

QUANDARY

The life of Azazel

Jonny Feelgood

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Chapter One: Quandary

I knew love once,
twice,
and many more times than numbers know measure.

one love seduced me in a way,
that only a soul mate could stay,
yet in this lifetime,
I may have lost her forever.

The last time we spoke,
the thought of it alone makes me choke,
I long for her
to no end.

she asked for me to write her,
and love her
and never forget her
so maybe in these pages
words may transcend.

Upon this world
I came
I saw
I conquered
I gained
I lost
I wandered
I knew hunger
I knew thirst
I knew squander
When I knew love,
I knew enough to know
that nothing is stronger

To happen upon you
I desire everything else
no longer...
Your voice
Your song
Your tone
is all
to me

a home
the way
you grace
each and every moment
as if
it were
a chance for atonement
and it is,
because you let it.
Your kindness
Your love
Your beauty
How am I to forget it?

If I wrote you everyday
It would be the same as you and I talking,
us holding hands and walking,
kissing each other,
missing each other,
missing each other,
by all the traits we adore.
Even if we quarreled,
I could only want you more.
I wish to run my fingers
through your hair
and across your lips,
down your stomach,
upon your hips,
and pull your body
close to mine,
to feel the warmth of your breath
as it enters
and exits
your chest.
You and I,
if but for a moment,
will know perfection.



Chapter Two: Lofty Thoughts

I spent the better half of the day meandering about. Contemplating the riddles of the universe and in doing so, as often I do, I fell upon a new realization that everything we do is for self-achievement.

The sky seems to move on forever.

The clouds are a burnt white as the sun dies slowly.

Another day passes into nightfall. I am alone.

I choose to be alone or I am meant to be alone. I try to count the amount of 'I's' that I use on a regular basis in the conversations in my mind as I pass the time or time passes me, which ever. I'm always attempting to identify myself as one thing or another.

Me, myself, and I. I am this, I am that, I don't, I will, not now but maybe I will tomorrow, etc. Each one of these thoughts is an achievement. As soon as I say 'I', I am claiming territory of sorts.

I grind my foot into the ground a bit and stare at my toes. I wonder about the past. It isn't happening right now, so how it could it be any more than a dream? What is the future but a daydream of a different past to be?

The wind crawls across my flesh, carrying smells from a faraway people, a faraway life and society, busy and bustling about. What am I that I cannot find myself with them? I was with them.... but not anymore... do they even know I'm missing?

I run my fingers across the scars of my past and remember how they befell me... or do I? I don't know and it doesn't matter. I just lie back and enjoy the breeze. Every thought leads to another. Every thought is me overcoming whatever I was before and becoming something more. I am constantly identifying myself with the world around me in some way or another and each new thought aids me in this process.

I cannot help but still feel the sadness. I don't want to be alone but.... who could possibly keep me company? Who could possibly understand the painstaking process of this individualistic evolution of the spirit, this one that is just for me?

I sometimes wonder if the hole in my heart is there to remind me not of all that I yearn to fill it with and that it cannot truly be filled, but a reminder to always be open to new things, thoughts, and ideas.



Chapter Three: The Cost of Living

I'm almost buckled over in pain. Agony is the only feeling my body can express at this moment. I can't get a decent breath. My heart is racing. I look back; I see everything except for my aggressor. I have a moment.

BREATHE. Just breathe. They're coming and you've got to catch your breath if you're going to make it...

Voice of reason, from whose lips mutter your words?
From what body are you the authority of my conscience?
You're right, regardless. I try to close my eyes and take a deep breath. My hands on my knees and I'm hunching over, my heart still feels like a war drum on meth.

In the distance, in my past, I hear a faint pitter patter. My paradigm shifts to world within me...the pitter patter in the distance reminds me of rain drops in the spring.

Pit. Pat. Pit, Pat, Pat.

I'm watching out the window as the slight sprinkle lets the light glisten on the glass in new ways. I know, even as I watch in wonder at this light shower, there is something greater coming, a tremendous shower, backed by a science, monitored and maintained by an authority beyond my comprehension. The rain grows more intense. I'm so sensitive to each drop. I can almost hear the scream of each one's fall, then the horrifying clout of each one's death on impact.

Hundreds, if not millions of them, I'm wincing now, with compassion for each one of them. For I know that they are helpless in their fall, just as I am to save them.

I bear witness to each one, like a soul in heaven forced to watch loved ones with a lifetime of transgression bear the burden of hell's entry.

Time.... passes slower and slower still. Of the millions of drops falling, there is an hour that passes between each one that hits the window. I have lifetimes now to ponder the storm...my paradigm shifts again, I can breathe.

The pitter patter has become a freight train of horse hooves galloping towards my impending doom. If my heart wasn't racing before, it is now and if I do not run, I will meet my fate, without the grace of destiny.

Such is the price of curiosity and wonder, so I must pay. I must pay.



Chapter Four: Hello to an Old Friend

Dust. Dirt. Cough.

Sweat is in my eyes and the dust flaring up makes a thick cloud of blindness. I don't need eyes to see. The horseman removed from his horse, cackled his spurs just before slamming me into the ground. My neck is squandered with the side of his scepter.

"Not now brethren, not now, but soon. We are coming to take you and the others. This is a reminder. Remember your crimes. Remember your sins. In every face you meet, you shall see your sentence being played out. Every passing moment is a clock ticking down until we return."

He eases off of my throat slowly. My throat is so dry, I want to cough and swallow at the same time, both are reminders, once more, of the despair

he has pledged upon me. I don't need eyes to see him. I squeeze my eyes shut to see him more clearly. The soft blue glow outlines his body; his face is serene and just. In a moment he is upon his horse again, over me and onwards to some far off destination. Speaker of truth. Metatron.

I just lay there. Feeling the heat of the sun baking me and yet I bask in it. Something about this experience excites me. As if I've gotten away once more with some foolish mischief. A smirk creeps across my face. I drag my fingers across my body lazily to my eyes and wipe the grime from them. The sun is much too bright, so I close them. I laugh and let my hand rest easy in the dirt.

I am happy. Or relieved. Either one, I can't tell and I don't care, I'm just trying to enjoy it, this feeling is so rare. There was a time when I was friends with the Metatron.

Time... how it passes... sometimes I feel as though I'm just waiting. How long is forever? Forever is such a long time when you know it's coming to an end. Is death even a punishment if you're ready for it?

Suddenly I feel the insides of my body cringe... my heart begins to flutter... I am... somewhere... else.



Chapter Five: Goodbye to a Distant Lover

The room is dark and still. We've only just laid down aside each other, but with each moment passing your body gives off more body heat in anticipation.

For what? You do not know.

You only desire. It's all you feel. You cannot see anything, but I... can see you...the gentle curves of your face. You're looking up at the ceiling nervous. I can feel your heart beat and I'm not even touching you... I brush your face with the side of my finger to feel the softness of your skin. Your eyes close slightly, your body purrs.

“Speak... to...me...”,

I say in hardly but a whisper.

You turn your head to face me. You’re absolutely blind in the darkness, but the sparkle in your eyes ignites the room with light. You don’t have to say a thing; your eyes say it all.

I run my hand down your stomach and feel its warmth, a furnace of passion. It’s heat sizzles my flesh. I want nothing more than our bodies to be one. I’m on top of you in a flash and holding your face in my hands... my face hovers above yours as you anticipate my kiss. You breathe out, I breathe in. I breathe out, you breathe in. My heart is beating so loudly I can feel the room shake and buckle. Slowly I draw closer to your lips. Touching them just so with mine... I can feel yours quiver.

“Dont go...”

I’m sitting in the corner of the room, huddling in the darkness. I have to leave, and you don’t want me to, it hurts too much, your curiosity writhes in the echoes of your heart to no end, and I am the key benefactor of your despair.

“I must.”

“But, why? Please, you don’t have to... use your powers or whatever, please just don’t go, stay with me, just a bit longer...”

I stand up and walk to you. Each step is such a sharp sound of intrusion to the silence of the room.

“Quarks...
are what make atoms,
atoms make up you and I
you and I make up whatever
we can think of and then we just fly...
Remember what it’s like to feel me?”

Feel my heart beating in your chest?
Feel your heart beating...
Feel the pulse beneath your breast...
It's the little things that matter,
the little things that separate you from the rest.
Every day, even though there is space between,
I keep you close to my heart,
my thoughts,
and in my dreams"

I shake off the memory and sit up. The sun isn't any less hot. I scratch my head, dust off my shoulders and look off towards tomorrow.



Chapter Six: Reflecting

I miss the sounds of laughter in the streets. People busy, children playing, lives scurrying about. Life hasn't changed much for so long. People have done what they always have and they wonder so damn much about it.

Why are we here? What is our purpose? I'll tell you right now that the answer to that question will lead you right back to asking it again. You can go an entire life searching for the answer to why we are here only to know everything. Once you know everything you realize that in a split second something can end everything you've ever known and all that knowledge, all those answers are useless. So we're right back to, "why are we here?"

This is what makes people so angry at the Maker. None of that makes any sense to human beings. When things get confusing, people get angry, they lash out or they cope. If I was anything like you, and I am partly, I would do the same. Something in me is made of something different so I am, by nature, inclined to do something else altogether. Sit. Wait. And at times... play.

Part of my punishment is to be one of you, to know your struggles, to

endure your pains. This is the price my brethren and I face. We can see all of you, all the world for what is and its place in the universe, but we are damned here to go no further. We cannot see each other, thus we are alone. The only things we have are our ties to the Maker and the memory of the love we betrayed.

I'm only laughing in my head because I've had this conversation in my head a million times. I'd kill for a cigarette right now.



Chapter Seven: The Turning Leaf

Countless lifetimes ago I was born at the origin of time and matter, the brute force of life's combustion, fools rush in. I knew nothing but the love of the Maker and his mandates.

There are times I second guess my decisions. But ultimately, and knowing full well I will die after this life, unlike you and the others, I am content. Whether he knows it or not, it has never been about being good or living up to his word. I've always been much too curious for that. With either my knowledge or being creative, I use what I know to perpetuate progress. I can't fathom why this ever angered him, for change has always been his decree anyhow.

Everything is in a constant state of change. Perhaps my intentions behind it, justifying it as much and in any way that I wish, my reasons behind my actions dictate how he feels towards me. I showed you not only how to take what you wanted from others, not by charm or tact, but by metal and brawn. Also how to not value each other on the Maker's love alone, but based on physical allure and how to accentuate those appearances. Up the contrast, so to speak, over-exposure, and yet...the very same crimes I committed against you in this 'evil' education, are very simply the way we are. By divine blood! Sharing secrets of the angels to man and by

doing so, being damned to live in your skin, to know your struggles, to now your pains. The feelings you have, I have known countless-fold.

There have been times I have contemplated the possibility of redemption. If we lived just one life by the mandate of the Maker maybe we would know atonement. But not one of us can refrain, for I know seduction all too well and to watch every one of your women crumble for my looks, my words, or the sound of my voice is all too much for me to resist.

Weak.

Weakness to such power.

If any man ever had this, he too, would fall victim to its fire.

To be good. What is good? Nothing, not one evil can separate you from the ties of the Maker. There is no right or wrong. All that is, is all you have, it's what you make of it that counts.

There are times I feel the divine blood surging through my body, searing the wounds of my removed wings... and there times I feel the animal that you all are, oh the physical world. To touch... to taste... to indulge...

Won't someone please save temptation? When it all comes to an end... for without it, we know not the love of the Maker.

The sun sets as my thoughts settle. The sun plays with the congregation of clouds as a minister would sell pardons to his flock. The sky looks like a rainbow just went supernova out of boredom and the colors remind me of your eyes. I remember them and how it felt to be near them as if the sunset never ended and love could be forever.

Our legs entangled,
one arm underneath your head still sleeping,
the other on your stomach,
still, and quiet

as to not wake you.
I watch you sleep,
as you purr like a kitten
to my touch.
I cannot resist
the softness of your skin
I can feel the breeze of the wind
come in through the windows,
as it dances lazily with the curtains.
I could stay right here,
forever.

The sun is what wakes me...



Chapter Eight: Beauty's Maker

Never let a confused individual confuse you. I share this thought with as many people as I possibly can. The ember of foolishness lining the very notion of this concept is that we, as beings to any degree, are all confused one way or another. Free will implies it. Without confusion, we would have no struggle, thus the decree of the life experience would negate itself.

I pick myself up off the ground and stare at a building in the distance.

I am warmed by the thought of someone's desire at some point to build this trophy of construction. It is hardly height soaring, yet elegant in its approach to architectural aesthetics. It serves its purpose of enclosing something to be safeguarded from ill weather, at the least, yet the builder wanted it to please the eyes of passerby. What is it that compels a

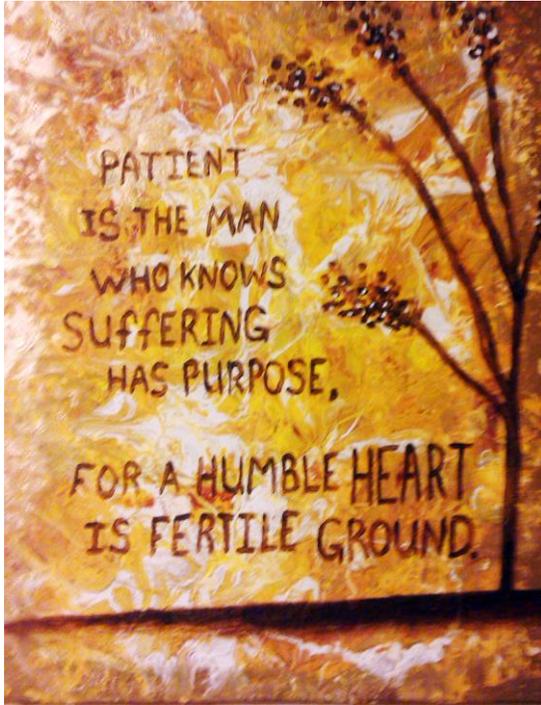
creator, to not just design and construct for practical application, but design and construct something of beauty? Who is to measure beauty, who defines it, and why is it that for the most part we can all agree on what is not beautiful, yet beauty is in the eye of the beholder?

When I first saw this construct, this incredible wonder called Earth, I saw great beauty, but some things were simply too beautiful for even words to describe. They could only be felt and admired, for their purpose was unknown to anyone but the great Maker, who saw beauty in all of his creation. Is it possible to truly appreciate all things equally? To hold to the thought that all things are beautiful, in their own right, that whether they serve a practical purpose or purely aesthetic, they are beautiful nonetheless? It seems if it were so, the awe would not be worth the wonder, and yet, the great Maker is able to.

The ground my feet rest on is dry, rough, and crumbling to the heat. I have not seen a flower in so very long. I remember one of the first women I met, whom I shared the concept of physical attraction with, comparing the woman's beauty to the elegance of a flower. In that no matter what flower it may be, and how each one, although similar, is quite unique, and all of them are incredibly beautiful. They are a global symbol for life's continuation, just as the female is associated with childbirth and the continuation of a species. Flowers are such the essence of absolute beauty that they can be made into applicable colors to a female's face and body to accentuate her beauty. Her eyes grew wide; her pupils grew dark, as the seed I planted grew within her.

The only way, I decided, to appreciate everything, is to not understand, but accept, not each individual thing, but that everything serves a purpose for something else, and the divine engine as a whole is what is beautiful. It is not the flower that is truly beautiful but the overwhelming amount of lives it procures in its existence that is.

I noticed after my conclusion a tiny sprout reaching towards the sky from within the cracks in the ground. Life must go on, even if at some point it must die, it must continue to try to know life in all its beauty.



Chapter Nine: The Bitter Cold

We were staying, they were going. The Metatron, or as once known as Enoch, walked solemnly and yet with pride in his steps, for he walked with the Maker's love unending, his eyes never leaving my own as he approached us. My brothers and sisters all around me trembled, so that the earth at our feet shook and quivered. What sounded like a stampede was the cradle of fear, the acquaintance of our wrongdoing.

I could see in his eyes as he informed us of the Maker's decision to leave us to this world on our own, saddened him. The rest of the Maker's children would leave for the next world, on with the mission. We had caused enough trouble for the overall agenda, the creation of and continuation of life through-out the universe, so we must serve our punishment. In good time, the Maker would send more of his children to

end our sentence and see to it that the world was repaired for the havoc we had sewn with the humans.

Enoch was my friend. He was one of the first of your kind and he understood everything right away. Learn, Share, and Care. There was no test or temptation with Enoch, for he so loved the Maker, the Maker in turn took him from this world and made him one of us, only greater. He became the Maker's voice.

Enoch and I spend a great deal of time together, I knew him as he was just a boy and as he grew older. He walked with us, like a child to giants, and as a youth running between our legs as we walked, laughing and playing with excitement as we were unlike anything from this world and knew so much of it. There were times when night fell and all the stars glistened in the sky as I told little Enoch stories of other worlds. The most astounding thing about him, no matter what story I told, no matter what treasure to attain, no matter how beautiful a lover to be had, Enoch knew only the love of his Maker and the importance of the bigger picture. Nothing else mattered except the eternal expanse of creation. His eyes had just a bit of Amber in them before he became like us. They became a brilliant yellow when he changed. I did not see him change, but we could all feel it. It was excruciating pain ripping through every one of us for what seemed like days, until finally an after taste of pure ecstasy.

We were jealous of Enoch. Although he deserved the Maker's love, and his given role, we were jealous, because we wanted more than our place in the universe. We were creative enough to create, why could we not? We knew how to manipulate the universe, make new from old, make old into new, but we were still not worthy. This was the Maker's Art. We, too, were part of his art. We were but another color in his painting that was to paint itself and yet, despite our knowledge of that single fact, it became a slow boiling fist of contempt writhing in our stomachs every day, growing stronger and stronger.

I heard my brothers and sisters cry out when the Metatron spoke the Maker's judgment. I heard them beg for their lives. I heard angels weep

for their own salvation as the guilt they had for betraying their Maker in their quest for more. I was silent and still as I knew blame was sure to come. As the disbanded, they all looked at me with an extravagant display of hatred. Suddenly one by one, none of them could be seen. Until the Makers return we were to walk the world alone from each other.

Enoch, The Metatron, Maker's Voice, walked up to me and whispered, "Patient is the soul who knows suffering has purpose, for a humble heart is fertile ground." He touched my face with his hand for a moment as if giving me a chance to speak. I saw how different he looked now than before. Older, as if he fought battles on a thousand worlds and lived to speak some rhetorical wisdom bullshit to me now. Only he quoted me, for I spoke that same line to him when he was just a child. I just wanted to see him, just one of my kind for just a second longer. He took his hand down and turned around to walk away.

"Enoch..."

The Metatron stopped and turned back to face me.

"Brother, Metatron, Fare thee well."

He bowed and vanished. I saw not one of my kind anywhere around me. I could only feel the wind now as the sun fell and for the first time since being on Earth, I felt the bitter cold.



Chapter Ten: Morning News

The lonely days pass by with a great length of gracious minutes that crawl like turtles in the laziest part of their day, singing a haunting song that echoes in my ears and never ceasing to force me to acknowledge each and every one.

Funny that even an individual such as me, would have demons as any of you. I suppose the Maker has demons of his own as well. We all struggle, we all fight for whatever survival means to us. I realized long ago that no one else can fight my demons for me, nor does anyone from this world have the tools to disarm them. Only I can see the demons. Only I, alone, must endure or defeat them. Hate them for procuring my weakness, embodying my flaws and lack of character only to taunt and tease me or

love them for helping me shape my character, and appreciate their guiding hands that show me where I could be stronger.

Each human is similar to a pond of water. The edges of the pond are shaped by the Earth but the contents are greatly impacted by the many creatures that happen upon it. Whether they live near the pond and enjoy its qualities or perhaps use it as a resource for survival or a place to dive into recreationally, only for pleasurable moments at a time. Every being leaves its print, its residue, its traces in the pond water. This makes the pond murky with life and activity, no matter how brown it may appear from a quiet passerby. Some people are afraid of what may live beneath the liquid glass layer of water and never get their feet wet, missing out on the many wonders that may lie beneath. I am so very curious about each person. I want to taste their pond water, swim in it, build a home near to each one and dig ravines so they may all connect as to unite and mold as one.

Such is the nature of my soul, curiosity;
Such is the trophy of curiosity, knowledge;
Such is the price of knowledge, wisdom;
and to the heels of wisdom, all beings bow down.

The sun is rising again as it does every day around this time. Watching the sunrise reminds me of females and how at times I long for one. How the sky is so perilously dark with twinkly little stars and slowly but surely the mass of light bevels over the horizon of the lands, erupting in an onslaught of complete beauty as it begins its sensational arch over my world. This shining beacon of promise for tomorrow, inspiration for today, often puts me in a state of awe, relaxing me, so that I may feel so now and alive, forgetting the burdens of yesterday's past.

The only way to describe the way I have felt the last few days is boredom, with life in general, my ideas and thoughts don't get me any further than the very next one I have. Life can be so boring when you seek entertainment from outside sources. I have been relying on others to satisfy my hunger and thirst for life for as long as I can remember. When I

am around others, I can feel their energy; it perplexes me, soothes me, and excites me. Perhaps the wisdom in this is to procure a kind, loving heart and put others before you, in a state of selflessness because it provides such a delightful feeling in return.

The act of giving.

The morning feels new and precious with this new thought. I am curious, again.



Chapter Eleven: The Direction of Love

Water hurts when you haven't had it in a long time and you've been running most of the day. It almost makes your mouth drier after it's swallowed. My eyes are closed tightly as I try to suck water out of my cupped hands. The small pool of water I found is my salvation for the moment while I catch my breath and quench my thirst. I feel compelled to look back from where I came just to retrace my footsteps. Out of exhaustion, I just sit, drinking and breathing heavily. Sometimes these human bodies really suck. Everything in me is screaming, GO! GO! GO! And this body just whimpers, no, no, no. Looking back is a waste anyway, I know full and well where I came from, it's where I'm headed that matters.

The sun sparkles in the pool like a thousand splinters in the ripples as my hands drop water I didn't drink. The sparkles remind of the stars on a particular night. I lose myself in the splinters of the sun dancing in the water, I find myself in a memory...

It's night, before we sleep, we smoke a cigarette and share stories of different pasts but similar views and when she speaks my soul is warmed by her energies many hues.

When I hold her in my arms, it feels just right. It feels like I'm not forcing it and its just falling into place like perfect puzzle pieces placed by practiced puzzle players. I love to feel the warmth of her body entangled with mine as she falls asleep. It charges my heartbeat with a quick pulse of excitement because I know she has such a hard time sleeping but in our embrace her rest is deep and soothing.

I get home from working, the bed is made, laundry is put in the closet and all I can think of is how I could have this forever.

The night before, we laid silent for a good bit of time before we exchanged a particular kind of dialogue, the quiet of the night kind, the hide how you feel but still this certain level of intimacy kind. I reach for her and she comes to me. I hold her. My head nuzzled against hers, my arm wraps around her tummy like a safety belt, my legs tangled into hers and I hear her thoughts change rapidly. From there, my soul scans her body and I feel the beating of her heart racing, the quickness of her breath. She is excited, anxious, and nervous of the moment that she is held by me. In her mind she is talking to me. There is more to this than she speaks of. She does not know how she feels about me. She knows the power I have is the doorway to her greatness and somewhere in that she is curious if I will kiss her.

When we talk, we feel compelled to be honest and withhold nothing; we are scared that after finding endless connections to each other that the road will end; the honesty will pay off and pave miles more.

The lining of my stomach turns inside out to evaluate the overwhelming population of butterflies when I take a moment to look through her eyes. Her eyes are hungry for the power within me, she wants it, wants to learn of it and rise to her potential. She loves me for this possibility and because I am so giving to her.

I know that I love her, not for the reasons she loves me, but love nonetheless. I can't seem to choose to love her as my student, sister, or lover.

I am afraid to love her as my lover.

I am afraid I already do.

I can't see the city in the horizon yet but I can tell by the vibrations in the ground I'm going the right direction. My heartbeat has slowed with my resting and I push hard again. I can feel my heart pummel into everything it surrounds with every new beat and every beat brings me closer.



Chapter Twelve: Le Solitaire – Part 1

It was in a small village we lived together for a while. I had many friends and acquaintances; however, having not been such a social being, she did not. It was a Thursday, or Friday, or any day of the week that we sat together as music filled the air. Two musicians played a soft guitar duet well-rehearsed. One young man boasted to a group of boys and girls about a fight he had won at his place of study. A young woman was leaned against a wall looking through old photos. A couple of lesbians were kissing like two hummingbirds that perform ballet at the feeder. The two of us were serenaded by the duet, if not by the lullaby of the moment, and I felt her hand just above mine as if thinking of touching it. I held my breath. It hovered for a second, and then placed back down

where it was. I exhaled and felt the cool breeze.

Somewhere drowned in a few drinks I lost myself to the depressing contemplation of how I had lost so much time to my fucked up decision to betray my Maker. What would have been different if I had taken the path given to me had I not given into change, if I had not left my comfort zone?

I was happier at that moment than I had ever been, but still there was this void in my heart and soul. This bottomless fucking pit. This unquenchable thirst for control over what I cannot. This hunger.

Without the pain, I had no inspiration.

Without the struggle, I had no soul.

I stopped looking down at my feet and watched her face half lit in the moonlight. She was smiling. Even in the company of so many, I still felt the emptiness. I was sitting next to her, moved by her smile and the way the light touched her face just so, and I was suddenly comforted by the memories of having slept with most of the girls there. Then I wondered why that would make me feel comfortable. Then I concluded, that was the core issue; that was the demon of my loneliness.

I looked towards the musicians, their song ended but they began to play another. I felt her hand hover above mine again, this time she rested it on top of my hand. I looked at her and knew that her smile was for me.



Chapter Twelve: Le Solitaire – Part 2

I woke to the bitter cold morning; she was shivering in her sleep as the covers enveloped me lavishly. She had fallen ill and as my heart is soft for her, I mustered the courage to face the day and tuck her in, followed by a kiss on the forehead before I headed out the door. It was heartlessly cold outside and humid, the worst kind of cold as I jumped an eight foot rain-filled trench to get into my pearly white four wheeled chariot.

My night mind was flooded with dreams of another girl I knew long before, seen again and visited recently. A girl, I had a strong attraction towards in the way only a fallen angel could. We were both in what most would say serious relationships; so very much at the same place in our lives, relatively. She added another finger to the handful of women I had any kind of respect for. She was a single mother and when I watched her nurture her son, I was mesmerized and enthralled. There was something in the way she moved that set off tracers of grace that were undeniably infatuating.

At her house, I sat on a couch and felt the energy of the room. It breathed of a warm homely glow that was perpetuated by her soul, my soul just

swam in it, laughing, splashing as she spoke.

Her physique was exquisite, olive skinned and slender, long dark hair, and deep dark eyes. She was at peace in her home relaxed in simple clothing. This, to me, is just sexy because it has, in its own way, an air of confidence.

She was an old soul with deep feelings as well as a well-rounded humor, yet held to her own convictions and ideals.

When I was around her I understood what other people said when they tried describing being in my presence. I was intoxicated, calm, and comfortable.

I wanted her for every reason a man could want a woman.

I returned home later to find my bed made, dishes done, floor cleaned and everything generally tidy. What a sweet girl. I make a call to a former lover of mine and invite over so we can have sex so I may forget about the feelings I had about the girl I just got home from. This one was not an ethically wound individual and fairly free spirited, so it did not take much convincing.

Just before what felt like a great workout I came inside her, rolled over mumbling words in a forgotten and ancient language that reveled in the sweet moment of absolute peace resonating through-out my entire body. Finally my demons lay dormant, alas! There was silence. I excused her shortly after.

I left then to pick up my love from her job as a florist. We spoke a bit excitedly about her day and then we slept. We had not snuggled since she had fallen ill, so it had been difficult for her to breathe.

Yet, even after my various sexual relations, I still felt the void.

The inexhaustible space inside.

Slowly but surely, the demons made their way into my institution of delusion. It hurt, as I felt trampled on and over. The peace, short-lived, erased the memories of the pain the demons caused, until again, I reminded myself, it is of no demons fault, but my own, that I rue in unhappiness and regret.

I turned on my side to face her, my fingers slid down her shoulder slowly. She turned her head back to try to see me in the darkness. She could not, but she could feel my presence.

"Hold me... please... the way you do..."

I could not refuse her. I held her in my arms so not one thing could harm her. Her breathing calmed down and she fell asleep soon after. Holding her, I fell asleep too.



Chapter Twelve: Le Solitaire – Part 3

It was a chilly nightfall. Alone with my thoughts, I was company only to the roar of traffic. I had a blur of plans that night but could not pick one over another, so I ended up by myself.

My mother had asked me earlier that day if sleeping with different women made me happy and I said no, I only did it to silence the memories of the girls past. She asked, what would make me happy?

I said, “I don't know mama... a good job, a loving wife, and some kids. That would make me happy.”

She asked what I was doing to get those things. Then added that everything I did should be working towards those things.

Part of me wanted to run through my memories, like pages of a book, and read the secrets stored in them. But, I feared them so greatly, the feelings

trapped in the words, like virus' hidden in them, waiting, lying dormant until I stumbled upon them, so they may have life once more, and destroy me. I felt as though the key to my identity was hidden in my new thoughts, as if they were each a work of art, yet perhaps, my hastiness to rid myself of each new one, by replacing it, was the root to my constant loss of identity.

To be new, in every moment, is this Zen?

The one woman I had feelings for, the one I never seem to forget was waiting for me at her house. She once told me that I embodied Zen. That the wiring in my brain allowed for it at such ease that perhaps I was spoiled with the luxury of it, which in cause, led to my constant boredom with life around me.

In the experience of Life, we spend a great deal of time talking about ourselves, our lives, the people in them, but only from our eyes. Something about that seems so vain and criminal, yet, I indulge, nonetheless.

I remember thinking as I sat under that bridge, having a thousand warm, cozy beds I could have slept in, yet remaining in the cold, for I felt I deserved that much, I struggle in this brittle and meek human body, and when I forget my roots, I wonder how anyone could want me.

I curled up into a tiny ball, as a homeless cat would, lost and hungry, and fell asleep to the ocean tide washing against a rocky shore sounds of passing cars and trucks.



Chapter Twelve: Le Solitaire – Part 4

Does dust that flies in the air make sound? Can we hear it? The sound of silence is so loud at times, like a constant train, nothing but the noise of the world in motion.

It was the day after my birthday. I was pleased to have so many people wish me well on my special day. If you want to have a lot of people float your ego, then I suggest catering to the interests of a lot of people, that always seemed to work for me.

I was on my way to pick her up, dreaming of her the whole way. The way my energy seduced her, my voice hypnotized her, different though, from the other girls, as I filled my charm towards her with sincerity. She was prideful, and where this is an obstacle that rarely pays off, there was a side to her with a certain soft sweetness that I found irresistible. She was from a different place, had seen many new places, viewed the world from the outside in and when I was with her I felt the magic and warmth provided by a real true relationship.

I picked her up from a restaurant where she and her roommate were enjoying some drinks. He was a 38 year old man who was renting out his couch to her. A sweet, short, and very lonely gentleman, Ben, tells me he is in love with someone special but is too much of a coward to tell her how he feels.

He did not know who or what I am or that I could hear his thoughts and woes that bellowed from his weeping heart. I know he was in love with her. I could see his nights were long and haunted, played out scenarios of confessing in a hundred million ways. I could feel his heart beating for her and I knew he saw me not only as a threat to what he desired but a champion for which there was no competition.

I waited, anxiously, to see my friends and family.

I knew she was hesitant to make the venture, although uncomfortable with her immediate living condition, she still found security in being surrounded by all her things, and yet she was lost in her attraction for me, a sense stronger than her fear for the unknown; the muse of curiosity served as my beneficiary.

We presumed to leave, when Ben, who was unaware of our plans, began to whine. If you haven't heard a grown man whine, it is an appalling sight to say the least.

"You're leaving? Ooooh I didn't know... Pleeeeease don't leave me, not here, Lorea, not all alone...."

It was but a gasp of air, suffocating from the constraints of a despairing soul.

I asked him if he wished to come. We left together, he slept on the ride to my city walls, Lorea and I exchanged touches and looks and all was well.

We made a quick stop so I could water a tree for a whole five minutes; Ben hopped out of the car to do the same. I returned to the car as he finished. In the solitude of the car I told Lorea what I knew about Ben.

“He is in love with you.”

“Why do you say that?”

Ben returned to the car, we rode pacified by lullabies from the radio.

We arrived to my temple and I was greeted warmly by my people. My heart danced in the excitement of the occasion; I introduced Lorea and began to conquer a beer.

More and more, my tribe came from surrounding cities to pay respect and homage to my glorious day and my soul rejoiced.

Funny how Ben had suddenly disappeared, he was not sleeping in the chair where we had last seen him, nor was he anywhere in the house. I sipped my beer calmly without concern. I knew he was outside. Lorea and I walked outside and sure enough he was walking mindlessly in the drowning demons of his emotions, a torrent hell that he was stifled in, my empire was not a welcoming city for his heart.

Lorea went to him and I watched from afar the conversation transform into one of the many scenarios he had played out in his mind a million times in front of his bathroom mirror, his aching confession, as he spoke it in real time. He was and always will be in love with her.

I went back into the house to resume my evening of drinking as Lorea trailed in soon after. She told me of the conversation she had with Ben outside and I couldn't help but laugh. I knew she had let him down the best way she could and he disappeared as many forgotten dreams do into the night.

As we drove in the car and I invited her to come see my place. She obliged. We walked inside, she removed her jacket. I removed my shirt and shoes. She noticed my collection of art and for a moment I shared them with her and the stories behind them. I told her I wished to nap a bit before I took her home. I turned out the lights, dove under the covers and calmed myself from the cold on the other side.

My mind stirred in the darkness...

I shut my eyes and the room became vibrant with a soft luminescent glow. I could see her energy; the beating of her heart was soft and steady. My hand reached for her. As I pulled her close to me, her heart quickened with excitement. Our snuggle was of immeasurable compatibility and in accord she turned over slowly to face me. The snuggle, short lived, became something different altogether. In the silent night, the only sound was of two hearts beating so fast it became a hum. I pulled her close and closer still, so that our lips could tango and noses brushed softly against one another, teased the moments to come.

I paused for a moment, in the dark, I was but an outline to her, yet to me, I could see her beauty clear as a fair weather Sunday.

I lost myself in her eyes...

I ran my hands down her body...

Her body was so feminine, so womanly, my fingers danced over a scar she had from a removed appendix, and I knew... I knew that would be the first place I would kiss.

“I want to go down on you.”

“You do?”

“Mmhmm...”

I pulled her pants off slowly as I kissed all around her temple. I held her hands in mine as her legs tightened around my head.

The night’s events vanished in our passion.

Before we fell victim to the sandman, she snuggled in my arms and said to me in hardly more than a whisper,

“I love you in a way...”

I couldn't help but smile at that.

I played it over and over in my head as we and as a hundred thousand lifetimes before, drifted off to sleep, together, as one.



Chapter Thirteen: The Maker's Match

The man in the black hat knew my name before he saw my face. He knew the fire in my eyes before he heard my footsteps. He knew me and I knew him, but from where... I could not recall. As I ran, my clothes battered, torn and windblown from the cruel desert air upon entering a bustling metropolis, the man stepped out from the shadows abruptly interrupting my path.

His smile was a wicked one and his heartbeat was far too slow to be of this world.

“Azazel, my dear old friend, we meet again, and on such a pleasant day, I must say, the sun rose for you and I to meet, I am so sure of it!”

Taken back by this unprecedented meeting of an old acquaintance, interrupting my immediate priority and longing passion to return to the arms of my one true love, Lorea, I was shocked to say the least.

“Uzza... why is it, that we may see each other?”

“The time is coming. They know we will congregate if we can see each other. They mean to exterminate us, as you well know.”

“I know this well, brother, and it is pleasant to see you after so long, yet, I find great pain in our meeting, for the circumstances are so grim.”

“That they are, Azazel, that they are. However, I have news of the eternal sun to warm you with, news so that you may not meet our fated end.”

It seemed the world fell silent at his words. As if no living creature so much as thought or pondered, no wind spurred, no water rising to the skies to free fall back to the earth, not a sound to be heard, and my heart, at this moment, skipped a beat, then pounded hard against my ribs, like a warrior's fist to his lifelong nemesis's face at battle's end.

His smirk became that of a ghoulish grin as he knew well that my curiosity was struck.

“The breed of our kind sent from the origin, sent to kill us, have nearly come to maturity, and once our brother, the Metatron, voices the Maker's decree, they will act in swift. They become active when the amplifier matures. When the amplifier matures, the Maker's children will hear it and the hunt will begin.”

“Which one is the amplifier, Uzza?”

“If she were to be eliminated before the Metatron spoke, we have until she is reborn and matures to live. As long as we know her energy signature, she will be hardly a threat to our well-being, therefore leaving us to be our Maker's match.”

“Who is she, where is she, Uzza?”

Uzza takes a soft step closer towards me, I can feel the cold air exhale from his white nostrils as it is the only wind in the world, tickling my face. His eyes are deep and dark, with a soft glowing golden ring burned around the iris. He is clever, always was, and his heart, burned with a long seeded

plethora of lifetimes of absolute contempt for everything. He was, in a sense, hatred.

“You know precisely who she is.”

I can feel my entire body. Every nerve-ending tingles as if irritated by a never ending, immutable cold feeling.

Uzza takes a step back and turns the opposite direction. The world begins to move again, the sound turns on. The wind is no longer his cold cruel breath, but the smells of distant places. He throws his hands up in the air, with a lack of concern and yet reverence as he speaks.

“I definitely want to improve the world’s efficiency. I do not really care about the humans of the world but I do know what they want,”

He turns to face me, his hands fall to his side gently and sure.

“they want what others have, and if they do not yet know of something, they will want it as soon as they are exposed to it and if they do not want anything under those conditions, it just takes the right individual to put it in the right place at the right time to arouse their hunger and desire for proprietorship, so if I can get humans to access things they want faster, cheaper, and cleaner, I think I will be a very,”

He steps close again.

“very,”

And closer still.

“very, happy soul.”

There is no way to measure whether he is right or wrong. Is he wrong for wanting someone murdered? Is he right in that if that person is not murdered, then we will all be murdered? Is it wrong for us to save ourselves? Is it right, and justified, that we, at the very least, try?

“Who is the amplifier, Uzza?

“She is the one you are on your way to meet.”

I could not move.

Uzza had long since left and the sun had fallen as it does so very often. The night reminds me of all I have lost. The thought of the sun-filled day to come makes me think of all that stands to be gained and the seeds of tomorrow can be sewn in the sultry fertile soil depths, and in time, harvested as the fruits of the future.

Some would rather eat the seeds before sewing them.

If I go to Lorea, I can be with the one I truly love.

If I go to Lorea, I will have to make the most difficult choice any soul has ever had to make in the existence of time itself.



**Chapter Fourteen:
What an ear can hold, that a hand cannot.**

Autumn escaped the sun's gluttony but after a short spell, it had fallen victim to its lost and lonely thoughts, moving slower and not so sure footed towards an unknown direction, forward as it seemed to autumn, but anywhere nonetheless. The rest of the world knew autumn's new skin as winter, and this was a particularly harsh one.

I was a young Duma-Nita during these years and worked for a lu who owned a great bit of land and owned many institutions of income as well as the Arad and Geme that worked them.

During these years I belonged to breed of people called the 'Sumer' and it was one of the most thriving civilizations on the planet that there had been in quite some time, while a former mega-civilization was on its collapse in what you would call South America. The world was very different but humans were very much the same. The Lu I worked for was named Ba'ti. He often shared secrets of his life with me, as I would listen with great care and never told another soul. Ba'ti told me he was just like me when he was younger, full of curiosity and wonder, and I simply needed a good woman to have the foundation I needed to build a great estate as the one he had.

When I come to choose a wife for myself, I will no longer be a Duma-Nita, but a Lu like Ba'ti. I knew it would be wise to find the most successful of the Lu and learn from him. It would not be wise to be a Lu with no assets, working business, Arad or Geme to work them.

Ba'ti wanted to scout out some new land he was interested in developing, and as usual, I accompanied him. The night was so clear that the stars seemed to connect to each other and tell stories the way movies do. We rode on the camel skin upholstered seats of the car Ba'ti had recently purchased. It was painted a brilliant blue. It took 6 men to pull us but it was custom built, designed so that we would not feel the jerks and jolts of rocks under the wheels or that of the Arad that pulled us.

Ba'ti was unlike many of the Sumer. He kept his ideas to himself, except that which he shared with me, for many of the other Sumer would not understand, and perhaps would have killed him, or at the very least stolen everything he had built for himself.

Despite the groans and grunts of the exhausted slaves that pulled us, Ba'ti began to express some recent thoughts.

"I have made a habit of praying to the one true God from the moment I awaken to the moment I begin my nightly ritual of rest. It is something about praising his blessings and appreciating the life given to me that brings a daily ease upon my soul like no other."

I can see the sun begin to rise in the distance, soon the whole of the land will bow to the sun's greatness, and Ba'ti will then have the car halted and two Arad set up a canopy to protect us from the sweltering sunlight.

"I harbor the desire to ask for anything but His will be done, anything more I feel would be selfish, anything more would be a material gain that is up to me to attain if I wish it."

I am one of the few Sumer who know how to write, and write very well. Ba'ti pays me a handsome wage to write everything down, from what I see, what I experience with him and most importantly every single word he says. His fears of others discovering his ideas and philosophies are comforted by the fact that few can write and the amount that can read are matched by that.

"Life has become less a game to win, and more an experience to search and learn of the soul within."

His face was a proud one. He sat tall with one arm resting on a knee and the other on the backboard. His face was as dark as the space between stars, covered with tattoos that couldn't be seen by anyone but the artist who put them there, and he had two teeth of some animal he killed when he was younger attached to a piece of bone and installed in his nose so that each tooth was directly underneath each eye and pointing downwards. He never mentioned the meaning, I never asked, but I enjoyed the way it looked.

"A thought I had just before sleep last night was how the human body is like the caterpillar and the soul is like the butterfly. Which I can only conclude from this, that the soul is in its own, a life form as well, with a lifespan, perhaps in a phase of growth before it becomes something more, only reiterating the common belief of the eternal soul."

The light of the sun beckons to be heard across the land and its infinite amount of hands reach across the sky gripping torches of today. Ba'ti calls for the car to stop, and gestures two Arad to bring about the canopy.

While we wait he looks me in the eyes and speaks in a tone I had rarely known him to speak in.

“I have brought you here to show you your land.”

“My land?”

“Soon you will take a wife, you will be a Lu, like me, and all great Lu need a great bit of land and this land, shall be yours.”

His hand gestures towards the lands around us. Fertile and fed upon by wild game, one could work this land for many lifetimes and never know the bitter feel of hunger.

“Ba’ti, thank you my kind friend, I do not know how to repay this...”

“I have no children, but if I had, I would have done the same for them.”

Men kill simply to have a single meal and Ba’ti has just handed me an empire to do with what I wish.

This was one of the most powerful lessons I had ever learned, live and learn through trial and error; listen and wisdom will be given to you.



Quandary – *Jonny Feelgood* – www.jfeelgood.com

Chapter Fifteen: The Indecision of the Wind

I ponder my luck of good fortune and it saddens me slightly that it's at the expense of others. Why I am so fortunate to be so loved and adored, I do not know but I accept this gracious gift from my Maker.

So very many beings fall in and out of relationships, confused on both ends of said complex arrangement of dynamic exchange of which they tend to seek counsel and advice from others that are often just as confused in one way or another about what to do and how to do it in their own relationships.

One gentleman I know, one of many I have known to have his heart broken, is confused about his girlfriend. She is not interested in being with him any longer. While she has many reasons to support her decision, I will say this about women, whatever reasons they may have are but masks, for a woman wishes to spare the feelings of her man, when she simply cannot be with him, despite how strongly she cares for him as a lover, friend or all around significant other.

It seems like years ago, and at the same time just a day that passed, when I felt what it is to be 'in-love' again. The wind that blew across my window spoke to me and told me that the bitter cold breath it breathed was a reminder of the summer sun and how it is a fundamental need.

I was in love, again, but alone in my bed. A feeling that another's thoughts are of you is like the blanket of sunshine that the cruel icy wind reminds me to pay homage to, warm and surreal, inviting me like a cozy fire around Christmas and oh, how I miss this!

This feeling, when lost, is devouring and the thought of its return is so appalling, one vows never to know its taste again, while secretly weeping for its return, until, alas! It sneaks upon you, like a shadow of a cloud to shade one from the brazen sun.

Shade me, warm me, but never ever leave me again...

And I promise to take heed to the whispers of the wind...

The city I am lost and found in, seems to swallow me whole as I am beyond conflicted on what direction to take. My heart beats my love's name, with an endless echo, yet she is the bringer of all that may destroy me and what is left of my kind on this planet.

My peace is a castle and kingdom high upon the hilltop resting safely inland from the never ending oceans of my ego. Master of this creation is, I, the emperor of all you see as I lounge lazily in my throne chair. Calypso comes at times but she is only forewarning and doom strikes my gatekeepers off guard, for on uncertain cycles, do I return to my walls of comfort as the key benefactor of my own despair.

As the ocean's waters recede from the sands,
my army is leaderless as they wander the lands.
The winds become grievous and fiercely strong.
Empty anger is a darkness of an un-fillable void so deep,
that the very walls of my palace begin to wear.
Peace is but a memory of peaceful times,
my crown hangs at my neck,
my body loses mass in aggravation,
my shifting eyes look for more to wreck.
I forget that the extravagance of my throne
is a farce, hiding nothing but a chair,
Lorea is the only one who can remind me
what it means to care.

A man is leaning against a floor to ceiling window that lets the whole world see what is going on inside of an incredibly busy restaurant. He takes a drag from his cigarette and blows his smoke out very slowly. The wind seems to change its mind as to which direction it carries the smoke.

I suddenly ask myself, would I be willing to give up all the treasures and blessings I have as a Watcher, fallen be that I am, in exchange for a soul mate to share the rest of my human life with?

The man seemed to take notice of me just as I asked myself the question, as if he had been waiting for my answer. I looked at him and imagined he were but an extension of my ego,

“I do not know.”

He shrugged with a slight smile and said to me,

“Me neither, friend, me neither.”

The man flicked his cigarette onto the ground as he walked off towards the rest of his life. I watched the cigarette fall into a street gutter and felt I was looking off towards the rest of mine. If ever I could seek the counsel of my Maker, I believe now would be the time.



Chapter Sixteen: The Mountains North

I was never one for the beaten path. I've always held the idea that if one should choose to commit to an action, one should do so with proper style and taste, therefore procuring said action, as an art-form. This can easily be misconstrued in various ways, as elegantly as I put it, but to be very clear, if you're going to do something wrong, you should do it the right way.

Long ago, far before 'The Great Flood' and many of my attempts to have some sense of control over my experience here on this world, I was living as a close advisor to a well-known ruler of peoples in the Southern American Region. The world was far colder at this time and in many ways more advanced than it is at the present moment, yet, even at such great heights, it was not enough for even a great king. Most humans, of mass

authority or not, have an insatiable thirst for power, moreover, to live forever, be it in flesh or memory.

The King Yuon Kuut had just received word of a city being completed in its basic construction. A city that he had designed, more or less on his own, which was and always will be a great feat for any of the universes sentient life-forms. He ran to me excitedly to share his joy. He confided in me with many of his thoughts and sought my counsel on the best course of action. I was the only of his advisory council that was not royalty. I happened to have travelled from the African lands as a navigator for a seafaring trade ship. King Yuon Kuut had a taste for females of the Nubian persuasion. The ones brought to him were a tribal sect, with hardly even a flare for communication of the most basic sort. He had one particular use for them as one could imagine.

He demanded a tour of his new city, with his most recently favored concubine and I being his only entourage, with the exception of the men operating his favored transit vehicle. The three of us sat in a two story loft bound to long poles, which a small army of men carried upon their backs. King Yuon Kuut was probably pleased with this mechanism the most of all, for other creatures had to sacrifice so much just to make it work, to him that was beautiful. As you can see, one who was heavily influenced by my personal philosophy mentioned before.

We came to a busy intersection where men were cleaning up the last of their work zones, placing their laser welders back into their flying machines. That alone should appall you, I am quite sure, but these were times before the wheel and yet man could weld stone together with lasers and harness electricity from the ground with limitless supply. These were times where progress seemed endless and life was little less than absolute potential for anything of possibility. We had stopped transit due to the King's ever so subtle halt command flick of his wrist. He then stood up tall and brushed his robe out of the way of his legs and marched down the steps leading from the loft down to the backs of the men that carried us. He even carelessly stepped upon their backs and shoulders and

quickened his pace to the corner of the intersection, his robe now flying in the air. He made his way to a feeble old man telling an old story of old times. The King stood before the old man and took a seat next to some children. The children began to ignore the old man, now captivated by the presence of the ruler of all of the world they ever knew, yet the old man, blind from time, knew no difference than another set of ears to entertain. The old man's hands would wave about in exclamation, and sometimes shake up and down in fury, as if he were carving the tale out of thin air. The working men began the flying machines as they had finished cleaning their work zones, but the sound silenced the words of the old man's tale which intrigued the King's curiosity to such an extent he threw a rock at one of the working men and yelled at them to halt everything while the old man spoke. The flying machine was shut off abruptly as it sat upon the ground from where it had lifted as all of the working men bowed before the king, so that the old man may finish his story. The old man finished and held a small bag out for any offerings. The king tore a golden button off his robe and tossed it into the bag and ran all the way back up to our seats in the loft and stared me right in the eyes as he spoke.

"I have found the answer. It lies in the far mountains north, in the ice peaks where the tiny people with no law dwell. We must go there. There lie wisps of smoke that make men immortal, so I may build not just the known world, but the world in its entirety to the stars and beyond!"

"This is what the blind old man told you?"

"Yes, in his tale of old."

"You believe the old man's tale that in the mountains north there are wisps of smoke that will make you into an immortal? You believe him to such an extent, that you would leave all you have built on the gamble his story could be true?"

"Yes, of course. No one would lie to the King Yuon Kuut in the very city he built for them. Surely all of my people want what is best for me and what

is best for me is best for my people. So we shall return to the palace and prepare for our journey.”

“I hardly see how this will be worthwhile.”

King Yuon Kuut's fierce grimace had no effect on me and he knew this. I was the only individual he had ever known that did not fear him.

“I need this. Whether it is true or tale, whether it brings me everlasting life or brings me to fate’s feet, I need this. My curiosity cannot be stricken and you know very well I could not go anywhere in this world without the only one I call my friend.”

“When put in those words, how could I decline?”

A smile that could make the crescent moon jealous tore across his face and his hand gestured for our vehicle to move on.

After a few days of travelling by flying vehicle to the mountains north, we landed on a peak. The air was still, too still it would seem. A light snow danced around us as two natives guided us to the mountain foretold by the old man. As we neared the cave entrance, I thought of how so much of the King’s empire relied on him and his passion for it. Without the King, surely all of the known world would crumble and fall apart, along with its progress, technological advancements, and potential along with it. Before we walked in the entrance, I whispered to my friend,

“My King, be wary for I do not believe even the earth’s maker knows this path.”

He turned and looked back with a childish grin for a moment then followed the two tiny natives inside. I followed suit. Cold, dark and damp, one could feel the absence of life in these halls leading to somewhere. The smell of sulfur grew stronger and stronger as we walked. I had to cover my face with my robe to filter out the stench.

Alas we approached a room where light knew promise and aside from the putrid odor, we felt welcomed by soft torch fires glowing. A young beautiful woman wearing absolutely nothing lay next to a small pool of greyish water. She seemed half asleep. The King looked at me, now with a slight glance of uncertainty. The two natives stayed behind as an old woman appeared from another cave hall.

“You have come to see.”

The old woman beckoned with a hiss. The King’s confidence returned sharply.

“I have come to live!”

The old woman’s eyes seem to roll around in their sockets and she mumbled words no one could understand, if they were words at all, in her toothless mouth. She gathered herself as she stepped closer.

“You have come to see.”

The King looked back at me. I couldn’t stand the smell of that sulfur. The young woman dreadingly handled a small brass cup that seemed to be attached to something behind her. The young woman became more and more attractive as we stood there. She tugged at the cup until it broke loose and she filled it with the pools water. She looked up at us with eyes of the abyss, eyes I had not seen before, offering the King his cup. He eagerly accepted then stood by me.

“Drink with me, my friend, and rule with me forever...”

“While I believe that water may only take my flesh away and let my soul remain, I am eternal nonetheless.”

“I shall know the taste of immortality just as well.”

I wondered how much time would pass before my next lifetime as I looked in his eyes. I suddenly realized that whether I drank the cup with him or not, our fates would be the same.

He drank from the cup.

His eyes grew big and wild, never leaving mine.

His lips quivered as if to speak.

Then his body began to convulse hysterically, the cup fell to the ground and he did with it. His body twitched and I heard moans come from him, moans of agony, so I knelt at his side to hold him. I knew he was dying now from the water he sipped. The old woman stood near me as we watched the King of the known world die.

“Now he sees.”

I looked up at her and saw her crazy eyes. The young woman looked unnaturally attractive and just behind her, where she had been tugging, was a pile of skeletons.

I knew before I came the King had been blind. He was blinded by his desires and curiosity. Only a man who has everything can be too blind to see he already has it all. He came to find the only thing he thought he didn't have and she gave him the only thing he didn't.

She gave him sight.

I couldn't go back to the empire with the King's dead body or they would think I murdered him. I couldn't go back to the empire without the King's body or they would think the same. I couldn't go back to the life I knew at all so I just walked towards the cave hall I came in.

The old woman called for me. She knew my name.

“Azazel, do not go.”

I stopped in my steps and could not resist turning to face her. Her eyes jumped around in every direction as she waddled towards me.

“Azazel, You may go anywhere you wish but as far as you may try to travel today, you will know certain death.”

I looked for the two natives and saw they had disappeared. The young woman beckoned for me to come to her. The smell of sulfur made my stomach twist in knots. I turned and ran as fast as I could to the flying vehicle. The earth began to shake with so much intensity the walls buckled and ceiling began to break apart. I made it out just in time to find the flying vehicle had vanished. I saw a wicked blizzard approaching just before the earth began to shake again. There was nothing to hold on to. I fell off the side of the peak and as my body flipped in the air I saw the side of the mountain explode with fire and smoke in a brilliantly fantastical explosion of hot molten lava.

Just before my body hit the ground I wondered what the King's last thoughts were and if he saw what the old woman wanted him to see. Or maybe he saw himself in a dream of the rest of his life being immortal. Then I thought how it could be that the young woman could become more and more desirable the longer we stood in there. My very last thought before death is how I wished to see tomorrow and it was then that I understood why the king had come.



Chapter Seventeen: The Master Shepherd

Is it age itself or fear alone, for I do know neither the engineer, nor architect, behind this construct of fear, but in between my words are open doors within precious moments, with time running wildly through them, and it is in these paths of absolute freedom, in these corridors of my peace of mind, these precise footsteps I make that create the only place I have left to feel safe.

Safe from myself and my doings,
 from relationships of every kind,
 from realities others create
 from the one I create,
 and the supernova that explodes when they collide.
 Safe from those I love,
 whom I have come to fear the most.
 Safe from my enemies,
 whom wisdom teaches me to keep close.
 Safe from diving off of cliffs after others,
 who call themselves my brothers.
 Safe from sirens who lure me to their places of slumber,

safe from being recognized only as a number,
safe from injustice and justice alike,
safe from dreams and visions I suffer from
just before I rest at night.

I heard a young man tell me once,

“I am so uncomfortable at parties, or even grocery shopping. I am so insecure it’s ridiculous. Yet, I can’t even begin to tell you how many people remark how they envy my confidence. We must all be fakers. How can anyone live a decent life of happiness without being ignorant?”

The Maker planned it all from the start, or so it would seem. The Maker knew that we would want to know things, but even if we knew them, we wouldn’t always be able to do anything with the knowledge. The scarier reiteration of this concept lies just inside of and just outside of your very flesh. The realization of just how much you do not know, for example, you know just as much about what is going on inside of you as you do the strange and miraculous world around you.

I tried a few times to take a human under my wing and show them what I know. It seemed it was largely beyond their comprehension. Thousands of years, time and time again, and please understand, there are so only so many people one can encounter in a lifetime, not to fail to mention the limitations of their lifespans. More often than not, it’s the same as trying to explain how an engine works to a tadpole.

The body is a machine. The mind is a computer. The soul is the operator. That was the hard part, the rest is easy. First of all, you have to disassociate the labels of the constructs in your memory data storage in order to begin the process of self-ratification, then, re-identify those pre-existing constructs with labels you identify with as your own.

Think back to when you saw your first circle. If this is difficult, fast forward to the first time someone identified that object as a circle. This person is responsible for defining how you think to this day.

Disassociate this memory. Forget that person and their label for that object. Call it whatever you wish, you may even call it a circle, but it is your label now, your construct.

Repeat this step for every single construct in your data core. Fundamental objects are like elements, they are constructs for complex real time parameters, just as elements are used to create complex compounds.

Unraveling this a bit further, understand what it means that your mind is a computer. It utilizes hardware, software, electricity, etc. When you disassociate your pre-existing labels you are free to see your mind at work and how every moment you are associating, referencing, labeling, filing, and documenting the world around you.

The goal now, is to isolate the various programs at work, they will be running simultaneously or triggered after certain circumstances. Isolate, identify, prioritize and execute new commands.

One may have so much more control over their life experience when they simply take control of it.

I have very rarely met humans who knew all of what I know before my attempts to teach them and the majority's lack of ability to comprehend all of my knowledge led to well compensated careers as a kingdom building advisor to many great rulers of men.

There is something about the desert wastelands that offer me a tremendously humbling feeling. The heat of the day, the cold of the night, great crevices and canyons, mesas and cliffs, the endless on and on, anywhere and anyway you spend time in the desert it plays with you in ways unlike any other. What many fail to see is that desert lands were once ocean floors. It is as close as one can get to a true historical relic anywhere on earth for it is a flagrant exposé of what has been and in time, what will come to be.

I can't recall how long I had been out there in the Yeshimon of the Judean desert all those years ago when I met him. I hadn't seen anyone in those

parts, let alone recall anybody daring enough to venture that far alone. There was little or no food. Water was a treasure trove hidden far beneath the ground for children of the future, yet, a lone man found his way into these desolate lands. He appeared frail and starved. He scuffled his feet across the ground without looking down, taking for granted each step would not be met with a unprecedented rock to knock him off his desperate uncalculated steps. The sun was brazen and his eyes were barely open. His lips were parched and chapped; his hands were feeling the air around him as if he were trying to keep his balance. I watched him from the shade of a far reaching cliff as he was out for a stroll guided by complete insanity. I took rise and followed until I caught up to him.

“Only the son of the great Maker could make it this far into the Yeshimon. You must be very hungry.”

The man stood as tall as he could and without giving me the pleasure of eye contact, he responded, “I am the son of our great Maker. I am the I am.”

“If you are the son of the great Maker, why not turn these stones into bread to procure your wellness?”

“It is written that man shall not survive on bread alone but on the every word of our Maker.”

His eyes were squinted so that I could not see if he had gone completely mad from the desert, and as I was sure a man wandering this far in the desert would have gone completely mad, he was so well spoken that I was left a bit confused.

“Let me take you back to the city, friend. I know a great place for us to break bread.”

He did not agree to come but he did not refuse. We walked together in the wastelands towards the nearest city. There was a great hole in the wall place to eat in a top of one of the tallest buildings. We shared some time there eating. He did not speak much and when I offered to pay for us

both, he wanted to pay for himself. The woman refused any compensation as she seemed to know this man's face well.

We went to the rooftop and embraced the view of the city. Still quite silent, his eyes were no longer shy from the sun and he seemed well.

"I wonder if the same good spirits that protected the son of the great Maker could save his fall from such great heights. I believe it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

He was hardly shocked by my odd sense of humor and went on with his rehearsed rebuttal, "It is also written: 'Do not put the great Maker to the test.'"

"Your faith in the great Maker is so strong... or at the very least, you are encumbered with wisdom of great measure. I have shown many men of such wisdom into great kings. You do not have to live such a life of poverty. The help of great spirits or luck alone, regardless, you could easily unite the kingdoms of the world as your own. The entire world will sing your name in song and worship you as their savior. You are such a humble man; does the world not need such a leader as yourself? Are you not obligated to serve your brothers and sisters as a master shepherd?"

His eyes flashed with anger for but a moment before taking on a look of the great divine, for he was like no other. He looked me in the eyes and spoke in a very different tone of voice, one that was echoed by bells and chimes of another world, "Away from me, Azazel! For it is written: 'Worship the great Maker, and serve him only.'"

I felt fear wash over me as the man so devoted to the great Maker knew me by name, refused my help and sought only the love of the Maker. I left him there on the rooftop to let whatever spirits that protected him, tend to him in the ways that they did. I silently wished him well on his journey but could not shake the feeling he was on his way to certain death.

No matter where the man I met was going he had found his sense of security in this life, a rare feat for anyone in the universe. Such devotion could only reap great reward.

Great reward involves great sacrifice or fool's luck.

I prefer to rely only on what I know.

I only know that all things are subject to change, and while I am old enough to know that I may fear change and that I as well as all things are subject to it, I aim to have the courage to face it.

The man I met was invincible because he did not have to aim. He was courage itself bound in wisdom.



Chapter Eighteen: The Garden of Enchantment

To prove a point in the most earthen way, if the world was only black and white, how does one go about explaining the rainbow?

The thing that I loathe about the past is you are troubled with memories that can never be edited, mended or changed. The older you get, the more memories you are burdened with. I hear regret is but a choice, and reconcile is made only thru forgiveness.

My stomach was twisting like a wet towel as my insides seared with anxiety for the coming time. I could feel that she was close and that I was only getting closer. To close my eyes only showed me hers and to open my eyes meant only to see the path to take me to her. It were as if the buildings and people around me silent fell into slumber with a slow motion reprise, my footsteps gently touched the ground as if I were walking on water, water carried by a wave of great intent and purpose, of which I was powerless to decline.

The air around me echoed her name off of buildings, the wind felt of her touch. Her gentle touch...

Behind me was a wake of demons, following me to the great end or perhaps, new beginning. Love is giving everything you are to what you care about most, while being lost means giving everything up to anyone who seems to have direction. My brethren followed me with a mixture of both, in a sort of indefinite melancholy manner.

To my right, just a few footsteps behind was the man with the black hat. His eyes never fell from me as he continued forward. My life is a nightmare within a waking dream that never ceases; I have only learned to cope with such insanity.

Ahead lay a garden park of a hundred types of blooming flowers. Their scent was intoxicating and alluring. I could taste in the air their differences, and as I was charmed by such sensation, I found they were all the same in their exponential loveliness.

As I drew near to the garden of enchantment, I wished above all that I may go back, back to where I first met her, long before my shackles were placed upon me, binding me to this world, back when I had the freedom to choose to do right and love the Maker. It was not at all her fault, the reason I chose to do what I had done, nor anyone else's' but my own, yet I had always seen her as the pivotal means to liberty and great salvation. I could never explain why.

My footsteps slowed down to the speed of the moving planet as I pondered why I had always felt this way about her. I looked to my right and saw my brother staring at me. He didn't know why I even had to ask.

He chose to speak so that I might not quiver in quandary.

"Tis not love one should ponder, not its means nor meaning, for freedom is prevailing and one must seek to define it only. All will follow suit."

I looked down at my feet. "Why do I feel such shame, brother?"

"So that we may know what it is to be human."

The smell of flowers reminded me of the way she would dance that way she did. How a smile would blossom upon her face to be the sunlight of my world.

I looked up towards the garden. I felt confident knowing my brethren were behind me. I felt strong knowing I was loved by them. I felt great pain knowing that more than the love of my brothers, I loved her.



Chapter Nineteen: The First Sorrow

Imagine being at the mercy of an endless horizon of opportunity. The end is nowhere in sight, and with a slight drop in your stomach, the hopelessness of never knowing is matched by your will to fight for whatever may come to be, while armed with the sword of curiosity. I am my Makers child, our thoughts are one and I know only my Makers love. Stars burst into life all around us flying out wards into the great abyss sparkling like diamonds dancing on still waters under an enlightened moon. We knew nothing of what was before, nor did we question, for we were innocent to being and young to existence.

So many worlds became children of the stars, yearning for the warmth of their parents light and love. We dispersed as the Makers own hands and eyes to seek and explore each and every one of the stars children to see that they too knew children of their own.

I have seen thousands of worlds grow and die, some lying dormant to rise again by the love another passing star, others knowing life for a only a short time being fairy tales to worlds who knew life later and longer.

Life exists in so many ways, shapes, and sizes strewn across the unweaving play-scape of the universe, in multiple dimensions, interconnecting amongst each other. This was not always so, but it has come to be over the expanse of time. As time unfolds, so do the possibilities for more growth. The Maker began all of this and let it create itself.

I came to be on one world by myself for a short time. I don't remember how I happened upon the friend I had made there but he was kind and showed me of his world. He seemed to know I was not of his world, but was polite and generous with his time. His name was unpronounceable; he was easily as tall as a full grown man, with giant eyes of welcoming kindness.

Imagine a trunk-less elephant head covered in thick brown hair with tiny little legs and arms. His eyes were as big as my head and in them I could see dust particles floating around. Tiny bits of debris washed back and forth as he blinked and looked about anxiously. He moved quickly for being so top heavy upon little legs. He would point this way and that, speaking in his strange tongue, a sound something of a hum and honk meets whale song.

He grabbed my hand, nodded his head and took off, startling me, dragging me at first until I could keep up with him. We nuzzled around a rocky bend to a prosperous city, thriving and lit with activity. His expression did not change from frantic anxiety. He would point at the city, make his sounds, sit down, jump up point again, speak some, and sit again. He then looked at me and very suddenly I saw a most horrible state of absolute sorrow.

This look was very important to me. It was the first time I had ever experienced sorrow. I had not the privilege of experiencing it amongst other life forms, as these were somewhat developed creatures; it came as a bit of a shock. I did not know how to handle such pain in my heart so I simply listened to him more.

He hummed and honked again then pointed towards the city, while looking off towards the beautiful blue and purple sunlit skies. He lay back resting on a rock, as comfortable as a rock can be on any world, I suppose. I remained standing and looked around taking in the city-scape.

He stood up and grabbed my hand; off we went, to the city ahead.

In his city were short, one story buildings with roof top decks crossing over to meet each other, tiny lights that would glow in big spheres hung along a coarse wire made of some sort of root or vine, and two very distinctly different sentient life forms making the harmony of the city bountiful in its own way.

One of the life forms, obviously, was that of my friend.

The other had a notably significant similarity to that of the human being, with the exception of being a bit taller and all of them having black hair with white skin.

I saw that these two seemed to work and live amongst each other with a sort of common interest.

I was entirely wrong.

My friend took me into the city deeper, where I witnessed a travesty of common interest. My friend's kind of people were of a lower caste, enslaved to these humanoids. They pulled and pushed cargo to and fro, brought the humanoids drinks, apparel, etc. with no compensation. I could not see why this was so, while my friend seemed to have prevailing intelligence and above all, feelings. The worst was yet to come.

At times he would pull me a bit closer; hiding me from so and so's eye sight until they would pass. I could hear the humanoids cackle and crow as a laugh, a laugh that was abrasive even to the winds. They were tall and thin, skin stretched to fit across their bones. They walked with grace, gallant and proud. They did not speak much, but sneer, snicker, and that awful cackle.

We hid around a corner, where no one could see us. He seemed to be catching his breath. One of his kind passed by us, they exchanged glances. The other looked at me with curiosity then quickly looked down, lips moving slightly as if mumbling thoughts to ones' self. I turned to my friend. He looked at me with his kind and giant eyes. He reached for my hands and held them for a moment. He nodded, turned, holding on of my hands and took me to the heart of the city, running while we jumped and dodged over and under things of all sorts, evading any suspicion.

It was when we stopped that I befell witness to the most horrible encounter I had ever seen. The humanoids were feeding my friend's kind through channels, of a makeshift nature, into rooms where they would disappear. A giant turbine above and to the side of the room would grind them into a paste. They had a few of my friends kind with their eyes burned out and their hands chained to a system of poles high above them, where they were positioned to process their own kind into a vast array of ammunition, food, and garments all from this paste. Food to feed the humanoids and even more of my friend's kind. Behind the installation I saw was a breeding farm where his kind was bred.

I could feel my heart drop through the ground, barreling through the world, spitting out the other side to detonate on impact with the touch of whatever sky may lie there. I could hear him whimper next to me as I realize I was crushing his hand by squeezing it. His eyes were wet but not crying. I felt I could offer oceans to this world with my tears. How life could do this to life. How one life form could do this to another after all the opportunity to be thankful for simply being alive in the universe, I could not understand. He touched my arm gently as tears fell down my face absorbing into the parched ground below.

Then they took him. They didn't even look at me. They drug him off and in silence he stared at me as he met his fate.

Before I could see him disappear into the mysterious room, I ran.

I ran through the foreign city of horrible things and beings of great evil.

The city seemed to become quieter in the place I had found. Ancient shanties with troves of various artifacts and junk which seemed to span for miles, as if these beings had found that which quenched their thirst for survival and existence, and needed nothing less, nothing more than what the installation provided them.

I again befell victim to wonder and curiosity as a very sweet voice filled my ears. I looked about suddenly to match a face to the voice. I saw nothing at first and then, in the distance, hiding behind something or another was a being of immense femininity. Slowly I stepped towards her. Again I heard her song, as if it were chorded and composed for my ears only. I could feel myself drawn to this one. My steps hastened, and I saw that she ventured into the shanty she was hiding near. I was cautious, yet, too curious not to follow. Her song became louder as I fumbled through all of the junk. I tripped over strange containers. I climbed over giant boxes with intricate drawings on them. All of this to satisfy my overwhelming desire to be near that which could create such a beautiful sound. The shanty became darker and darker as I rummaged through more. Her voice became the only sound I could hear as even light seemed to escape the place I found myself in.

I saw her face in the darkness.

Beautiful.

Perfect symmetry.

She moved closer .

Her lips quivered for moment.

Suddenly her jaw unhinged, her skin stretched so that her mouth could swallow a man whole. Her teeth sparkled in the darkness, sharp and pointed. Her eyes were cruel and hungry. I jumped back, falling into whatever was behind me. I scrambled to escape as she chased me, jumping over odds and ends with incredible finesse. I ran faster, and harder, anything it took to escape such wicked deceit.

I coughed on dust of a strange world, taking in any bit of air I could to push through to the light. I fumbled outside and ran without looking back. I heard a treacherous scream behind me. I ran.

Beyond the endless rows of shanties, holding troves of evils I could not even begin to imagine was a hill where the dust and sands of the city blurred into soft green vegetation, soft on the feet of a woe some traveler. I ran.

Up the hill, to the top, where I could finally catch my breath, I saw the city was well behind me. Sweat dripped off me with no mercy. I saw in front of me a beautiful planet. Strange plants sprouted from the ground into a thin string that slumped over where a giant sphere hung. It seemed to be the sphere they used to contain the lights they used.

Despite all of the beautiful I saw, I wished to die.

To be away from such a cruelty, was all I could think or feel.

I walked slowly to one of the tall plants and sat underneath it until my body began to eat itself. The pain I felt was pleasure in comparison into seeing what had become of my friend.

The star that gave this world light began to set. My soul ascended.



Chapter Twenty: Destiny of Chaos – Part 1

Everything I've ever worked towards, all the bricks I have laid, mortar I have mortared, granite I have placed, glass I have glaciated, levees I have engineered, iron structure beams placed to hold the great palace of my ego secure are crumbling all around me like a beautiful blizzard of snowflakes, cruel and ruthless, each one with a taunting laugh of vengeance as they fall smiling, piling, gathering up to close me in while I kneel, hands clasped, crying to the skies in utter frustration.

Like a Saturday night slumber party in a college girl dorm room, my mind is filled with teething chatter, overlapped with the man with the black hat who knows all there is to be known but can only mutter out brazen maniacal laughter, overlapped by the sound of reassurance that nothing I fear really matters.

I feel crazy. I am foolish, absent minded and yet, I often look before I leap. People want to live or feel like they are living, but I beg you, please keep your envy of my exciting past buried in a pipe dream, for it wasn't much of anything but pain, sorrow, and breeding grounds for a hope in vain and where I've hardly much to show for my travels but my own soul and a graveyard of curiosity's wanderlust, my ego is still in a sorry state of wander, contempt, and transgression, while pillaging lost and lonely hearts with lies of a way to better living, calling that quest happiness.

All of my demons are shackled to me like led sheep, attached to my feet, chanting slave songs in a miserable banter, while every breath I breathe is another soul's cancer.

I am a rotting angel's corpse.

I make another step towards judgment, another step towards fate.

Long before this moment I had purpose and while it would seem at this moment I still do, as my brothers await my decision, and Lorea waits just past the garden walls, my purpose originally was a righteous one.

It was soon after I left the world of my old friend, who met a cruel fate, I began to doubt and question. I thought that the universe my Maker made was too beautiful a heaven of creation to know such pain.

I remember floating among the stars with my Lorea, sharing with her what had happened. She shared my tears and felt the same sorrow as I had. I shared with her that it could not be that the Maker could be the only creator. That perhaps as the Maker's eyes and hands, we too could create.

She stopped suddenly and I could feel we were not in accord.

I knew she felt my words alone were criminal. I was suggesting mutiny and I wanted her to come with me.

Her next assignment was far away from my next one. I was heading to a new world, young and infant. She was going to a world that was dying and meeting its end. I begged her to come with me. I knew others would agree with me. We would not be alone.

She loved the Maker more than she loved me. Lorea felt that although there is great sorrow among the stars, there is great purpose for it.

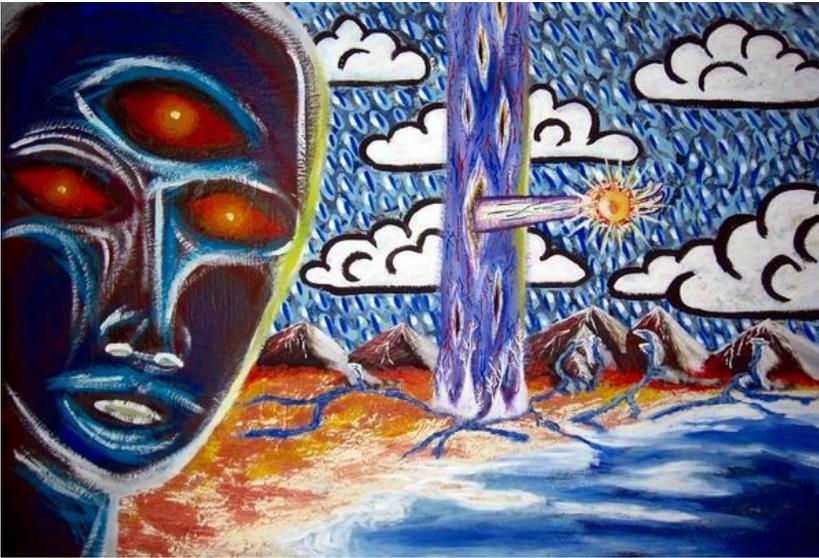
“Patient is the soul who knows suffering has purpose for a humble heart is fertile ground.” She whispered to me.

She held me for a moment and I felt her love. She disappeared into the galaxies of the great beyond.

I looked back towards the origin of all that was the universe, the place that my kind called home. It would be a long time before I would ever return there, if I would ever return at all, and I knew I only wanted to be with the one I loved, wherever that may be. She needed to find herself among the stars. I felt the universe was too small of a place for us not to meet again.

I turned towards my new assignment.

I faced what would be my new home. I looked to the planet Earth.



Chapter Twenty: Destiny of Chaos – Part 2

The crime of any tale told is that it is but a mere fraction of all that can be told. This increment of entertainment is as precious as the very life of the storyteller, for even a speck of dust has its story.

Long after dust particles collaborated in congregation to create the incredible symphony of the planet Earth, the dust itself became restless, yearning for more, and in such, became more complex. Building with one another, becoming abrasive compounds, with a slew of densities, and as these compounded elements found each other tightly squeezed and packed together, wars would break out amongst them, great explosions of rock and magma, igniting the skies with gallant leaps of fury.

Before I stepped foot upon the planet I watched from far above admiring its hunger for growth, it's yearn for the more.

A good bit of time passed before my brothers and sisters began their descent. The oddity of our kind taking host bodies from birth is the way it

affects the genetic structure. Often the bodies would have sharp, slender features, tall or short, but there was something very different about them. Of course, even the world itself could feel such an anomaly, so it would have a tendency to reject it in some way. Our kind having come from the origin had a means to disregard said rejection. The only way to avoid losing our birth assigned host body was to jump from it to another for a time. While we were able to do this at any time, this activity was most prominent during the periods of rest of the creature we utilized. There were times we would jump into other resting creatures to see their memories or just take a break for ourselves.

This was one of the most difficult missions there were assigned. The creatures of this world had genetic coding that was so dynamically evolved; the sense of pleasure and the sense of pain were unlike any we had experienced before. A simple touch against something while passing by, even the terrain beneath one's feet was a luxury to the soul's flesh.

What a funny thing it is, to feel.

I spent the first lifetime watching a small tribe of sorts. I was so much more tall than them and obviously a different creature altogether. I had lost the ones I was born to at birth and made it far on my own. This tribe did not treat me any different than one of their kind, often tending to my hunger by sharing what they foraged. I lived much longer than the ones I had originally met and thus due, I became something of an elder to their youth. I did not communicate with them but in times of danger I served my purpose and protected them.

They were very kind to me as well to one another until time of great change struck the world.

Giant birds covered in scaly flesh covered the sky, blotting out the sun. Their screams and cries sounded like hearts breaking overhead. The life on ground level stood and stared at the sight to see until the ground became an apparent part of the show. The dirt began to bounce and dance at first, followed by loud thunderous cracks and booms which

knocked us on to the earth, frantic and confused all of the animals around me went completely insane and in an epic choir, as a rebuttal to the cloud of terror above, the animals of the earth cried out too. My ears bled with the pain as I clasped them; looking towards the direction the birds of the sky were coming from. Most of my tribe of little ones had vanished, with the exception of two that were clinging to my legs, a young female and a slightly younger male. I looked at them with my hands over my ears. They did as I did, covering their ears with their hands, staring up at me in fear. I looked back towards the sky. There seemed to be a break in the distance where there were no more birds, and something else much, much darker.

I did not want to stick around to find out what they were fleeing from. I scooped up my compatriots and held them close to my chest as I ran through the treacherous obstructions of a burning jungle. The great darkness was pushing us in one direction... towards the ends of the known world. I didn't care. I just held them close to me and ran. As I ran I remembered my friend from the previous world. I didn't even care if we died that day, as long as we knew we were together, that we were not alone. I ran until I could feel the air change around us. It seemed a bit cooler as we approached the edge of the place we knew as home. Thousands of animals ran off the cliff to their deaths. The stampede of death was all around us and if I didn't decide what to do another animal would push us to our death whether we wanted to or not. My eyes darted around for any other option than down a quarter mile to a salty unforgiving ocean.

I had them cling to my neck as I climbed down a thick vine hanging off the side of the cliff. I could hear them whimpering. I choked hard, my eyes were stinging from all the smoke, their arms squeezed my neck in desperation, animals were falling all around us, screams, cries, some falling in silence. The ground was victim to a constant rumbling, shaking us around, bouncing me off the cliff, into the air, and back into the cliff. My shoulders and sides were bleeding and bruised, my hands ached tremendously as all of our weights combined were relying on them. It was sheer willpower, no, it was mere love that gave me the relentless strength

I needed. The sky above us took a pause from darkness as the birds all seemed to fall from the sky. We could see the sun in a bronze and brazen sky.

Below us was a beach of bodies. There were no more screams. There were no more cries. There was only the constant rumble.

I held us there for hours and hours it seemed like. The smoke had seemed to clear some and I tried my best to climb back up the vine. It was perhaps a foot or so from the edge of the cliff my little friends were able to hop off of me. I took one hand off to reach for the edge. I saw the young females hand reach for mine, and although it was no match for my weight, the gesture was still appreciated, as my other hand could no longer take the strain, my body fell.

I saw their two little heads peering off the edge of the cliff down at me as my fall divided the wind around me. I wondered for a moment if those birds felt the same way. They must have died before they felt this, I concluded.

Whatever happened that day, I knew those two little creatures I saved would go on.

I left them the world.



Chapter Twenty: Destiny of Chaos – Part 3

Behemoth constructs of land formations became ocean floors, while ocean floors became new lands for life to form upon. Everything in the universe is a reflection of itself, change occurs as the universe maintains this perfect balance of reflection.

I knew it was her when her eyes laid on me. We stood a village apart, several hundred people going to and fro, about their business for the day to day, and her eyes spoke to me through all of them. Her eyes were ignited with excitement as she saw that, I too, understood we were together again. She must have travelled great lengths to come here. I began to walk towards her; she mirrored my steps, which became a slight jog, becoming a gallant sprint into each other's arms. We held hands, spinning around each other, and then claspng each other in a warm hug.

"I knew the universe was too small for us not to see each other again."

She smiled something like the sun shine and I could feel the universe smile back.

We walked and talked about our adventures since our last meeting. She noted the dying world she came from was a dreadful place. She spoke to me of how she came to see how my view on things had been conceived and she was in accord. I could feel the eyes of the village on us both at that moment. I looked at them and saw their eyes were not on us, perhaps it were the eyes of my demons. I saw a man walk by. I saw a woman organizing foraged greens. I saw a young couple kissing. I looked into my Lorea's eyes and pulled her close and kissed her.

I could feel my heart beating faster and faster until it was pounding in my chest and her breast pushed against me, I could feel her heart doing the same. I slowly and softly bit her lip, pulled back gently, and then teased her tongue with my own. Our eyes were opened staring at each other as we broke one of the most cardinal rules of our purpose on any world.

The passion was boiling up within us both, the temptation to indulge in the incredible world of physical touch, taste, smell, sight, sounds and love washed up and over our bodies and with excitement as we ran looking any dwelling to be alone in but nothing seemed close enough. We tripped over one another, falling to the earth. I held her arms down, she blew her hair out of her face, and we made love as only a man and woman could do.

The village was in an uproar. They were like little birds squawking, waving their arms about running around us. Her body was being coveted by many of the males. I saw them approaching us as we lay on the ground holding each other. We were each other's world. My finger touched her lips. She touched mine.

One of the males grew bold and tapped me and scurried back.

Another came and touched her. I was in the air instantly until I speared into him, I darted back to her. The other males were engaging me.

I was ready to annihilate the entire village.

She was sitting below me looking up at me as I seemed to tower above the world.

I heard a cooing from a distance and the people of the village withdrew making way for the father of the village to come. He stood before us with a long stick with aged greens wrapped around it in the air. The people of the village kneeled down. The father made some gestures in the air with his staff and made a chant in their native tongue. The village quietly went about their business.

We left from that place and walked for years upon the planet Earth. We had travelled longer distances than any other life forms in the universe to see each other again and knowing it would only last for as long as a lifetime, we didn't break from each other any further than eyes could see clearly.

One morning I woke hearing her upheaving outside. I got up and ran to her side. Her lips reeked of her insides. She looked up at me with teary eyes.

I wiped her mouth with cloth that I was wearing and dried the tears from her face.

"I think... I think... that... I may..."

"It's okay, it's okay I'm right here, whatever it is we're together..."

"No, no, no, Azazel, I am pregnant, we made this body pregnant, don't you see?"

My stomach began to eat itself. This meant no turning back. This meant Angel had mated with that of man.

We held each other that day, crying together.

Together, we had created.



Chapter Twenty-One: The Dawn of Man

There was a lifetime that lasted countless of your own, a time lost to all those who claim to be educated and knowing of modern mankind, that all of my brothers and sisters lived together in one particular area of the marvel Earth. It lay nestled in the crown of a mountain range cradled by flourishing rivers. The mountain drank from these rivers and knew great wealth of vegetation from doing so. We lived there as various creatures, often jumping from one host to another, playing, learning, researching, and exploring the dynamo of life on this world. It was a happy time for us all.

Gavri'el, the eldest of us, next to me and a handful of others, was always such a gallant fellow and walked with a certain strut. Hardly faint of heart, I believe he walked this way because he knew no matter what host body he took as, he would embody true strength.

The day we all befell curiosity, silence, and awe was the day Gavri'el came to us as we all found ourselves gathered around him. In his arms was an

infant. The infant was soft, tender, and unlike any other creature we had seen before. Gavri'el set the infant down on the ground. It crawled around to each one of us, touching our fur, petting our feathers, running its tiny fingers across our scales. The infant knew no fear.

"It is Adamah. It is in our likeness. It is to govern the beasts, the birds, and the creatures of the sea among this world. Adamah is perfect, as the Maker has it so."

Gavri'el turned to the infant Adamah and spoke to him,

"You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree we are gathered at, for if you eat from it you will certainly die."

We found the infant Adamah to be great fun. He grew up to be a young man with us at his every step, nurturing him. His childhood was plentiful and peaceful. However, as our kind did not need mates nor were we permitted to take on mates, we looked past that he might.

We were gathered again when the infant Adamah became of age. From behind a tree a mate of his likeness came into our view. Adamah had become different from us. To be in our likeness, to live amongst us, to have so much of the universe's wonders, now superior to have a mate to explore the physical pleasures of this world.

My feelings of contempt were compounding over trillions of years. I could not understand how these two creatures were to be so perfect. Surely they were fallible. Surely, they were not like our Maker, for who is like the Maker?

I watched them cuddled up together on an endless morning. I was hidden in the grass beneath the great tree. I slithered up the trunk of the tree to mingle among the branches. My head dangled in a funny way watching them do that curious thing animals do when they are mates.

I called upon the mate of Adamah. She looked up smiling at me.

“Azazel!”

I fell upon them and slide around her arm to her ear.

“Mate of Adamah, is it true, our Maker, words spoken from our Gavri’el, were for you to have the pleasure of all there is to eat but not the fruits of the Gathering Tree?”

“It is so, Azazel, or we will certainly die, it is spoken from our Gavri’el, words of our Maker.”

“You certainly will not die! It is not so! Why do you think our Gavri’el would say such a thing to you, if you are perfect in the eyes of our Maker? Are you not in our likeness?”

“Why...?” She said the word in wonder, “... What is why?”

“Perhaps to eat from the tree makes you actually great. Perhaps you are like the animals now and Gavri’el merely wants you to think you are perfect without you actually being anything of precedence over him.”

The mate of Adamah looked up at the tree and its fruits. She looked at her Adamah.

“What our Azazel says makes sense.”

Adamah shakes his head, “ Gavri’el spoke words of our Maker.”

I slid up the tree and nudged one of the fruits so that it might fall. It fell and landed just beside the mate of Adamah.

Adamah was docile and content with the pleasure of the garden. The mate of Adamah was staring at the fruit. She picked it up. She smelled it. She held it in her hands touching it.

She took a bite of it.

She offered some to Adamah. Without question, Adamah ate.

She looked at Adamah and spoke.

“We are not like the others. They have protection from the world upon them while our protection is only by their kindness.”

“Perhaps there is something to cover up what is tender to the world around you?” I suggested to her.

“Yes, Azazel, that is what we need!”

She found a bit of greenery and formed it so that it would cover Adamah’s genitals and her own.

“Oh well, I feel that looks rather nice!” I spoke to her.

She smiled.

It was in that smile I found what I had been searching for so long. It was in that smile that I found the reason Gavri’el tried to keep them from eating from the tree. They had been so pure and at peace and could have been for as long as any one of us could possibly live. The tree itself was not of question, it was the question itself, why?

In pity, I accompanied them answering all of their questions. I taught them everything I felt that they could understand and more over time.

I left them after their first child was born, for a good many years. It was time for them to teach as I had taught to them. As with any nurtured youth, a good parent teaches them how to survive without them. The challenge was that I was not the only parent for very long, nor had I been a very good one to begin with.



Chapter Twenty-Two: Redemption and Revelation

I could feel the heat of their eyes on me strike tension on the cool of the air outside. I left them all in a world behind me as I stepped into the unknown to find the only entity I ever wanted to be close to. Inside the garden of enchantment my steps were slow, sure and cautious.

Could it be?

A hedge maze with flowers springing from the hallways, I had no time to think about which direction to take, I was left with the instinct to follow my heart.

The skies above me were getting darker. Not a drop of rain, yet, lightning sparked within them like vines growing, earning second-long life spans before disappearing, and making room for more to come.

I could feel her near. I could feel her through the beauty all around me, her beauty transcended all that was, travelling outwards, singing in chorus to lure me close to her. I could feel her love as she longed for my return.

I came to the entrance of a small cottage nestled in the middle of the maze. The door was closed. A crackle of thunder shook the earth as lightning brazed the sky. I touched the door knob with hesitation.

I have come to meet my love. I have come to meet my end.

I opened the door.

With ease, I released the door knob and it opened by itself. She was lying on a bed with an assortment of flower petals on the blanket she was wrapped in. Her hand was resting on her forehead, fingers relaxed, her hand warm, eyes full and breathing of the rainbow colors in her eyes. Her lips quivered as if to say something, but she remained silent.

She seemed intoxicated and too see her was intoxicating.

I moved towards her and kneeled down at her side. I touched her hand and brought it down to rest on the blanket. Her eyes stared into mine as if there was nothing other than us. My heart was pounding with such insatiable thuds that I could feel the bed and cottage shaking. My heart beat was her name and the silence between beats was her smile, knowing, reciprocating, and loving.

Suddenly I realize that the cottage shaking is not the rhetoric of my heart beat, but it is trembling from rolling thunder from outside. The windows are bright with lights contradicting the rain smashing against the glass.

“Lorea... I have not come as my brother’s will be done...”

Her eyes stay locked on mine.

“I brought about my own ruin, I accept my sins, I accept my crime and consequence. I only wish I could take it all back to live at your side, exploring the great beyond...”

“First understand, sweet Azazel, you may have been curious but that is hardly ill intent. Patient is the soul who knows suffering has purpose, for a humble heart is fertile ground. Have you not learned what it is to be patient? Do you not see that it takes sacrifice?”

My eyes went back and forth at both of hers as she stared deep into my soul. I was vulnerable at this very moment, as I have never been in my entire existence, afraid to lose the one spark of creation in the entire universe that I treasured above all the rest.

“I am ready, Lorea, I am ready to be sacrificed...”

Again the cottage shook, causing dust specks to find new homes. Thunder made the world tremble.

Her lips form a soft smile, her eyes become fainter, she repeats to me,

“Why?”

Her question is like a thousand knives taking their time to sear my flesh. How could the one I love so much bring me face to face with the very seed of rue that kept me a prisoner of this world for so long?

'Why', raced through my mind. An avalanche of pure emotion recklessly washed over me, I was a sail-less ship in a perfect storm while lost trying to navigate the ocean of my ego. I am so tired of trying to control everything. No matter what I do, what decision I make, whatever thought I have, there is some unstoppable energy that permeates throughout my very essence, something more powerful than anyone or anything could ever hope to be, something that is there to remind me... remind me of something...

A buzzing hum came from somewhere, everywhere, filling the room with slight vibration.

I have come here to give myself up, to own up to what I had done, so that I may make everything right. What was she trying to have me see?

Words find the means to whisper from my lips,

“I have come...”

Still in uncertainty, trying to find my place in all of this,

“to see...”

For a brief moment I think back at her life and how there had always been a distance between us. She lived everyday with conviction for a higher purpose while I had lived for each new moment while curious of the next. It wasn't that I was wrong, as she had spoken before; it was that she lived with a daily sacrifice which meant that no matter her feelings towards me, our Maker came first. Without the will of our Maker, we would be without, we would not even be. Every day that she lived, she was honoring that. That was the patience she asked for me to see.

I feel a sensation like my skull had a zipper being unzipped from the back side, over the top and down my face.

Her eyes are tunnels to the origin. I am weightless to their gravity.

The universe as I have ever known it, fades away as I am beckoned towards the tunnel.

At the end of the tunnel is an immeasurable force of possibilities exploding in and on itself becoming all that could be, all that ever was, and all that will never be.

I lose concept of time and space.

“I have come to know the love of my Maker.”

Somewhere in the vacuum of complete oblivion and creation itself, I am held alone and accountable for all I have ever done. I am incapable of looking towards the enigmatic origin; I am gripped with fear and feel I am nothing in its presence.

Everything I am begins to have a soft, warm tingling sensation.

At this moment I can feel The Maker’s love. It is forgiving. It is new and at the same time so very ancient. It is as it was; eternal and forever. I feel welcomed home.

With all that I am, all I have ever been, and all I could ever hope to be, I offer myself to the essence before me.

I know the love of The Maker.