.

Now, it would just be nice to know where exactly he was supposed to be going, and what exactly he was supposed to do when he got there.

"Uh-Oh!" He saw the patrol cruiser too late to even attempt to slow down. It came over a small rise or hill, just as he was barreling up his side of it. They approached each other at a combined speed of over two hun-

dred miles an hour. No time to slow down, but plenty of time for Ben to see the blue lights whirling on the top of the cruiser, and to catch the barest fleeting glimpse of the surprised officer's face turned towards him when they rocketed past each other.

Looking in his rear view mirror, Ben saw the brake lights on the cruiser flicker for just a moment. Then it was as if the officer had changed his mind about stopping and possibly turning around to come after the obviously speeding Ben. The cruiser's brake lights dimmed back to just tail lights.

"Whew . . . !" Ben breathed a sigh of relief. Then he saw another set of headlights behind him that had to be going over the speed limit too, just before he went over the top of the rise from which the patrol car had come.

"Man, whoever that is, they already went by the cop too." he exclaimed to himself.

I bet the cop turns around for sure now. He thought.

In response, he slowed down even more than he had already done by taking his foot off of the gas when the cruiser had surprised him in the first place.

At a far more moderate pace, he went down the other side of the hill, and kept a wary eye on his rear view mirror for anything coming up from behind.

After a few more minutes/miles at what he figured without a speedometer to help him was no more than the 55 mile an hour speed limit, and with no sign of the cop car behind him pursuing, he breathed a sigh of relief. He sped up a bit, but felt he had lost the caravan of bad guys for sure.

He passed a sign advising him that he needed to reduce speed and then another showing a stop sign ahead at a four way intersection.

A man wearing a bright blue jumpsuit, with blue boots even, was standing at the intersection with arm raised, and as Ben got closer he could see the hitchhiker's thumb raised—above the smiling face of Jon.

Gus blasted past the cruiser. He was in such a state of rage and hate that he didn't care about anything except catching up to the black truck.

“(*&%?#!<*) that cop,” he snarled aloud to himself. “Besides, those scumbags stole my gun and a key, which puts me in the right in chasing that (*&%?#!<*) truck anyway!”

Chapter 25

Tranth strode through the corridors of the palace, his long cape with its golden clasp of office, swirling around him.

He was an imposing figure by any standards, and appeared quite human except for his red hue skin color, and the two massive horns that adorned his forehead. More so than most demons he fit man's image of what the typical stereotyped demon should look like.

As second in the palace only to the Master himself, he was given a wide berth by any who chanced to cross his path. However, he was not a Prince in his own right, as he had no principality. Yet he was on a par in demonic authority with the Princes to better serve the Master as a go-between in fielding communications of not enough import worthy of Satan's personal attention.

Having determined that the initial reports from the western area of Torath's principality were worthy of the Master's attention, he had been subsequently ordered to pay closer attention to that area, and forward everything noteworthy direct to his lord.

Torath's chastisement had brought satisfaction to the Chief of Staff, as the North American continent Overlord had on many an occasion derided Tranth about his station as a mere "go-between," and about how he wasn't "... even a Prince at all."

Yes, the high and mighty Torath needed to be taken down a notch, and Tranth would not mind at all taking over his principality should Torath fall even more out of favor with the Master.

From the lowest to the highest, the demons who were on the palace grounds were aware that something unusual was in the offing.

The sibilant hissings and muted whispers in the anti-chamber fell

silent as Tranth strode through and mentally commanded the portals to the throne room to open.

One thing no other demon was allowed to command except himself, by Satan's direct order, was the opening of these doors.

It did not matter if you were a Prince or not, Tranth thought to himself with satisfaction.

Lucifer looked up from adjusting his greaves, when his chief of staff came in.

He hadn't bothered to wonder who approached when the portals had opened, knowing that only Tranth had leave to command the doors.

He had just shortly before finished donning his armor with the help of the demon, whose function was to keep his armor bright, and his sword and dirk sharp.

One of the throne room walls had been transformed into a reflective surface as a mirror, and he couldn't help but admire himself in it, though he hated how it reminded him of having been an Angel of Light, himself.

That reminder brought with it the remembrance of his bid for godhood, and how he had been overcome with his hosts, to fall from heaven.

When he had transmogrified, even the wails and sobs of the tortured damned, imbedded and imprisoned within the walls, floors and ceilings of the throne room, had muted.

They no doubt wondered that such a beautiful appearing being could be the author of such evil torment and hate.

Tranth was taken aback somewhat by the appearance of his Master.

Searching his memory brought the realization that Satan hadn't appeared as Lucifer for a long, long time. As a matter of fact, he might never have appeared as other than Satan in one guise or another, since the fall, as far as Tranth could remember.

"My lord, what are your commands?" He asked, while making obeisance and bowing from the waist with head almost to the floor.

Having had enough of his own reflection, not being vain at all but merely adjusting his armor in the first place, Lucifer caused his reflective wall to opaque and allowed the ripples and superimposing of the souls to add texture to its surface, before responding.

“Rise Tranth.” He commanded, and his underling straightened.

“You have heard no word from Torath?”

“No my lord, and I have sent messengers to every corner of his principality to summon him. It is as if he has disappeared.”

“That is as I assumed, having had no word from you. I have decided to take steps. Heed my words closely . . .

“Send messengers to find Baloth, and have him remain wherever whichever messenger finds him. The messenger is to hasten to report the whereabouts thereof, to you. My whereabouts will be known to you as well, and you are to send me Baloth’s as soon as you receive it.”

Satan leaned from behind against the backside of the black throne from where he stood at the rear of the dais, drumming his fingers against the obsidian reflectively.

“Unless there is a dire threat, you are to field all communications from the other Princes, without recourse to me . . .” The fingers drummed more rapidly, just like the talons of Satan clicking. “Except of course in the event of Torath contacting you.”

“Yes my lord, but . . .” Tranth began.

“No buts. I take my leave soon, and you have your instructions as I have commanded. My wish is that your messengers find Baloth before I arrive at Torath’s principality and that Baloth’s whereabouts reach me so he can attend me upon arrival.”

“Now go and do my bidding!”

Satan caused the portals to re-open behind Tranth in a punctuation of his Chief of Staff’s dismissal.

His “steeds” and chariot of times gone by awaited him.



When the first truck going in the opposite direction had blitzed past Tiny, he’d been tempted to turn around and give pursuit, but . . . he was ‘On A Mission From God.’

Then the second truck had appeared, and where the first truck, the black one, had not seen him because of the hill, this second one had the time to slow down, but didn’t.

That normally he would construe to mean that the driver was drunk-

enly inattentive to even such glaringly obvious things as the cruiser's overheads, or . . . that the driver just didn't care.

Either way, Tiny wasn't going for it. Sure he was on a 'mission,' but not to the exclusion of allowing blatantly dangerous drivers to rule the road while he was right there in front of them.

"No, no, no. . . . Oh no you don't!" The big lawman muttered angrily when the second truck blazed by without making even a pretense of slowing down after seeing the cruiser.

"Hold on." He told his three passengers.

"What's going on?" Ellen asked, bracing herself against the back of the front seat, as Tiny abruptly let off the gas, and braked hard in preparation for turning the cruiser around.

"Man," Ivan commented, "They were really moving."

Josh meanwhile, was turned about in his seat watching to see if Gus had ever hit his brakes to where his brake lights came on.

"That guy didn't slow down a whit, Tiny." He informed the lawman.

"Well ladies and gentleman, fasten your seat belts tight, cause it looks like we are going to get side-tracked for just a minute. I just flat can't ignore, being ignored, by law breakers who know I'm here. Those two just flew by me without even pretending to slow down, and that's not only dangerous, but doggone disrespectful to the law . . . period.

"I just cant' have that!" He avowed. (A bit of angelic inspiration was involved too).

While he was speaking Tiny had slowed down enough to swerve to a quick stop, and was backing up to head back the way that they had just come from.

"Now listen folks, technically I'm not allowed to engage in high speed pursuit with passengers. That means anyone, even legitimate riders like those who might be in your seats with handcuffs on. You guys on the other hand are kind of not supposed to be there at all. Just like . . . I guess . . . none of us are really supposed to be here, hauling butt down the road in the first place, when I'm officially off duty."

"Well, what are you going to do when you catch up to them then?" Josh asked.

"Ohhh Boyyy!" Ellen exclaimed in concern, as the patrol cruiser laid

down a long stretch of black rubber on the asphalt, as a result of Tiny mashing the gas pedal to the floor before responding to Josh.

“I’m gonna’ catch them, and then I’m gonna’ give them tickets. And . . . if they give me any lip, or are drunk, I’m gonna call my buddy on patrol out this way in the Seaport area, and have him handle arrest, custody, impounds, or whatever.

“At least, that’s my plan so far, if we catch them in the first place,” The big lawman amended.



Farol, as did the demons with Gus, took note of each other when their respective human charges had passed each other. Neither was aware of any connection between the two parties.

In Farol’s case, information was received by the Holy Spirit, or from another Angel of Light.

In the demon’s case, no messages had been received at their end or things, since the caravan had started out from the beach.



The cruiser topped out coming back over the hill that they had initially zoomed over coming the other way, when seeing the first truck. Down below, at a distance, they could see the tail lights of one of the vehicles that they pursued, but the other was apparently beyond another rise, or down in a vale, so they couldn’t see it.

Tiny turned on his siren to accompany his overheads. They reached speeds well over one hundred and twenty miles an hour on the down hill side of the first rise.

“Come on baby,” he crooned to his car as the quartet of Christians with their attending angel rapidly began to overtake one of the trucks he pursued.

Then even that one truck was lost to view for a few moments as the patrol car dipped into a long vale before once again coming up on level ground.

“Uh-oh . . .” Tiny muttered

Now both of the trucks were lost from line of sight, and Tiny worried that they might have taken evasive action by turning off down some side road or another, when they could no longer see his lights flashing behind them. . He began to slow down to look around for any head or tail lights out to either side of the deserted highway.

Topping out again on another rise and up ahead a mile or so, he saw tail lights. He sped up again and within a minute saw that the vehicle wasn't moving and was pulled off on the side of the road at an intersection.

With overheads flashing he pulled over behind the black 4x4 and saw that there were two passengers.

“Isn't that the first truck that we saw?” Asked Ivan sitting beside him.

“Yeah.” Tiny agreed though his attention was focused elsewhere.

“Hey look!” Ellen exclaimed about what he was looking at while leaning forward with arm over the front seat with a pointing forefinger.

A strange emerald green license plate with golden letters read: *'Angel,'* and the state of origin location showed in the same but smaller flowing script to be *"New Heaven."*

“Boy am I glad to see you!” Ben exclaimed to Jon after he had pulled over and the angel had opened the passenger side door. “And I see you changed your duds. I could see you a mile away in the dark.”

“That was the idea, O' Ben, a 'heavenly blue' to draw your attention,” Jon replied. Once again using the formal salutation of “O,” as man had picked up in their use of “Oh” in the many ways and languages now used commonly.

Just after Jon had climbed up into the passenger side of the truck, closed the door, smiled, and responded to his greeting, Ben noticed the red flashes in his rear view mirror outlining the top of the rise behind him, though the patrol car hadn't yet come over the hill.

“Uh Oh, Jon! I'm afraid that I was going a bit too fast, and I'm gonna' get a ticket.”

The sheriff's cruiser had come over the rise and now the entire area was flickering with the blue and red reflections from Tiny's overheads.

Jon turned in his seat to observe the officer's car approaching from behind them.

He turned back toward Ben and asked, "Do you not recall when I informed you before I left you that Christians were to come to your succor?"

"Well . . . yeah, I guess . . ." Ben hesitantly answered as so much had happened in so short of a time that was mind boggling, he only hoped to remember it all so he could tell Morty about it.

"These behind you are they." Jon nailed it down for him, and then added, "Ben, you cannot inform them of my true being, but only that I met you at the beach, and offered you a ride and help in your quest. This is the truth."

Jon pondered a moment and decided to take just a moment to clarify knowledge.

A man is born with an instinctual desire to answer a question, or to confess his sins in an unburdening of guilt. Confessing and asking forgiveness of the Lord with a repentant heart is the only way to unburden oneself truly, yet man will answer a question or confess to others in the same expectations to unburden, but without obtaining the forgiveness and unburdening, or even understanding.

Seeing by the perplexed frown on Ben's features, that again this was 'meat' to the new Child of God, where 'milk' was still the order of the day Jon quickly rephrased his imparting.

"You need not answer every question asked of you. For instance, should this officer ask of you about this truck, or about me, it is the truth to reply that it would be a betrayal of a confidence for you to answer that question. Or that you do not want to answer the question, unless the asker can document that they have the right to know. Or answer that you do not know the person asking enough to answer the question. Or even that it is not their business to know the answer, if that is the case. There is no lie, and there is no sin in not giving others information, or the means to judge you, just because they asked."

"Well . . . okay, that feels right, cause I sure don't feel like lying about anything to any one right now." Ben replied, as the Holy Spirit dictated that as rightness from within him, while in turn just the thought of lying had brought about a feeling of wrongness from the same Source.

A flashlight reflected off of his side view mirror and Ben watched as the officer came up to his door.

He rolled his window down, and looked up to see a puzzled frown on the officer's face.

Tiny had approached the driver initially with the intent of exercising his usual precautions. Normally at night, his pistol flap would be unsnapped and his right hand would be firmly on the gun butt, while his left hand would be holding his flashlight steady in an effort to somewhat blind the driver. First by reflecting it off the driver's side mirror, and then directing it right into the eyes as he came up to the window.

The peace of the Holy Spirit had allayed his usual trepidations however, and gave him vaguely to know that this confrontation was a needed step in accomplishing his 'mission from God.' And that he had no need to fear the trucks occupants. This all came through to him as just a good 'feeling' about the occupants of the truck.

By rote on automatic pilot, Tiny asked, "May I see your drivers license and registration please?"

"Yes . . ." Ben reached into his back pocket to produce his billfold, fished out his license and looked over to see Jon just crack another smile at him instead of finding the glove compartment (if there was one), and/or producing a registration and proof of insurance from anywhere an angel could get them.

He handed Tiny his license through the window, and prodded 'his' angel. "Um . . . Jon, would you mind getting the registration and insurance papers for me?"

"Assuredly Ben, will these suffice?" Jon had reached into his shirt pocket to produce some folded papers.

Tiny paid attention to this repartee closely, as he just had to see any documentation justifying the plate on the back of the truck. He was familiar with most European, and all the Canadian and Mexico plates, but this one had him stumped.

Ben passed over the papers, and while Tiny was opening them he addressed the duo.

"You were going far faster than the posted speed limit when you passed me. I didn't get a reading on just how fast though, and I was on another errand at the time. . . .

“What in Heaven?” (Before his Salvation, he would have used an entirely different expletive in his thoughts, or his words.)

The first paper he had opened had a heading simply stating: ‘Registration,’ and under that was one line only which read: ‘This truck belongs to Jon Seraph.’ The papers themselves were of a funny kind of material. They looked old and brownish, and were really thick like some kind of a parchment.

Tiny was about to remark on the first paper opened, when he opened the second one to read: “This vehicle is insured by all that is Holy to do no harm to anyone, anything, anywhere, at any time.

Ben strove mightily to maintain an innocent face. He *was* innocent, which helped his façade, but he surely wished he knew what was on those papers that the officer was reading and glancing up at him from.

Tiny leaned, to rest one forearm against the truck’s door window frame and stated questioningly, “I assume the passenger to be Jon Seraph?” Recalling that the driver had addressed the passenger as ‘Jon.’

“Yes officer that is indeed . . . I.” Jon replied.

Tiny scratched his head perplexed that he still felt ‘right’ about the duo, but for goodness sake what monkey shins were going on with them?

“Look, these Mickey Mouse papers, and that bogus license plate just aren’t going to cut the mustard. I was going to ignore that you were speeding, but then another truck blazed by me far faster than you were going and just didn’t even try to slow down after seeing me. I turned around to chase them, and ran up on you two instead.

“Now I have to call in for a tow truck, and get another Sheriff out here to take you in cause’ I haven’t room for you in my car. You’re raining on the parade and efforts of some really good people who have need of me, by taking up my time dealing with your shenanigans.”

“Man, I’m really sorry officer, but we were chasing some real bad guys ourselves, and I just pulled over. . . .” Ben just had a thought.

“Hey, I don’t suppose that you passed a long caravan of cars and trucks heading in the same direction that I’m going?” He asked.

“No, I didn’t” Tiny answered briefly, then added, “I’m afraid I’ll have to ask you to shut off the truck and both step out to the back and put your hands on the tail-gate.”

As he was speaking Tiny now unsnapped his holster to put a hand on his pistol butt, and stepped back from the driver's door.

"One moment sir." Jon leaned over a bit to address the officer who had backed away from where the driver might (if to avoid arrest) throw open the door into him.

"Officer Joe Bradford . . . you know of The Lord thy God and of Jesus thy Savior." The angel stated as fact. (Whereas with Ben, before his Salvation, he had asked this as a question.)

The big lawman stepped back up to the driver's door, with a perplexed frown.

"Now how do you know my name, and where do you get off asking me about my religion?"

Jon smiled, and added, "I know too that those who accompany you also know the Lord, and I know of your quest."

Tiny made as if to speak. He took his hand off of the gun butt and started wagging his hand with a forefinger raised as if to emphasize the point he was going to make. His mouth was open to speak, but with his thoughts and words jumbled and the Small Voice's persuasive inputs confusing him further, all he could manage was, "Just . . . just hold on a second . . ."

Meanwhile, Ben was drumming his fingers on the steering wheel, happy that Jon was handling everything to where he didn't need to answer and put the wrong oar into the already muddled waters (so to speak), and not talking at all was a very fine thing at this point.

Jon waited one exact minute as the officer ruminated, came to the conclusion Jon was given to know he would arrive at, and then he again addressed the lawman before Tiny could formulate further questions.

"We have no more time, Tiny Joe Bradford. We go on the same quest as you, to succor the abducted female, and you must follow us to her whereabouts, if you would lead Ben in confronting her human enemies with man's laws. I will deal with enemies of another ilk."

Tiny was coming up to speed and had just had first hand experience with what he could describe himself as "enemies of another ilk."

He was standing slack-jawed somewhat, paying close attention to Jon's words, and so noticed that the driver had turned off the truck by reaching his hand to the right side of the steering column when he

had told him to shut the truck off and step out. Then he was amazed to note that the driver nor passenger's hands were anywhere near the column when the big black truck rumbled back to life seemingly of its own accord.

"We go back in the direction whence you both came." Jon informed Ben and Tiny.

With a quick, "Okay I'm right behind you, let's do this!" Before sprinting back to his cruiser, Tiny briefly put into words the conclusion he had arrived at that Jon had known, which was simply that; given the circumstances and imparting received now, and the recent events, Tiny wasn't going to question that the Lord was taking a hand through these two. Easily, the bogus vehicle registration and/or plates took a far back seat to his 'Mission from God.'

Ben pulled a u-turn and accelerated back the way that he had just come from observing in his rear view that Tiny was following.

He was wondering why Jon had called the officer "Tiny" Joe Bradford,' because as a description it would be more apt to have been 'big' Joe Bradford.

Jon interrupted Ben's musings by causing the truck's head and tail lights to turn off. Within a moment the red and blue flashes from the overheads, and glare of the cruiser's headlights went out as Tiny took their lead and followed suit, plunging them into darkness

The road was still nicely lit though, the moon and stars lighting their path.

Farol, still in attendance, flew over the quartet, knowing what the being in the black truck actually was, and honored to take part in the Seraph's objectives, whatever they were, though Jon knew him and only given him a wink when Farol had drifted over to hover over the hood of the pickup truck when Tiny had approached Ben's side.

Apparently, The Lord chose that the Seraph could play this one 'by ear,' as Farol's questions of The Holy Spirit merely reaffirmed that he was to continue his protection of the foursome who had been in his charge, and gave him no leading as to the part of the Seraph.

When Tiny got back into the car, the trio had started bombarding him with questions, which he didn't bother to immediately reply to,

but wordlessly handed Ivan the registration and insurance papers while turning around to follow the truck.

Ivan read the few words contained on each ‘paper?’ and looked at the occupied officer, before quietly handing them back to the eager hands awaiting them from the back seat.

After reading and passing the papers to Ellen, Josh thought for a moment.

“Seraph,” He quietly remarked.

“Yeah, that’s the name of the dude who owns the truck. He talks kind of funny too.” Tiny informed them totally unaware of any Angelology.

“Well Tiny, don’t keep us in suspense,” Ellen chastised. “What happened, and why are we following them?”

“I don’t know exactly,” Tiny replied. “I just asked them for their license and registration and got that junk I just showed you. Then the passenger knew my name, and he even knew my nickname. He told me that I knew the Lord, and then I believe he told me if we followed them he would take us to Evelyn. He didn’t use her name, but he said he knew we were on a quest to find a female.”

Tiny scratched his jaw, trying to remember details, before adding, “I don’t know, I just trust those yahoos for some reason, and to be honest, I’d of had to shoot them to stop them as they just told me that they were going and that I should follow them, and so here we are.”

While he was adding the last bit, Tiny had to slow down and follow the truck in a left turn down a dirt country road.

Ivan turned in his seat and addressed Josh and Ellen with a strange look on his face.

“A Seraph?” He questioned with an emphasis on ‘A.’

“Yeah, I was wondering about that too.” Josh responded.

“What, you guys know that dude or his family?” Tiny asked.

Ellen clapped her hands delightedly, and addressed Josh and Ivan as each was about to answer the newfound Christian.

“Hey you guys, let me for a change.” She said, and then addressed the unscriptured lawman.

“In The Old Testament, in the book of Isaiah the sixth chapter makes reference to the Seraphim Angels . . .”

Ellen went on to describe what she knew of the hierarchy of Angels

and gave a brief synopsis of what little scripture was devoted to such knowledge, while Tiny followed the truck which he could barely see through its dust trail, except when the brake lights came on at turns and curves.

Chapter 26

Tiny had been right in his concerns, as Gus, observing the pursuit of the cop car behind him, had been looking for just such a bolt hole. To that end he had already turned off his headlights, which left only his brake lights to give him away . . . but only if he stepped on his brakes to activate them when slowing down to a reasonable turning speed. How nice that the turnoff that the caravan had taken, was coming up on his right.

Gus down shifted to avoid using his brakes which would activate his brake lights, then turned down the small country lane unseen by the pursuing Tiny.

Discretion had mitigated his demon enhanced lust for revenge, when Gus had noticed the turnoff coming up that led to the cabin where Ralph and company were surely partying big by now. When he had blasted down the road after the black truck, only one thing had been on his mind initially, and that was some kind of pay back, and to get his keys and gun back, then that stupid cop had to show up out here in the middle of nowhere.

Reality told him that if he got pulled over, even with explaining that his gun and keys had been stolen to justify his speeding in pursuit, his alcohol consumption was going to cost him a DUI, and probable arrest.

Besides, strange stuff was going on here . . . like falling asleep for no reason right when those yahoos were in his face. Not to mention all the gobble-de-gook that those weirdoes were babbling, and all the looking around like others were watching, and windows rolling down on their own and stuff.

“Yep,’ I think I’ll just let bumping heads with the cops slide for

now,” He judicially advised himself, as he sedately drove down the little used back dirt country road, trying to raise as little of a dust trail as possible.

What got his goat the worst though, was the loss of Ol’ Betsy, and it was surely going to be a pain in the butt to replace some of his keys, he reflected angrily.

“Ahhh . . . , (*&%?#!<*) it,” he swore to himself, reflecting that he’d get blasted at the party, and blame Ralph and them, and get them all to chip in for replacing his piece.



I’m back here looking out for them mo-foes and covering their butts and I bet they forgit’ I even exist, he thought rightly.



When Gus’s self preservation instinct had somewhat overcome their direct wishes, the demons who conspired to influence Gus into self-destructive acts, were a bit chagrined.

But though one of them continued to follow Ben in his Godmobile,’ the others looked forward to joining the swarm of their brethren who infested Ralph’s party.

Even from a distance of some miles, the spiritual disruption of the air surrounding, and over the cabin, could be seen by the demons with Gus.

All of them drooled in anticipation of reuniting with the larger host, who certainly had a Captain (Granth) who was organizing things towards Baloth’s ends, and so . . . (Theoretically), the Master.

Most demons were more than willing to have another take responsibility for the corruption of man that was their mandate by their Master. That was why the demons who had initially stayed with Gus had been so directionless. None of them wanted to take the lead in orchestrating the efforts of the others, as none of them wanted to incur Baloth’s wrath in the event of failure.

Gus arrived at the clearing where the revelers were still partying in full swing. His appreciation at arriving at what he thought of as a safe haven, was echoed by the demons who accompanied him, who immediately sought the Captain of that demon host, to report what they had seen and heard while with Gus, and submit to his orders.

Their spokesman, one demon of rage and hate, entered the cabin to see a frozen tableau, as all eyes . . . both demon and human, were glued to where one tall human held another by the scruff of the neck with unhappy surprise etched upon his scowling dark visage.

Granth listened to the report, and was relieved to hear that messengers had been sent in regards to the angelic smiting by the human cum Seraph, as he in his turn wanted some one else to take the lead in any response to the attack.

Baloth was the one who should be orchestrating things personally when it came to angelic interventions, Granth was thinking. Besides, all of Baloth's higher echelon Captains had occasion to see that their lord didn't exactly play by the rules, and wondered when the higher ups were going to jerk his chain, hoping they in turn wouldn't get caught up in the chastising.

During the minute or so that it took for the abbreviated report, which didn't dwell on but the fact of the Seraph's smiting occurring " . . . for no reason at all cause we were abiding by our mandates, and not breakin' rules," Granth had kept an eye on the frozen tableau, as the dark man had just frozen in place for a moment, with Sam dangling.

In the background against the wall, the formerly possessed victim of Baloth was seen to be now aware and awake, with her eyes opened in horror.

Chapter 27

Baloth and his host approached the seat of human power for the city of LA. He noted the swarms of demons that flitted about the Mayoral offices, and knew that he would soon get to the bottom of this invasion of his territory by a confrontation with Jankh.

As he entered the building and flew through the various human walls within it searching for Jankh, the cries of that Prince's fawning minions resounded in his ears.

"You can't go in," was cried.

"You must be announced," was protested.

There was even one Lieutenant among the buffering followers of Jankh, who physically tried to interpose himself between Baloth and his unannounced search for the Prince of the Pacific.

Baloth dealt that interfering entity such a mighty buffet of his taloned fist, that the protruding eyes of the Lieutenant were crossed . . . perhaps permanently.

"Oh . . . Jankh . . ." Baloth began to call, as he continued on his rampaging search ever upwards through the walls and floors of the building.

"Come out . . . come out . . . wherever you are . . ."

By this time thunderclouds of rage again took their usual place upon Baloth's visage. This was actually his normal state of being in his hatred of man, and in his forced curtailing of his desire to exceed his mandate in the persecuting of man.

Baloth had long chaffed at merely whispering temptations, or just putting temptations in the paths of men, to simply, or with a complex-

ity, enhance man's sinful nature toward wrong doings, and/or building other barriers between man and God.

It just wasn't as satisfying as it used to be. The knowledge of wreaking havoc to where man suffered eternal Godless torment, was a promise of human torments in the future, in relation to the pain and anguish that Baloth really wanted to have man experience right now.

Having them simply lost to God in the future, just wasn't quite as satisfying as torturing them on their way to losing God, as well.

Of course, all demons knew that there was an inherent "God hole" within man, and that man could never be truly happy in the world without the Lord filling this space within them that only God could fill.

On the other hand, demons well knew that men who prospered in the things in the world, rarely looked for God, as they were too full of themselves and their accomplishments, to be humble enough to seek Him. It was a demon priority to pacify man's inherent cravings for their God by helping them get a false satisfaction in obtaining worldly things.

So, demons were on the horns of this dilemma.

Ignorant man, so earnestly desired the worthless things of the world, that they upon obtaining them, found a degree of happiness, not knowing or caring of any other realms. But the demons who helped man prosper sometimes, just flat hated, like Baloth, to help man even obtain this delusion of joy.

It was just a drag to give something you hate, anything that made it happy even for a minute, in the eternal scheme of things, regardless of the fact that you knew it was only a smoke screen.

Wealth and/or power were just things of the world to confuse them from what was the only effort worthwhile for them, that being obtaining their God, who would protect them from their enemy, and save them from an eternal spiritual life of Godless torment.

In any event, Baloth had initially cut his teeth, so to speak, as a spirit of rage and hate, as this was what he was initially most inclined for by his own demonic proclivities in the first place.

So, it was easy and natural, for him to hate . . . period. Especially

some piece of bejeweled vain dung, like this turd, Jankh, who dared to think he, Baloth, would just acquiesce to being usurped.

Baloth entered the mayoral office suites, and his horny jaw dropped in amazement.

There before him stood the angry Prince of the Pacific, in all of his supposed splendor. The pig-like face bristled with puffed up self-importance. The mean little boar eyes, and sharp tusks, did little to inspire fear in such as Baloth though, especially not taken in conjunction with the ridiculous accouterments that the Prince had adorned himself with.

“Who in the (*&%?#!<*) are you trying to look like,” exclaimed Baloth in amazement. “Elvis?”

He stared goggle-eyed at the gold chains, rings, and other adornments which festooned the vision before him.

Jankh stamped his hooves in angry annoyance, “Baloth, you will address me as ‘My Prince,’ and you will never again just foist your presence upon me and barge in like this!”

“You’re not my Prince.” Baloth retorted with a snarl.

“Oh really?” Jankh responded. “What in the (*&%?#!<*) would I be doing here in Torath’s principality, if I were not allowed by him, or by the Master, to be here and be Overlord to you?”

“(*&%?#!<*), I don’t know. Why the (*&%?#!<*) do you think that I’m even here talking to you for? I’m waiting for you to tell me what the (*&%?#!<*) you’re doing here.”

“Very well. Torath gave me temporary dominion of your part of his principality, in order to direct you in resolving some difficulty or other that you seem to be having here.”

Baloth rolled his eyes and shrugged at hearing this, trying to give the impression that there wasn’t anything that he knew of that would justify such a supposition on the part of Torath.

(Of course, Baloth couldn’t appear ‘innocent’ if his life depended on it.)

The little pig eyes had a moment to regard him distrustfully before he responded verbally.

“Well, don’t keep me in suspense here. Did Torath say what the problems that I’m supposed to be having are?” He asked the ‘Hog,’ as he was beginning to think of a good pseudonym for Jankh.

“No, but he did give me to know that you are seriously out of favor with him, and that you are to work under me in resolving whatever it is that has the Master, and Torath, concerned.”

“Uh-ohA . . .” Baloth thought to himself.

Then he once again addressed the ‘Hog,’ “What does the Master have to do with all this between you and Torath?”

Even though Torath had distinctly suggested that Jankh not reveal Satan’s supposed inclination to bequest him with the west coast, Jankh just couldn’t resist boasting.

“Oh yes, the Master has deigned to give me the authority, through Torath, to address your problems here.”

With this statement Jankh had drawn himself up to try to look as regal as possible, as if his appearance was going to be more impressive by mandate of authority enhancing the actuality.

“So, I’m supposed to tell you what’s troubling me in my kingdom, and you’re going to direct me how to deal with it?” Baloth asked, trying to figure out what Torath’s real motives were in sending this offal in to quarterback his efforts.

“That is exactly right,” answered Jankh. “You will also now address me with my title as your new Prince. After all, one must observe the proper forms of address, so that all might know their stations, and the stations of others.”

The piggish eyes gleamed with malice before Jankh added, “Especially that of their betters.”

“*%?#!<*, *%?#!<* . . . grumble, gripe . . .” Baloth made use of some incoherent but barely audible expletives, punctuated by snarls and grunts, while attempting to digest this input before finally exploding in rage.

“Look, I don’t know what game is being played here, but around my kingdom, Lieutenants, Captains, or whoever . . . enforce any kowtowing and butt kissing that they expect to get from those under them. I don’t even tell someone to lick my boots when they address me. If they do, it’s cause they are wimps in the first place, or they figure that I deserve the respect.”

Here Baloth eyed the puffed up pig in frustration, for he knew that as a Prince, this turd could not simply be smacked upside the head, but

failing that, Baloth had no other course of action to express his unlove for the pile of bejeweled dung.

He was surely not going to “My Prince” the little sucker to death, and kiss his butt, no matter what mandate he claimed.

Baloth scratched at a fang with a taloned forefinger, while musing on just what exactly to do to get out from under Torath’s machinations, which is what the presence of the ‘Hog,’ surely reflected.

“Well, Baloth???” Jankh demanded. “What have you got to tell me about all this unwanted and unwarranted activity by angels in your kingdom?”

“Ummm . . . Ahhh . . .” Baloth began clearing his throat as if to answer, meanwhile furiously trying to figure out what Torath knew, and so, what this idiot knew.

Actually, Baloth himself didn’t know what he had gotten himself into. “Sure,” he mused to himself, “I know what I’ve done, but I don’t know why a hornet’s nest has developed out of it. . . .”

“All right, keep your jewels on there for a second . . . Mr. Prince, while I try to organize the sequence of (*&%?#!<*) that happened, so I can tell you about it in order of occurrence.”

At that moment, a fawning acolyte announced the presence of a minor demon that had come in response to the relayed need of Jankh, to have his hooves polished.

Baloth stared in amazement as Jankh lifted a hoof foppishly, to have a shine administered by the lackey.

“This is some mother (*&%?#!<*), (*&%?#!<*) bull-(*&%?#!<*)!” he exclaimed in goggle eyed wonder.

What lurked in this sucker’s brain?

Jankh’s porcine forehead grew a wrinkled frown as he made to respond to Baloth’s exclamation, but he was forestalled before he could speak.

“All right,” Baloth abruptly began, now with a certainty of how to deal with such as Jankh, “this is what I know of what happened.”

Baloth went on to relate an edited version of the events that had occurred before the angel’s intervention. He leaned the tale toward a sudden Heavenly manifestation of power that was not a result of any unauthorized effort on his part.

He only gave Jankh the basics of the tale, without disclosing his machinations, (who seemed to be more interested in his lackey's attention to his hooves anyway) that a group of men had spirited away some human woman, with the authorized aid of demons of Lust, Hate, and Rage. But, that for some reason, an Angel of Light had pursued the humans, and then confronted one of them in the guise of a human, himself.

He went on to tell how the angel was out of the picture now, having been run off by some of Baloth's underlings, who had attended the human that the angel had confronted.

"So, what you're saying is that this angel is gone now, and the power that was reported, was just a momentary flash of angelic power, and that we don't need to concern ourselves about Theophanys?" Jankh asked, after Baloth's tale was done.

"That's how I see it," Baloth affirmed with a secretive toothy grin, thinking Jankh's visual attention was wholly focused on his hooves.

"Bull (*&%?#!<*), Baloth! You can wipe that smirk off of your face," The seemingly inattentive Archdemon responded angrily. "I'm not swallowing your trying to get yourself off of the hook that easy."

"(*&%?#!<*)," Baloth snarled aloud, then thought to himself . . . *I should have known that even this vain turd couldn't be all dumb . . . not if he's an Archdemon Prince.*

Baloth growled angrily, balefully glaring at the perked ears of the nosy shoe shining demon, who he knew would be scuttle butting this entire conversation as soon as he got done with his chore.

"OK, there's a bit more to it, but not to where you need to know every detail. I'm telling you that the other side has boned out on saving the woman who seemed to be what it was all about.

"But . . . cause of all this hoof idiots doing, (Baloth pointed a talon at the shoe shining demon, who looked up at him angrily, not being very happy himself with his current vocation) . . . I forgot to tell you that she is a Rabbi's wife, and so . . . was being kind of watched over especially . . . by me.

"And why would she merit your personal attention," The Prince of the Pacific asked pointedly?

Baloth drew himself up to his full height, before responding.

“I, as well as most other of Torath’s Lieutenants, was told to pay special attention to any Jews, who might be thinking about being . . . you know. ., getting Saved and all that (*&%?#!<*)”

This part Baloth uneasily grunted. For he, as was usual for most demons, totally danced around, as much as possible, from having to say the word “Christian.”

“So . . . ?” Jankh encouraged more from the reluctant Torath Lieutenant.

“Well, this (*&%?#!<*) was a Rabbi’s wife, and both he and she were getting ready to accept the Ughhh . . . truth of things. The Jew boy was keeping himself pretty clean, no matter how many temptations we threw at him, but she gave us an in.”

“So far, so good,” Jankh said. He was paying close attention, as in spite of his vanity, and some would say . . .”underwhelming” intellect, he really could focus when he needed to, on other things than what he considered proper decorum, and his own personal appearance . . . sometimes.

Baloth, meanwhile, was getting into his tale, and for once, kind of enjoyed having someone on a plane as authoritative as his own, to share his machinations (even semi-fabricated ones) with.

He even took a second to ponder whether he could somehow use the Prince of the Pacific in his own way, to diffuse whatever Torath must be trying to orchestrate against him.

But probably not . . .

Baloth went on and described his part in Evelyn’s possession, and then eventual abandonment of her to the demon inspired group of humans, led by Ralph.

He admitted that he had no idea of what the Seraph’s interest was, but he related what he knew of the one sided confrontation between the angel, and the demons who were assigned to Gus.

Now came the hard part, as it dealt with his own manifestings on the physical plane, which all demons knew fell outside their authorized parameters of normal operations.

Yet, Baloth couldn’t see anyway around divulging that he had gotten enraged enough to do a few of those, which inspired yet another angel to come against his forces. There were just too many demon witnesses

to some of the things that he'd done, that he hadn't bothered to threaten others to hold their tongues about, for him to get away with lying about it.

Baloth kept an eye on Jankh's reactions to that part of the story, while he tried to hurry past it, and began to describe the reports he'd gotten about events in the cabin where the Rabbi's wife was being held.

But no, Jankh wasn't going for it. With beetled brows, the porcine face frowned at him, before interjecting.

"(*&%?#!<*), Baloth! Now we know what is getting the other side all in our faces," the Hog Prince exclaimed.

"Yeah, well. .,that doesn't explain why the Seraph got involved. That (*&%?#!<*) made moves before any of my manifestations," Baloth answered defensively.

"What the (*&%?#!<*) do you mean by 'any' of your manifestations, Baloth??"

"Don't get your panties in an uproar about it," Baloth retorted with rage beginning to mottle his features. A sickly yellowish hue distorting his greenish complexion.

"I wouldn't worry about *my* panties, if I were you Baloth. It isn't my rules that we are forced to play by. You (*&%?#!<*) well know Whose game both we and the Master have to abide with.

Then Jankh's pig eyes opened wide as a new horrible thought hit him.

In a low voice he asked, "Baloth, did any humans seek and find their (he grimaced in distaste) ugh . . . Salvation because of your er . . . indiscretions?"

If Baloth could blush in chagrin, here he would have done so. As it was, the unhappy thought of the Rabbi, and other human's Salvation . . . made him grind his teeth in chagrin big time.

But to personally be responsible?

"Ahhhh . . . who knows what makes those flesh bags get any kind of spiritual common sense? Those cattle are so dumb; I can't tell what scares them to do what, or when. You can't blame me for the whims of humans."

"Yes, blah, blah, blah, Baloth," Jankh said with a raised eyebrow. "How many of them did you prove our existence to, and so, cause them

to choose . . .” He paused to glance up pointedly before continuing. “The other side instead?”

Baloth saw he couldn’t worm his way out of it, and angrily decided to come clean.

“(*&%?#!<*), I don’t know. Maybe two, or three.”

“Well, no wonder Torath wanted someone to handle this part of his principality. He doesn’t want to have to take responsibility for your actions.”

Here Jankh cocked a porcine eye as he pondered the total ramifications of his own words realizing that he had inherited Baloth’s blunders and future blunderings, which inevitably led to his realization that now he was responsible for Baloth instead of Torath.

His first inkling of the potential duplicity of Torath’s secretive meeting with him was just hitting him, when Baloth added a little reinforcement to his thoughts.

“Oh (*&%?#!<*), Jankh,” Baloth stormed at the Archdemons apparent naiveté. “Torath’s got some plan to discredit me anyway, but now he’s roped you into it. I’ve always been a thorn in his side, because he fears the Master’s favor in my direct appointment to be a Lieutenant under him, by the Master himself.”

While Jankh was digesting this, which ran along the lines of his own thoughts, now that he’d a moment to think about other than the carrot at the end of the stick, Baloth added another coffin nail.

“Yeah . . . I know why Torath’s got a case of the (*&%?#!<*) for me, but you must just be here to be some kind of patsy.”

Here Baloth scratched an eye ridge in perplexity. “But, I don’t know what his devious (*&%?#!<*) little mind is up to . . .”

“By the way Jankh, while you’re over here doing who knows what. . . where the (*&%?#!<*) is Torath, anyway??? And what the (*&%?#!<*) is he up to?”

Just then a Jankh underling announced from the opening that served as a doorway to Jankh’s chambers, “O’ Prince Jankh, a messenger has arrived from the Master, and craves an audience.”

“Aha!” Jankh exclaimed, “Now we will know directly the Master’s wishes, and see if they are as Torath portrayed them to be.

“Bid the messenger to enter,” He answered the underling.

(*&%?#!<*), here it comes!) Baloth thought to himself.

The diminutive palace messenger replaced Jankh's henchman in the opening. He was used to being in the presence, and receiving and delivering messages to and from the higher ups in demon hierarchy, and so, knew protocol and first addressed Jankh as the Overlord present.

"Prince Jankh and Captain Baloth, my message is for Captain Baloth only. . . ." He began and was immediately interrupted by Jankh.

"I am Baloth's Overlord now, and what you bring him he must report to me anyway, so get on with it and speak the message."

Jankh had puffed up to stand in what he thought was an imperious stance when delivering this order.

Offending Princes not being a wise idea, and not having been ordered to deliver his message in confidence anyway, the messenger agreed.

"As you wish." Then turned to directly address Baloth.

"The Master orders you to remain here and, forthwith orders me to return to the palace and report your exact whereabouts, and of your compliance with this message."

"Yeah!" Baloth answered in disgust. "Like I am not going to comply you worthless piece of (*&%?#!<*)! Be off, before I help you on your way in a manner you deserve, but that would pain me to administer!" Thinking literally about how it would hurt his toes and feet more than they were already smarting from kicking underlings.

Yet still . . . He advanced on the messenger with a fist clenched.

I've still got two hands and this turd needs a humbling, Baloth was thinking.

The messenger vanished from the opening in an instant. If demons wore tennis shoes it could have been said that he 'burnt rubber' upon seeing the huge Captain advancing threateningly and knowing through the grapevine, like most of the messenger demons did, of Baloth's propensities towards messengers who bore bad tidings.

Chapter 28

Torath's exclamation of dismay, groaned and snarled in another worldly timbre, though uttered from his ostensibly human lips, had a two-fold effect.

First, it had apprised the watching drooling demons that something really wasn't right here with whom they had previously thought of as just a very, very black hearted human.

Second, was that the unusual timbre of the voice of the dreaded Archdemon, albeit from a simulated human voice-box, had in conjunction with the sudden silence of the room, served to awaken the snoring Ralph.

It was kind of like going to sleep with a stereo blasting, and then someone turns it off, to where the absence of volume causes a disquiet which awakens.

"Whaa . . ." Ralph mumbled, as he blearily squinted about dazedly, his head feeling like a gong being struck by hammers.

Torath shook the human bug (Sam) he had dangling from the end of his arm, then tossed the hapless dooper aside against the wall, with a bone jolting crunch. The dope-"fiend" (if that word was applicable in such fiendish non-human company), slid unconsciously down, as his head had taken a pretty good shot at going clear through the drywall. Sam's forehead taking the brunt of the impact had a gash from which the blood flowed freely.

Torath derived some satisfaction from the human suffering that he had inflicted, but knew that in the scheme of things the mere physical suffering on the part of the one, didn't weigh against the loss of Hell get-

ting a soul, should the woman he might have saved the life of ultimately now find Salvation.

Evelyn tried to take in the scene that was before her. The stimulant that the now unconscious Sam had been injecting her with, should have done far worse things to her than awaken her. But the Covering of Ivan's Salvation, and the prayers of the saints, had provided through the presence of the Holy Spirit, that the awesome power of the Lord, could work even the most evil intent into a blessing.

She struggled to her feet, wondering how she had gotten where she was, and who all these people were. The last thing she remembered doing was kneeling in her attic in a supplication to the spirits, to communicate with her dead son, James, and then her memory became clouded by vivid horrible dreams full of whispering inhuman monsters.

The tableau before her was almost as bad as the dreams she vaguely remembered.

When she had arisen, the whisper of sound had caused the tall dark man to whirl towards her, and she found herself impaled by two burning eyes, lit with the flames of inhuman rage.

A forefinger at the end of a very long arm was pointed at her, while a cruel voice in an echoing timbre addressed her.

"You . . . don't even move, or you will surely die at my hand!"

"Hey, who the (*&%?#!<*) are you?" came from Ralph who was struggling up from his chair to address who he had rightly guessed was the cause of the disturbance of his little snooze. As he came erect, he couldn't help but notice how all the other partyers in the cabin were silent, watching the tall dark visaged man who he had just addressed.

Torath apprised the skin sack who had dared interrupt him with its speaking to him, meanwhile considering rectifying by the death of the woman, the possibility that he had been the instrument of her still drawing breath.

Now, did this oaf, dare to challenge him?!

Torath still had one finger pointed toward the woman, when he had whipped his head about to see the big human piece of (*&%?#!<*) who had the audacity to interrupt him.

"You would do well for yourself, to sit back down and wait your turn, O' human offal!" he advised the bleary eyed Ralph.

Unfortunately, for the drug and alcohol befuddled Ralph, his eyesight wasn't up to par at that moment, or he would have discerned that the dark face before him, had two burning red eyes. Eyes glowing ever more brightly, as they lit with the demonic flames of Torath's rage being fanned further by Ralph's challenge.

"(*&%?#!<*) you," roared the oblivious human winner of many an altercation, with many a human adversary.

"Hey . . . Ralph," came from one of the other people who had been in the cabin, and seen the arrival of the dark man. "I don't think you wanna' (*&%?#!<*) with this guy . . ."

"Oh yeah?" Ralph answered. He advanced the two steps it took within the small cabin to confront, virtually nose to nose, the tall, much thinner man than himself, who he saw as trying to dominate the moment, as if he didn't count for anything.

He'd show this joker who he was dealing with, he thought to himself, as he tried to intimidate the stranger with his far greater bulk, though they appeared to be about the same height.

Baloth's demons looked on the developments, without lifting any kind of hand, one way or another.

The Captain of the small host, who had been initially assigned by Baloth over the demise of Evelyn, now continued to orchestrate the temptings and assailings of those at the party, and had been present inside the cabin when the dark man arrived, to witness everything that the intruder had done and said.

He had taken no action to hinder the man, after his minions had reported failure in trying to stop the stranger from interfering with Sam's administering Evelyn an overdose. His underlings did nothing either, as they were guided by his, so far, non-participation.

As with any "Captain" assigned to any endeavor, this one was a bit more discerning, and supposedly wiser . . . than those who took their lead from him. That was why he had been appointed over this group in the first place.

Of course, he had been ordered to cause the death of the woman, and he had been well on the way to having that accomplished at the hands of the human, Sam, as he had been directed.

But now, plans were awry. Worse, the woman was aware and awake,

which was going to make things even more difficult, if not almost impossible.

It had been almost immediately apparent to the watching demons when the woman had suddenly gotten a spiritual Covering over her. After all, during the millennia, there had been many instances when demons had been at work on a spouse, when their mate had received Salvation. It was well known that a kind of Covering of the Saved one's faith would sanctify the spouse, as was written in Scripture, but the Covering wasn't as strong as if the assailed themselves had received their Salvation . . . not even close.

It was still a serious obstruction of demonic intent though, as it meant that the Covered was made "acceptable" to the Lord, by the Salvation of his or her spouse.

In any event, this particular Captain, Granth, was single mindedly focused on the tall dark visaged human, who though a bit shy of the bulk of the man who confronted him, radiated an overbearing threat that quietly dwarfed the bigger man's blustering.

Then the head of the tall man swiveled again to sweep the room and Granth saw the red highlights in the eyes as the head paused briefly as if to survey him and his minions.

The red highlights were becoming more visible on the spiritual plane, the more blatantly angry the tall dark 'man' became. Granth was having serious doubts about the being even *being* a man.



"All right ya' (*&%?#!<*), what da' (*&%?#!<*) is your trip, and. . . ."

Ralph's voice trailed away, as his bleary vision finally came in to focus enough, to really see the dark face which was on a level with his own.

When he had first strode up to the intruder, he had been sizing him up and down physically, and then after deciding that the stranger would pose no threat as he appeared rail thin, he had looked into the face. He was expecting to see fear written on the features, which people normally couldn't help but express when someone of his bulk approached them threateningly.

With this guy though, not only was no fear to be seen on the fea-

tures, what he saw had him instinctively recoil in fear himself. He felt like a mouse must feel in the presence of a snake. He instinctively knew which of them was the true predator.

The swarthinness had somehow turned into an all pitch black face with two red orbs for eyes, which blazed with an unholy fury.

“Whoa . . . (*&%?#!<*), Ralph exclaimed, as he backed away, knowing without knowing why, that distance was the better part of valor as regards dealing with whatever trip this guy was on.



Granth knew some off the wall things were happening. This tall dark man was either possessed, an Angel of Light posing as a man but totally out of Angelic character, or a demon in disguise.

“Who are you,” he asked on the spiritual plane, addressing the darkness that was the spirit of the entity.

The supposed human only responded, by looking past the back pedaling Ralph, to glare right where Granth was, though no human should be able to see the Baloth Captain.

The dark man appearing being, still had one arm out toward the human woman, yet had begun to turn toward the retreating Ralph, as if the position of the arm was something forgotten, while the entity began pursuit of yet another train of thought.

Evelyn was taking advantage of the situation. When the two tall men had exchanged words, she had started sidling towards the open door, with her back against the wall.

Initially, when the tall dark man had spoken to her, she had known somehow, that his order for her not to move had better be obeyed.

More than a “self preservation instinct,” had informed her of this. The Covering from Ivan’s Salvation, as well as the prayers of him and his Christian friends, were being answered by the Holy Spirit in “Small Voicings to her.

Now though, she saw a chance to get away from the awful dark man, and hopefully this awful room. She shuddered in fear of him, as she quietly slipped sideways toward the beckoning doorway.

Chapter 29

Lucifer had received the message that Baloth and Jankh awaited his pleasure at man's city, Los Angeles.

What Jankh was doing there he had no idea.

He snorted in disgust, thinking; *Someone had better have some idea of what was going on by the time I get there!*

He stood with arms folded in a black Roman like chariot, embossed with golden dragons intertwined, with gilt edgings, his long black hair whipped by the speed of his passage.

No reigns guided his steeds, who were the original precursors to man's winged, supposedly mythical beast of lore, Pegasus.

His beasts were all black, and the mighty ebony wings gently beat the air belying the swiftness of which the steeds were capable.

With a thought he guided them into a more direct approach to the mayoral headquarters wherein Baloth and Jankh awaited him.

A long procession followed in his wake, as the bulk of the palace minions attended him, and hordes had joined at the bidding of their lords, when he had passed through those Prince's principalities.

The mighty host had swelled to where though invisible to man's eye, the land below was shadowed as if by a cloud when they passed over.

The outskirts of the city sought, soon came into view.

Baloth had slumped into a leaning posture against the wall, idly watching as the shoe-shining demon had finished this task and was given leave to go, after Jankh had inspected to make sure that his hooves were done to his satisfaction.

While thus engaged, the Prince of the Pacific had berated and admonished the Torath Lieutenant, who at this point really didn't care

what Jankh thought, while waiting for a reply from the palace, i.e., from the Master.

Baloth tuned back in from boredom, to hear the tail end of another one of Jankh's babblings.

“ . . . yes Baloth, all that I have heard about you is apparently true. Your ham-handed handling of things is what has you, and I hope not me, in this mess in the first place.”

At the conclusion of this statement, Baloth couldn't help but make a toothy grimace, which passed for a smile on his face, as the human description of being “ham-handed” coming from a porcine looking idiot like Jankh, had its mirthful points.

As Jankh continued with his monologue, Baloth took a moment to wonder anew that man's creative usage of wordings, and creativeness in general, was so prevalent among their kind.

Perhaps the Creator had given man this likeness to Himself when creating man in the first place. Assuredly, demons utilized some of man's own originalities at corrupting themselves without demon help, to better aid demons in creative ways to help them on their paths to Hell, along with the usual temptations long established. Then demons also widely used descriptive words they had gleaned from man, when discussing things between themselves.

Baloth himself, as much as he hated mankind, used their expletives, and swear words with regularity.

If man was supposedly created in the image and likeness to He who made them, then why were they such a corrupt bunch of cattle in the first place? Baloth wondered for the umpteenth time, then tuned back in to catch some more of Jankh's drivel.

“Take, for instance the messenger that you just threatened. Don't you think that even such a one as he could harbor ill will toward you, and in his report paint you in such a way to put you in an unfavorable light?

He's got a point there, Baloth mused. I think I can use all the good favor I can get, and then some more, if the whole truth gets to be known.



Just then another of Jankh's underlings popped up at the doorway.

"My Prince, a host approaches that darkens the skies by their number. It is said that the Master himself leads them."

(*&%?#!<*) Baloth exclaimed, springing from his indolent lounging against the wall, while Jankh spun on his hooves towards a mirror.

If Baloth wasn't so worried about his own dilemma, he would have taken satisfaction in watching the be-jeweled Prince of the Pacific hurriedly divesting himself of some of his adornments.

Chapter 30

Ralph had retreated in a hasty sweat to get away from whatever the thing was. It sure wasn't a normal human being . . . that much he felt in his bones. A cold sweat had broken out on him, and numb with fear he stumbled over the chair which a few moments before had been a nice, safe, snore zone.

He heard a murmur from the other partygoers in the room, as all had focused on the dark man, and noticed his face change shape and color. But the eyes. The eyes seemed to not be able to obey the beings attempts to try to appear as a man. The inhuman rage reflected in them, wasn't to be confused by any who had seen them flaming red, to be that of a real human being.

Torath struggled mightily to maintain his facade. He had given in to his rage, just a little bit . . . he thought, and was doing a good job of hiding his true self by an enormous effort of will, to not display rage or pride at the insult offered him by the big human excrescence. But he didn't know how badly his eyes had given him away to all who observed him.

Or, at least, he didn't know so much, until the Captain of Baloth's demons addressed him.

(*&%?#!<*), he thought to himself, *the humans are looking at me like I'm their worst nightmare, so they know something too. And Baloth's turds know something as well . . .*

He froze in a long moment of indecision, with his burning glare mostly focused on Ralph, but with side glances towards the cluster of demons who were present.

Then a couple of partyers from outside the cabin barged in loudly

and boisterously, laughing about something or other, drew the attention of those in the cabin.

Torath, with a mighty effort of will, bottled his rage and tried to dampen his fierce domination of those in the room.

Evelyn saw her opportunity, and slipped out the door as soon as the laughing couple had cleared the entry.

The drunken newcomers had simply come in to make the rounds of the party, and fuzzily noticed that things were kind of quiet inside, compared to what was happening elsewhere at the party.

“Hey, what’s up, Ralph?” The man asked in puzzlement.

“Yeah, what’s up with Ol’ Sam?” The female newcomer wondered aloud, after seeing Sam in a heap at the base of the cabin wall. “Nodded out again, huh?”

“(*&ç%?#!<*) all that,” came from Ralph, who had backed into a corner with some of the others who had been in the cabin.

Ralph pointed at Torath. “This dude is way out, man . . .”

As all eyes again turned toward Torath, Torath let out a snarl of anger and muttered angrily to himself.

“Got to give some to get some . . . give some to get some . . .” With these words, he took three long strides towards the door, and exited the cabin out into the night.



Granth followed the long strides of the entity.

All plans and instructions from Baloth were laid aside as he decided to confront the being who had interrupted everything. He knew that he could not manifest himself on the physical plane to confront the man in the guise of a man . . . not with so many humans about. He had to wait for an opportunity to get at the being, which he now felt sure to be other than human, when it was alone.

Torath, however, wasn’t going to easily get pigeonholed by some minor Captain, not if he could help it.

The problem was, the dread Archdemon thought to himself, there was no where to get away from the closely following Captain, at least not while as a man, and limited big time by being in a fleshly form.

He strode among the humans, whose only motivation in their lives at this moment seemed to be to alter their perceptions of reality.

This they seemed to be pretty professional at. At least in regard to this particular group of them.

Torath would have taken delight in the knowledge of the lost to the Lord status of the humans he was among, if he wasn't so preoccupied by his own ruminations. As he moved among them and mingled silently with them, he considered that he had probably accomplished his objective. That in all probability, he had thrown some kind of curve ball into Baloth's plans, judging by what he had seen, but that didn't necessarily mean that he'd driven a coffin nail in downing Baloth's future in Satan's regard.

He also still wanted to jerk Jankh's chain a bit, but only as a side effect of bringing Baloth down in the eyes of the Master.

Meanwhile, he was well aware of the pesky Captain of Baloth's, dogging of his every move since leaving the cabin.

What was an unwanted thing though, was that the demon Captain and his henchmen who now followed him, who had previously been so intent on the woman in the cabin, didn't seem to care that she was the focus of his own meanderings through the groups and hodgepodge's of partyers outside the cabin.

That meant that they had a new objective, and it went without saying that he was it.

Torath followed Evelyn with no real motivation, except in that she seemed to be some kind of pivot point, and for the moment he was a bit directionless as to how to go about any further efforts to thwart Baloth.

He knew that the blackness of his spirit was cause for comment by the Baloth demons, and he heard them addressing him on the spiritual plane, but he deigned to not answer them, while he formulated his next move.

Evelyn meanwhile couldn't help but realize the tall man was following her. He stood out from the crowd, in height, as well as in the evil menace that he projected.

The small hairs on the back of her neck prickled as in the expectation of a blow, from the knowledge of his mere proximity behind her.

She was looking for someone, anyone, who seemed to not belong. That meant that as she wandered about, she was seeking someone of a sober appearance, who if possible, seemed to have a caring attitude.

When she had first escaped out of the cabin, her intentions were to go as far and fast as she could.

But right after exiting the cabin, she looked back and saw the dark man come out as well. He almost immediately saw her, and their gazes locked. That was when he started slowly striding after her, and that was when she knew she would feel safer in numbers. Even in such a crowd as this.

“Where in the world am I,” she thought to herself.

“Excuse me.” She addressed a smallish young man, who though he was smoking a pipe with who knew what foul chemically smelling stuff in it, at least looked like he was a reasonable type. “Could you tell me where exactly this place is?”

“Huh?” The pipe came down for the utterance of that non-informative grunt.

“I asked if you know where we are.” She reiterated to the now somewhat focused pipe holder.

That worthy seemed to need to look around himself, before responding.

“Um . . . well . . .” he scratched his jaw, and then seemed to brighten considerably as if a revelation had occurred to him. “We are at Ralph’s party, somewhere in the woods . . . somewhere.” This the young man declared as if it were really helpful. It seemed to be his thinking that as long as there was plenty to get high on there, who cared where it was on a map.

Which information would have been all that was needed for those who usually address another dooper at such an event, when normally upon waking from an alcohol or drug induced stupor and having forgotten their whereabouts.

This was probably what was now being thought of by this man, about Evelyn.

She waved a hand to dispel the fumes from his pipe, and politely thanked him, before side-stepping to go around him.

Seeing the dark man getting closer, she covertly studied him from

where she had turned around after passing by the pipe smoker, and noticed that he seemed like he had lost track of her for a moment.

He moved slowly, somewhat directionless, borne for the moment by eddies in the human current around him. The burning gaze that had been focused on her unwaveringly, now seemed to be blankly looking inward toward his own thoughts.

Evelyn moved away from the young man who had given her such a lost in space description of where she was, and joined another group of people who were near by.

Torath half-heartedly followed the woman. He was trying to figure out his next move with some semblance of calmness, but being stalked by Granth and company, was getting his goat.

As a matter of fact, there really wasn't any reason why he could justify trying to hide, now that he was being tailed. But then again, he thought that there must be some way to lose the Baloth Captain, at least for as long as it took for him to formulate some kind of plan.

He'd come to the party, simply as it seemed to be a concentration of Baloth's efforts, and now that he had done whatever it was that he had interrupted in the cabin, he needed time to think.

But . . . it just didn't seem to be going to come to pass. Baloth's busy-body Captain was on him like stink on poop. Not being the most patient of beings, especially when his role in the spiritual heavens was as one of such awesome power as to be virtually unassailable, he was, as Baloth before him, becoming angrier by the minute at his self imposed curtailing of his power and authority.

Thunderclouds of rage began again, to storm across his countenance. *Human chattel . . . Bah! Minor demons . . . Bah! What the (*%?#!<*) was one such as he doing in playing such a role amidst such lowly beings? (*%?#!<*) all of them!*

The only thing that restrained him was knowing that if he displayed to all the sundry spirits of the air who he really was, then there would be no way to lay the blame for any mishap on Baloth.

Were his Lieutenant even here now, he, as Baloth's superior when in the field at whatever location in his Principality, was the final authority to answer to. So, he was the one to blame if things went wrong when he was present.

Even if he wasn't present, the Master appointed Overlords to supervise their Lieutenants, and to force all underlings to conform to their Prince's commands. So, the Master would take issue with him no matter what, but it would bode ill for Torath if Satan were to know for certain that he, Torath, deliberately tried to make Baloth look unfavorably upon, by orchestrations, and hence subsequent lies to his Master.

And what was the deal with this (&%?#!<*) human female? Had he done a (*&%?#!<*) life saving of her?!*

That kind of bumbling would go down like a lead balloon.

There was only one way to find out, and still not give himself away to where Baloth's demons would recognize him, and be able to report that he was guilty of working against the Master's will, just to thwart Baloth.

I need to pick the woman's brains, and see where she fits into Baloth's plans, he thought to himself.

By a Herculean effort of will, Torath bottled his rage, and tried to look deadpan with his features. He had to look about him and see a calm faced human, to try to emulate the stoned man's appearance, as Torath was so normally in a state of wrath and hate of humans when among them, it was totally out of character for him to display any calmness, at all.

Chapter 31

Deigning not to abide by anyone else's building structures, whether on the physical or spiritual plane, Lucifer simply came through the walls, floors, and ceilings, of the mayoral chambers.

No underling had a chance to announce his presence, yet he did not take the two who looked upon him in awe, totally by surprise, as only the deaf could have ignored the fanfare outside that had heralded his arrival.

He still, however, caught Jankh preening in front of his reflection in a human looking glass, and the hurriedly divested ornaments were there for all to see, as the flustered Prince of the Pacific had whirled to face him, when catching sight of his Master in the mirror.

Baloth had come to ridged attention, with worry lines etched across his green features.

Lucifer looked from the one to the other for a few moments, letting an appreciation of his presence build up, as it was so rare for the dread Master to leave his palace.

Jankh, however, was not of the ilk to savor what his lord considered should be a quiet moment of appreciation, but must fill it with the sound of something, preferably the sound of his own voice.

"O' my Master . . ." He began, falling prostrate in obeisance.

"Silence Jankh, and get up. I have made it clear that my Princes do not need to prostrate themselves." Upon the completion of which command, Lucifer noted the upright stance of Baloth.

"Eying the Torath Lieutenant his voice dropped an octave into a low voiced growl and he stated pointedly, "However, except for some of my palace staff, all others must show obeisance."

“Yes lord!” Baloth fell to his knees and put his horny brow to the floor.

“I crave your pardon, Master. Protocol slipped my mind by my awe at your presence.” The Lieutenant mumbled to the floor.

Lucifer flared his all too human nostrils in a snort that would have been better served had he the snout and issuing fumes of his most recent manifesting in dragon form.

“I see that your obeisance still does not take the form of prostration, but your answer pleases me.”

“Rise.” He commanded the kneeling Baloth.

Glancing at the porcine figure of the fidgeting Jankh, and probably for that Prince’s benefit, he addressed them both, with for him, shared a rarely granted inner glimpse of himself.

“I really have no patience with fawning sycophants. All know who the Master of this realm is, and I need no bowings and scrapings to reaffirm what is.”

“Respect is what I require, and one should be respectful in my presence, and the only way I know for a certainty that respect exists for my deigning to honor someone with an audience with me, is for them to show it immediately when come before me.”

“Hence, my commands for obeisance for those who have an audience.”

He sighed after this informative, knowing that he was probably “throwing pearls before swine” to use a human term, but in the case of Jankh the phrase came to mind easily, though the Prince of the Pacific seemed to be quite attentive to his words.

Attentive indeed was Jankh as he drank in the protocol and the grounds for it. He was adding it to the list of how he as a Prince wanted to be kowtowed to in the future in his own Principality.

Baloth of course cared not a whit for protocols, and merely grunted an assent to his Master’s words.

Lucifer looked between the two for a moment, as they awaited his words attentively, and then decided someone was redundant for his purposes, no matter the reason for being in this Principality. He would find out later what that was all about, as he knew Torath had no love lost with the Pacific Prince.

“Jankh, you have my leave to go. Return to your own Principality, and your hosts are to attend you.

“Silence, I do not wish to hear you!” He commanded with a warning glint in his eye, as he saw Jankh open his mouth to speak. “And while you go thither, take your ridiculous baubles with you!”

With these words a brief grimace of disgust flitted across the still somewhat angelic countenance of he who used to be first among the Lord’s Hosts.

Chapter 32

Evelyn had been ducking and dodging from one group to another, still keeping an eye on the dark man. He had only been kind of haphazardly following her now, as if not really on any mission about it, but his meanderings around the party still had too closely followed her own, to be just a coincidence.

Plus, there had been that moment of eye contact, to where she knew he had been following her for some reason.

Perhaps he had been the instigator of bringing her to wherever this was, in the first place.

Evelyn was a bright lady, and through her lifetime had lived to where going to extremes weren't exactly her forte. So, the avenues she had explored in trying to reach her son, she had known in her heart and mind to be wrong all along, and that is why, for instance, she had hidden her quest from her husband Ivan.

She had just been atypically hard headed about the whole deal, not knowing that as her interest had waned here and there to where she would have turned from her path, that Baloth had instigated more incentives to keep up her interests.

For instance it hadn't been by accident that she had found the box containing Ivan's grandfathers old study books, or that upon opening the box she found just the right books to cause her to pursue the wrong avenues; the satanic bible being placed atop the pile by a green taloned hand.

It had also been that in a travesty of Heb 13:2 (NKJV) she had “. . . entertained angels unawares” as Baloth had been to whom she spoke

through some of the self labeled ‘spiritual mediums’ she had gone to. (See Author’s Notes)

Though the scripture in context wasn’t manifestly to apply to the fallen angels, she had certainly “entertained” Baloth who had been the instigator of some of the tricks that some of the obsessed/possessed charlatans had played to encourage her pursuits.



Soreness in her arm caused Evelyn to look down and see the darkening track of drying blood that had trickled from a puncture wound over a vein in the crook of her elbow.

“Oh my . . .” she exclaimed! She closed her eyes in a brief moment of barely whispered prayer to the Lord, while shuddering at this additional evidence that she had gotten herself lost in more ways than in just geography.

“Lord, forgive me for . . .” She had then thought of all the wrong pursuits she had engaged in while trying to communicate with her son James, “everything, and please, please help me now.”

It took no real stretch for her to now discern that her occult pursuits had somehow opened a door, bringing her to the plight she found herself in.

But goodness, had she been even doing intravenous drugs, and associating with such as she found herself surrounded by? Then she had a truly horrible thought about what Ivan would think about it all.

She opened her eyes bleakly, and numbly turned to stumble away from where she had paused in a brief prayer, only to run right into the chest of the tall dark man.

Torath tried to smile reassuringly down at the frightened woman’s face, as he grabbed her firmly by the arm.

“I need to talk to you woman,” he tried not to grate too harshly to her.

“Who are you?” she tremblingly asked him in response, as he held her in a grip that she knew she could not break.

“That is not your concern,” the dread Archdemon responded, as he eyed Baloth’s watchful Captain.

Evelyn opened her mouth to scream, and was horrified as the tall man drew her to him in an immediate embrace.

Cold lips closed upon hers, to muffle the beginning of her scream, and a strong hand at the back of her head kept her lips pinned against the dark man's mouth.

Chaos swirled through her and she drifted in a blackness, as two red eyes hypnotized her into a state to where once again, she was not in control of herself.

There was a difference though from the last time. This time she was obsessed through the stronghold given to the demons by her former willingness to go by the dictates of her studies in how to supposedly communicate with the dead, which had created an opened pathway for demonic intent within her.

Torath could not possess her in any event, because of her Covering, but even if she were not Covered, he could not be in her, and maintain a separate presence elsewhere at the same time.

Only the Holy Spirit of God, could be omnipresent.

Torath was aware that the woman was, for some reason, made acceptable to the Lord. He felt the resistance of some kind of Covering, or action by the Holy Spirit, in his even just dealing with the woman at all, and he knew that he must tread warily now.

He knew that if he had been not so busy with other events and beings, both human and demon, he would have sensed that the woman had a Covering over her when he had first removed the syringe injecting Sam, from where he had been bent over her in the cabin.

There was something going on here, which had rattled Baloth's cage. And now that Torath had stumbled across who seemed to be a primary human player in Baloth's plans, he wanted to use her to his own ends.

Simply thwarting Baloth wasn't his only objective though; He needed to also resolve what appeared to be too much for even Baloth and Jankh to handle, and so . . . secure even further, his place as the most powerful and influential of the Master's arch-angels.

Evelyn felt the mesmerizing eyes boring into her own, and a commanding thought echoed through her mind, though no words were audible.

She was held upright in a strong grip as her legs had turned to rubber.

The lips which in her numbness she could no longer feel, withdrew from her own, and she was commanded to answer by the hypnotic strength of one of the most powerful of Satan's demons.

"Tell me of yourself woman, and of why you were to die." The command was hissed by the cruel lips by her ear, as she was held in a firm embrace.

Chapter 33

In the cabin, Ralph and his fellow partyers were commenting on, and questioning each other about the strange man's fearful domination of them all, after he had strode out the door. The hushed and somewhat sober discussions had resulted in the fact that no one knew anything about the stranger. (Fear did have a tendency to bring one to sobriety.)

The chagrined Ralph questioned those who had been awake when things had started to happen, while he had been snoring away.

The answers hadn't been very revealing. No one knew who the "tall skinny (*&%?#!<*)" was, as Ralph described him.

Ralph decided to try to assert his authority a bit, knowing that he hadn't come off very well by comparison with the stranger when he had blusteringly confronted him.

"OK, this (*&%?#!<* *&%?#!<*) better not still be around, or he's going to have to answer to Mr. Colt 45." Ralph bragged, but cowardly didn't make a move as of yet, for the doorway out which Torath had gone.

Sam began groaning, and Ralph looked over to see the dope head groggily making his way to his feet, blood still running from the gash on his forehead from where Torath had flung him into the wall.

"Whaa. .wa happened?" that unworthy asked of no one in particular.

("*&%?#!<*)!" Ralph responded exasperatedly. "Why don't YOU tell us."

No one had seen the drug zooming Sam at work busily doing the demons will with Evelyn, so no one knew why the stranger had so quickly zeroed in on him.

Everyone had though, had time enough to see the syringe fall from his nerveless fingers, after he had been hoisted in the air by the dark man.

But no one had noticed that it had been the “Out to Lunch” sign wearing woman, who had the blood trickling out of her arm, as their attention had been riveted on the dark man who had intimidated everyone.

So, they had all just thought that ol’ Sam was up to his usual tricks getting himself high.

Sam saw that the sign lay where it had fallen off of Evelyn, when she had taken both it and the party hat off of her head, before rising to her feet.

So, no one knew that he had been doing dirty drug deeds to anyone other than himself, he thought.

“Well?” Ralph demanded of him belligerently. “What do you have to say about all this (*&%?#!<*)?”

Just then Gus strode into the cabin, and noticed right away that something was wrong.

Besides an obvious confrontation between Sam and Ralph, who Gus had caught eyeing each other in some kind of face-off, someone had muted the music that normally would have been blasting from the stereo.

“Hey Ralph, you won’t believe the (*&%?#!<*) that has been happening . . .” he began trying to blurt his story.

“(*&%?#!<*), Gus . . .” Ralph waved his arms wildly in the air. “Where in the (*&%?#!<*) have you been?”

Before Gus could even begin to respond to the question with what he wanted to run by Ralph about the black truck, his gun, and all the strange things happening to him, the flustered Ralph continued.

“There’s’ all kinds of (*&%?#!<*) happening right here. I mean really weird (*&%?#!<*)! There was this (*&%?#!<*) guy in here whose eyes glowed! I mean really off the wall!”

Gus just opened his mouth get in something about his own weird experiences, when the tunnel vision self involved Ralph, overrode him again with a nervous question.

“Hey . . . you didn’t see some dude in black, with a really sun burnt looking face hanging around out there, did you?”

Gus couldn’t help but notice the fear etched in Ralph’s face when he asked about whoever this “dude” was, who seemed to have bummed everyone out.

“Ralph, slow the (*&%?#!<*) down, and chill out for a second. I ain’t seen anyone like that yet, but then again, I just got here. He ain’t outside the door if that’s what you’re asking.”

“Now what’s up? Did this guy kick your butts or something? Why are you tripping about him?”

The demon of fear that had been kind of elected spokesman for the group who had arrived with Gus, located Granth. The Captain was hovering closely above a human couple who stood in a close embrace, appearing (the spokesman thought) to be working his will upon the two humans.

The Captains attendant underlings were keeping a respectful distance from whatever there leader was orchestrating, and as the spokesman made as if to pass their perimeter one of them bade him stop, and placed a paw against his chest.

“But I have news of great import!” The minor “fear” demon exclaimed angrily, “Let me pass.” Then saw that the circle of his brethren weren’t paying him attention as they watched their Captain bent over to where his head was so close to those of the embracing human couple, that his shaggy mane was draped over them.

Chapter 34

Tiny and his trio of mission bound rescuers followed the black truck which had somehow unerringly made all of the turns through the woods on dirt roads, to arrive at some kind of gathering, based on all of the vehicles haphazardly parked in the trees and clearing.

The black truck continued on its way wending through the parked cars, while Tiny thought it best to park the cruiser at the outskirts of the clearing where its overheads wouldn't stand out and warn anyone who might be interested, of his arrival.

"Well, here we are, wherever this is." Tiny said, and shut off the engine, then began unbuckling his seatbelt.

His passengers followed suit, and Ellen asked, "Where did the other . . . (She paused in her description uncertain) 'men' go in the truck?"

Ivan held a hand up to block out the glare from the huge bonfire that blazed in the center of the clearing, lighting up the ramshackle cabin which appeared to be the only structure on the property.

"I can see it parked over there. You can see it cause it's so tall. It's over on the other side of the cabin from the fire." He indicated by pointing.

Josh and Tiny had already opened their respective doors and were climbing out.

Stretching from unfolding from the cramped rear seat area which was all the smaller from Tiny needing the front seat pushed all of the way back to accommodate his big frame, Josh was better able standing to his full height, to see what was happening around them.

"Boy!" He exclaimed, watching the wild gyrations of the dancing partyers around the fire, their distorted shadows mimicking their

movements on the cabin and neighboring trees. “What do we got here, Dante’s Inferno?”

Tiny looked around, rubbed his chin, and sighed. He had his occasional beer or two, and liked music and dancing, if he could keep his big feet off of his dance partners, but some inhibitions were a good thing, and letting it all hang out as these people were doing, judging by the abandoned screams and yelling, just plain and simple meant that they didn’t care about what was right and wrong.

Just then a half naked woman sped by laughing, her only apparel a wet man’s shirt, which was molded to her form, and barely covered her behind. A young man ran behind her shirtless, so one could suppose that between the two there were enough clothes for one.

The pungent odor of marijuana overcame the sweet scent of the pine trees among which they had parked.

There wasn’t much doubt in the big lawman’s mind that other substances were being freely and openly used, and he was tempted to call in for back-up, but first things first.

The ‘Mission from God’ took priority.

He sighed again and began unbuttoning his shirt, knowing that like his cruiser, his uniform was going to go over like a black man attending a Ku Klux Clan meeting.

Suddenly it sounded like fireworks were going off. Popping, then some louder bangs, followed by the boom of a bigger explosion, were accompanied by raucous laughter. Flashes of light at the other end of the clearing showed the source of the sounds, and Tiny whirled to face that way with his shirt half off, alarm etched on his features.

“What in the world was that?” Ellen cried out.

More popping noises followed by another huge boom echoed across the clearing.

“You folks get back in the car!” Tiny ordered, while literally ripping off the final sleeve button on his shirt before throwing the garment through his open window onto the front seat.

“These idiots have guns!” He told the trio, and then addressed Ivan who had speedily obeyed his order to get back in the car, never having closed his door in the first place, besides having ducked down at the sound of what he knew to be gunfire.

“Ivan, turn that volume knob up a bit (Tiny had muted his police radio when they first came up on the gathering) and call for help. I don’t know who if anyone, will hear you, but say; this is car six of the Applewood County Sherriff’s Department, and an officer needs assistance, and tell them that shots have been fired!”

“Yeah, but where . . .” Ivan’s voice trailed off as Tiny had taken off towards where the flashes of light, gunfire, and wild yelling were coming from.

Farol drifted along behind the running lawman, and more than one demon shied from his line of flight, while one took off to apprise Granth of the Angel of Lights presence.

Baloth had decided to come clean to his Master.

Just the presence of his lord here, or out of the palace anywhere for that matter, meant that all had better tip-toe as far as stretching the truth, as Satan/Lucifer hadn’t been known to get the wool pulled over his eyes much, if ever, through the ages past that anyone knew of. He was their “Master,” but he was also the master of deceit, and author of confusion himself, and so, wise to anyone else’s use of the tools of his trade.

The ever present spies of Tranth were the Master’s ears and eyes, and a demon had to be slick indeed to keep his business from being public domain through the busy-body chief of staff’s efforts to ape omnipresence.

After Jankh had been dismissed and left earshot, which was enforced by the appearance through the walls of two burly Captains from the palace who had marshaled Lucifer’s hosts and attended his procession, the first of the fallen angels had pulled his sword and casually leaned on it before addressing his Lieutenant appointee.

“Baloth, I appointed you over Torath’s objections. I did so as I know you to truly hate man, and not just because I say so, but because you harbor the why of it. Even when I deign to explain to some of the bowing and scraping underlings that serve me that man was created to be over us in the heavens if they choose the right path to gain that authority, these fools still do not feel the hate and jealousy in their essences as they should, but merely follow my orders to corrupt the animals from that path.

“You, on the other hand, have shown a true appreciation of our betrayal, of how after our own creation and great efforts to please, the Creator chose to reward us with an ultimate role of subservience to his latest creations.

“That is why I chose you to lead. You don’t need orders of how to spread chaos, you naturally invent ways to corrupt the prisms through which men see the path they go down, through your own hatred of them.”

Baloth listened to the words of his lord, knowing that the Master hardly ever bothered to explain himself to anyone, and so truly, he must still be in favor.

Lucifer continued, “Now, however, we have disruptions in your area of Torath’s Principality, and I have not had any explanations worth heeding. Torath has vanished to Tranth’s knowledge, shortly after an audience with me wherein I bade him find the truth of what was occurring in his domain.

“Fools are talking about Theophanys, and angelic interventions, and even go so far as to talk second coming. Yet we who know . . . (he made a grimace, disgusted to even have to say the hated words) The Word, know that all of the prophecies haven’t been fulfilled yet, so second coming is not yet on the agenda to contend with yet.

“So now . . . what do you have to tell me about events of which I have spoken, where about you have personal knowledge?

“I warn you, do not resort to lies, or even half truths, as I will get to the bottom of all I seek, and you will surely know more than mere disfavor should you resort to subterfuges, or even half truths”

Lucifer eyed his Lieutenant with a judicial glance, to discern whether his words were falling on fertile ground, or whether the casting his first few pearls of wisdom had plugged his underling’s ears to where he was oblivious to the latter impartings.

Without doubt though, the ending threats would have registered, but it was known to the dread lord of the earthly realm, that most of his lackeys had an attention span somewhere between non-existent and woefully short, unless it served their purposes.

Baloth scratched a horny eye ridge, frowned and decided to start from the beginning of Evelyn’s corruption to keep both she and Ivan from

pursuing Christianity, through the rest of what he had done personally with his manifestings. He told of what occurred with Farol, and the subsequent reports he had received about angelic interference with his plans to get the woman killed to keep Ivan and his neighbors from ever formulating a Judeo-Christian Ministry.

He went on to explain what he knew of Torath's placing him under Jankh's authority, and how that had brought him to confront the Prince of the Pacific, and that is how he came to receive the orders to remain where he was until further notice.

During his imparting, Lucifer drummed his fingers on his sword hilt, still in a tripod stance leaning a bit forward in his attentive listening to his Lieutenant, to where the point of the gleaming blade was imbedded.

"Baloth, Baloth, Baloth" Drum, drum, drum, went the fingers on the pommel of the sword, punctuating the Master's words.

"Your lack of finesse and subtlety in your efforts to corrupt, have even had occasion to reach me, though Tranth is to censor to what he deems I must pay heed to. Yet I find no real fault in you, as your motivations are out of pure hatred, and not for praise from Overlords, or from me, or for advancement." He paused for a moment in thought, his eyes gleaming in malice that Baloth hoped was not directed at him.

"Yet were Torath truly innocent of direct responsibility for your actions and here to accuse you of disobedience to your Overlord, then I would have to chastise you. He however, is not to be found, and that must be a deliberate orchestration on his part, as it would take such to avoid Tranth's underlings notice."

Just then a squeal and the sound of a blow could be heard through the opening/doorway of the mayoral suite where the two Captains of hosts had taken up station after expelling Jankh, so to leave their lord his private audience with Baloth.

One of them appeared in the opening holding an imp by the scruff of the neck.

"Your forgiveness my lord, this offal begs audience with you, and states that he comes direct from Tranth, or I would not impose." The huge Captain glowered at the imp in his grasp.

"Bid him enter." Lucifer gruffly allowed, and came fully and imperi-

ously erect, then jerked his sword free to swing it up and over to rest upon his shoulder while turning to face the cringing messenger.

“Speak.” He commanded of the imp.

“O’ my Master, Tranth bade me hasten to you to inform you that word has reached him of a matter worthy of your notice.” The messenger began in a fawning drool.

“Speak his exact words, you fool, and make obeisance!” Satan ordered and advanced a few steps to where the cowering imp fell prostrate at his feet.

“Yes, yes, your worship!” The imp’s words were distorted with his lips pressed to the floor. “Tranth said, ‘My lord, there comes hosts to this part of Torath’s Principality under his Lieutenants, led by Sinath, his Central North American Lieutenant, who is apparently designated the Captain of the host by Torath’s command. This I believe you want to know as it seems to bear on the cause of your presence in the area as we discussed.’”

Upon reciting what he recalled verbatim of the message, the imp was biting at his lips in fear, as he hoped he had remembered the salient message in all its parts, or it would not be well for him should he fumble things between such awesome personages as the Chief of Staff and the Master. He cringed anew as he was prodded by his lord’s next words, while physically prodded by a burnished armor shod foot.

“Well, is that all; is there no word as to the destination of Torath’s hosts other than ‘this area’? Further, when you finish a message state that you are finished, so your betters do not stand idle awaiting your wits to stimulate the lagging of your memory to finally result in an utterance.”

“Yes, O’ awesome one, I mean . . . no, there was no more of the message my lord.” The messenger whimpered expecting a kick from the mailed foot.

“Return to Tranth forthwith, with this message, ‘Send to Sinath his Captain, and to all of Torath’s Lieutenants that he Captains, that they are to return to their dominions, and disperse their hosts by my order.’”

Upon finishing his command message to his ‘Chief of Staff,’ Lucifer again prodded the hapless messenger with his foot.

“Be on your way with haste.” He ordered, and the groveling imp

scurried backwards on all fours with his tail in the air, to whirl and vanish from sight with gratifying speed.

Baloth had once again leaned upon the wall in an attitude of indifference to give the impression that he was not eager to eavesdrop, which belied his close attention to the Master's audience with the messenger. At the conclusion, when the messenger was given his leave to go, Satan turned again to address him and Baloth straightened up once more to a kind of attention.

"I am assuming that you know of a point that we may go to and see just what we are up against, to see if there are any actions at all by our enemy, and not just their immediate reactions to our overstepping of boundaries in manifestings."

"I do know of where the woman is by my Captain, Granth thereat, lord. If that's to be any kind of focal point for further of the butt kissers efforts. Yet I point out that the report of smiteings by a Seraph was only coincidentally connected, as it occurred to my underlings who just happened at one point to have been part of the small host who followed those who were to cause the woman's demise."

"One too many coincidences Baloth, when taken in conjunction with the flash of enemy power which occurred just behind your little band of fools, before which you state that you orchestrated the woman into the hands of lost men."

"Yeah, I wondered what the (*&%?#!<*) was with that." Baloth frowned and rubbed his eye ridge in perplexity.

Lucifer whirled and strode through the wall, his burly Captains hastening to follow, and a command floated back to his appointee Lieutenant.

"Come and attend me Baloth, we go to seek answers to these riddles."

Chapter 35

Ben had followed all of Jon's directions to ultimately end up at the cabin's clearing. While they slowly wended their way through the cars and party goers, Jon was silent and finally Ben could take it no more.

"Well Jon, is this the place . . . where do you want me to stop?"



While on the dirt roads after coming off of the main highway, Jon had been surprised to see such a concentration of the enemy for what must be only a small gathering of man. The disruptions of the air could be seen for miles. Legion upon legion seemed to be trying to form up in some kind of order within four main blocks at each point of the compass.

Jon didn't know of course, that Torath's appointed Captain, Sinath, and all of his hosts were those who had just arrived and surrounded the area, as through scuttlebutt, it seemed the focal point that Sinath had been told by Torath to find. Even the Canadian Lieutenants were there with their myriad of underlings, as they had been ordered to be by messenger, and to arrive and place themselves and their hosts under Sinath.

Jon had turned back and forth in his seat observing the cloud of the enemy as they had passed under one corner of the host and approached the clearing. He knew that Farol in attendance on the quartet of humans following behind he and Ben, appeared to any who watched, to be alone and exposed to the might of the enemy.

That worthy however, chose to spread his wings to their fullest,

rather than cowering and trying to hide in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Within a minute they had passed under the perimeter of the host, who were stacked vertically up into the heavens from an earthly point of view, and not spread out laterally over the land like a human army.

Jon had been silent in contemplation after the last turning direction given to Ben, and that is what had brought on the impatient question from the new child of God.

Ben had to slow the truck to a crawl as they neared the open space at the center of the clearing where the bonfire blazed. He had been forced to circle somewhat in an inward spiral, as any direct approach was out of the question due to the haphazard parking that resulted in an impasse, where bumpers almost touched, and in some cases did.

“Yes Ben, we are where the woman is, and you may stop at any time. Favor me with a few moments of silence while I ask the Lord’s leading in our endeavors, as the enemy is here in vast numbers for reasons that I do not know.”

“Well . . . yeah, sure Jon, whatever you need to do. I’m sorry.” The chagrined Ben avowed and apologized, sorry that he had tried to push ‘his’ angel into things as Ben would want, instead of how (being the Lord’s Angel) must be God’s way, as how else could an Angel of The Lord be, right?

Jon had been able to read between the lines of Ben’s words, and though occupied with discerning (hopefully from the Holy Spirit) his next moves, thought to inform the “babe”(Heb 5:13–5:14 NKJV) in Christ, of a bit more angelology.

“I am not the Lord, and so, am not perfect. I am not omnipotent, omnipresent, or omniscient. The latter, omniscient, means all knowing, which I am certainly not. I am not perfect, and so, am capable of error, and am only assuredly not in error when directly guided by the Holy Spirit.

“The Lord God did not create me as his clone, and I am not divine, and merit no praise or worship.

“My brethren who fell from Grace and were ousted from the Presence of God, certainly show that the angels were capable of error when left to our own devices.

“Pay heed, and when in doubt, seek the Lord’s leading in every aspect, thoughts, feelings, deeds and works, and most certainly in how to form your words, as through your speech is how you will be perceived by others who cannot read your mind, heart, or intentions (James 1:26–3:8 KJV).

Ben was indeed paying heed to his Angel’s words, but was thinking by the end of Jon’s imparting that he would be having some mighty slow conversations in the future, if he had to wait on being told every time how and what to say. He was thinking that it would be kind of like the time lag between a talk show host asking questions of someone long distance that you hear immediately, but the questioned doesn’t hear right away, and so stands there rapidly awaiting until the words finally come through to them so they can answer. Which, of course was only a matter of seconds with today’s technology, but Ben didn’t know how long a lag he could reasonably delay a response without looking totally stupid, when someone was talking to him face to face. Worse, what if the other party or parties were in the same boat?

A scene played out in his mind to where Morty was Saved also, (which he intended to try to bring about as soon as possible), and Morty might ask him what time to meet for lunch, and he would have to postpone the answer until lead to reply, standing there vacantly awaiting the chime of an incoming message, or a “You’ve got mail” alert. Upon receipt of the data, he would snap out of his holding posture, and his vacant expression could then reflect the words that he was led to speak.

Daze/days could go by for the simplest communications depending on whatever spiritual modem the Holy Spirit was using. Then another thought sped through the labyrinth of his mind.

Why didn’t the Holy Spirit just converse with Itself on their behalf, and report of the results to both Ben and Morty, so they didn’t even have to speak to one another? He couldn’t help but smile at the impious mental meanderings of which he was capable.

These thoughts flitted through Ben’s mind ending up with the humorous somewhat un-devout (he was thinking wryly) last thought. Meanwhile he had been awaiting Jon’s input, and the truck had shut off seemingly on its own accord, and the headlights had gone out to leave them only lit by the blazing bonfire.

Then he saw Tiny run past and go charging through the dancing figures in the center of the clearing towards where Ben had heard and seen some men firing their guns in the air.

With Jon as his sidekick, he wasn't worried too much about himself, but was a bit concerned about the Sherriff and his companions, and as Jon had just stated that he wasn't all knowing, Ben thought to let him know about the guns, and what the lawman was up to.

"Uh, Jon . . ." He began, "Did you see that cop just haul by us?"

Jon had seen, and had also seen Farol, who while following Tiny, had swooped down to hover at Jon's window with a questioning glance at the Seraph, in an obvious effort to see what Jon's part, if any, might be in conjunction with his own mandate to protect the four in his own charge.

Jon had merely nodded in acknowledgment at the unspoken question and non-committaly shrugged, while wishing that the protecting Angel of Light hadn't drawn attention to him as the eyes of many demons were focused on Farol's every move.

A short distance away, Granth was attempting to overhear what the dark man and his captive, the woman who was to die, were whispering. He was aware of the commotion among his henchman, and soon gave up on concentrating exclusively on the embracing 'couple,' and flew over to where one of his attendants was waving to get his attention.

"What the (*&%?#!<*) is so important?" He demanded of his lackey.

Several messengers who had been held at bay by the circle of his attendants all clamored to respond at once.

"Silence!" He roared, and pointed a claw at one of them.

"You, speak your message first."

"Yes my Captain." The designated one responded immediately, and rapidly told Granth again what he had already seen himself, about the enormous flash of power, and subsequent smaller glow behind the speeding caravan. Then went on to complain in a whining voice about the Seraph who had administered "many blows" to him and his cronies, while they had merely been about their usual business of temptation and corruption. ". . . for no reason at all!" Was his summation of that part of the events as that is what demons were mandated to do in

the normal course of their current existence, and so, was not cause for abnormal responses by their enemies.

The demon then sketched in how, without further mishap, except in seeing Farol hovering over another vehicle that they had passed by on the way to the gathering, he and his fellows had subsequently arrived at the clearing.

Granth barely had a moment to brood on the first message, especially on how the Seraph had been in the guise of a man initially before changing to smite the diminutive underling before him and his cronies. When another of the messenger's group arrived, who had presumably also borne the affront by the Seraph, and catching the tail end of the first messenger's report, chimed in while dancing from foot to foot in impatience.

"And the same Angel is here now attending the same vehicle that passed us. "Look, look over there!" The excited diminutive demon of lust pointed to where the glow of the Light of the Lord that suffused Farol could barely be seen past the roaring bon-fire, as the Angel followed Tiny across the clearing.

Granth rose swiftly to get a better view, followed by one of his trusted followers who grabbed his hind paw from below, bidding him to stop.

"Hold a moment my Captain, there is another message that reports a great host arriving!"

Granth pulled his paw from the other's grasp, whirled, and demanded of his henchman who hovered just below him, "What? Whose . . . ? Ours or theirs?"

"Ours, but not exactly our ours," The perplexed demon answered, and then followed at a more leisurely pace as upon completion of his words, the Captain had zoomed to a greater height to get a better view of the air around the clearing.

All the tardily following henchman could hear of his Captain's words were a loud, "(Now what?!.)" followed by muted mumblings that wafted down in response to whatever was seen from a higher perspective.

Granth was looking at legion upon legion of his brethren that rose as a circular wall around him, reaching high into the heavens. Above him he could barely discern a group of demons who must be those who were Lieutenants and Captains of the huge host.

It went without saying that it couldn't be mere coincidence that the formation had centered on his little sphere of influence, i.e. the gathering in the clearing.

Granth could tell even at a distance, that they weren't locals, and besides which could not be from Baloth as they were far too numerous, and would have contacted him as a matter of course if they were connected to his own pursuits.

"*&%?#!<*" He exclaimed again, and then shrugged his shoulders and sighed. He winged aloft higher towards those who must be the Captains of the host to find out what they purposed.

Ralph peered out around the door jamb, and seeing nothing alarming and the party going in full swing, he relaxed a bit.

"I'll be (*&%?#!<*)" He mused aloud, still bleary eyed and dizzy. "Have I been (*&%?#!<*) hallucinating, or what?"

Gus came over to peer over his shoulder, and seeing nothing special to be seen in his opinion, had some advice for his pal.

"Dude, you got to lay off whatever (*&%?#!<*) your' puttin' inta' yourself by the pound, and go a bit easier. I mean, unless you suddenly got to be Santa's age, you got you a white mustache there that's about twenty bucks uh' coke, so I'm wondering how much you actually managed to snort, before your circuits shorted out."

Ralph turned around groggily, and faced his bud while wiping under his nose with the back of his hand and holding it out to blearily focus on the white powder on it.

"You're right Gus, I could use to be less loaded right now, but I tell you what, this dude I'm tryin' to tell ya' about . . . just messing with him got me pretty sober pretty quick! Ask any of these (*&%?#!<*) in here, they'll tell you what I'm talkin' about."

Gus focused in on some of the people in the room, who were whispering to each other totally un-partylike, and except for the dope-fiend Sam who Gus personally never had a use for except to use him as a connection for getting dope, none of their core group was present in the cabin.

"(*&%?#!<*) it Ralph, I don't want to hear what any of these yahoos have to say. Let's go find some of the home team, find your dude, and kick his (*&%?#!<*)."

Suiting action to his words as he spoke them, Gus had stepped past Ralph and gone out on the porch of the ramshackle cabin to look around for some of their original group that always hung together.

"I'll be (*&%?#!<*)!" He exclaimed within a few seconds as just a hundred feet away he saw a black truck making its way through the clearing.

Ralph had just followed him out through the doorway, when Gus grabbed him by the arm to turn him to see where he was pointing.

"See that truck . . . those mothers got their wires crossed. Those are the dudes who took my (*&%?#!<*)!

"Man, what in the (*&%?#!<*) are you babblin' bout'?" Ralph asked in puzzlement.

"I been tryin' to tell you man, some weird (*&%?#!<*) has been happening to me too. Those dudes got my gun and keys. They are the ones I called you about on the CB who were following us, and I thought that I had lost em,' but now those suckers are here, and we gotz' ta' git' my (*&%?#!<*) back!"

Gus made as if to step off the porch and it was Ralph's turn to grab his arm.

"Wait up fer' a second will ya,' and lemme' git' my (*&%?#!<*) together," He ordered, while lifting both hands to his face to rub it briskly in an attempt to remove the last vestiges of the torpid stupor that he always strove for in his partying.

"Yeah, well they just parked so it don't look like they're going to bone out of here right away," Gus answered.

Ralph finished rubbing his face, which accidentally rubbed off the coke mustache that had been the result of Sam's blunderings, and tried to focus better on things. Over the years of drug and alcohol abuse, he had come to have a pretty high tolerance, and without replenishment often, came to sober up fairly quickly if he was awake and mobile even after getting pretty high.

"Okay Gus, ya' got to tell me somethin' first . . . how in the (*&%?#!<*) did those dudes get your piece, and your keys, and . . ." Ralph looked around and saw Gus's truck. ". . . and how did you get your truck here?"

"Thought you'd never ask. Them turds . . ." Gus launched into a

short version describing his confrontation with the two “dudes” that followed him, how the window had mysteriously rolled down, how the two “clowns” had been “tryin’ to evangelize me or some (*&%?#!<*)” Then wound up his tale with how he “must’ve nodded off is how they had to of gotten my keys and piece, but I had a spare set of keys.”

During the couple of minutes it took Gus to tell his abridged version of events, Ralph had listened while sagely nodding before voicing his ‘take’ on the story.

“Kind of the pot callin’ the kettle black, ain’t it Gus? What with you tellin’ me I’m the one gettin’ too high and all.”

Exasperated, Gus kicked one of the porch posts that precariously held up the outside roof of the cabin.

“I’m tellin’ you that’s how it was, and no matter what, those dudes got Ol’ Betsy and my keys. I don’t see how my story got any more bull (*&%?#!<*) in it than yours does anyway, and I’m good to go to help you kick booty on your guy, so where you at on helpin’ me with my trip?” He demanded.

“Yeah, yeah . . . Ok. I get your drift. Let’s round up the guys and take care of business. These suckers were talkin’ about are all party crashers anyway,” Ralph stated like party crashing wasn’t what “he and the boys” did with the regularity of breath.

They had just stepped off the porch and started for where the guns were going off, as they knew that to be where they would likely find a concentration of their buddies, when Gus had a thought.

“Hey dude, you got your piece witchoo?”

“Hey dude back.” Ralph responded and came to a halt while shading his eyes. “Do you see that guy who just ran by your buds in the black truck you’re talkin’ about? That dude looks like a cop. See the stripes on his pants? And lookee’ there, see . . . his gun belt’s got all that dumb (*&%?#!<*) on it, that cops carry around.”

Just then Tiny turned a bit to go around a small group who were in his way, and his back could be seen.

“Woe woe, you got it, lookit’ those hand cuff deals on the back a’ his skids!” Gus exclaimed.

Chapter 36

“Ben, you are not going to know joy in knowing this, in that I am not going to be of much aid to you that you can discern, in your endeavors to succor the woman.” Jon informed Ben who had been quietly waiting to take his lead from his Angel.

“What does that mean, and what about helping that Sherriff we brought here, that just ran past?” Ben asked, thinking all along that when push came to shove everyone was finally going to see, as he had, that Angels were real by Jon kicking butt with Angelic Heavenly Powers. Then in short order the whole world would know that if Angels were real, the Lord was real, and so everyone would start behaving themselves and the world would become a great place to live in.

These thoughts were to be short lived, however.

“If you knew The Word of God . . .” Jon smiled with a twinkle in his eye, and elaborated. “That means the Bible. You would know somewhat of the end times when the Lord will reveal Himself for all to know as the Lord God.

“Until then, man will choose his path, without the absolute certainty by Theophanys that the Lord is real.”

Seeing Ben’s confusion, Jon continued.

“Ben, this is why it is so important that you study The Word, to arm yourself with knowledge of spiritual things. Read Ephesians chapter 6, for instance. I do not have the time to do a Bible study with you now, but a Theophany is as the Burning Bush was to Moses, a physical manifestation of the Lord to man, that could not be denied.”

“Okay, okay . . . I got it, but what am I supposed to do by myself without your help if I’m all alone against so many bad guys?” Ben asked,

really bummed out, and quite frankly very disappointed in Jon, in that he understood from the Angel's own words that 'they' were going to "go to do battle with the enemy" when Jon first introduced himself.

The heck with it, he thought, and decided to take the bull by the horns so to speak.

"You told me we were going to do battle with the enemy, and I distinctly recall the "we" part of that, and now are you telling me that I have got to do it all by myself?"

"No, Child of God, you have the Holy Spirit with you now, so heed The Small Voice. You have those who followed us here who are the "other Christians" who I told you would aide you."

Jon opened his door as he was speaking, and stepped out to see quite a few pairs of the enemy's eyes watching to see why Farol had stopped to hover outside the door of their truck before continuing on his path following Tiny.

He shut his door, and leaned back in through the open window to whisper to the still disgruntled Ben, "And, you have me, but I will be fighting the enemy that you cannot see, who is all the more deadly to the woman than any group of your fellow men could ever be, as they seek her eternal damnation, rather than just her death."

Ben digested this for a moment and then responded, feeling relieved a bit.

"So you are going to be around to help out after all. Can't you tell me what to do before you go? Will I still be able to see you?"

"Yes, I will be here, though attending to your quest in my own fashion as I am allowed by the Lord. I cannot know the future, as only He is omniscient, but you will see me for a time, and then perhaps not see me. My advice is to seek those who followed us as they are of a certainty, allies in your quest, some of whom can advise you by their knowledge of how to seek the Lord's will in your efforts."

"I must leave you now to confront the enemy in ways that you cannot be of assistance, but would only put yourself in peril, should you accompany me."

With those parting words Jon walked off toward where he knew Evelyn to be surrounded by demons. He mingled with the throng, and then was soon lost to view.

Ben watched him go for a moment, and looked toward where the Sherriff had disappeared through the dancers around the bonfire, then looked back behind in the direction that he thought was where they had first driven into the clearing, to see if he could see the patrol car.

He knew approximately when the cruiser had turned away from closely following his rear bumper, and suspected that it was somewhere among the trees just outside of the clearing.

His choices were limited in that he could try to find the Sherriff among the throng, or could try to find the other Christians who Jon had said were with the Sherriff, but he hadn't seen following the officer when he ran past them a few minutes ago.

He cocked an ear, and just now noticed that for a while he hadn't heard as much gunfire, and that it seemed to be intermittently coming from other directions from where he first thought he had heard it. He figured rightly that the officer had the focal point of the firing as his destination when he had run past, and that having arrived to confront the shooters, had ordered them to stop.

He got out of the truck, closed his door, and though Jon had called him Ben "of the heroic heart," he wasn't really prepared to go confront more people with guns than he had to . . . certainly not without Jon at his side. So he began trying to trace their path back to the point where the patrol car had turned off. Within a couple of minutes searching the clearing's perimeter in the direction he thought he had driven through, he saw the overheads on top of the cruiser reflecting the firelight, as his eyes refocused to see better in the dark from not facing toward the glaring bonfire.

He increased his pace and approached the car, where he saw three people with it. One was sitting shotgun with his door open, and the interior light showed him to be talking into a microphone, while the other two, a man and a woman, were standing closely together by the hood of the car, with their heads bowed, like they were looking at something on the ground between them.

Tiny had run initially, but was winded by the time he reached the bonfire in the center. He was forced to slow his pace down to a walk in any case, trying to duck and dodge the wildly gyrating dancers by the bonfire.

Music was blasting from huge speakers in from the bed of a truck which was backed in, and on the immediate circle of vehicles around the fire. The thumping beat was so loud that Tiny couldn't hear the gunfire over the music.

It wasn't bad music either in Tiny's opinion, as it was Country Rock, and he liked country music of all kinds.

Skirting the bonfire where the heat of the roaring blaze kept most of the dancers at bay, he was trying to orient himself to take the most direct route out of the throng of dancers, when a strong hand grabbed one of his to spin him around.

He was spun into the arms of a tall cowgirl, complete with hat and boots with denim jeans molded to her lithe figure, and a western shirt tucked in to be belted tightly at the waist with an overlarge oval silver buckle for adornment.

She pulled him into a two-step, and Tiny couldn't help but follow her lead (or trip over her) for a moment, looking down into the bright blue eyes and pretty oval face framed by the golden curls that fell from beneath her Stetson.

"Hi, tall and handsome, I'm Barbara." She leaned close to say in his ear to be heard over the sound of the music.

Within seconds Tiny had stopped moving to the music and pulled his hand from the small of her back where he had automatically put it without thinking as she had pulled him along and around in her dancing.

He backed away from her but she maintained her grip on his left hand, and now he saw what he thought was a hurt, pouting expression spread across the pretty face, yet there still seemed a smile in the crinkles around the blue eyes.

Seeing that she wasn't typical of the drunken and loaded dancers that he had been wending through, but maybe just a good gal out for a dance and a beer or two, he gently disengaged his hand and leaned toward her and almost had to shout, "I'm sorry miss, er . . . Barbara, but I'm here on official business."

He pointed with his right hand to the Sheriff's emblem that was on all of the t-shirts that he bought through his office.

The pretty face cleared up to smile up at him. “Oh, okay.” She also virtually had to yell, and produced a card. “Maybe a rain check?”

“Maybe.” He mouthed, tired of trying to be heard, while looking over her head and around him.

“Doggone it, now I don’t know which way I was going to go.”

The woman put her hand against his chest for a moment to draw his attention, waved, and moved off into the dancers, swaying to the music.

Tiny headed out from the center of the fire, but at a tangent away from the speakers so he could hear again where the shooting was coming from, and get his bearings.

He fingered the card in his hand, musing how the beautiful woman had befuddled the male in him for a moment, before he could shake it off, and re-focus. How sad, that with so few opportunities for somehow getting a wonderful woman to share his life, someone like her had literally thrown herself at him, but was obviously not cut from the same cloth, or she wouldn’t be keeping company with the bulk of the people that he had seen here.

Yep, the mystery of how people found a mate to share their lives with was still eluding him.

He was just ready to crumple the card up in his hand, when The Holy Spirit moved within him, and he lifted it up to read it.

It had a logo in the top left corner, just like his had, and Tiny lifted it up higher to read the small print by the light of the fire.

It read Federal Bureau of Investigation, and in the center of the card in larger print, Barbara Townsend, under which was, (Special Agent). The usual office, fax, and cell phone listings were at the bottom.

“Well I’ll be.” He said aloud, and looked back toward the fire to see if he could find her. The glare made it impossible, as all he could see were silhouettes of the dancers closest to the blaze.

He’d been wondering if the gal was blind, as even without his uniform shirt to draw attention to him, he still had his gun belt with all its assorted hardware, including flashlight/baton, hand radio, gun, and handcuffs. Then his uniform pants had a dark stripe running down the sides, and of course, the hard to miss emblem on his shirt. Most people

shied away from him if they knew he was a cop, especially in a place like this.

Yep, she knew what I was, straight from the gate, he was thinking now. She wanted to let me know she was here, and undercover, and grabbing me up to dance was her way of doing it without having to holler it out over the music.

Thinking of how her clothes had molded to her figure, he wondered where she could possibly hide her piece.

Just then he distinctly heard more gunshots, and turning in that direction, he set off at as fast a pace as the crowds would let him, but without burning himself out to where he would get there out of breath. Other single shots replied from other locations around the area, but the main volley seemed to be coming from straight ahead.

“Man,” He grumbled under his breath. “I have got to slow down on the grits, and get back in shape.”

That thought caused him to also fleetingly wonder how slovenly he might have looked in just a t-shirt, to Barbara.

Within moments he could see muzzle flashes, and a couple of trucks with their headlights on, just outside the clearing among the nearest trees and brush.

Parting two bushes, he stepped between them just in time to see a bearded man raise a shotgun and shoot at a tree limb over the head of one of his fellows, who was subsequently showered with debris.

The “Boom” of the twelve gauge loaded with double ought buckshot was deafening up close.

(“*&%?#!<*&”) Mike,” That unworthy complained to the shot-gunner. “All the (*&%?#!<*) trees ta’ blow up round here, and you got ta’ pick on the one I’m under.

The unoffending tree limb still precariously held, dangling from its former life giving parent, by a few threads of fiber.

There were five men all told, with guns laid across the hoods of the two trucks, within which circle of headlights, the group was gathered.

One of them raised a large bore automatic pistol, and fired five rapid shots at the dangling branch and the few threads by which it still hung parted.

“Crack, crack, crack, crack,” And a final better aimed shot, which was the one to finally part the limb from the tree, echoed out.

“Run Jim, another of the group addressed his already debris showered fellow, who having seen the pistol bearing man take aim over him, had already scuttled out of harms way.

None of them saw Tiny standing between the bushes, until he stepped forward and raised his opened badge wallet.

He had pulled his service revolver, and because of the pistol wielding man, vaguely had it pointed in his direction. None of the others had anything in hand more dangerous than a beer can, except the one with the shotgun, and that was pointed at the ground and couldn't be easily brought to bear.

“Nice shooting,” He addressed them all. “I don't know what these trees are doing to you to make you feel like killing them, but you all are done with it right now.”

“Hey, this is private property . . .” One of the unarmed men started toward him.

“Yeah, ya' got a warrant?” The man with the automatic chimed in before his fellow could finish.

“I'm Deputy Sherriff Joe Bradford of the Applewood County Sheriff's Office, and I don't need a warrant as I was in pursuit of a DUI suspect who I believe to have driven onto this property.”

Tiny was stretching the truth, as he had only that weird talking, and weird ID having Jon Seraph dude to explain how he had arrived here. He sure hadn't been following the second truck that he had finally turned around to follow, and so wasn't exactly in “hot pursuit of a suspect” which would justify his presence on the property.

But now that he was thinking on it, the turn off from the highway was the only one that the second truck could have come down after he had lost sight of it over the rise, so it was a good bet that that driver had made all of the subsequent turns to get to the clearing.

The second truck had blitzed by him so fast, that he hadn't time to get a make on it as he had zoomed by in the other direction before turning around in pursuit.

Now the debris showered one who had been busily brushing off

twigs and leaves, and seemed the soberest one of the group, addressed the lawman.

“I’m an attorney, and I can state unequivocally that we have all been here for quite some time.” He pointed to the shell casings that littered the ground among the scattered beer cans and bottles. “And we were all sober when we got here.”

“Yeah, right.” Tiny responded, not believing a word of it. “You do know however, that being here and seeing you in the commission of a crime still empowers me to act?”

“What crime?” The pistol holder demanded belligerently, while Mike, the bearded shot gun holder, merely grunted an assent to the question and shifted his grip on the gun and the barrel seemed to swing indifferently towards Tiny just a bit.

That was it. Tiny immediately raised his sidearm and came to a two handed target stance, to point it directly between the eyes of man who had the automatic.

“Freeze, all of you!” He commanded.

“You with the pistol and you with the shotgun, drop your weapons right now, and all of you put your hands in the air!”

The men all slowly complied, the automatic shooter being the last, glaring with a booze fueled hate at Tiny.

“I am Robert James, attorney at law, Officer,” The debris ridden once again informed Tiny of his vocation. “And I demand to know what laws we are supposed to be breaking. Mind you, I have friends at court.”

As he was speaking, the attorney lowered his hands like he had just absolved himself from having to comply with Tiny’s orders for all of them to put their hands up, just because he was so wonderful as to be a lawyer.

“Yeah, me too,” Tiny responded, keeping a wary eye on the automatic guy, who seemed to be the troublemaker of the group, though now as all were disarmed, he relaxed his two handed grip. “Privileged us to have ‘friends’ in court, huh?”

“But, I got to tell you a few legal things, attorney James, first put your hands back up where I told you, and second is a law of physics. That would be that what goes up, must come down . . . by the law of gravity. As an attorney you should appreciate those laws, and the law

which forbids you to fire metal chunks a half mile or so up in the air, without care of what they hit when they come down.

Seeing that the attorney was digesting this, while the others looked to him for his lead in the legal end of things. Tiny continued. "Here's a scenario for you Einsteins, an ounce of steel jacketed slug falls from three thousand feet in the air, and aerodynamically comes down point first in to the face of your child in her baby carriage."

"Now, this particular planet has a quote 'law of gravity' unquote, which dictates that a falling object, such as a slug without much wind resistance, will fall at the rate of thirty two feet per second for the first second, and thirty two feet faster per second for each second it falls."

The men, drunk or not, were actually hanging on his words now, as it had to do with guns and bullets, and this was something interesting to them, no matter the circumstances.

After a moment's pause, Tiny drove in the final coffin nail of his argument, waxing pontifically with one finger in the air in facetious lecture mode. "Apply the laws of mathematics, and I'd say your baby is in big trouble."

"So are you dude," A gravelly voice from behind him announced just as he finished speaking, while a cold hard gun muzzle was pressed to Tiny's neck

"You're covered, so drop your piece, and don't turn around." The harsh voice ordered him, and the gun muzzle was nudged a little more firmly to add emphasis to the demand.

"Hey Ralph . . ." The bearded man began who had seen Ralph and Gus sneaking up on the Sherriff, and was waiting for them to make their move. He bent over in mid sentence to pick up his shotgun with a grunting effort that compressed his beer belly into his lungs, which stopped the supply of air to blow the horn of his mouth, and so, stopped him from finishing whatever he was next going to say.

"Oh (*&c%?#!<*)" The attorney muttered seeing things getting out of hand.

"I think there . . . numnuts, that we could do without giving our names to this cop. Maybe ya' wanta' give him our social security numbers too." Yet another voice sounded sarcastically from behind Tiny, obviously

specifically aimed at the rotund bearded Mike, but addressed warningly to all five of the group.

Tiny had hesitated for a moment when ordered to drop his revolver, but at the sound of a second voice from behind him, let go his grip to let it fall to the ground.

Just then in the comparative silence, Tiny's radio crackled to life, and though he had lowered the volume to almost nothing to sneak through the party goes with out drawing undue attention to himself, all of them heard Ivan's voice calling for help over the channel, and describing to anyone who could hear, how to get to the clearing.

The demons that had followed Farol and Tiny had joined with the one's digging their wills into the minds and hearts of the little gun club.

Farol was doing absolutely nothing, but observe, which is what was intended for him to do.

The demons had tested Tiny's resolve with timid efforts, just to see if Farol, who obviously attended the lawman, was going to take any kind of umbrage. Between the Holy Spirit that was within him, and the Angel of Light, they had trod warily at first, but after no response from the Angel, lust had given it his best shot when the woman had grabbed Tiny up to dance, and then fear and doubt had assailed him with their best efforts afterwards, when he approached the shooting . . . all to no avail.

Right now they were gloating and tossing taunts at the unamused Farol, as his charge was accosted from behind, to lose charge of the situation.

The demons had not overstepped the bounds allowed them, and so Farol was powerless to aid Tiny to repel their attacks. He certainly could not take physical action without authority to do so.

Besides, were he to scatter all of the minor demons from influencing the men, or assailing Tiny, these men were well able from their own perverted human wills, to harm his charge of their own volition.

Lord, Lord, Farol mentally sighed in exasperation, as myriads of Angels, including himself, had done for millennia.

The Holy Spirit soothed His Angel, and bade him patience, as He had also responded . . . for millennia.

Chapter 37

“I give up, no one’s answering,” Ivan complained, leaning back out the open door to address Josh and Ellen.

Their prayers interrupted, Josh responded from where he and Ellen had been seeking the Lord’s will with heads bowed at the front of the car.

“Well then, I guess it’s all up to us, except for whatever our officer friend is up to.” He said.

“Hello there.” A youthful voice intruded on their thoughts about what exactly they were to do.

In the air above them, a question was being answered.

“Baloth’s time is over, Sinath gloated to Granth. We are here at Torath’s bidding, to see to that.”

Granth was puzzled at this answer to his announcement of who he was, and of his authority as Captain over the demons below, and then his demand as to why the Central Plains Lieutenant, who now Captained this huge host, was on Baloth’s turf.

As Torath’s Lieutenant, Sinath was equal to Baloth, and so, nominally Granth’s superior, though out of his jurisdiction, so to speak, but so too were the Canadian Lieutenants who were of the group he had risen to confront, who could only be present by order of Torath, and so lent credence to Sinath’s boasts. Certainly they would not submit to Sinath, their Central Plains peer, having Captaincy over them if not ordered by Torath, himself.

Sinath was a happy camper. The memory of Baloth’s toe in his ear, and his mandibles being ground into the pavement, was still a fresh sore spot in whatever organ demons would call their hearts.

He was hoping with all of his being that a direct confrontation with Baloth would shortly ensue, to where he could regain some of what he had lost in the eyes of any who had heard about the last meeting he had with the West Coast Lieutenant.

This minor Captain of Baloth's might just be the vehicle by which his desires could be brought to fruition.

"Granth, I order you to seek your Lieutenant, and summon him before me, to answer for his trespasses," He commanded.

"I already sent a messenger about your arrival, and believe me, Baloth will come to, or maybe the right word is, 'for' . . . you, for his own reasons, never mind any orders from you to encourage him," Granth tried to warn Sinath.

"Enough said then. You may go about your little business, and leave things to your betters up here."

Sinath chaffed at even this minor Captain, having obviously heard of his last confrontation with Baloth, daring to warn him about future head to heads with his Lieutenant.

He also knew that he was over stepping the bounds that Torath had given him, as he had only authority to marshall and Captain this host, and then wait for further orders from Torath, not to issue demands and such.

The disgruntled Granth flew back down towards the party and his henchman who had awaited him half way between.

He was hoping that Baloth was not out of favor, because if that were true, then it would surely reflect on his own standing as a Captain under him.

Mostly though, he hoped Baloth would resort to his usual tactics when confronted by an over bearing idiot like Sinath, and just kick the Central Plains Lieutenant's butt again, no matter if he was out of favor with Torath or not.

Grumbling and griping under his breath, he passed his second in command henchman without a word, and headed back down toward the ring of demons who hopefully still paid heed to the woman and the dark man.

Torath had gleaned all that he could from the cow. He had let go of her as soon as possible, as her Covering from Ivan's Salvation, made her

unpalatable spiritually for even such as he to be comfortable from the obsession or possession standpoint.

Attacking and withdrawing from someone Covered or Saved, mostly by using the lost as battering rams through hate, lust, fear, or whatever . . . was one thing. Staying in close proximity for an extended period was like a demon forced to listen to the prayers of the Saints, or worse, in the case of the Saved, hang out around Holy Spirit Itself. Totally rubbing any demon the wrong way, and grated on their indelicate sensitivities.

Evelyn stood there swaying, trying to refocus from what seemed yet another repulsive dream state. This one had her dying for some reason as a monster wished it, but she was to tell yet another monster why she was to die at the first monster's command.

As in most dreams, this one didn't make sense, and as in most of hers, or most peoples she had talked to about dreams, bad things were happening. She and her friends had occasion to wonder in discussions, who or what caused most dreams to be primarily where bad things happened.

Are dream states, especially scary ones, some kind of spiritual battleground, versus a reflection of psychological traumas as some believed?

Her rubbery legs soon firmed, and she stopped swaying.

Seconds that seemed like years had gone by while she had been in the cold embrace of the horrid man, and she snapped her eyes open as the memory of him returned her fully from the chaos of her dreaming.

There was the evil man still before her, exuding malice even with his back partially turned to her, his head tilted up to look at the sky.

The driving music thudded back in, and awareness of the throngs and sounds of drunken partyers curtailed the beginnings of her scream, to just a sharp indrawn breath.

In these surroundings who would hear her . . . or care?

Well, Baloth had been doing as he was mandated, from what Torath could learn from his distasteful perusing of what little the flesh-pile knew. As usual though, his Lieutenant had overstepped the boundaries somewhere or other that the woman knew nothing about.

That much was certain, as Torath also knew that the Holy Spirit was omnipresent, and through means not available to demon-kind, could

effect a response from an action in one area, by simultaneously reacting to it in a distant and seemingly unrelated area of demonic activity.

Kind of like Torath could only see one part of the chess board, and someone on his side made a move he doesn't know about, resulting in an attack by the opponent against the pieces Torath can see.

"Bah . . . the (*&%?#!<*) with it all!" Torath gave vent verbally to his frustrations.

His lieutenant was more than capable of digging his own grave, from what he could find out, and needed no help to fall from favor with the Master. Just so Torath didn't lose favor with him.

He had seen the glow of Farol pass by, just before he drew the images from the woman's mind, and thought nothing of it, as Angels of Light were everywhere just like fallen angels. He couldn't help but notice the glow standing out, as there wouldn't be many Angels attending such as these cattle, as it offended them to witness man's happy degradation of himself, unless there were children to protect, or they had someone specifically assigned to their charge.

Torath just bet too, that even the Holy Spirit could find few to heed His Small Voice trying to turn this mass of demon fodder from their pursuits.

That fact had to be, because so few of these were Saved, that in looking around him from his currently limited lowly view upon the Earth, he couldn't see any, who had the Holy Spirit.

Torath was thinking that this pile of excretion could be a demon vacation spot, just like the command bunkers of those who ran such places as the ovens at Auschwitz. All fun and play for the demons, as they didn't have to do any work to corrupt the damned, but merely gleefully watch humans merrily enjoying their paths to Hell, and take additional delight in them torturing each other to death on the way. Added bonuses being the doing of it all supposedly "in the name of god."

Well, anyway . . . this mingling with protoplasmic concoctions of the Lord, except for when he sowed his oats so to speak, with the daughters of men millennia past, was a repugnant and done deal for Torath.

Especially so, this very instant, as the busy body Captain of Baloth's had taken flight up to where Torath could see what must be, by their numbers, his host under Sinath.

The few of the number of encircling demons who had been in the cabin, and witnessed his strange behaviors for supposedly just being a man, were focused above on the gathered host to which their Captain had just flown a few moments before.

Torath glided below them with his eyes on the ground, and rapidly made toward the perimeter of the clearing.

Evelyn watched him disappear among the throngs in delight.

Now to just get myself oriented, and find a way back home, she directed herself firmly, and had no sooner had a moment or two of relief, when she was rudely jostled from the side.

A slurred voice spoke, "Hey, I know you!"

She was grabbed by a hand on each shoulder, and spun to her right to see a completely unknown leering face looking down at her.

"I seen you at the beach. You're the babe that Ralphy boy was playing with." She was informed fumely.

The miscreant let go of her with one hand to reach into his back pocket and produce a bottle, leaning on her a bit to keep his balance.

"Ya' wanna' drink, sweet cheeks?" He let go of her with his other hand to unscrew the top and took a long swig, while keeping one eye on her even with his head tilted back.

Evelyn tried to move away and was bumped into from behind by someone else who slurred, "Maybe Ralph's got his issue already from her and now it's our turn."

"Yep, that's what I'm a thinkin,'" the first man replied.

Evelyn was just getting ready to scream anyway, out of sheer frustration whether it would do any good or not, when an authoritative sober voice announced at her side.

"I do not believe either of you to be using what the good Lord gave you to be thinking with."

At those words, she turned her head to see a man totally attired in the brightest blue she had ever seen.

The fair haired stranger had twinkling blue eyes to match his (jumpsuit?) which seemed to be all of a piece without seam or zipper, with a high Nehru type collar open at the throat.

The eyes smiling down at her were crinkled at the corners, though the features were unamused.

This man could help her; she was given to know in the core of her being.

For the first time since her son died, Evelyn felt a sense of peace flow over her in spite of the horrors of the events she had awakened to and that seemed to still be on going, as the strong presence of the Holy Spirit with Jon, in such close proximity to her, was a balm to her demon inspired turmoil of the past year.

She took a small step to be closer to him, mesmerized by the depths of the Angelic blue eyes in a totally good way, versus the way she had been hypnotized by the red eyes of the fallen.

“What did you say you son of a (*&%?#!<*)?” The bottle was lowered, and a befuddled frown was upon the brow of the first man, who fumbled at his side with his other hand, where he habitually had a clasped knife in a sheath on his belt.

“Yo,’ Bob, check out this dudes duds.” The second man said with a sneer. “Is this a costume party or what?”

The first man, seeing Evelyn step right up to Jon, obviously for protection from him and his buddy, addressed her rudely.

“Hey, (*&%?#!<*)! Get the (*&%?#!<*) away from that dude, or your gonna get hurt cause me an’ my partner here are fixen’ to take him down!” Then he leered, “And then we gonna’ take you down in a different’ way right afterwards, over in my truck.”

“I’ll be (*&%?#!<*)!” A demon exclaimed.

The demons who had been watching for the return of Granth from the host above, returned their attention to where the dark spirited human had been in embrace with the woman.

Now, though, the dark man had turned into a bright blue attired fair haired man to all appearances, and though the couple were not in embrace any longer, they still were obviously together as the woman was close against the side of the man.

They were all wondering what had happened in the few minutes of their inattention, and only a few of them had been in the cabin and were party to the dark man’s projected menace, and had felt how black of heart he was. So only they could wonder truly at how the stranger had transformed into what appeared a different man altogether, as well as into one who they could see was filled with the Holy Spirit.

“What trickery is this?” One of them asked of the others.

“Granth was thinking that this man could not be merely human, but must be a spirit of light or dark.” Another of them said.

“Yeah, but if this be a lackey from above, can one of them transmogrify to fool us by showing a black spirit rotten to the core, when they are Angels of Light?” Yet a third snarled the question.

Granth descended into their midst, and was brought up to speed on the situation, and was sheepishly admitted to, that no one had been paying much attention to the man and woman since he, Granth, had arisen to confront the host.

He looked at Jon and the woman, and the two men that appeared to be going to accost them, and decided to bide his time and wait for the show to begin, knowing some answers would be forthcoming by the actions or non-actions taken.

Yet still . . . he glanced at his minions.

“You are the dumbest pack of would be Captains, Lieutenants, or Overlords, that I have ever had to listen to.

“Among the lot of you, have you ever considered, heard of, or seen a fallen able to stomach what it would take to even remotely attempt to appear an Angel of Light as a man, never mind as a spirit . . . to another spirit? How can we project the light of the (here he pointed a finger upward)? On the other hand how could a flunky from above project the darkness of we, or the damned of man, who follow our Master?

“This man has the mmmph . . . Presence with him, that much is obvious, and the other is not this man, as he did not have . . .” Here he stopped, knowing his lackeys knew of He whom he spoke, but it was just too hard to refer to the Lord aloud, twice in one sentence.

“The other man, and I still do not believe he was only one of these mud dwellers, must have gotten away right out from under your snouts.”

The minor demon who had been with Gus, and been chosen by his diminutive status to serve as an even lowlier messenger and report to Granth of the Seraph, suddenly caught a full view of Jon’s face as that worthy looked over the shoulder of one of those who had obscured the messenger’s view, at he and his fellows.

The same warning knowing look in the wise ethereal eyes, and the

same features, percolated through the fog in his mind, to ring a bell of memory.

“My Captain, my Captain, it is he!” The demon danced from hoof to hoof in excitement.

“In the name of our Master, what are you babbling about?” The more than merely tired of dealing with brainless henchmen Granth, asked of the excited imp.

“It is he! It is he!” The messenger repeated again and again, growing even more excited as the piercing blue eyes of Jon focused on the knarled finger that the imp was pointing at him, and then looked directly into the messenger’s reddish yellow eyes, while the fair haired head shook from side to side in a subtle warning to him.

“Fool, who is ‘he’? You witless recording!” Granth finally exploded.

“The Seraph! It’s the Seraph in man form. He is the one who smote me!” The imp finally clarified. “The man in blue is the Seraph!”

“Captain, there is an Angel here already, who diverted from his charge, and stopped by this man’s truck for a moment, before continuing on his way, another demon who had just joined the group to listen in, added.

Granth was beset from every side with too many variables for him to contend with without direction. First I have that blowhard Sinath, up above stirring my pot, and then I had the dark, whatever, to contend with, and now if these idiots can be believed . . . this might be the same Seraph who was nosy at the beach, but did nothing then.

What is so important about this woman, that first Baloth wants her dead, and then for her existence to be of such import as to justify an Angelic transformation into man, especially by a Seraph.

“Baloth, where are you.” He grumbled aloud.

“You fools who call yourselves skilled at pushing buttons,” He addressed his henchman who were all eagerly listening about the Angels. “Go and push those two who are almost to the brink of violence, into attacking the blue one, and see what other men can be inspired to help them.”

Demons of Lust and Rage raced to sink their tendrils of will into the minds and hearts of the two who faced Jon, who had subtly moved so he was between Evelyn and them.

Chapter 38

Josh and Ellen turned toward the youthful stranger, who had come up to them and said “hello.”

“Hello yourself, young man,” Josh returned Ben’s greeting, and Ellen simply said, “Hello.”

Ivan climbed out of the car to hear what the newcomer had to say.

“I’m Ben Rawlins, and I know this is going to sound strange, but bear with me for a moment. First off, I am the one who was driving the truck that you followed here.” Then Ben launched into a brief description of the events leading to where the cruiser had pulled in behind him and Jon.

The three were quiet, raptly absorbed in Ben’s tale, and except for surprised expressions in certain places, drank in his impartings without doubting that he at least was telling them what he thought was the truth. They were encouraged by the part where Ben had received his Salvation, which lent credence in their eyes to the otherwise unbelievable story.

Ben wound up with how Jon had told him to seek them out, and ask their direction in just what he was to do next.

Ben’s story reinforced what Tiny had said that the owner of the black truck knew of “the abducted woman,” and from his description Ivan was positive now that the gal referred to was indeed, his wife.

He turned to Josh and Ellen where they had all gathered by the hood of the car. “I don’t know about all of the rest of it, but he sure describes Evelyn to a T.”

“Ben, right? I think its time we introduced ourselves,” Ellen said.

“I’m Ellen Campbell,” she put her hand on Josh’s arm, “and this is my husband Josh.

She indicated with a gesture, “And this man is Ivan Seranovich, who is the husband of the woman . . . her name is Evelyn by the way, that we believe is the lady you are trying to help.”

Handshakes went the rounds with the introductions.

Ivan couldn’t stand still, and had been taking small paces back and forth, since the part of Ben’s tale where he had described Evelyn by the light pole at the beach.

“I don’t know about you three, but I think we should go and see if we can find her, whether Tiny is back or not,” He said.

“I agree,” Josh said, while Ellen wasn’t so sure.

She said, “From what Ben told us, there are a lot of bad men involved, and I don’t think that we should confront them without Officer Bradford. I just think that he isn’t here accidentally, and I . . . well . . . I just don’t know.”

“Ellen, honey, we prayed about it, and I don’t know about you, because Ben got here before we could discuss what came of our prayers, but I didn’t get any leading from the Holy Spirit.” Josh told her.

“Did you?” He then asked.

“No, I didn’t,” She responded, and then a bit more firmly said, “But I still don’t think we should leave without the Sherriff.”

Ivan had been rubbing his forehead while listening.

“I tell you what, I’ll go and take a look around, and you guys stay here and wait for Tiny.”

“I’ll go with him,” Ben readily volunteered.

“Well, if it’s something you both feel strongly about, then I guess you should follow your hearts,” Josh said, “I don’t feel strongly either way about what is the right thing, and I won’t leave Ellen alone in this place. We will be here praying for you.”

“That sounds good, but while you’re at it, keep trying on the radio too, cause’ just seeing and hearing what is going on here, we could use some more physical troops, even though we seem to have Angels on our side.”

“All right then, it’s you and me Ben. And by the way, I can’t thank you enough for all you have done, and tried to do, for my wife already.”

“Don’t even think about it,” Ben responded, pointed, then added. “I came from over there and I didn’t see her, so maybe we should head out looking over towards the cabin.”

“Okay, fine then. Josh, Ellen, if Tiny comes back tell him that’s where we are going to start looking.”

Without waiting for a reply, Ivan set out on a fast pace. “Come on Ben,” He threw over his shoulder.

Tiny wasn’t a happy camper.

In these surroundings that thought kind of applied, he was thinking.

He was standing in the middle of nowhere in his t-shirt, with his hands raised, and from what he had heard from his radio, Ivan still hadn’t reached anyone for help.

“Ya’ know, I didn’t come here by myself, and you just heard the radio call so you know that to be true. This whole shebang might be surrounded by Sheriffs, highway patrol, or city cops by now.” He said.

“Yeah, well, what you don’t know is that me an’ the boys have a (*&%?#!<*) time of it getting CB calls in or out of this area, and your radio probably ain’t getting out much either.” The same gravelly voice of he who the bearded big bellied Bob had addressed as Ralph, responded from behind him.

Ralph and Gus had pushed Tiny in front of them a bit further towards the other men, as Ralph spoke, when an authoritative female voice came from the bushes they had just passed between.

“This is the FBI, everyone drop your weapons and put your hands in the air. Believe it, you are surrounded, and our radios work!”

“This really ain’t my day,” Gus sighed and raised his hands, and Ralph dropped his magnum and followed suit.

“Man, lady, I’m going to be cleaning my gun for a week,” The shot gunner grumbled, letting the twelve gauge thud into the dust again.

Torath growled and griped his way through the woods, and after getting to a place where he could change back into himself, did so with a satisfied grunt.

He rose towards the host and soon came up upon Sinath who was giving orders to the other Lieutenants, just as a messenger arrived from the palace.

Torath came up right into the airborne meeting of his Lieutenants, and addressed them all.

“Whatever you are doing . . . stop doing it. Some (*&%?#!<*) is going on that changes my plans . . .” He paused and addressed his erstwhile Captain.

“By the way Sinath, what exactly are you doing? I recall giving you no orders to be doing anything besides just getting to the area with the host.”

“I am so glad to see you.” Sinath oily replied. “We were just preparing for the arrival of Baloth.”

“Yeah,” Another Lieutenant growled. “Your Captain here ordered for Baloth to attend him, and’s been ordering us around like he’s Major General Buttweed, and we’re his lackeys.”

“Is that so?” Torath asked of no one in particular while eyeing Sinath malevolently, when the messenger who had hovered not wanting to interrupt his betters spoke.

“Lord Torath, I bring Sinath direct orders from the Master through Tranth at the palace.”

Torath winced inwardly, though in front of his troops he assumed an imperious air and ordered the messenger to impart his message.

The imp simply said, “The Master orders Sinath and his host to disperse to whence they came.”

“That’s it?” Torath asked, surprised that there was no more information or orders.

“Yes, Overlord.”

“Be gone then, your betters would speak.”

The imp fled.

Minor Captains under the various Lieutenants had approached the circle for orders, but held off seeing the Overlord had arrived and was giving an audience.

One however, approached through his peers with haste, and again Torath was interrupted before he could issue orders.

“Pardon my lords. As Captain Sinath directed, I stationed myself and my underlings afar, to forewarn of Baloth’s approach . . .” The minor Captain hesitated.

“Well, get on with your report then, seeing as how you too have already interrupted me.” Torath growled.

“Yes Overlord. The problem is that I don’t know who approaches, but a mighty host looms on the horizon to blot the heavens, and I bring that tidings.”

“How mighty of a host?” Torath asked in alarm.

“Greater than this one, Overlord.”

“Could you even tell whose host? Their’s or ours, you idiot!”

“My advance scouts reported it as a host of ours, Overlord. I thought that would be understood,” The Captain said apologetically, wondering unless it was the end of the end times, why his Overlord would even be thinking that an Angelic host of such size could be that which approached.

“(*&c%?#!<*)” Torath vented, only a bit less unhappy that a demon host approached than were it an Angelic one.

Assuredly, there was only one other besides himself, who could marshal such a demon host in Torath’s own backyard, and that was the Master himself.

He also knew that Satan would have the foresight to have his own advance scouts to forewarn him of Torath’s own host.

He had been there to hear the order to Sinath to disperse, and as Sinath’s superior it was his responsibility now, yet disbursing in haste wouldn’t change things as there was no way to hide his own huge host, and besides, Satan already knew of it as he had sent a messenger to it.

What really gave him pause from ordering an immediate disbursal though, was he was trying to figure out how to lay the blame on Sinath, Baloth, or anybody for that matter, for whatever the Master might have issue with.

Of course the issue might just simply be that Satan didn’t need Torath’s host for whatever his objective in coming was, as he had his own larger host.

Either way, he had been ordered to disperse his lackeys, and an order was an order.

He addressed his Lieutenants, “All of you pack it in, and return from whence you came . . . except you Sinath.” He pointed at his former Captain of the host.

“What about my personal host, lord?” Sinath asked, worried about his own standing as a Lieutenant.

“Oh, they may stay as well. I do need some personal attendants as befits my station.”

The cylindrical formation of demons around them, began to break up into phalanxes, who at their Captain’s commands began to move away north and east.

“Well, Sinath,” Torath draped an arm across his underlings rounded shoulders and conversationally said, “We await with great interest, the Master’s arrival.

Within a few minutes, even from the distance, Sinath and Torath could see the approaching host of Lucifer beginning to blot out the night sky.

Ben and Ivan had just gotten to the front porch of the cabin.

On the way, Ben had described what Jon was wearing and how he should stand out from the crowd, and in response to Ivan’s questions, had described what Evelyn was wearing when he had last seen her.

They stepped up on the porch, and even its slight elevation gave them a better view to look over the heads of the crowd, where Ben immediately saw glimpses of the bright blue of Jon’s clothes stand out from the dark colors most of the partyers were wearing.

Ivan had gone to look through the cabin doorway, where with a brief glance he could see all of the occupants, when Ben’s shout brought him back outside.

“Hey Ivan, Jon is over there!”

“Where?” Ivan tried to see by looking in the direction of the pointed finger.

“Never mind,” Ben said, and jumped off of the porch. “I saw him for a couple of seconds and I know just about where he is. Follow me.”

Ben raced off through the throng, and Ivan was hard pressed to keep up with his new young friend.

Seeing the host melting away overhead, Granth dispatched a messenger above to see what was going on, and to inform those above about the Seraph. He knew that Sinath wasn’t about to forgo lording it over Baloth, and unless Sinath was taking leave to go confront Baloth else-

where, the Lieutenant cum Captain wouldn't have the host leaving until trying to belittle his rival.

Granth had not gone to see for himself, as he wasn't about to leave without witnessing the confrontation that he was trying to orchestrate between the Seraph (if indeed that was what the blue man was) and those his lackeys were pushing into violence against the supposed Angel.

Within a few moments his query brought Torath and Sinath down to his side.

Descending, Torath again noted the glow of an Angel off to one side of the gathering.

"That isn't a Seraph," He gruffly remarked to Sinath, and indicated the light where Farol was. "A Seraph would be brighter than that."

The messenger had directed them in their descent to come down by Granth. Torath noted with a grunt, that this was the Captain who had been such a pain in his butt.

The messenger had borne, ". . . tidings from Granth," so at least Torath knew who he addressed, as he didn't know or care to know the names of all the flunkies of his Lieutenants.

Granth, of course, knew the name and appearance of his own Overlord.

"What's this?" Torath asked as soon as he had the Captains attention. "What's this about a Seraph?"

Surprised at the appearance of one so exalted, Granth bowed and replied, "Overlord, that man in blue is he who one of my underling's state is an Angel in man form. He even said that from man it became a Seraph right in front of him, and then smote him and his fellows."

Jon had attempted to guide Evelyn away from the two men who seemed to be trying to bolster themselves by taunts, and swigs from their bottles.

He had seen the Captain dispatch demons who strove to inspire the men to violence.

Backing away only caused them to follow him and Evelyn.

One of them unfortunately was obsessed enough, and fortified by enough alcohol to have gotten his false courage. That unworthy had dropped his bottle to fumble at his side for a knife, when Jon heard a

familiar voice hollering his name, finally loud and close enough to be heard over the general din.

Ben pushed his way through and greeted his Angel, “Boy, am I glad to see you.” Then he saw Evelyn behind Jon.

“O’ man, you found her. Ivan is going to be so happy!”

Ivan had no sooner also edged his way through to cry out in delight, “Evelyn!” When the man got his knife out and unclasped it.

The other of the two didn’t have a weapon, but at a meaningful nod followed his partner’s lead and simply reversed his bottle to hold it by the neck to be a club.

“Ben, we must do battle with the enemy . . . right now,” Jon told his protégé, who noticed that Jon wasn’t even looking at him as he spoke.

Ben whirled just in time to see the two men rush upon his Angel. With the reflexes of youth, he threw himself sideways in front of their feet, just as, in the spiritual realm, Jon unveiled the Light of Heaven within him.

The two men tripped over Ben and fell prostrate, so drunk as to barely have the reflexes to turn their faces from skidding nose first into the dirt, while the minor demons who inspired them were knocked away in dazzled dismay at their proximity to the Light of The Lord that Jon let loose.

The demons weren’t hurt, just repelled by that which since the fall, they could not tolerate being in close proximity to.

Ivan had Evelyn in his arms, and she was sobbing in relief into his chest.

Ben had spun out of the tangle of the two men’s legs, and before either of them could react, had knocked the bottle from the hand of the one man, and straddled the other pinning the arm holding the knife; His wrestling days in high school now serving a purpose, and coming to the fore.

He was busy wrenching the knife from the man’s hand and didn’t see Jon melt away through the circle of curious on-lookers who had been jostled by the brief altercation.

Torath, at Granth’s direction, had observed the entire episode. Noting first, without much surprise, that the focal point was that same

woman, and second, that indeed this must be a powerful Angel who walked the earth as a man.

Chapter 39

Barbara circled around Ralph and Gus to where Tiny could see her.

Tiny saw that the Fed must have gone somewhere and loaded up with her belt and gun, cuffs, etc . . .

She was still wearing the form fitting country garb, but had a blue windbreaker with FBI lettering, which was unzipped at the front where she could reach to, and around her waist, to access her hardware.

Her muted radio crackled to life. “Agent Townsend, a status report please?”

Barbara reached for the small two way radio she carried when undercover instead of the giveaway traditional earpiece, turned the volume up and spoke, “Sorry Abe, I guess we can break radio silence now, cause I followed the Officer I told you about, thinking he was investigating the same thing we were, and found him in need of assistance in arresting a group of armed perps, so my cover is blown.”

“I was worried about you Barb, and snuck another of our guys in there to try to find you, so state your twenty in reference to the entry point, or from that fire I can see from here on the hill, or from the cabin, and our inside man will be right there,” The Special Agent in Charge directed her. Then spoke again just as she lifted the radio to reply to give directions.

“Hey Jack, are you getting all of this?”

Another male voice responded with music loud in the background,” Yeah, loud and clear. Barb just tell me where to go. I’m right by the fire with my ear bud in.”

“Alright everyone, move in.” The Agent in Charge spoke again, obviously to yet more Feds on radios.

Barbara took a few seconds giving direction through the radio, and then addressed Tiny.

“Officer, you can pick up your weapon and help me keep an eye on these miscreants,” She said officially, but with a bit of comradely warmth in her tone.

“Thanks,” Was all that Tiny could think of to say, chagrined at having to be rescued, while he made use of his handcuffs on the man he had been wary of, who had shot the branch off with his pistol.

“Help is on the way, Officer . . . ?” She prompted him with a questioning note.

“Joe Bradford . . . Deputy Sherriff Joe Bradford out of Applewood County.

“Here,” Barbara reached behind her and produced two more pair of hand cuffs and handed them to Tiny, who promptly cuffed both Ralph and Gus.

“You who are cuffed, just sit where you stand. The rest of you sit together with your hands clasped on top of your heads where I can see them.” She ordered all of the men with steel in her voice.

Conversationally, she addressed Tiny in a softer tone, “Hey Joe, a bit out of your area, aren’t you, and do you usually go to arrest a bunch of drunks with guns all by yourself without backup? She asked the last with an arched eyebrow, looking for all the world like Mr. Spock.

Tiny related briefly how he came to be there, leaving out demons, Angels, Salvations and such, to simply state that through investigation they had found someone who led him and his charges to this gathering to find the kidnapped wife of one of them. Then hearing gunfire he had gone to investigate, and “. . . well, you know the rest,” he finished lamely, with a sheepish look in his eyes.

Over the music they could distinctly hear the wail of sirens approaching, and within seconds the thumping of a helicopter.

Tiny saw the skepticism written across Barbara’s features when he had finished with his tale.

“Yeah right,” She said after a moment’s contemplative pause, when he was done. “You better come up with something better than that when my ‘Special Agent In Charge’ gets here, or we are going to both look like idiots.”

“Well, you haven’t said just why exactly the Feds are here either,” Tiny said in response.

“It sure wasn’t for me to blow my cover to rescue you.” She retorted somewhat miffed, then continued.

“But if you must know, there is a methamphetamine lab somewhere around here, and we thought mingling at this party might find us some users who know where to go to buy a quantity, which could lead us to the lab.”

“Sorry that you had to blow your cover, just to save me,” Tiny was miffed in return.

“I didn’t mean it that way, I mean . . . I am happy to have been of assistance to a fellow Officer, and I know the Agent in Charge will back me a hundred percent. It’s just that your story lacks a certain credibility, and I am kind of mad that after helping you, you don’t trust me enough to fill in the blanks, that if you don’t mind my saying it . . . are glaringly obvious.”

While Tiny was chewing his lip in thought about her words, and how sometime soon he might have to fill in those blanks with some pretty hard to believe stuff, she spoke again.

“Though there might be something here for ATF, I don’t see anything for the Bureau to assume custody. I suppose you had better read them their rights, as this seems to be just violations of County or State laws, and not Federal,” Barbara advised him.

“What’s up Barb?” A new voice asked, and a man warily stepped through the bushes with his sidearm drawn, held casually aimed at the men who were in a group with their hands clasped on their heads.

Tiny was thinking, *Boy, am I going to have to do some explaining sometime, somewhere, about how I got into this mess!*

Jon had seen Torath descend with another of his ilk, and was well aware of who were the primary orchestrators directly under Satan.

He was given to know that the Holy Spirit would not allow any harm to come to those in his charge, and so, he discerned that he was of no further use as a man in confronting men.

In the spirit arena though, things were quite different.

Farol had observed Tiny’s succor by the female, and with a warning

swoop upon the demons who attended the men under arrest, had gone off to see how the others in his charge were faring.

In rising above the clearing to find his humans, he had seen the thundercloud of an approaching host of the enemy, and observed a shooting star blazing across the night sky over and past them, while noting that the host who had been in the heavens above the clearing had all but dispersed.



The Angel zoomed down towards those he was directed were to be protected, who remained where they had been left at the main police vehicle, and saw that Josh and Ellen were in prayer, with the Holy Spirit joyously in attendance. (Prayers of worship and songs of praise both being a music to the Lord's ears.)

Casting about for the two others he had received to be in his charge, he saw them to be also in the protection of the Holy Spirit, while the Seraph was rapidly striding away in man guise, from the two Saved, and the one Covered, who the Angel was given to know were in the Lord's hands.

His intention was also to attend the Seraph, Jon, who was followed by a small group of the enemy, led surprisingly by an Archdemon.

He too, recognized Torath, and took up station over the Seraph, as Jon strode through the crowds in a direct path towards the clearing's perimeter.

The Seraph wasn't bothering to hide himself any more as he had been doing in cloaking the Light of the Lord previously, so the Angel had no qualms about positioning himself directly above the walking Jon. Demons scurried from their path with unsavory comments, and rude gestures that they had picked up from mankind's sinfully creative repertoire.

Torath dispatched his toady, Sinath, to fetch the Central Plain's Lieutenant's not inconsiderable host down a bit closer to his position to attend his commands.

He followed the man Angel, more out of curiosity than to confront it, as he could still see no real threat from its efforts in human guise,

but Angels on special missions were still worth watching as their efforts might portend big events.

Yet, a soul or two won or lost, wasn't anything to get excited about, and Torath still didn't know that Ivan's Salvation might bear on the 144,000 being nurtured from the ranks of the Jewish community (Rev 7:4).

As one who had been fairly high up in the Angelic Hierarchy, before the fall, Torath wondered if he knew this Angel, and could tell once it became a spiritual being again, if it was known to him.

The Angel attending the walking one, was unknown to the Archdemon Overlord, and probably not doing other than its normal mandate to spiritually attend or protect whoever it was ordered to.

The little procession led by Jon with the Angel floating above him reached the trees bordering the clearing, and within moments had passed through the parked cars and trucks to enter an area hidden from human view.

Jon stopped his rapid pace, and turned around to face those who followed him, just as Sinath descended with his own host, that Torath had ordered him to bring to attend the Overlord.

The attending Angel descended to stand quietly at the Seraph's side, while the enemy Archdemon also came to earth in front of them, and Granth and Sinath alit a few respectful paces to the rear of the demon Prince of North America.

"What now, Angel? Is it time for you to cast off your disguise and ascend, for I would know who you are, and of what you have been about in my Principality?" Torath grated.

Jon leaned forward as if to impart a confidence, folded his arms across his chest and so quiet as to speak below what the perked ears of the Overlord's lackeys could discern, said, "I answer your questions with this question . . . in all the heavens what makes you think I am here to answer your questions?"

Torath had in turn leaned forward to hear what the Angel was saying, and jerked back at this affront to his authority in his own domain. It wouldn't do for him to be made a fool of right in front of his own henchmen, and he was a bit happy to note that Granth and Sinath couldn't possibly have heard the Angel's effrontery.

His wolflike features sneered to display the razor sharp teeth, and he snarled, “Whatever you have been about in man form will not bear further fruit, as I will not let you walk hence upon the earth in my Principality without a host to thwart your every move!”

“Oh, so be it,” Jon answered with a shrug, his blue garments shimmering as in a haze of heat and beginning to turn white. “My Lord is Omniscient and Omnipresent, as you do know, though you do not know what seeds I have sown that bear fruit now, or that will in the future. Even such as you surely know that you and your kind are limited to your own knowledge and abilities, while I have the Creator of us all to enhance mine as He chooses.”

By the end of his statement, Jon’s lively animated human features had lost most of their expressions to turn stone like, while the voice without human larynx changed to issue hollowly, to be heard only on the ethereal plain. Simultaneously, the glow of the Holy Spirit’s attendance was allowed to blaze with undiluted glory, superimposed over the form and chiseled features of one of the Seraphim.

Torath flinched a bit and shielded his eyes from the glare, while he stepped back a pace. Being too close to the Holy Spirit attending an Angel was a very distasteful thing to his kind, whereas the lesser attending by the Holy Spirit to a saved human wasn’t quite as overbearing.

He knew Jon at once for who and what he was, and could see that the Seraph had retained quite a few of his ethereal features while in the guise of a man, but Torath just hadn’t snapped to the similarities, as he hadn’t seen Jon for a millennia or so.

“Well, well, well,” He said rubbing his snout in speculation. “You’re the Seraph my worthless idiots reported as being one given to smiteings. Now what could you have been up to, I wonder?” His mean yellow eyes were narrowed to slits in thought, as a cloud darkened the land causing him to look up.

Far above the small host of Sinath’s, the great host of the Master had arrived.

Torath turned to Sinath and beckoned, and after a few moments whispered instructions the Lieutenant scurried off with Granth and Granth’s followers towards the party to do the Overlord’s bidding. Before leaving in his mission, Sinath directed two of his Captains and

several other demons to come to earth to attend the Archdemon, while his host remained close above.

Far overhead, a group splintered off from the main body of the great host, and spiraled down toward the earth. In the lead were the great black winged horses pulling a chariot, in which Lucifer rode in full battle attire.

Behind the chariot came Lieutenants and Captains, and as they came within range to see details, Torath saw that among the highest ranked and most notable of these, was Baloth.

Uh Oh . . . he thought to himself, wondering if Baloth had been appointed Captain of the mighty host, or was just along for the ride as Torath could see that several of the palace high ranking Captains were also attending the Master. Any of those could equal the rank of a Lieutenant in the field such as Baloth, though palace Captains had more of a figure head status, versus Baloth's hands on experience in the field of endeavor, and authority over part of a Principality.

If Baloth Captained the host, then it would surely show that he still had the favor of the Master, dictating that Torath should be wary to discern how fared his own status as first among Satan's Archdemons.

Jon wasn't happy about the arrival of the Enemy. He had been given no leading as to why . . . instead of habitually being on his throne like a spider in its web, Lucifer chose to be a party crasher at this particular event. The internal politics of the enemy forces never having been of importance to him, as which one or the other of the demons that came into ascendancy under Satan, was of no real import, as the Luciferean policy was always the same . . .

To keep as many of man as possible from being Saved from populating Satan's realm, preferably by as painful a process to the human as possible, as Satan knew that men were created to be over him if they did get their Salvations, and besides sheer hatred of mankind, wanted to grind as many as he could under his foot in hell for all eternity.

The Enemy knew he was going to be consigned to the bottomless pit, but just wanted to take as many souls with him as he could before the second coming.

Like a suicide bomber.

A bit before, while Jon was walking to their present location, Farol

keeping pace above, had informed him about the massive enemy incursion about to arrive.

Jon had been going to simply transform unseen by man, and go back to verify that all was well with Ben and Evelyn, who he had personally cared for, while Farol might attend those who had been in his charge. But upon hearing about the huge host about to arrive, decided to wait and see what the enemy was up to, as the Holy Spirit gave him to know that for a time . . . his charges were safe.

Blowing steam and fire from their nostrils, the chariot's winged steeds alit upon the earth just a few paces from them. That one of the black stallions had a pine tree seeming to grow from the ground up through its back didn't bother it a whit, as the open space available between the trees couldn't accommodate them all.

Baloth and several Captains came to earth behind the armored figure, who jumped with a clang from the chariot to approach them.

The two Sinath Captains and the rest of the small group of demons behind Torath fell to one knee in obeisance, as their Master strode up to face the Overlord, while ignoring the Angels for the moment.

A mailed glove reached up and opened the visor on the black plumed helmet, and Lucifer regarded Torath for a few seconds before speaking.

"Torath, Torath . . . Torath . . ." And then another pause, while the Overlord cringed inwardly, as his experience of Satan's thrice repeating of your name usually meant that a chastisement, or at least an admonishment, was to follow. The mailed fingers of the right hand on the sword hilt drummed in cadence with the words.

"I see that you are having a nice little meeting with the other side of things, which I don't believe I authorized." Venom dripped from every word, though the voice was low. "Perhaps you are about some kind of plea bargain on behalf of the animals I see enjoying themselves by the fire yonder?"

The fist on the pommel of the sword raised and opened to point a forefinger back through the woods towards the clearing.

"No, lord, I was just . . ." Torath was interrupted by the pointing hand turning palm out to stop his words.

"Perhaps you are making a deal to where you let them get someone Saved without hindrance, while we get to draw and quarter a bunch,

and roast them in fires like unto that which they dance around?” The voice had risen a few octaves, and now had an oily hint of steel to the rationalization.

“My lord . . . no, I was just trying to find out what this Seraph was doing in my Principality. I was just following him as he was in man form, and I wished to see who he was and discern his orchestrations.”

Lucifer turned to face Jon with his fists on his hips, and regarded the two Angels, “Yes, and what did you find out by your observations?”

Torath rushed the words, “He stopped to address me first, my lord, and I figured it wouldn’t hurt if I could find out something from it about what it was up to. It is the one who heralded flashes of power, changed to man and back, and smote Baloth’s lackeys.”

“And . . . ?” Lucifer urged curious himself.

“And I don’t know, but I did find out that it had interest in the same female that Baloth’s underlings were driving men to harm, and I watched it ward her spiritually. I do not know what Baloth’s interest in the cow is, but he somehow inspired her protection by a Seraph, though she is only Covered and not ughh . . . Saved.”

Baloth cleared his throat in the background and made as if to speak, but Satan raised a hand for silence again, still regarding the Angels intently.

“Well, Seraph, (Lucifer knew Jon’s name but didn’t deign at this point to recognize him in an effort to belittle) what brought you hither to my neck of the woods?” He asked sarcastically and gestured around them at the trees.

Jon had listened to the repartee, and as hoped, had gleaned knowledge of the enemy’s efforts, but had already had from Farol and the Holy Spirit, knowledge of the woman’s place in the scheme of things. What he learned so far, therefore, was that there was dissension and confusion in the ranks of the enemy, extending all the way to the top.

To keep the flow of information going, he decided to give a bit of redundant information, which since it seemed that the principal demons involved were all gathered and under Satan’s questioning, would soon come to the fore in any event.

“As I informed your supposed ‘Overlord Prince,’ I am *definitely* not here to answer your questions. Yet I will bide a while to inform you that

had your underlings not stepped over boundaries, Farol nor would I have been empowered to act.”

“Hmmm . . .” Click, click, click went the fingers again drumming on the pommel of the sword, while Lucifer digested this, which went in line with what Baloth had already informed him.

“So the cow situation was the harbinger of all this?” Satan gestured sweepingly to include them all and those overhead, while with his opposite hand jerked a thumb towards where they could all hear the music from the party. “You cannot lie, this I know, but you are not telling all. From what I have heard, the female was ours by right, as she even studied to summon us to come to her, so there was no trespass.”

“True,” Jon replied. “The trespass came later in manifestations, and your confusion is amazing to me, as you of all of your kind know that the Lord is omnipresent, and can and will react at any time in any time, to whatever happened at any time, even so before the trespass ever occurred.”

Satan wheeled to face those who had come to earth behind him. “Baloth,” Come here and make sense of this Angel’s babblings,” He snarled, in a rage at being made to look ignorant by this upstart of a Seraph, who had surely not been a mover and a shaker in the Heavenly Hierarchy, when Lucifer had been first among the Lord’s Angels.

Baloth came sheepishly forward, groaning inwardly that some of what he had glossed over in impartings to his Master would now have to come out and be dissected.

“That is the one who manifested to man and then smote your Angel, O’ Seraph,” The heretofore silent Farol informed Jon in a deep sonorous voice, easily overheard by all.

Jon turned and looked at his companion quizzically.

“What? What’s this? We attacked Angels?” The face in the helm had turned a dangerous red, and flames spurted from holes in the chin area of the helmet with each word.

The black horses whinnied, and stomped the pine strewn earth in excitement, picking up on their lord’s wrath.

Just then Sinath returned and pushed past his Captains who were still on bended knee, as they hadn’t been given leave to stand in the Master’s presence.

He tried to sidle unobtrusively up to Torath, who was not being targeted by Satan right at the moment, and made as if to whisper something in his ear, when their lord caught a glimpse of his movement out of the corner of his eye.

“Stop!” Was screamed loud enough to deafen. “None of my subjects may come into my presence with impartings for another without my consent! Come here before me and make obeisance.”

While saying this, Lucifer looked past the humbled Torath Lieutenant and saw the other demons that were still on bended knee to where it unseemingly looked like they were . . . praying or something.

“The rest of you get up, but you . . .” He eyed Sinath who came to prostrate himself before his lord, “You stay right where you are and state your message to me that you were about to whisper to he who *might* still be a ‘Prince,’ Torath.”

Torath winced, and cringed inwardly again at the implication in the use of the word “might,” but couldn’t hold his reaction in totally, and actually flinched as if slapped.

“O’ my Master, at Torath’s direction we went . . . Granth and I, to encourage further assailments by the lost men we own, against the female which Granth states he had orders from Baloth to cause her demise,” Sinath whined, while dust puffs blew with every word from where his serpent like face was in the dirt.

Jon darted a glance at Farol who shrugged his wings and made as if to rise, when a mailed fist closed upon his robes to arrest his ascension.

“Hold and bide, Angel,” I would hear the rest without you flapping about!” The grip tightened holding the robes though no real effort was seemed to be made to dislodge Lucifer’s grasp.

Jon, receiving direction, said, “It is given that we abide for a time, Farol.”

The held Angel heeded him, and ceased seeming ineffectually trying to lift from the grip that held him earthbound.

“Make haste with your tale,” Satan ordered Sinath impatiently. “I dislike touching this thing I hold, or He Who resides with and within it!”

“Yes, lord . . . we sent many to obsess and push the men who did attempt the female’s demise before, but find that she is now in company

with ahhh . . . those who belong to Another, and our enhancements failed when those men approached that One's sphere of influence."

"The plot thickens now doesn't it Torath?" Satan addressed his Overlord. "Now why would you personally encourage the death of this woman, I wonder, though I know Baloth's reasoning."

Again, Lucifer raised his hand for silence before Torath could reply.

Prodding the prostrate snakelike Sinath with his steel shod foot, he asked, "Why did your Overlord send you to accomplish sealing the female's doom, worm?"

Sinath was caught between a rock and a hard place, that being the ground and the armored foot, or between Satan and Torath. Either way he couldn't win as far as he could see, and he squirmed both physically and mentally with the unfairness of it all.

"Lord, I did not know the reason why, but that Granth told me as we went on the mission that he believes Torath to have been the one who stopped the creature from perishing at our hands, just a short time ago, and so . . . possibly sent us to make amends by the death of her now."

Lucifer swept his helmet off with his free hand, and hurled it to the ground in disgust, shaking his head in bewilderment, while steam issued from his nostrils. He made as if to speak, and simply expelled a gust of fire and steam from his mouth.

He released Farol with a shove that surprisingly only pushed that worthy back a few paces, and spoke aloud plaintively to no one in particular, but probably just to himself. "This whole yarn is one of confused babblings and inept orchestrations that only grow with the telling . . ."

"Yea, you are in perpetuity lost and confused, O Son of the Morning, but take succor from the knowledge that you dwell there always, and thus are inured to the failings of your state, or you wouldn't have fallen ere."

Farol had spoken yet again in response to the Enemy's musings, and after issuing his pronouncement and judgment of Lucifer, glanced over to wink at Jon who suddenly knew no doubts about his companion Angel.

Satan wasn't confused about Farol either, as only one other in millennia had called him Son of the Morning to his face, and that was long ago, before battle.

He wheeled from his pondering at his underling's duplicities with his mailed fist again upon the pommel of his sword, and faced Jon's companion who had stepped in front of the Seraph, though as perhaps the lesser of the two in the Heavenly order of Celestial Beings, it wasn't his station to do so.

"How appropriate for you to join us in the garb of another, Archangel," Lucifer replied. "Your Hebrews 13:2 has a new import for both sides this day."

"True." The Archangel Michael responded, "And you and your kind as a rule, deign ever to not appear as you were created, as it must remind you of your Creator and that He is the Author of your existence."

The form within the white robes grew taller and wider while the chest broadened to conform to the deep rumbling voice, while the face of Farol dissolved into the scarred visage of one of the Lord's favorite warriors. The robes could no longer hide the armored knight of the Lord with the golden circlet upon his scarred brow, and dissolved in a mist to waft away on the slight breeze.

The shield and helm were all that were lacking from his normal attire, but the broadsword and trumpet horn still hung from his waist.

"Bah! Michael" Satan retorted with a snarl. "You lick the boot that holds you in your place, worshipping the foot in the boot on your necks, while protecting these animals and striving to get them Saved from me, Thus providing that they in their turn come to be placed in ascendancy over you, offering their own boots for you to lick. *This*, and you dare to call me confused?"

Through the rank and file of the hosts above, the word had spread that not only was there an awesome Seraph confronted by their Master and the Archdemon Torath, but that the dread Archangel Michael was being faced as well.

It was a toss up debate among the demons, which was the more powerful of an adversary should push come to shove, but it was agreed that both were far above the station of the normal Angel, and that neither could be thwarted on the spiritual plain, by any demon, but could only be stymied on the physical plain through the willful disobedience of man, ably encouraged by Satan's hosts of minions.

Chapter 40

The FBI helicopter had flown obviously right through the hosts of demons to hover while a loud speaker issued orders to the partyers to remain where they were, and wait for instructions. The wind from its rotors fanned the bonfire which blazed up higher briefly, but then began to die down as no more fuel was fed to it.

Local police, and unmarked Federal cars and SUVs, were arriving at the clearing from all directions.

Tiny had read their rights to all the men under the watchful eyes of Barbara and her fellow agent, Jack, and was soon provided with yet more handcuffs and a window barred Applewood County van, to transport those arrested to the local county jail.

He and Barbara had a few brief moments together to hammer out their stories and exchange personal numbers. Again, Tiny had balked at disclosing everything, but told her that he would call with the details, once he knew the end of the “Mission from God” that he had embarked on, it seemed . . . so long ago.

They parted with a warm handshake, and each felt that they should pursue friendship with an eye towards developing a serious relationship of a personal nature.

Barbara took off to apprise Abe, her Agent in Charge, of events, and Tiny went off to search for his trio of Christians.

Tiny found Ben and the reunited foursome by his patrol cruiser, instead of the threesome he had expected.

Introductions were made, and on a personal level he was overjoyed to find that Evelyn had indeed been found, while on the official level he was satisfied that taking part in her succor justified his extending his

shift, and normal patrol area, to get to the scene where she did, ultimately, get rescued.

Upon questioning Evelyn, he found that her memory of events was sketchy at best, and though Ben was vehement that Ralph somebody or other had taken her, she could not recall things enough to even be a witness, or to pick him nor any other member of the group that Ben spoke of, out of a line-up.

“That’s ok,” He assured them all. “From Ben’s description I believe that Ralph and Gus are the same two Ralph and Gus that I personally arrested, and I can state that they are facing some serious charges already, though it would have been great if she could recognize them in a line up.”

For the umpteenth time Ben was wondering what had happened to Jon, and voiced his concerns to Tiny.

Tiny scratched his jaw in perplexity, but before he could respond Josh interjected. “Look Ben, if Jon was what we think he was, then it stands to reason that he would disappear somewhere before the authorities got here.”

“Gee, thanks a lot!” Tiny exclaimed, but with a smile on his broad features. “Here I have been pretending to be a member of the quote, authorities.”

All of them got a smile going then, and Ellen qualified her husband’s statement with, “Josh meant to say the ‘other’ authorities.”

Tiny had a mess of paperwork to get started doing just on the gun club deal, and was a bit relieved to know that somehow, none of them was going to be called upon to testify, or bring charges against anyone. That meant that though he was convinced in his heart that the Lord and his Adversary had been hard at work throughout the entire ordeal, that Tiny wouldn’t personally have to spell it all out in his report, as some kind of predominately spiritual battle.

Then a thought struck both he and Ben at almost the same time.

“Hey, where’s Jon’s black truck?” Ben asked, and sprinted off toward where last he remembered it having been.

“Hey . . .” Ellen’s voice trailed off as the young man disappeared into the mill of officers and partyers, some in handcuffs, and some still sul-

lenly waiting their turn to have their fates decided to where they might in their turn get to wear a pair of steel bracelets.

There were quite a few folks, who didn't have drugs, warrants, or new charges, who were just milling around looking for someone to drive them away, but the serious shortage of sobriety was proving a stumbling block as designated drivers were few and far between at this gathering of power drinkers.

Tiny knew he had to book those he had arrested into the local jail, but figured that it would be a while before processing due to the volume of folk who were sure to be in custody from the party.

To insure that this was so, and that he would have an hour or two to spare before he had to be at the jail, he excused himself for a moment, and went off to find someone who was handling the custody situation for those arrested at the party.

He found Jack, the agent who had come to help him and Barbara, and was assured that he had plenty of time until everything got sorted out.

He returned to his cruiser shortly, with the news that he would easily have the time to take his new friends back to Scarsdale, and then return part way as the county jail was between where they were and town.

Evelyn, not quite comfortable enough with him to call him Tiny, asked, "Yes officer, but what about that nice young man that tried to help me?"

"Oh boy, I forgot. You know besides that, I cannot legally have that many in the car as I have only so many seat belts, so we'll have to get him a ride from someone else."

Ivan said, "He lives in Seaport anyway, so it wouldn't do him much good to come with us as it would be the wrong direction for him."

Just then, Ben, who must have just gotten back within earshot to catch the last of Ivan's words asked, "Who lives in Seaport? Then before anyone could answer added, "I found the truck, but it wasn't where I remember leaving it. It's way over on the other side of the fire, and Jon still isn't around, but like I told you, it does things that no other set of wheels I have ever known can do. So, he must be going to come back for it, and I want to be there."

Right away all thought of just leaving went out of all of their minds,

except Ellen's, when there was a chance of seeing and speaking with an Angel a possibility. They listened to Ben's words, but before any of them could respond that they too wanted to await what might be an Angel, Ben, with the impetuosity of youth, waved and ran off again to be swallowed up again by the hustle and bustle.

Dawn approached, and the twilight of early morning started blotting out the stars.

Josh started out after him, but Ellen laid a restraining hand on his arm and said, "Honey, I don't think that truck moved by itself, and from what we know, we can find Ben's number later through information and find out what happened by calling him after we get home. I just think that if Jon wanted us to know whether he is or isn't an Angel, he would have let Tiny know for sure, when we first pulled up behind them."

This was the first Evelyn had heard about Angels, and she asked and blurted confusedly, "What do you mean? Was that man who helped me supposed to be an Angel? I don't understand."

"It's a long story dear," Her husband answered for them all. We'll tell it to you on the drive home. And . . . I have to tell you about the Lord, and what he has done for you personally today."

Ivan said this with a meaningful look at Josh over the roof of car as they all climbed in to start the trip home.

Evelyn was going to know exactly who her Savior was by the time they got home, by becoming Saved herself, or it wouldn't be from the lack of effort by the other four Christians in the car.

They all piled in, and Tiny did so with a satisfied grunt, glad to be back in the safety of that which he called 'my office,' glad that Evelyn was safe, and glad that they were going to have the wonderful, hopefully easy task of showing her the path to her Salvation through the telling of all of their parts in the journey to rescue her.

It looked to be a very rewarding trip home.



Ben arrived at the 'Godmobile,' and saw that Jon still wasn't there. He'd looked all about on his way, and was a bit bummed about his Angel's

absence, but perked up when he saw that the truck was still there, which must mean that Jon hadn't permanently taken his leave yet.

He patted the fender affectionately, and climbed back up into the driver's seat with the thought that if the truck was going to magically go anywhere else, or disappear, then he was going to go with it.

As soon as he closed the door, the truck motor rumbled to life all on its own, and the truck began moving forward, the steering wheel turning by itself, to wend the big vehicle through what was left of the crowd, exiting in their cars, trucks, and on foot.

Ben grabbed the wheel and tried to turn it to steer back towards the patrol cruiser and invite his new friends to go with him, but no matter how much effort he put into trying to steer, he couldn't budge the wheel from the turns it was making by itself. Which was heading the truck toward the opposite side of the clearing from where the cruiser was parked. Neither could he stop the truck by stomping the brake pedal, nor budge the accelerator a whit to affect the speed of the truck's forward motion.

He gave up, and folded his arms across his chest and sighed resignedly. He didn't bother to try the doors, as he wasn't about to bail, no matter what happened, as he felt safe in the 'Godmobile,' and was sure it was intended that he literally . . . just go along for the ride.

He would go along with any reasonable program where at the end he could see Jon again, because he had been, and still was berating himself, about how many cosmic, all, and spiritual questions he could have asked the Angel, and hadn't thought of to ask, while they were together earlier.

The truck purred slowly by several uniformed officers, and quite a few haphazardly parked official vehicles. The officers looked at him when he passed, as the truck stood out a bit, even among a lot of other big 4x4s in the clearing, but for whatever reason, even though his hands were obviously not on the wheel, no one tried to flag him over.

The truck reached the clearing perimeter and began wending its way through the trees and bushes, and Ben wondered had they had tried to flag him down, whether the truck would have come to a stop on its own. Would it recognize mankind authority, or just have ignored

the cops, and merrily kept on it's way until someone tried to shoot out the tires or something.

I bet they wouldn't even go flat, he thought to himself with a grin.

Jon listened to the dialogue between Michael and Lucifer with an enjoyment that was hard to find on his stone like features, but was discernable nonetheless.

It was pretty smooth for the Archangel to trade places with Farol, and infiltrate to observe first hand what he had offered to help Jon with, at the Gates of Heaven.

Jon had been preoccupied with things of course, but wondered at what point the swap occurred since he had first seen Farol with the ones he attended in the police vehicle when it pulled in behind him and Ben.

The Holy Spirit could have let him know, though did not give to every Spirit to know what every other Spirit was about, as they weren't all part of a single greater consciousness as the Lord, but individual Celestial Beings.

In this case, Michael might have even asked of the Lord to deliberately not tell Jon, as just before, when speaking to Jon while they were out of demon hearing on the way, he could have told Jon himself.

As a Seraph, Jon was ostensibly of the highest order of Celestial Beings, while the Archangel was first among all of the Angels who belonged to the second rank. This did not necessarily give him pre-eminence over the Archangel, and he certainly felt that the un-bound Michael must know the parameters for any action against the Enemy even when allowed his own volition, at least as well as Jon did, and perhaps from experience . . . better.

This being the case, Jon would bow to the Archangel's way of dealing with the situation, as his own mandate in being un-bound revolved around the woman who had been abducted, which matter he was given to know, was resolved.

One more matter remained for him to contend with, and with the advent of Michael's presence, he felt himself to be free to address it, should he be able to take his leave without inspiring a following of demons.

He focused in again on Michael's words, which had been of an on going accusatory nature about Lucifer's trespasses:

“ . . . minions constantly over stepping boundaries, even though you have been given the world on a plate, with a ridiculously sinful natured population already geared to be demon fodder,” Michael finished saying.

“So, and here you are to prove that my lackeys didn't get away with it . . .” Satan paused and growled ominously, looking at Torath and then over to Baloth, “. . . yet again! “What about the Seraph's smiteings of my minions? You boot lickers can't have it all your way! Not in my realm.”

The two had come to stand virtually nose to nose in the heat of their argument, and both had hands closed upon the pommels of their swords. They had both grown in size to be as the giants of old, dwarfing those around them.

From Jon's perspective, they were nearly identical in appearance armor wise, though the Enemy's was black, and Michael's was gleaming silvery burnished steel. The one had been first among the Angels before his fall from grace, and the other was now first among the Angels.

Jon spoke in answer to the lord of hell's last question/statement. “As the Archangel implied, one of yours did smite an Angel elsewhere first, though only the Omnipresent Holy Spirit connected the two events to allow the reaction elsewhere. Yet, truth be told I would smite your minions as a rule rather than as an exception, were I not bound.”

“Yea, The Lord's patience is not ours,” Michael agreed. We chaff at our restraint in this world given to your dominion, Son of the Morning, and you wonder at when an occasional hand is lifted to perhaps a purpose do a minor smiteing? Be warned that your time draws to an end before you and yours are to be consigned to the bottomless pit, where you will be herded by more than mere blows.”

Lucifer snarled epithets that were not in a language known to man, and made as if to pull his sword, sliding a foot or so of it threateningly from its sheath with a hiss.

Michael stepped back and his sword sprang to his fist in the blink of an eye, to whirl over his head in a blur of steel to imbed several inches of its point in to the ground in front of him. He leaned forward with

both hands upon the pommel, and spoke quietly to where only he, Jon, and Lucifer could hear.

“You know your blustering and threats have no meaning, as could you overcome Heaven to rule, you would have done so ere the fall. You are a big fish in the little pond of man, but don’t let that go to your head, as it has to your minions. We all know why you lurk in your palace with rancor, and that is that you know your time is short to rule this world that was given to be your dominion, and that it is only through our loss of those who are hell-bound through your efforts, that you obtain any sense of winning, as ultimately you know you lose all but dominion over they who you successfully tempt now.

Jon had stepped back pace by pace from the two giant figures confronting each other as if to give room for battle. He stood between two trees now, while behind Lucifer the minions of hell had to likewise step back several paces to give the huge warriors a wide berth in order to not be in the path of being trod upon.

The Lieutenants and Captains, and the few of the Sinath host above, that were close enough to see clearly, were all focused on the two giant figures. None noticed how Jon had been cloaking the Light of the Lord emanating from him by increments down to a soft glow, which was barely discernable in contrast to how Michael’s figure blazed with Heavenly power.

The great host far above could even see the Archangel’s glow, though they could not see the details of the encounter.

Jon let the Light of the Lord totally wink out, and stood there a moment to be assured that no attention was being paid to him at all, then turned to glide silently off through the forest, his feet not touching the ground, while two of his six wings unfolded to guide his passage through the air as he flew faster and faster.

The Godmobile had to be four wheeling now, as it was going over bushes and small boulders in its steady climb up one of the hills surrounding the clearing.

Ben was really enjoying the ride, for two reasons: it was like riding in a bull dozer or something, as no obstacle fazed the truck from its path. Secondly, he knew that he was on the road to see Jon.

Small trees, boulders, a stream, and hundreds of bushes, had passed

under the truck on its way, without any change to the speed of passage, or the need for the engine to change the tempo of its throaty growl.

Looking behind him, Ben thought he would see a trampled path of uprooted bushes, and small trees broken off to stumps, but found little to mark the truck's passage. It was as if everything the truck touched dissolved to reappear intact behind it.

Trees seemed to part where Ben didn't figure the truck could fit through, and the truck came to a stop in a small glade sheltered from above by the pines, whose branches had grown to be a canopy over the glade.

The growl of the engine ceased when the truck stopped, and Ben hesitated before opening his door, but decided that this must be the end of the line, and got out to stand by the truck and enjoy the beauty of the spot, which appeared to never have felt the hand of man.

The Holy Spirit moved in him, and peace and contentment filled him.

The early morning daylight filtered through the branches, and brought out all of the colors of nature. Only the isolated bird calls disturbed the quiet, and Ben drank in the peace of the place, giving thanks to the Lord that such quiet beauty existed in the world. He was given for the first time to know, that having seen all of the other wonderful places in nature that he had seen on TV, or in person, that this and they, were obviously Creations of a caring Lord, who strove for beauty in his Creation.

Jon watched the Holy Spirit deal with Ben from a vantage point where he had quietly entered the glade a bit to the rear and off to the side of where the truck had entered.

Ben had stepped a few paces from the 'Godmobile' in a daze as the Holy Spirit filled him with knowledge of how the Creation was not haphazard, and how if one only looked and studied, one could see the miracle of how each Creation, had meaning to or supported the life of another Creation, from the smallest mote. How one in turn must see the miracle of all the interactions needed to support life, and how impossible it was for it all to have just accidentally happened except to have been divinely and deliberately orchestrated down to the smallest detail.

The truck dissolved behind the enraptured young Christian, without his notice, and Jon gave him a few more moments to take to heart his new found realizations before speaking.

Ben had lifted his face and tilted his head towards the Heavens, and without instruction had also raised his arms and opened his hands palms up to drink in the Holy Spirit through every pore, as one might bask in the warmth of the sun.

“I see that you are learning to know the Lord, and listen to the Holy Spirit, O’ Ben,” Jon spoke quietly in the other worldly hollow timbre of his Angelic voice, as could be heard by the senses of man.

Ben whirled, and could only see the shimmering white outline of a huge figure with wings, though the blue eyes could be made out fairly clearly.

“Jon . . . !” Ben exclaimed, and then noticed that the truck was gone. “Hey, what happened to the truck . . . no . . . I mean . . . I don’t care . . . I have a million things to ask you!” He confusedly jumbled out.

Jon lifted a hand for patience, and let himself be seen a bit more clearly by the Child of God that he had nurtured. He did not let the glow of the Spirit blaze, to cause notice from the enormous host above though, whose outer ranks even extended to be over this glade far removed from where Michael confronted Lucifer in his stead.

“Listen instead of speaking, O’ loved one of the Lord. You are a new man in Christ and your life is now not your own to do with as you wish. You have been given that which few before you have received, in that you have not only faith to see by, but have actually seen with your own eyes.

“As Moses, and others before you, the strength of your convictions are unshakable thereby, and now you need to arm yourself with the Word of God, to become a Warrior for Christ. ‘Put on the whole Armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil,’ and learn how to help others to stand against the Enemy.”

Jon paused to see how fared his instructions to the young, new found Christian, and saw that the Holy Spirit was giving Ben a gift to where the meaning of his impartings were discerned clearly.

“I understand, Jon,” Ben got in before the Seraph could speak again, but what exactly is the best way to do all that? I mean, what religion

should I join . . . and who could I tell about you and all of this who would believe me? I mean . . .” Ben was also thinking about how to tell Morty about the whole episode and get his best friend to share his new mission in life, by getting his own Salvation.

“Stop . . . Enough . . .” Jon lifted both hands and vaguely looked like a traffic cop with wings. Laughter could be heard in the hollow voice, and seen in the additional twinkle in the already sparkling blue eyes.

“With all men and woman praise the Lord, and pray. This will give you through the Holy Spirit who are truly those whom you should seek the Lord’s will with, and whom you should not. Denominations and religions are the inventions of man and not of the Lord, though within them and without, you will find true Men of God.”

“I cannot tell you what path you will take. Again I am not the Lord and am not given to know your future. I can say to seek counsel from mature men and women of God, three of whom you just met, though one is a new found Christian like yourself, but does know the Word. These would be a beginning place for you, as they, like you, have actually seen physically manifested spirit beings, though unlike you, they have only seen physical manifestations from the enemy’s side, while you in your turn, have only seen me.”

“Ok, but . . .”

“Shhhh . . .” Jon approached Ben to enfold the Child of God in his wings in a human like gesture of farewell, though Ben only felt the lightest of the feathery touch by the Seraph who was not manifesting physically.

The blue eyes far over his head twinkled at him, and the hollow voice soothingly spoke for the last time as he was released from the feathery embrace.

“I will be watching O’ Ben, and know that tales of Guardian Angels from the ranks of Celestial Beings abound, but who else can tell the tale of having such a one from the ranks of the Seraphim?”

Then the towering figure rose above to treetop height, before disappearing from his sight as it passed through the pines.

Ben was bursting with all of the information that he now knew from the Holy Spirit, and from his Angel, and like many another new found

Christian was agog to go out and start evangelizing right away, all lit up like a Christmas tree with the Holy Spirit.

He was ready to accost the first person he could find and share The Good News, when he took stock of his location situation.

“Hey . . .” He said quietly as the realization struck home. “Hey Jon . . .” He hollered, facing up to the treetops. “What’s up with the truck?”

Authors Note

(As given by demons, ‘spiritual mediums’ actually could be such, in that enemy spirits could and do use the open to suggestion, obsession, and sometimes possessed, human so called, to astound the unwary with knowledge’s that the medium couldn’t possibly know in and of him/her self, and so promote the opening of channels between man and demon through these aptly called “mediums.”

As easily seen by any who can discern, in Exodus 7:12–8:7, the Pharaoh’s sorcerers and magicians were given by the enemy to perform what mankind would see as miracles.

It takes no spiritual Einstein to extrapolate that the enemy continues to this day in his efforts to confuse man by performing signs and wonders that the unscriptured might attribute as what only the Lord could do, and so, these ignorant beholders follow the false paths provided by the enemy to lure man from the right path. See Mark 13:22.

It is really so easy to see that the enemy was and is adept at orchestrating this type of confusion by all the atrocities of the thirteen hundred years of the “dark ages” when the enemy *must* have infiltrated the church to where tortures, inquisitions, and killings were sanctioned “in the name of god.”

The persecutions of the Jews throughout history, the Roman persecutions of the Christians, the “holy wars” of the Crusades from the 11th to the 13th centuries, the Catholics and the Protestants who still have fought in recent times, and the Jihads of today, to name a few, all have in common that man can be persuaded by the enemy into a viscous “religious” fervor towards other men, by somehow confusing/convinc-

ing us that even in killing and tortures, we are acting in the name of the Lord.

The on-going atrocities of today, where Muslim Shiites and Muslim Sunni sects of the exact same faith kill one another because of miniscule differences in their beliefs are current examples. For our purposes in relating, it would be the madness of the Baptists trying to kill off the Lutherans, or the Lutherans the Presbyterians.

No other source can be the author of such evil, and be capable of such psychological and spiritual subtleties in the orchestrations of lies and deceptions about the Lord's will, to continuously through all the ages keep mankind at each other's throats, ostensibly "in the Name of God," except through the adept machinations of the author of all evil . . . our only true enemy, Satan.

“Praise You and worship You and all power be Yours for ever and ever, Lord!” Jon uttered as he found himself wafted from the Presence by divine winds.

He discovered himself once again at the Gates of Heaven, and there stood majestically, one of the most powerful of the Lord’s warrior Angels.

A circlet of hammered gold gleamed around the forehead of the being, holding long black hair from falling forward to obstruct the blazing emerald green eyes. A diagonal livid red scar ran from jawbone to right ear in contrast to the otherwise flawless features; the scar a kept memento from battles of long ago.

The Angel was dressed in the garb of a crusading knight, complete with broadsword at hip. A trumpet like horn hung at his other side from a leather thong about his neck, while a shield with an embossed cross leaned against one of the gate posts.

As in a dream of the millennia long wishes that he had undergone on the world watching demons wreck havoc, he heard the deep booming voice of this awesome one of the Lord’s hosts, address him.

“Jon, you have only to ask for me and I will come, for I await the second coming, but have always been unbound.”



Jon raised a hand in mute acknowledgment to the exalted warrior of Heavenly and Scriptural fame, as he was wafted back toward the enemy’s dominion—Earth.

In return, the Archangel Michael slapped a gauntleted fist to his breast plated chest, before raising the fist in a half salute of farewell.

Epilogue

Michael stood there for a long moment, pondering his offer to the Seraph, Jon. He wondered at why he had chosen to do so, as he felt no leading by the Holy Spirit, yet he had just happened to loiter about the Gates of Heaven at just the right moment to witness Jon's departure.

Or had he just "happened" to be there? Had he been led to be there without knowing it? Maybe I am just getting old and tired of wandering about the Heavens, and move without incentive or thought from observation to observation, he thought to himself. Then another thought struck him by association.

Assuredly . . . I may be getting old, and perhaps deliberately forgetful of things I have witnessed upon the Earth that leave a bad taste in my mouth, but what is truly "old" is letting the Enemy have his way with man . . . without hindrance.

He sought the Lord's will for a moment, and found a curious lack of response.

The Archangel had heard through the Heavenly grapevine (so to speak) that the Lord had allowed the Seraph some outside the norm manifestations on the physical plane. For what exact reason only the Lord, and perhaps . . . the Seraph knew.

As Archangel, Michael had long been "unbound" to act outside the normal restrictions imposed on The Lord's Angels in acting against evil. These restrictions limited Angels to a defined set of guidelines of how far they could go to protect man against the orchestrations of Satan and his hosts, or from even trying to sway man away from following his own sinful nature.

Michael knew though, that while he was not bound in this manner,

the Lord didn't want him to arbitrarily sally forth from Heaven and smite the Enemy as he would. Nor manifest on the physical plane to do what man would perceive as miracles, to convince them that Eternal Life wasn't just a myth, and that they had better seek their Lord . . . to gain their Salvations.

Lucifer had abused the freedom of being Archangel when he had been "first among the Angels" before his fall, and though Michael was now Archangel and could theoretically do as he wished, he wasn't about to trespass on what he knew to be the Lord's will.

Lucifer had played at being a god, to the point to where he had started thinking of himself as one, and had even gone so far in his delusions, as to challenge his own Creator.

These thoughts chased each other about in his mind, and Michael stood there in a bit of confusion, for he knew the Lord knew his thoughts, and normally would have soothed him with the knowledge that though it was not yet time for him to take a hand against the Enemy, to bide . . . as the time would come.

His confusion stemmed from how at the moment, the Lord seemed to be denying him any input one way or another through the Holy Spirit, who was a constant Presence with any of the Lord's Celestial Beings.

Michael had become a fixture in Heaven over the last millennium, as he had wearied of watching man fumble in spirit. He was so tired of watching the Enemy ply their trade so easily with temptations and diffusions in so many ways . . . to deflect man's spiritual focus. Man's sinful nature and the demons efforts so readily resulting in a bountiful Hell harvesting of all too many souls.

Yet . . . the Seraph was apparently unbound to do something or other on Earth, and as Michael hadn't received direction from the Lord either way. . . . *hmmm*. . . .

But . . . on the other hand, maybe Satan, when he was Lucifer and Archangel, hadn't received direction either somewhen, when he sought the Lord's leading, and that is why he went his own way to ultimately fall from grace. Michael surely wasn't about to follow Lucifer's path.



Well, enough of this! Michael finally came to a conclusion and addressed the Lord. “Father, you know all, and I go to observe your will being done . . . if for no other reason than the balm it will be to your faithful servant to witness first hand . . . that You are allowing one of us to in some way . . . chastise the Enemy.”

He turned toward his shield, and lifted it to sling it across his broad back, and adjusted it’s strap to comfortably ride over one shoulder and diagonal down across his chest and back up under his left arm, leaving his sword arm unencumbered. It was habit, as he hadn’t used his armor, shield, or sword in battle, for millennia. They had all just simply become his normal attire. Then upon second thought, he unslung his embossed shield, and returned it to where it leaned again, against the Gates of Heaven. As a mere observer, why encumber himself?

Just before launching from Heaven toward Earth, the Archangel paused and his green eyes twinkled at the thoughts that came to mind from handling his shield, and he was tempted to re-sling it to bring with him. He knew the Lord just might find humor in his setting those thoughts forth kind of facetiously prayer-like, as they both knew just how self serving they were for Michael, while perhaps not being the Holiest of communications.

(It was known by Celestial Beings, that God had given his creations to have attributes in common with Himself, and the Lord certainly must have given the gifts of Laughter, Joy, and Humor, to some of them, as of those good attributes He had Himself, in like manner to, for instance . . . Love.)



Michael dropped to one knee and bowed his head to where his long black hair fell forward, from where it was not so confined at the sides by the circlet of hammered gold that adorned his brow.

He spoke solemnly, knowing that his hair wasn’t hiding from The Lord the humor displayed in his countenance, (to whatever extent Angels could facially show humor, as their features were somewhat stone-like and set). “Lord, should you choose to have any smiteings done to help the Seraph, Jon . . . by any other beings . . . I pray you consider your

humble Archangel to have co-incidentally placed himself to be available to be that instrument . . . should you choose to lift your hand.”

Perhaps entirely too happy at the thought of doing violence to another being, no matter how deserving, Michael was abrim with the potential of being an active thorn in the Enemy’s side. God *is* Love, but Angels were Angels, and required criteria for them didn’t have much to do with having to love their demonic enemies.

(Actually, given free to act, the Lord’s Angels were about the best at doing some big time destruction. One could possibly discern that as the God of Love, personified in Jesus Christ, can *not* do harm to any being . . . man or demon, that His Angels have served him where such needs have arisen. Read Old Testaments)

The Archangel rode the Celestial Winds, and was wafted from the Gates of Heaven, he was almost sure that he felt a response from the Lord in answer to *his* plea, by feeling the Lord’s Divine sense of mirth awaken to shake Heaven.

Or . . . maybe the Lord was mirthful over some other childish action by one of his creations, all of whom were but babes to him, no matter the millennia that were under their belts.

Michael truly suspected that the Lord deliberately chose to not know everything all of the time, so he could be surprised and delighted here and there by the wayward antics of some of his creations.

Michael thought for the umpteenth time that it would be pretty boring to know everything, see everything, and be everywhere, to where there were no surprises. That is why he suspected that God sometimes limited Himself to present time events in whatever time-line, so He could enjoy observing his Creation, and the actions of his Creations . . . unfold.

The Archangel Michael

CHAPTER ONE

The two giant figures faced each other warily across the small clearing in the woods. Hosts of the enemy minions were ranked in phalanxes high into the heavens. A full eleven foot tall each, they were seen to be as the “giants” told of in Scripture, some of whom were descended from when: “In those days, and even later, there were giants on the earth who were descendants of human women and the heavenly beings.” (Gen 6:4)

Michael was undaunted by the lord of Hell and his hosts, and stood with his sword imbedded several inches in the mossy earth, his hands resting one atop the other on the pommel.

He blazed with the Light of The Lord for two reasons. One that he felt called to show the power of the Lord, to put the witnessing demons and their Master in their place. Two, as the Holy Spirit had broken the unusual silence of impartings from the Lord, by giving him to know to gather attention to himself in order that the Seraph could depart unseen.

He had noted when Jon had unobtrusively by increments backed away and dimmed the glow of the Holy Spirit to where it was totally cloaked. Then out of the corner of his eye he had seen the Seraph melt away into the surrounding forest, while none of the Enemy had seemed to notice or care, as all eyes were focused on the primary show between he and Lucifer.



Earlier, he had sallied forth from Heaven, and taken the place of one of his Angels of Light, one Farol by name, and assumed that worthy's

appearance. Then he had prayed that the Holy Spirit would not inform the Seraph that he was, in fact, the Archangel Michael. He had come (ostensibly) to only observe, and hopefully observe some long overdue (in his opinion) smiteings of the Enemy with the Lord's blessing.

After his subterfuge and subsequent following of the Seraph, (who was among humans and had manifested on the physical plane as a man) it became evident that the Lord had granted Michael's wishes to be incognito. He took this to be a blessing, or at least a tolerance of his actions in descending from Heaven. He had paused several times and sought direction . . . but the Holy Spirit had still remained quiescent within him.

Farol had told him something of the events that had transpired to bring the Angel to where he was, and how and why to replace him in doing the things he had been doing. The hosts of demons that were in the air above the gathering of men that Michael had found to be the focal point of the Seraph's endeavors, (whatever they truly were as Farol only knew his part) had taken no action, and Farol didn't know for what purpose they were there.

Having just come from above, Michael didn't need to be told that upon the horizon yet another massive front of the Enemy approached, but was actually kind of satisfied that they were coming, as he was craving some kind of action, that could allow him to witness, and maybe even take part in as Farol . . . the reaction.

With the thought, his hand went to rest on the pommel of his sword.

He had blithely been going to follow Farol's advice about what that Angel was doing in the protection of the human's in his charge, then had been informed that the Enemy had . . . yet again, been overstepping the boundaries set by the Lord. Even to the point of having dealt a blow to Farol physically.

At that point Michael had interrupted his Angel, the livid scar on his cheek flushing crimson with his disquiet. "Why wasn't I informed?" And before Farol could reply, he knew the answer. "You must have told no one or I would have heard of it, so the only answer would be that the Holy Spirit led you to bide?" He told and asked all at once, as certainly had the Lord wanted Michael to know, the Holy Spirit would have told him. The Lord would have known that he would have

wanted to put his oar in the water right then and there, and must not have wanted him to know about the smiteing, probably to protect him from enduring the misery of impotent wrath. (All of the Lord's Celestial Beings endured watching man's folly ably abetted by the Enemy, to off times feel impotent ire to whatever extent, when they wanted to take action, but obeyed the Lord to await their time.)



After Farol had taken his leave, and Michael had assumed the Angel's duties as outlaid for the current situation, and seen to the well being of the charges that had been in his care, he had ultimately wound up following above the Seraph. Jon had left the large gathering of men to stride through the woods, on what mission, Michael didn't know. While the Seraph was walking, Michael . . . keeping pace above, informed him about the massive enemy incursion about to arrive, which could now be seen to darken the horizon.

The Seraph had looked at him quizzically for a moment, and shrugged as if indifferent to anything the Enemy could bring to bear. (*I wonder if he knows something is different about me?* Michael thought to himself.)

He kept pace above the rapidly striding Jon, and following them both were demons, one of which Michael was a bit surprised to see was the so called Archdemon Prince of the 'North American Principality,' one Torath by name.



Satan had appointed these whom he called Archdemons, or Overlords, to rule over designated areas of his realm on Earth. These designated areas he called "Principalities" Hence, they could also be called the "Prince" of their Principalities. Under these, and usually appointed by these princes, were their 'Lieutenants' who ruled over sub-sections of a given Principality. Nominally, under these came the 'Captains.' "Captains," were leaders of hosts, or appointed heads of any size group of demons, whether large or small. Whoever led a host he "Captained" it. Any demon who led, was

Captain of his followers and minions, whether he was an Archdemon, Lieutenant, or simply an appointed underling.



The little procession came to a small clearing, and the Seraph was making as if to walk right on through . . . to whatever end he was about. Halfway through though, several demons that Michael didn't recognize came to earth in front of them. At least one of them must be a Captain from the host of the Enemy that had been above the man gathering, as it too had shifted to follow them, and slowly descended to hover close by.

The Archdemon Torath, and his retinue, came to earth behind them, and the tableau seemed just about right for some smiteings in Michael's opinion. (As far as Michael was concerned, any place where a demon was, was right for smiteings!)

Jon had turned to face the Archdemon who immediately began to question the Seraph about his mission in what that Overlord considered 'his turf.'

Michael had listened to the short repartee with impatience, happy though, to see that the Seraph was undaunted by the superior numbers of the Enemy.

Then the enormous host arrived to shadow the entire area.



Blowing steam and fire from their nostrils, the chariot's winged steeds alit upon the earth just a few paces from them. That one of the black stallions had a pine tree seeming to grow from the ground up through its back didn't bother it a whit, as the open space available between the trees couldn't accommodate them all.

Baloth, a Lieutenant of the Enemy that Michael also recognized, and several unknowns who must be ranking demons, came to earth behind the armored figure, which jumped with a clang from the chariot to approach them.

The two demons who had descended to block the Seraph, and the

rest of the small group of demons who had alit behind them with the Archdemon Torath, all fell to one knee in obeisance. as their Master strode up to face his Overlord Archdemon Prince, while ignoring Jon and 'Farol' for the moment.

A mailed glove reached up and opened the visor on the black plumed helmet, and Lucifer regarded Torath for a few seconds before speaking.

"Torath, Torath . . . Torath . . ." And then another pause, while the Overlord cringed inwardly, as his experience of Satan's thrice repeating of your name usually meant that a chastisement, or at least an admonishment, was to follow. The mailed fingers of the right hand on the ebony sword hilt drummed in cadence with the words.

"I see that you are having a nice little meeting here with the other side of things, which I don't believe I authorized." Venom dripped from every word, though the voice was low. "Perhaps you are about some kind of 'plea bargain' on behalf of the animals I see enjoying themselves by the fire yonder?"

The fist on the pommel of the sword raised and opened to point a forefinger back through the woods towards the clearing which hosted a man gathering. (Over time, spiritual beings . . . both good and bad, had picked up the usages of the language of men, to describe worldly things for which prior to man, there had been no need for description, and hence no words to describe. Demons even went further in their usages of the language of man in aping the expletives and swearings.)



Lucifer's presence was very, very interesting to Michael, as it was known that the Enemy rarely left what ever worm hole he chose to lurk in what all knew to be his chosen normal dragon snake form. Michael wondered anew why the Holy Spirit hadn't informed him that Satan was out and about.

He and Jon listened patiently to the Archdemon trying to explain his presence, and how he came to be there following Jon, culminating in: ". . . I was just trying to find out what this Seraph was doing in my Principality. I was following him as he was in man form, and I wished to see who he was and discern his orchestrations."

Lucifer then turned to face Jon with his fists on his hips, and regarded the two Angels, “Yes, and what did you find out by your observations?”

Torath rushed the words, “He stopped to address me first, my lord, and I figured it wouldn’t hurt if I could find out something from it about what it was up to. It is the one who heralded flashes of power, changed to man and back, and smote Baloth’s lackeys.” He pointed out one of the demons who had come to earth behind Satan.

“And . . . ?” Lucifer urged curious himself.

“And I don’t know, but I did find out that it had interest in the same female that Baloth’s underlings were driving men to harm, and I watched it ward her spiritually. I do not know what Baloth’s interest in the cow is, but he somehow inspired her protection by a Seraph, though she is only Covered and not ughh . . . Saved.” (“Covered” being the state of one who has a spouse who has their Salvation, though the covered one does not.)

“Well, Seraph, (Lucifer knew Jon’s name but didn’t deign at this point to recognize him in an effort to belittle) what brought you hither to my neck of the woods?” He asked sarcastically and gestured around them at the trees.

The Seraph deigned to respond, “As I informed your supposed ‘Overlord Prince,’ I am *definitely* not here to answer your questions. Yet I will bide a while to inform you that had your underlings not stepped over boundaries, Farol nor would I have been empowered to act.”

“Hmmm . . .” Click, click, click went the fingers again drumming on the pommel of the sword, while Lucifer digested this, which went in line with what his Lieutenant appointee under Torath, Baloth, had already informed him.

“So the cow situation was the harbinger of all this?” Satan gestured sweepingly to include them all and those overhead, while with his opposite hand he jerked a thumb towards where they could all hear the music from the party of men in the larger clearing. “You cannot lie, this I know, but you are not telling all. From what I have heard, the female was ours by right, as she even studied to summon us to come to her, so there was no trespass.”

“True,” Jon replied. “The trespass came later in your underling’s

manifestations on the physical plane, and your confusion is amazing to me, as you of all of your kind know that the Lord is omnipresent, and can and will react at any time in any time, to whatever happened at any time, even so before the trespass ever occurred.”

Satan wheeled to face those who had come to earth behind him. “Baloth,” Come here and make sense of this things babblings,” He snarled, in a rage at being made to look ignorant by this upstart of a Seraph, who had surely not been a mover and a shaker in the Heavenly Hierarchy, when Lucifer had been first among the Lord’s Angels.



Listening to the dialogue between Jon and Lucifer, Michael was still champing at the bit about his Angel of Light having been pounced on by a demon. Michael found himself barely able to hold his subterfuge together.

Then came a point to where Lucifer had actually laid hand upon him to restrain his half-hearted attempt to rise to do the Seraph’s unspoken bidding, and the fabric of his illusionary efforts to just maintain and observe, crumbled before his umbrage at the physical affronts to both he and his Angels.



Satan had been interrupted in his gathering of information from the demon Baloth, and had been in turn listening to a short report from yet another underling, concerning the reason he was confronting Jon, and of what his demons had been doing. From overhearing that report, Michael hadn’t wanted to go and address the issue revealed to all by the underlings report, but the Seraph still thought he was the minor Angel, Farol. And had given him a look in expectation that he would go see to the matter. He had made as if to rise, and Lucifer had reached out a mailed fist to restrain him.



“Hold and bide, Angel,” I would hear the rest without you flapping about!” The grip tightened holding the robes disguising Michael’s armor, who made no real effort to dislodge Lucifer’s grasp, so not to betray his true strength.

Jon, receiving direction from the Holy Spirit, said, “It is given that we abide for a time, Farol.”

Michael heeded him, (and his own wishes) and ceased seeming ineffectually trying to lift from the grip that held him earthbound.

“Make haste with your tale,” Satan ordered Sinath, (the minion he was listening to), impatiently. “I dislike touching this thing I hold, or He Who resides with and within it!”

(Not as much as I dislike you touching me! Michael thought . . . about to burst from holding back smiteings.)

“Yes, lord . . . we sent many to obsess and push the men who did attempt the female’s demise before, but find that she is now in company with ahhh . . . those who belong to Another, and our enhancements failed when those men approached that One’s sphere of influence.” (“Those who belong to Another” being those who have their Salvations and belong to Christ.)

Michael and Jon listened to Satan question and chastise his underlings, and whatever of the matter that the Seraph knew, Michael soon found that Ol’ Lucifer had been getting the wool pulled over his eyes by his own henchmen, and was so satisfied by the Enemy’s confusion, that he relaxed a bit in his Farol guise.

Apparently, Lucifer like himself, had come to find out just what was going on, and to take a hand if needed, without knowing all of the events that had led to the moment. The upshot being that the “hand” the Enemy seemed to be about to take in things, was going to be against his own disobedient Lieutenants and Captains, and perhaps even an Overlord or two. These seeming to be of those who were in the upper echelons of the demonic hierarchy appointed by Satan to orchestrate the assailments against mankind, meant an “enemy divided against itself,” and a very fine thing to Michael.



Lucifer finally swept his helmet off with his free hand, and hurled it to the ground in disgust, shaking his head in bewilderment, while steam issued from his nostrils. He made as if to speak, and simply expelled a gust of fire and steam from his mouth.

Upon removal of Satan's helmet, again, Michael wondered at how such a wonderfully featured being, could be such an evil entity.

Lucifer released Farol/Michael with a shove that surprisingly only pushed that worthy back a few paces, and spoke aloud plaintively to no one in particular, but probably just to himself. "This whole yarn is one of confused babblings and inept orchestrations that only grow with the telling . . ."



"Yea, you are in perpetuity lost and confused, O Son of the Morning, but take succor from the knowledge that you dwell there always, and thus are inured to the failings of your state, or you wouldn't have fallen ere."

Michael had spoken in response to the Enemy's musings, and after issuing his pronouncement and judgment of Lucifer, glanced over to wink at Jon who had turned to face him as he spoke, and suddenly knew no doubts about who was his companion Angel.

Satan wasn't confused about Farol either, as only one other in millenia had called him Son of the Morning to his face, and that was long ago, before battle.

He wheeled from his pondering at his underling's duplicities with his mailed fist again upon the pommel of his sword, and faced Jon's companion who had stepped in front of the Seraph, though as perhaps the lesser of the two in the Heavenly order of Celestial Beings, it wasn't his station to do so.

"How appropriate for you to join us in the garb of another, Archangel," Lucifer replied. "Your Hebrews 13:2 has a new import for both sides this day."

"True." The Archangel Michael responded, "And you and your kind as a rule, deign ever to not appear as you were created, as it must remind you of your Creator and that He is the Author of your existence."

The form within the white robes grew taller and wider while the

chest broadened to conform to the normally deep rumbling voice of the Archangel, while the face of Farol dissolved into the scarred visage of one of the Lord's favorite warriors. The robes could no longer hide the armored knight of the Lord with the golden circlet upon his scarred brow, and dissolved in a mist to waft away on the slight breeze.

The shield and helm were all that were lacking from his normal attire, but the broadsword and trumpet horn still hung from his waist.

“Bah! Michael” Satan retorted with a snarl. “You lick the boot that holds you in your place, worshipping the foot in the boot on your necks, while protecting these animals and striving to get them Saved from me. Thus providing that those you help to Save, in their turn come to be placed in ascendancy over you, offering their own boots for you to lick. *This*, and you dare to call me confused?”



Through the rank and file of the hosts above, the word quickly spread that not only was there an awesome Seraph confronted by their Master and the Archdemon Torath, but that the dread Archangel Michael was being faced as well.

It was a toss up debate among the demons, which was the more powerful of an adversary should push come to shove, but it was agreed that both were far above the station of the normal Angel, and that neither could be thwarted on the spiritual plain, by any demon, but could only be stymied on the physical plain through the willful disobedience of man, ably encouraged by Satan's hosts of minions.

'Soul Bowl'

The game was in the last inning,
But the score had more sinning.
The Lord was sore . . .
Keeping the score . . .
Saddened by who was winning.
Home team advantage was hell,
The world would surely tell.
All should beware . . .
The spirited air . . .
And pray for the final bell.
Jesus coached the one team . . .
The 'visitors' it would seem.
They were sent in . . .
To try to win . . .
This nightmare to a dream.
Some were in not of the land.
No cheerleader or a band.
Wished them well . . .
Against Hell . . .
But surely they needed a hand.
Opposed was a legion arrayed.
Demonic brutes were displayed.
A satanic host . . .
Of the most . . .
Powerful beings made.
The coach of this nasty horde,

Amused himself when bored.
This “roaring lion” . . .
Toyed with Zion . . .
Confusing them Who is Lord.
As it was without a doubt,
The Jesus team was in route.
Christians withstood . . .
As Salvation could . . .
But sheep got lost in each bout.
Some men were fumbling so sad,
Their sinful natures so bad.
The demons grinned . . .
As men sinned . . .
Because of the natures they had.
Some Christians even got sacked,
Sometimes when attacked.
Spirits of air . . .
Didn't play fair . . .
And Hell looked to be packed.
Then came a joyous sound,
Or so the Christians found.
Had Jesus lost???
No He'd tossed . . .
The coin for the final round.
The first string came to the fore,
A thousand times one forty four.
The new players . . .
Fought with prayers . . .
The demons had not heard before.
It was Judeo Christian zeal,
The enemy began to feel.
They had faith too . . .
But these Jews knew . . .
That the “game” was for real.
Now the Christian cheered the Jew,
And Jew cheered Christian too.

The Enemy heard . . .
The Lord's Word . . .
And a white horse came in view.
A Second Coming was to blame.
Angels sang His mighty Name.
Men did choose . . .
Their souls to lose . . .
But Jesus had won the game!!!

Endnotes

1. Note: The Author tried to read the Satanic Bible in curiosity *before* his Salvation, and got flat hammered by such a sense of wrongness, that I couldn't get through 2 paragraphs!

