

WARRIOR CHILDREN

LEGENDARY THREE



VAUGHN EDWARD

WARRIOR CHILDREN

The Immortals Series

Book I: Legendary Three

is the first installment in
The Immortals Series.

WARRIOR CHILDREN is a work of fiction.
Any characters resembling real people,
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**For all those who believe in
magick and the vastness
of Other Worlds.**

**For all those who imagine
life in wonder and fantasy.**

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A peer into the future...

WARRIOR CHILDREN

Book II: Sons of the Red Planet

Aaron slammed the base of his staff into the ground. A bright flash emanated in all directions, signaling their arrival. Edward and he walked confidently toward the mouth of a large cave.

Before they reached the entrance, a tall, muscular figure stepped out and greeted them. "Son of Muruga, how very nice it is to finally meet your acquaintance. We knew it was only a matter of time until you found our demon lair."

Aaron tilted his head and squinted his eyes. "And by a matter of time, you mean, a few million years? That is how long you all have resided here. Am I right?"

A wide grin formed on the demon's face. "You are correct."

PROLOGUE A

HE LANDED IN THE CANYON. The ground shattered and cracked in five places, four hundred feet below from where he was standing at the top of the cliff. He stood up, shook his head and yelled out to nobody in particular. "Seriously?! What. In. The. HELL?!" *How do they keep following me? From where?*

A minute later, two portals opened up in front and behind him. Ten large and grotesque, hulking figures, five from each portal, shuffled through. He eyed them curiously and saw each had an upside-down half-moon on their forehead. *Just don't give up, do they? Sharp fangs and demonic in nature. Well this should be fun, at the very least.*

They slowly circled him, enclosing him in the center.

The leader of the group scoffed and spoke out. "Ten of us! Sent to dispose of one small boy? A waste of our time!" The others agreed, and murmurs and jeers simmered around the circle.

Small, sleek and slender, the boy appeared to be in his mid-teens. He sighed and ran his left hand through his dark, wavy hair, while his right hand rested easily on a long, golden and metallic staff, which stood as tall as him. Acting as if he was ignoring the predators before him, he casually touched and inspected the leaf-shaped tip at the end of the staff, rubbing his hand slowly on one of the flat sides.

A voice rang out from the circle. "Leader, after coming this far, you should allow each of us to tear him apart slowly, one at a time. It would be more satisfying than just gutting him with a spear."

The boy slowly lifted his head and sneered. The right corner of his mouth curled up into a thin smile. All that could be heard was, "Heh heh". *Maybe I can find out more about this portal, if I can draw a few more out of it.*

In his most cocky voice, the boy retorted, "One at a time? Each get a bloody turn, while nine of you watch on the side? Technically, that's still ten against one. The way I see it, ain't much of a fair fight." He paused. "I'm thinking, maybe you should call a few more of your pretty friends to come join you. You know, to even the odds a little bit?"

The leader yelled. "Enough!" He pointed to one of his followers down the line. "Get it over with! Kill him, now!"

Immediately, the boy shifted his stance and sprang up into the air in a back flip. A beam of light shot out from his staff and exploded one foot in front of the leader, causing him to tumble backward, while the boy landed outside the circle.

He stared at the group in front of him and taunted them. "I'm much faster than all of you. I can run, and I can hide. I can do this ALL day. I would even venture to say, I am physically stronger than your strongest. If you care to test me? Ah, but I already told you. Let's even the odds. Bring a few more here, and then I'll fight."

After pursuing him for nearly two hours through the mountains, leaping from rock to rock and running through the woods, they came into a clearing. Again, the boy repeated, "It's really very simple. My directions aren't hard to follow. Bring a few more here, and I'll fight."

Clearly frustrated, the leader threw his arms up in the air in rage and screamed at the top of his lungs. Instantly, a portal opened up.

The boy watched intently. He saw five more emerging from the portal. He set his gaze to the very back of the portal, as far back as he could see inside of it. A familiar feeling set upon him.

Well ain't that interesting. They're from home. I knew there was something familiar about these yayhoos. A moment of annoyance, and he creased his brow. But where would they be hiding on Mars?

"Father? You gonna answer that one?" the boy asked, loud enough for his ears only. He waited a moment. No answer. *Right then.* "I forgot. You only answer when YOU see fit," he muttered.

Whatever. "Do I really ask for much? No. Do I talk to myself? Absolutely. Why? Cause I've no one else to talk to, except for huge, ugly demons twice my size. Mission. Find rocks. Throw rocks around. Holy bitch. I've definitely hit a new low."

He let out a long sigh, then screamed out. "Eight months, Father! You said he would be here! But still no sign of Edward!" No reply. "Whatever. Let's just finish this."

He kicked a rock and prepared himself for battle with the fifteen demons before him. Just then, the air crackled and popped behind and above him. *What the hell? Only a small handful in the universe could possibly know this technique of communication.*

Without turning around, the boy said sarcastically, "Whomsoever you are, you have picked a most inopportune time. As you can see, I am in no position to talk. Even though I'm, talking to you right now? I can, however, tell that your intention is not to harm me. Because of that, I'll not waste your time in finding me by cutting the communication. If you wish, you can watch. Before I begin, state your names. Quickly."

PROLOGUE B

“THOSE STARS! MAN, IT’S A perfect night!” Starko was resting on his back, staring up at the sky and pointing his finger. “You know what, Thomas? With all those planets, I sometimes wonder if there are any others out there.”

“By that, you mean?”

“Well, like me and you. And if there are, you think we’ll ever meet them?”

“You know, I wonder myself,” Thomas replied lazily. “But it’s all speculation. Maybe they’re out there. Maybe they’re not.”

Starko was silent and thoughtful. Then, in a slow and drawled-out manner, he stated, “So. The sons of Surya exist.”

Reflecting on his entire past, Thomas finally answered, “We sure do.”

“But what do you really think? After all these years, surely you’ve gotta have some kind of an opinion?”

Starko, for a god, you sure do sound like a babbling, ignorant child. I mean, you sound like I used to, before you turned me into this Greek god. Look at me! I’m thick and muscular, over six feet tall, and this fiery, red hair of mine...”

“Doesn’t make you look like a Greed god,” Starko interrupted with a cheerful grin.

They were both humorous, remembering the antics of their days together. Starko leisurely sat up and looked at Thomas. “Seriously, though. Give me your most intelligent answer. You think the children of all those other stars exist somewhere in form? Look at all the planets up there, and think

about all the ones we can't even see. You'd THINK the gods of those other universes have spawned children also. It only makes sense, doesn't it?"

Thomas was quiet for a moment before he answered. "I really don't know. Actually, I don't know if it's even worth caring or thinking about. I mean, maybe the gods are making babies. I don't know. I suppose if the Otherworlds wants us to know, it'll make us know. Wouldn't that be slightly arrogant and moronic of us to think we're the only ones?"

"Maybe we ARE the only ones." Starko shrugged his shoulders casually. "Okay, fine. I can remain content with that answer. For now, at least."

Suddenly, a blazing stream of fire and light shot across the sky. "A shooting star?" Starko's eyes bulged in wonder. "How much more perfect can this get?!"

A straight line soaring to their right, it changed colors, from green to gold to white to blue, and back to green. It slowed down, until it hung suspended in mid-air for nearly half a minute.

"What in the blazing hell?" Startled, Thomas slowly stood up.

The colorful star discharged with a blast from its suspended state and traveled toward the left, before it zigzagged, racing closer and closer to the ground. There was a big explosion in a field in the distance. Lights from every color of the rainbow lit up the night sky.

"Come on!" Starko ran toward the field, with Thomas at his heels.

Three hundred feet away, they both stopped. A powerful force reverberated in the air, which caused their bodies to tingle wildly. Both Thomas and Starko were rendered speechless, and all thoughts dwindled to nothing. There was but a single hum, vibrating from the field. In both their minds, they heard, "Sons of Surya, an honor it is for me."

Striding from out of the field came the outline of a small boy with an aura of pure white, reaching thirty feet in length in every direction. In his right

hand, he carried a three-pronged weapon, five feet in length, which shined with its own aura of pure silver.

When he finally stood fifteen feet away from Thomas and Starko, he laid the weapon down and simply fell to his knees in full prostration, with his forehead to the ground and his arms outstretched. A wave of blinding energy pierced through them both. Slowly, the boy rose from his position and stood staring at the two sons of Surya.

He was a teenage boy, slim in figure and cut facial features. A broad smile passed over his face right before he laughed heartily. "Hahahahahahaha!"

He laughed for quite some time, with his hand pressed to his belly, until tears were running down his face. It was so infectious and intoxicating, to the point where Thomas and Starko were laughing without reason.

After some time, he quieted. Dictating with immense pleasure, he voice out, "Starko, Thomas, as you can already feel from the very depths of your bones, we know each other as the rains know the sky, as the leaves know the trees. It was, after all, my father who urged your father to turn the tides of transformation for you both, from mortal thinking to enlightened intelligence, nearly one hundred and fifty years gone by."

"Who... who ARE you?" asked Starko in awe.

"I am as you are. I am that which has always been. I am my father, and my father is me. I am the son of Siva." He breathed in the nighttime air with great elation and slowly looked around, taking in his surroundings.

He turned back to the two sons of Surya. "On this planet, I believe I will choose..." He closed his eyes and seemed to be concentrating, listening for something. Opening them back up, he looked eagerly at the two sons of Surya. "I have chosen the name Andrei. A strong and beautiful name, I heard it

whispered to me, as I scanned the length and breadth of this planet. What do you think?"

"Andrei. Siva. It works," Starko said. "Siva," he repeated. "As I know it, he's the greatest god in existence." He turned to Thomas and slapped him on the shoulder. "Like I said, a perfect night!"

Thomas gave a slight bow of his head. "Seems like a perfect night, indeed. But something tells me you've come with a bit of urgency, and that there's more to this story than the merry meeting of three gods."

"Truly, Thomas. I HAVE come with urgency. Your roles in the coming days are about to change."

Starko politely interrupted. "I knew this day was coming." Andrei merely nodded in agreement. "Father warned me about a time when we would have to join forces with the three gods from eons ago. It seems that time is upon us now, is it not? Is my story on par with yours?"

"It is." Andrei's gaze was intense and piercing. "Exactly one month from now, the skies in three different directions will light up in grandiosity, and the deities of grace will fall from the heavens to lead the peoples of Earth from the Age of Darkness into a Golden Age of knowledge, wisdom and heartfelt silence.

"The suchness of this moment to come has been declared by my father. Through the combined forces of the authorities of the son of Kala, the son of Gaia, and the son of Arul, the tyrannical occupancy of he who leads in the guise of fear, doubt, worry, jealousy, greed and dread, can be disposed of. It is such that this deity of terror has arisen in full form through the ignorant minds of humanity.

"He is but a blood god, one who has taken the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocents, and he has dripped the life force of hundreds of thousands more to nearly nothing."

“You paint a pretty bleak picture for us.” Thomas stuck his hands in his pockets and tilted his head.

“Perhaps, but true,” Andrei responded. “Yet, the three to come, so long as they remain intact and alive, will train, inspire, and rouse the forces in order to annihilate.”

He continued. “Once upon a time, a wizard of very high status, and a god from the loftiest realms, banished the brother of this blood god to an unknown space between the spaces. The demonic energy, which was sealed away, has since been dissolved into pure light. Yet, a part of that banished demon lives on through the reign of he who has claimed supremacy in the unnatural foulness of human nature.

“Humanity is now at a crux, in which the scale can be tipped in either direction. This blood god, Moloch, has rooted his energy into all the sleeping minds of unawareness. He has made them all forget who they are and has twisted their minds to the darkest corners of abomination.”

“Moloch?” Thomas was full of questions. “Sounds like a good name to fit an evil bastard. Just who or what is he?”

“That is a very good question, Thomas. On my honor, it is also a question I cannot answer, for I simply do not know the exact origin of this monster. It has been speculated by various gods and goddesses in the Otherworlds, but none have bluntly come forth and affirmed in a knowing manner. If my father knows, which surely he does, he has not spoken.”

“Ah,” said Starko. “But you said, the brother of Moloch was once banished and that his energy dissolved. So, if that’s the case, then what was his brother?”

Andrei tilted his head a bit. “I also said, a part of that demon lives on in what is now known as Moloch. And if I know not what Moloch is, then I know not what his brother was. As far as I know, which is not much, since I was not

there, and I only received the story second-hand from my father... Moloch's brother was the antithesis of purity.

“And if conscious, streaming awareness is your definition of purity, then the brother of Moloch was the complete contradiction to consciousness itself. If that is the case, so too is Moloch the antithesis of consciousness, or that which streams through everyone and everything.”

Thomas and Starko looked confused.

“As I stated, in exactly one month, the three gods from the Otherworlds will take their thrones upon the world to battle once again. They have been chosen for the second time to courageously defend this planet. Upon their arrival, they will inhabit their spaces for one month, as their bodies will form into substance from the particles of light from the Otherworlds.

Thomas creased his brows. “So, let me get this straight. Three gods are coming to Earth to do battle against some apocalyptic demon who wants to plague the planet with violence and destruction. And these three gods aren't like those legendary half-breed, demigods, born from a god and a human, are they?”

Andrei shook his head slowly. “No. They will not be born from a mortal. The three to come, will be born from pure light, pure energy.”

“Ah,” said Thomas. “So, one hundred percent god. When will this happen?”

“On the eve of luminosity, as the lustrous Chandra shines her light of intelligence, the bodies of each of the three gods will have reached their peak densities.”

“Chandra?” Starko asked.

Andrei nodded. “She is the goddess of the Moon. There is no other like her, and she will hinder or grace as she sees fit.”

“I see. You said, on the eve of luminosity. You mean the Full Moon, right?” asked Thomas.

“Indeed, I do mean that.” Andrei continued. “However, although their bodies will have formed into dense matter, they will still be very weak. Only when the Blue Light from the Otherworlds comes pouring in, will they be capable of gaining bodies of immortal strength. It is imperative that the three gods stay alive until then.”

Thomas inquired again. “The Blue Light? You mean the Blue Full Moon, right? There are two Full Moons in December, and one of them is the Blue Moon.”

Andrei stared at Thomas for a moment. “HmMMMMM.”

Well that was a non-answer. Clever bastard. Thomas turned to his right and spit on the ground. He looked at Starko without saying another word.

“And you? Can you not stay and fight with us?” Starko asked. “It seems the powers you wield could easily wipe out a lot of the bad stuff going on.”

“It is not for me to interfere, at least on that level,” Andrei said. “What would the people learn if all I did was wave my hand and pull the demons from this world? Only through a combination of the magicks of the Otherworlds and the life experiences of each individual, as they overcome the demonic forces, can the people AND this world truly move forward in strength and intelligence.”

“I see.” Thomas shook his head, and the corners of his lips creased upward. “I have to admit, that makes too much sense.”

Andrei nodded. “Thomas. Starko. As the sons of Surya, the great god of the Sun, you have been called by the gods of the Foremost, to serve humanity by serving the sons of Kala, Gaia and Arul. Although their bodies will have formed into bones, blood and organs, they will be very weak for some time.

“As gods who walk as matter amongst the mortals made of matter, you are urged, and expected, with the help of the three gods from the Otherworlds, to wrestle the human and animal races from the grips of darkness, and bring them all to the brink of the Otherworld’s boundless boundary.

“Starko, son of Surya, do you accept?”

“I do.”

“Thomas, son of Surya, do you accept?”

“Sounds like no other choice, huh?”

Andrei tilted his head a slight bit and raised one eyebrow.

“In that case, I suppose I do.” Thomas stretched his arms out and yawned.

“Very well, then.” Again, the son of Siva bowed heartily to them both. “My time has now drawn to a close. I must bid farewell. One day, I shall return.”

His body exploded into millions of light particles. Both Starko and Thomas had to shield their eyes. When they uncovered them, the son of Siva was gone, but there remained an incandescent glowing throughout. Surrounding them in all directions were the most colorful roses and flowers from every species.

“Wow!” Starko was in complete amazement, staring at the glowing orbs in the air and all the flowers strewn about the ground.

“Wow is right,” said Thomas. “But wow, did he have a way with words. I felt like I was in an airy, fairy tale from centuries ago.”

“I’m sure he rarely makes it to Earth, so it probably doesn’t matter what time-period he’s in. Besides, he’s the son of Siva. He’s probably earned the right to talk however he wants to talk.”

Thomas shrugged his shoulders and stuck his hands in his pockets. “I can live with that answer.”

CHAPTER 1

Part I: Edward's Dwelling

MARVELING AT THE INTRICACIES of his new dwelling, he smelled the damp stench of soil poking through the rocky floor, as it filled his senses. The light flickered once. It flickered again. Faintly, he saw the outline of rocks and insects crawling upon them. *I don't think I'll ever get used to this. How am I even seeing this?*

He passed what seemed to be a faint outline of his right hand through his stomach area, and he gasped. It slipped through, without touching anything solid. He looked down to where his body was supposed to be. All he could see was the pulsing violet light in the center of his chest.

As the hours passed, the light spread, following small pathways which looked to be veins running in every direction. *If I am seeing this, surely, then my eyes have formed. I smell the Earth, but my body doesn't feel solid yet.*

Twelve hours passed. Aware of every detail as it was happening, he heard slight echoes of dripping water and the bugs which were swarming in every which way. *I can now see, smell and hear. What a grace.* He turned his head in the direction of something scurrying nearby, and he saw a faint outline of a small animal with a long tail. *Goodness. What in the world is that? I've been gone so long. So much evolution has occurred.*

After seven more hours, he felt a small tingle in the middle of his forehead. This lasted for nearly thirty minutes before it spread throughout his body. First his toes, then his groin and the bottom of his tailbone, before it traveled up his spine.

Startled at these sensations, he was forced to emote. *Four of my five senses. I won't need the fifth for at least a month.*

Breathing in and out slowly, a tear rolled down his cheek, and he whispered to nobody in particular, "I'm back. It's been so long. So many incredible moments. So many horrific events. And... and I... and we can experience it all again. I can't believe I'm actually back."

He continued to whisper, sending hissing echoes bouncing from wall to wall within the confines of his cavern. "I... I wonder what it's like out there now. After all these years, the evolution of... of everything! Certainly, every detail, every crack and crevice, and even the animals and the people. Surely, every single atom and cell on this planet has evolved!"

His whispering quieted, and he was content to sit in silence, without a care of the world or his own experience. A full twenty-four hours passed. He remained sitting on the slab of stone, watching the light emanating from his body, reflecting around the rock walls.

His eyebrows raised, and curiosity hit home. *Indeed. I wonder what the world is like.* With effort and concentration, he focused his mind as far out as he could imagine, stretching his energy and attention for miles and miles beyond the walls.

Murmurs of voices, children laughing and people screaming. Strange sounds he had never before heard, and wondrous melodies, somebody singing, and a pounding rhythm. The clanking of metal grinding, barking and conversations. It was electrifying!

Even the wind he could hear brushing against the leaves of various trees, and the waves of the water crashing into the rocks. He listened and listened in ecstasy for several hours, soaking in the sounds and the energies of a world so foreign to him.

He smiled. A small giggle. After listening some more, he laughed uncontrollably for several minutes. He was joy incarnate.

Slowly, he tried to stand, but wobbled a bit and fell down. Pushing his arms against the ground, he rose up onto his knees and breathed a few moments before crawling toward the wall. Leaning against the wall, he stood up and walked slowly forward, then backward.

He walked the entire span of the room which he occupied in the large underground cavern, following the lining of the wall. He made a full circle and reached the spot he had first started walking.

Eyeing the stone he was previously sitting on, he took one step. *I can do this. I don't need that god-damn wall to hold me up.* Another step, and another. Slowly but surely, he reached his destination. When he fell forward upon the rock, he laughed wildly again.

Halfway through the second day, he was still sitting in the same spot, unmoved. Breathing, seeing, smelling, feeling, listening. The smile upon his face never left. Then, from out of nowhere, he heard a voice as if the person was standing directly in front of him. Only, the voice came from the very center of his brain.

Low and entrancing, the voice streamed into his awareness. "You are now acclimated to the vibration of the Earth realm."

He was instantly placed in a trance, but still aware of everything happening. "Father! The Earth has accepted me well. I breathe. I see. I feel. And this dirt! The dirt is very pungent. And the sounds of this planet! Everything has changed. It has all evolved. I can't believe the world I live in!"

"Son of Time, much has happened since you last dwelt amidst the shadows of this planet. As time passes, it is a law willed by the Otherworlds, that all matter must change. As thoughts change, the atomic nature of all things change, causing bodies to change. When those thoughts change and the old concepts collapse, structures change. Buildings, trees, and all races, from the tiniest insects to the largest animals and humans, change."

“Yes. I knew this was the case. Yet, I am still very astounded to find how immense and intense the change has been from our last footings three millenniums ago. By the way, Father, you have come with a purpose?”

“As all things change, so too must your name. The evolution of all things continues, even the particles encased within the sounds of names. You will need a suitable calling to fit this new age you are tasked upon, for the title you were given thousands of years past has not the power to guide you in the modern world.”

“I see. What do you wish for me to be addressed as?”

“My son.” There was a grand pause. “Your name, which I wish to bestow upon you, hails from the resonance of two lines of adornment. It vibrates with wisdom energy from a line of saints, and it carries the energy of courage and leadership from a lineage of kings. With this name, I will give thee the power to walk as those who walked as wise men in a world of chaos, and the magnetism to draw upon the nobilities of those who were born into status and grandeur.

“Your very being, as it mortalized into the body which forms, will be granted passage by my will and presence beyond time and space. That which you will be called, draws from the power of saints and kings past, and thrives as a living force in the modern day. From this moment on, you will now be addressed as Edward!”

When spoken, a shaft of brilliant white beamed through the ceiling of his dwelling and poured into the top of his crown, enveloping his entire body. Strength flooded his muscles and bones, and his senses were heightened.

His father added, “Now that you have been aligned with your new name, you will need an official last name to be placed on documents as you walk the planet. You shall take one of my names. You will be known amongst the mortals, as Edward Kronos.

After nearly an hour, all was quiet, and Edward sat motionless but relaxed. *Thank you, Father.*

A few hours passed, and his silent reverie was broken by yet another voice, which pierced into his thoughts.

“Can you hear me?”

Edward was instantly filled with amusement. “I can.”

“So, you’re aware!”

“Yes, very. Father granted me my new name, Edward Kronos. And you?”

“Yes. Father too came and went. For this day and age, he willed the son of Arul to be known as Gene. Gene Arul.”

Edward’s lips creased upward. He felt the resonation of Gene’s new name. It was powerful and fit for the contemporary setting. “It’s very strong, very pronounced. Your father makes no mistakes in the choosing of all things. What of Gaia’s born? Have you heard?”

“I have,” said Gene. “He’s resting now. He was in very deep communication with the Earth goddess, and when he came to, he needed rest. He would have contacted you, but while we were communicating, he got weak and his voice faded out.”

“His chosen name?”

Like electricity through wires, Gene sent the thought to Edward. “The goddess herself chose it for him, imparting him with a sense of adventure and all the gifts that a goddess would give. Christopher.”

“Christopher? Let me guess. Christopher Gaia?”

“Exactly!” Gene was clearly excited.

“Nice. I like it. It suits him.” Edward paused, letting the new name roll in and out of his consciousness. “After all this time. We’re back.”

“Yes. We are,” Gene answered. “As I understand, nearly two thousand miles separate our bodies. I’m immobilized in the central portion of this land. Where are you?”

“Near the water, underground. I feel the presence of mountains everywhere, and an immense body of water is very near. I listened and found that I am somewhere in the west of this country.”

There was a long gap of silence. Finally, Edward spoke. “It’s time, you know. Now that we have full awareness, and the powers of communication have opened to us, we haven’t a minute to lose.”

“Yes. I know. Our Guardian Watchers. It’s time.”

Part II: Mery's Dreams
A small town in the Midwest
1st Day of December

“Nooooo!” Thrashing wildly, Mery’s scream pierced into every room in the house. “No,” she whispered while panting.

Dashing to her room, Douglas almost hit his head on the top frame of the door, as it hung a few inches below six feet. He crouched a bit, so that his seventy-one inches could fit through. He found his daughter uncomfortably sprawled out on her bed, sweat and tears pouring down her face. Her hair was in a matted mess.

Dammit! Everyday this happens. Her dreams are my worst nightmare! He stood frozen, tranced out in fear for a few seconds, before snapping out of it. “Mery! I’m here! Oh gods! It’s okay, calm down. Just catch your breath. He-here. Just wait a sec. I’ll get you some water.”

“I’ll... I’ll be alright, really. I don’t need you fussing over me all the time.” She was choking on her words as her father left the room, and she knew she wasn’t very convincing.

He sat next to her on the bed and watched her gulp down the water. Her long, dark hair was frizzed out, partially covering her face. Her chest and body were still heaving heavily, and she was slurring her words. “Oh, my head.”

She put her right hand to her forehead, before sliding it down to wipe the drool onto her sleeve. She took another sip of water, and with a trembling hand, she slowly placed the glass onto the mantle beside the bed. “So, you know the past month I’ve been having these dreams. They’re freaky intense! And dad, they seem so real. I feel like I’m right there living the moment when they happen.”

She was quivering, with a despairing look on her face. "Dad? Wh-what's happening? You're always wanting me to tell you about all these dreams, like they matter. You sit there and act like it's all real. I'm either crazy, or you are. Or, maybe we both are!"

"Sweetie." Douglas took a deep breath. He did not know what to say. He opened his mouth, but the words would not come out. He tensed a moment, before letting out a long sigh. He knew the time had come. She deserved an explanation.

She was clutching onto her wrist, which was wrapped up in her blanket. "These dreams! They entice you and make you wanna stay in it for a real long time. It's all good, and you're put into this fantasy dream land at first. Then, all of a sudden, you're thrown for a loop, cause everything changes, and blood and guts are splattered everywhere! I mean, what the hell?!"

Mery had a crazed look. Her normally pretty face was scrunched up, and her forehead was wrinkled. "And those stupid boys! Those three, god-damn boys! See?! I'm already talking to you like it's all real! But they're always in my dreams! I'm starting to feel like I'm possessed by them. And they aren't even the scary ones! They're real tame compared to everything else. They shine in all their glory. It's like they WERE the light.

"But then, it goes from them to all this gore and war, and blood and death. I can't even tell you how many times I've seen people killed in my dreams! It all seems so real! I'm losing it dad! I'm really losing it!" Her sobs had turned into a full-out cry.

Looking like a crazed lunatic, she uncovered her wrist from under the blanket and pointed at it. Speechless, Douglas dropped his jaw. "In the dream, they pointed to my glowing wrist. They called it a Trident. They told me I have to follow my calling. When I woke up, I find that my dream ain't really a dream! Look at my wrist! It's glowing! It's all real!"

Eyes wide and terrified, Mery was shaking uncontrollably. Choking on her own spit, she could barely talk. "I'm going bloody crazy, dad. My head feels like it's about to pop. If anyone sees this, they'll wheel me away with no questions asked. I've become a god-damn case-study for the government!"

Oh no. No no no no no! How can this be? Why her?! Why now?! "I'm sorry," he whimpered. "There's a lot to tell you. I can explain. You're not crazy. I'm sorry all this is happening to you. None of this was supposed to happen."

Douglas was pale. His forehead creased, and he fidgeted. He ran his left hand through his short, white hair. "Mery, I need for you to tell me something. Why were you screaming 'no' when you woke up?"

She shuddered when he said the word. The very mention of it sunk her back into the experience of her dream. "Dad, these boys, they aren't the only ones I saw in my dream. I saw others. But these other people, they weren't human, or they didn't look it. They were big. I don't know what they were. In the backdrop of everything, there was something really gory. I could taste it. Feel it! It was pure evil." She closed her eyes, and tears raced down her cheeks.

He placed his hand on her shoulder. "Take your time, sweetie. Just take your time. Nothing'll happen to you. I promise. Everything'll be alright."

She calmed down a slight bit. "What I saw was the most horrific thing. It was worse than anything you'd see in the worst movies. And I was there. I could feel it all happening. People were enslaved. They were shackled and tortured and gutted. I never saw the thing behind it all, but it or he obviously controlled all those pawns of his that I saw.

"And those people. When they resisted, they were... they were slaughtered." This time, she whispered it, "Slaughtered. I could see it all, feel it all. I swear I was there and that it was happening. Then I woke up, obviously screaming."

She was staring at the glowing insignia on her wrist, while they both sat in silence. Douglas stammered, "Mery. I..." Stumbling on his words, he dropped his head and sighed. "Listen, it's been really tough ever since your mother and Lynne left. And I've a lot of explaining to do, starting with that mark on your wrist."

"What?! You know about this?! Wha-?"

"Li- Listen. It's like I told you. None of this was supposed to happen! None of this!" He shook his head from side to side frantically. "Your mom and I, we kept all this a secret from you, for your own good. I didn't know you'd open up to all of it, at least not in this way. You weren't supposed to. I'm sorry. I can say that a million times, that I'm sorry. But I didn't know any of this would be happening."

"Dad, what are you talking about? Any of what? What the hell IS this thing on my wrist?!"

"Mery, there's a lot to tell you. Your mother and I, we kept these things from you for your own good. That mark on your wrist. It was always there. It was just... it was just concealed. We hid it from you, using magick." His voice was shaking, and he was searching for the right words.

"What? What the hell are you talking about?" Her face wrinkled up, and she squinted her eyes into a glare, before giving her father a dumbfound look.

"Look." He took his left wrist and placed it on his lap, face up. "See this line?" There was a small line two inches long that looked like a tattoo.

"Yeah."

He took his right index finger and placed it on the line. Nothing happened. "Gimme a second. I can't do this unless I relax, and I'm far from relaxed right now."

With his eyes closed, he took a few deep breaths. For several minutes he sat there, while Mery audibly sighed and thumped the wall with her right foot. Finally, he opened his eyes. His demeanor had changed. The look on his face was extremely focused. He incanted aloud. "Vasi!"

In doing so, he was thrown back against the wall with a powerful force. The two-inch line on his wrist ignited into a bright light. Three lines then grew out of the base of the first line, forming a Trident, with the two-inch line as its base and staff.

The room instantly grew brighter, and Mery had to shield her eyes for a second. He placed his wrist next to hers. She saw with startled eyes, both insignias were identical.

"Wh- what in the hell?!" When Mery touched his wrist, she received a small electrical shock.

He rubbed his temples and shook his head. "I haven't called on that power in years. I forgot how strong it is."

"Dad, what's going on?"

He took a moment to compose himself. "You were born into a family filled with generations of magick. We both were. Your mother was. Your sister. It's something that can't be helped or swayed. It is what it is. You are magickal, and you've been entrusted with knowledge beyond your comprehension and mine. When I was a kid, it was normal for me, cause my parents lived in a place that this kind of stuff was acceptable."

"You just said I'm magickal! I'm supposed to accept that? But why? Why didn't you tell me? Does Lynne know? How could you keep this from me?" She felt betrayed, scared, angry.

"Because, Mery. I wanted a normal life for you. I wanted for you, what I never had, something I've been trying to have! That's why we hid these marks on your wrist from you and Lynne. And Lynne does know. Now. That's why

your mother took off with her. She wanted to finally train her in the magicks of our ancestors.

“I didn’t want that for you. You weren’t ready or old enough. B- but look. You’re seventeen, and well, I just never thought. I just never fathomed.” His voice trailed off into a whisper. “I just never thought your Trident would be activated by them.”

“What? So, you DO know who those three idiots are! You kept all this hidden from me, AND you knew about them! Who in blazes are they anyway dad? I’ve a right to know everything! They come to me every single day! And LYNNE!”

No longer able to contain herself, she bolted up and shouted, “Forget it! I need to get the hell out of here! And if I come back, and if I’m in the mood when I get back, you can tell me who the bloody hell these fools are in my dreams!” She stormed out of the room. Douglas heard the front door of the house slam.

Oh gods. What just happened? My love, I wish you were here. She’s got your passion. And she talks just like you when you were mad. He looked up toward the sky. “Now what am I supposed to do?” He sighed audibly. “The once fearless, Douglas Damaru, has become a useless tool in the shed. And I have no idea what to do.”

He stared at the dazzling insignia on his wrist. Touching it with his index finger, he slowly traced the outline of the Trident. A wave of peace came over him. Somewhere deep inside, he knew everything would escalate. Yet, he was assured everything would be okay.

Part III: The Prophecy and the Clan

*The hours gone by.
The rustling leaves in the wind.
The setting sun.
The quiet surge of a warrior,
emerging from the silent depths
of Destiny's gaze.*

Alright, time to talk. She stretched her neck from side to side, up and down. A long sigh escaped her. *I'm starvin'.*

Startled by the creaking front door, Douglas quickly sat up on the couch, still dreary from sleep. He rubbed his eyes and groggily looked up. "Mery?"

"Yeah, dad. It's me. I don't smell any food."

"Well, you couldn't possibly think cooking was on my mind. Besides, I kind of thought you'd be staying the night with a friend, judging how you stormed off."

"Nope. I'll just warm some leftovers. Then, you can tell me everything. I'm ready now, and I wanna hear. I mean everything. Lynne. Mom. The three boys. These marks on our wrists. That word you said earlier that made your mark appear. Vasi. Or whatever."

Muttering to himself, "Yes, Vasi." *I'm a magick man turned dad. I'm not cut out for parenting.*

Twenty minutes passed. Mery came back with a plate full of potatoes, buttered beans and an old, hardened piece of bread. She took a seat next to her father. "We need more food, and this bread is stale." Her voice was muffled, and food was nearly spilling out of her mouth.

"So, why are you eating it?"

"Still tastes good, and if you slop it with enough butter, it really don't matter. So, start with that word. What is that?"

“Right. That word. It’s been around longer than our entire line of ancestors. Our entire heritage has used that word in similar ways that I used it, and it never grows old. Vasi is a trigger. It’s a very powerful trigger, handed down from every generation.

“Supposedly, it originally came from those three boys who are haunting you in your dreams every night. At least, that’s what the stories say. I tend to think it was around before they even set foot on the Earth. The word represents the entire power of everything that exists. It’s just... it’s just pure energy.”

“One little word?” Mery poked at her food, then looked up and blinked several times. Her mind wanted to protest, but the power from her wrist said otherwise, so she remained quiet.

“Yes. One little word. But not everyone can use it, unless you’re empowered by one of the three boys who gave it to us. Or, born into an ancestry line that was empowered by them a long time ago. Or, I’ve heard that somebody with a very pure heart can tap into it and use the power if their intentions are good.

“Also, those three boys? They’re not just boys. The stories I was told say they are gods. For whatever reason, they choose to come before us in the mold of youth. But before I say anymore, I need for you to first tell me what they told you in your dream.”

Straining to remember, Mery took a seat by the fireplace. Staring at the glowing embers and the fire, she closed her eyes and took a long, deep breath. “Well, when they spoke, their voices were all in unison, and it sounded like a mini choir in acapella. It was actually kinda cool.”

She drifted off, trying to remember their words. “You see, that’s how they always start out. They draw you in with all that beauty and pretty stuff and

their soothing voices, before they show somebody's guts all over the place." Her voice switched to a bitter coldness.

She shuddered. "Anyway, they told me it was time, that all I've known isn't what it seems, and everything will change. They also gave me this cryptic message. I wrote it down when I was sitting in the woods this morning."

The brilliance of the first light, a pure white, will circle over the horizon during the battle cries of Earth's mourn. Winter will come to pass. The second, a wondrous blue light, will usher in the dawning of a new age as the three who walk amongst the flesh, will gather as one.

At the very moment she spoke the message, Douglas tensed, and his eyes widened. Before she could finish, he cut in while his gaze was set upon the floor. "Heed the cries of souls be gone. Earth, wind, fire, water and space, will bow before one, and all that is lost will be found."

"Yeah, that's it exactly! But how'd you know?" Mery couldn't believe what she was hearing.

He looked up and quietly said, "It's the old prophecy of our clan."

"Seriously, dad? Clan? You mean like some secret society that you read about online or hear about every so often on the news?"

He relaxed a bit. "Honey, you have a shining light poking out from your wrist, and you're asking if I'm serious?"

"Oh, right."

"And no, not like those secret societies. We're secret alright, but you never hear about us on the news, and we're not even talked about online. The magick covers our trails and protects us from just about everything. There were parchments written in Japan dating back over a thousand years. The

transcriptions translate our clan name into The Warriors of Light, or the Light Warriors. Either or, but you get the picture.

“We’ve been around for ages. Actually, I take that back. There are some famous texts written about us, mystical happenings that our clan was responsible for, but those texts don’t have a name for us, and we’ve long been forgotten about. It’s just references.

“As for the prophecy, I never really thought much about it. Had no reason to believe it’d come to pass in my lifetime. That prophecy’s been around for over three thousand years, so why would I give it much thought? But now, it seems the prophecy is suddenly coming to a head. Not to mention, it was passed on to you first-hand from the three gods.”

His voice trembled. “We tried to escape the life of magick and prophecies. It’s just too much, and it’s always been a dangerous path. If you hadn’t recited part of it, and if your wrist wasn’t glowing, I’d think you were just crazy, dreaming dreams that any teenager would. But then I’d be a naive fool.”

Glancing at the glowing Trident on her wrist, he knew she was one of them.

“Dad. Who are they? I mean, honestly, in my dreams they look younger than me.” She added, “Yeah, they’re fine, but damn they’re annoying.”

“Yes well, don’t let their outer appearance fool you. As I said, they choose to come in that form. Word has it, they’ve been around for over 3000 years, which explains the history dating the prophecy. Stories say, they’re as ruthless and deadly as the most gruesome destroyers in all of history.”

Shaking his head that he was actually relaying all this to her, he continued. “The stories surrounding them, some of which were passed through the ages by word of mouth, speak of three boys, no more than the age of sixteen. It was said, when they last made their presence known in 1300 BC,

they scoured the lands eradicating the vile malevolence caused by the demon lord, Mephistopheles. It was...”

“Wait! Did you just say Mephistopheles?” She cackled, writhing on the floor, lightening the air. “Seriously, dad. That’s a name kids learn about in school, you know, like in those stupid plays.”

“You’d be surprised, Mery. A lot of plays are written from the truths of those who lived them. They write about things in a creative way, so they don’t sound so loony. In the case of Mephistopheles, his name lived on years after he was slain, and he was forever made famous by a wordsmith.

“Anyway, the three boys. There’s a stone tablet that tells about the making of their swords. It says, the three swords they used were forged by an ally, another great and powerful god. The tablet also says, when this god prepared for battle, wings would sprout from his back, and light would pour from the sky and illuminate his sword and entire body. Even the most powerful of gods and goddesses would come to bask in his presence and bow to him.”

Still wanting to protest, Mery stopped herself and looked down at her hands and wrist. Instead, she just let her father continue.

“According to our records, it’s written, this same god who made the swords, came from the highest order, a clan known as the El Dynasty. But they’re a mystical clan in the spirit world. The story says he summoned three warriors to Earth. The three warriors had never before stepped foot on this planet. But because it was this particular god of El who made the summoning, the fathers of these three warriors each gave their permission for them to take leave and be amongst the people here.”

Mery’s eyes were closed, and she was lightly bouncing the back of her head against the wall she was leaning on. “So, a god from some group, called the El Dynasty, made a petition to the fathers of these three boys and

told them they needed to come to our planet. Really nice. This story is just too much, dad. But honestly? It's one hell of a story so far."

"Yes, it is," Douglas said. "As far as I know, it's all true. But anyway, as a gift to them for leaving their home and coming to a new land, the El god used a powerful magick and willed his own sword to partially melt. The drippings from his sword were combined with and covered the most precious base metals of platinum, gold, silver and copper found from deep inside of the Earth. He basically merged the power of his own sword with metals from here, to create invincible and deadly weapons for the three gods.

"After everything was said and done, and Mephistopheles was defeated, they buried their swords somewhere in Middle-Earth, where the Heart of Gaia resides, making it impossible for anyone to find them."

Mery's eyes were wide, and her mouth was gaping. She didn't know if she should be afraid, or if she should laugh again. He continued. "To the few who became their sworn followers, they etched into their wrists the mark of the Trident of Siva, the greatest god of all, whom even the El god bows to. Their followers were told that this insignia would serve as a gateway, a connection to them. The followers were also told of a time in the future when the three gods would return to battle once again.

"As for the trigger I used to invoke the power that caused this Trident to form on my own wrist? It's the name of Siva. Only, the syllables are turned. Either way you say it, Siva or Vasi will ignite the power and bring the magick of the gods to you to use as your very own."

Mery was shaking and almost in tears. She still couldn't believe what she was hearing. If the Trident on her wrist hadn't been glowing, she wouldn't have believed a word her father was saying. Everything just seemed so sudden, so outlandish. It caused her emotions to scatter in all directions. "So, these three gods. They have names?"

“They did. I don’t know their human names from long ago, but I know their origins. It’s said, they are the extensions of their fathers, and mother, powerful and infinite streams of energy within the spirit world. There was the son of Gaia, the goddess of Earth. Son of Kala Bhairava, the god of Time. And the son of Arul, the god of Ascension.”

She thought about it for a moment. “And the El god? He has a name? I mean, he sounds a bit too important to have a boring name like the El god.”

Douglas found that humorous. “He does. In our clan, we know him as Mikhae, the great god and slayer from the El Dynasty. But in mainstream religions, he’s referred to as an angel, or a protector. He was one who saw no need to cover his tracks like the three gods. He came out to the public more often than not, banishing evils and creating miraculous things for people.”

“This can’t be true,” she whispered. “But my dreams. Oh god, my wrist.” She stood up. “Dad, just... just give me a sec, k?”

“I know. It’s a lot to process. Take your time. There’s more. Actually, a lot more. Why don’t you go to bed? We can talk about this in the morning or whenever you want.”

“Yeah. Yeah, maybe I should.” Her voice barely audible when she walked away.

Part IV: Storytelling on the Gods

Arising at the crack of dawn, Mery opened her eyes to the sun peeping through her window. The sweet smell of waffles hinted into her room, and she heard her father rustling around in the kitchen. *Holy freaking crows. I actually had a decent night of sleep for once.* She rolled out of bed, put on her robe and walked toward the bathroom.

Hearing the cranking of the pipes in the bathroom, Douglas yelled, "When you're finished with your shower, come get your breakfast."

"K, dad."

A half-hour later, Mery walked into the kitchen and sat down at the table.

"Did you dream?"

"Yeah, but only a little. It was different this time, and I woke up feeling good. But this time, only one boy made a grand appearance. It was a short dream too. Also, you were right, at least about one of the gods. He called himself the son of Ascension. He told me he chose the name Gene and would rather have me call him that. I feel stupid saying all this, but whatever. It could be true."

"Gene, huh?" *My worst fear. She really is a chosen one. Gene. Perhaps for him.*

"So, their parents. I mean, who are they? You said these boys or gods, or whatever they are, were like extensions of their parents. So then, who are they? Listen to me. I'm starting to act like this is all normal."

Unsure of the exact answer, he gave only what he knew and what he could surmise. "You're asking the wrong person. I mean, I can only tell you what was handed down to me, and honestly, I don't know if everything that was

word-of-mouth is completely reliable. Your grandfather and grandmother knew more than I ever did. I can tell you a little bit about the three gods themselves, but not so much about their parents.

“There’s a lot of stories about them. Some are myth, some are truth. What we believe to be true is that, when they were last here, they were born into the physical world as powerful streams of light, which somehow formed into bodies.”

“Soooo, assuming any of this is true, and I’m not saying you’re lying to me, cause I’m not stupid or blind to this thing on my wrist, but I’m just sayin’. Why do you think they’ve come back? I mean, after all this time, why come back now?”

Douglas stared at the ceiling, then the floor. “I don’t know. I can’t answer that.” He seemed to be lost in thought. “But to come back after all this time only means that we as a whole on this planet are on the brink of some kind of disaster. The best way to explain it is to tell you in a chronological story. It’ll give you a much broader spectrum to understand it, I think.”

Holy hell. Always the intellectual. Should’ve been a professor. “Suits me, but hold on.” She grabbed a plate and tossed three waffles on it, then dumped a third of a jar of jam on it, followed by a thick layer of syrup. “Alright. Now I’m ready.”

He stood up and paced around with his arms behind his back. “Twenty-five hundred years ago...”

“Oh lord,” Mery mumbled to herself.

“...a boy was born to a very prominent family in a region of Nepal. When he grew up, he went from prince to beggar, before acquiring the status of a great god. And even though he set his heights to the status of the gods and achieved it, he was quiet about it and didn’t portray himself as such. His contribution is that he paved the way and led ignorant people from the evils

and toxicity of word, thought and deed. Because of him, life was good for a short time.

“But after five hundred years had passed, the world was falling to shambles again. So, like clockwork, the world was given another god. When this one appeared, he ushered in a new way of living. He came to lead the battles caused by the sins of man and the demons that controlled them. He was known to be a very miraculous god who could make the blind see, and he could raise the dead. Unlike the first one, though, he was outspoken, which led him to his demise by the people of that kingdom.”

“Dad, you should’ve been a storyteller. It’d be a lot more interesting than the insurance office you’re at.”

“Yes, I agree. It’s pretty bland down there.” He paused for a moment. “Where was I? Oh yes. Since the passing of those two great souls, humanity’s nearly lost all conviction. Throughout the generations of our clan, stories were passed down of how people in this world were becoming bitter, jealous and argumentative. It’s no secret. I mean, look around. Seriously, just watch the news for one night.”

Mery looked confused. “What do you mean?”

“Exactly what I said. The news is all about portraying the bad stuff and showing people in the worst of ways. Not to mention, nowadays it’s all about waking up and fixing meals, driving to work and listening to gossip while at work. Then, coming home and gossiping about what happened at work. People act like robots, fixed in their own little world. But the three gods? Stories say, THEY say we’re all gods and goddesses.”

Mery looked even more confused. “What do you mean they say we’re gods?”

“Exactly that,” Douglas answered. “Deep down, we’re all intrinsically a god or goddess, but we just don’t remember that we are, and we don’t remember how to do anything godlike or miraculous.”

“What about you? Do you remember? You know, the god stuff?” Realizing what she just said, she put her head in her hands. “Aaarrgh!! I can’t believe I’m having this conversation with you. That sounded like a dumber than stupid question that I just asked.”

“You’re fine. It’s a lot to take in at once. But in answer to your question, yes, at times. When I’m drenched in magick from the Trident on my wrist, yes, I remember. But it isn’t completely sustained in me. I’m told, the more you fumble around with that power, the more you become it.

“As for your question about why they’re here now? I really don’t know. But who can really say what’s lurking out there now? Those three warrior gods didn’t come back to this planet for so long, cause they were never needed. But the very reason they’ve made their presence known, and with the passing on of the prophecy to you, shows a time of need for them on this planet. Whatever’s going on, it’s enough to summon them back into existence.”

She swallowed her food and took a sip of juice. “Well, yeah. They’ve been bothering me and causing me all sorts of racket in my dreams. Something’s obviously going on. Now that I’m somehow a part of it all, I need to know. Everything. Simple as that.”

He cleared his throat from the lump that was forming and resumed the story. “It was written in history, when the three male warriors return, they... they’ll choose three females to protect them until they’re ready to fight. These females will know magick, and they’ll know how to fight. Nobody knows who it’ll be.

“But I mean, of course it’s not you or anyone you know.” A fake smile formed on his lips. “You don’t really know anything. We didn’t train you, and you’ve never fought.”

A spine-chilling feeling crept through her. “Yeah, I don’t know nothing,” Mery said, staring at the floor, still feeling slightly betrayed by her parents. “But why come to me? Every day for a month, they’ve been coming to me in my dreams. Doesn’t that mean something?”

“I can’t answer that.”

“What about the prophecy? What do you think that means?”

“Look outside Mery. What do you see?”

She moaned at the prospect of having to move her legs, but did it anyway. Staring out the window, she replied, “The woods, the sky, that squirrel over there. What am I supposed to look at?”

In the distance of the morning glow was a very faint outline of the Full Moon. “The moon’s almost full.” Mery was silent for nearly a minute.

“Wait!” She gasped as she repeated the first line of the prophecy. “The brilliance of the first light, a pure white, will circle over the horizon during the battle cries of Earth’s mourn. And,” she paused lost in thought, “winter’s coming on the 21st!”

“Yes!” There was excitement in his voice. “At the end of the month there’s also another Full Moon. That will be a Blue Moon. There are two Full Moons in the month of December. It doesn’t happen often. And the rest of the prophecy?”

She struggled to remember it. “The second, a wondrous blue light, will usher in the dawning of a new age as the three who walk amongst the flesh, will... will do something or another, before hunting for bacon and eating their breakfast in the woods. I don’t know. Wait. Where’s that piece of paper?”

The brilliance of the first light, a pure white, will circle over the horizon during the battle cries of Earth's mourn. Winter will come to pass. The second, a wondrous blue light, will usher in the dawning of a new age as the three who walk amongst the flesh, will gather as one. Heed the cries of souls be gone. Earth, wind, fire, water and space, will bow before one, and all that is lost will be found.

“All the signs are aligning with the prophecy,” Douglas said. “Also, since you’ve dreamt about the three gods and even opened the gateway to them through the insignia on your wrist, my fear is that there’s going to be some bloodshed in the near future. Maybe that’s what they were showing you. Maybe all that war and gore you were talking about could very well be a predicted future. Everything might change soon.”

He seemed distracted. *Everything. But why her? Why now?*

Mery considered all of what her father said. “I’m curious about you and mom. You basically said that you settled down to hide and get away from the magick. Why? I mean, what were you two REALLY doing before you had us?”

“Well, we were both born into the clan. Your mother and I met when we were sent on a special mission. She left home in Wales and traveled to New York, and I left home on the West Coast to travel there. There was an alarming rate of paranormal activity going on, and the police couldn’t pin it down. Even the psychics the police were using had no idea.

“However, the people in our clan kept a watchful eye from a distance. When nobody could solve it, we quietly stepped in and took over without anyone knowing. It was demonic activity. That’s why nobody knew what was happening. How could they?”

“Your mother was the first to arrive, and I stepped onto the scene about four hours after her. There was a rupture in veils between our world and another dimension. It was in a certain spot near these railroad tracks deep in the city. There were entities of all sorts coming and going and creating havoc. The psychics couldn’t sense it, because psychic viewing happens from a lower-based world. The power to view and sense from that standpoint is limited. The demons know this, and they are able to cover their tracks.

“That’s why we stepped in. Where demons are concerned, the power of the gods is needed. I call them demons, since we have no other word for them. They’re not ghosts. We just don’t really know what they are. When we don’t know, it’s best to just allow the power from the three base gods of Arul, Bhairava and Gaia to flow, and everything just seems to take care of itself.

“So, your mother. When I arrived, she was already in battle.” He smiled at the thought of her. “These blue eyes of mine have seen a whole lot in my day, but nothing as spectacular as your mother. She was so beautiful and courageous. That is when I fell in love with her. She almost had the rupture sealed, but a demon had slipped from her view and was still in the Earth realm. It let loose on her, and this brutal force of energy shot out of its hands. Luckily, I was half a second faster, and the energy that came from me, absorbed what it had sent out, and the demon was dissolved into nothing. Your mother just smirked at me, acting like nothing happened, and then finished sealing the rupture.

“That’s really how we met. But you know, stuff like that got to us. There was danger and excitement. But it was too much, so we hid and left that world. We silently played with the magick in our own fashion, away from all that stealth. We were able to cultivate the power of the gods without having to fight all the time. The fighting was just too much.

“There’s something else.” He started to weep. “Mery, the reason your mother left us ten years ago? She wanted to train Lynne. I didn’t want this for either of you. I only wanted you to grow up and live a normal life. I wanted you two to go to school, play music, dance and hang out with your friends, or whatever. Then go to college and get married. My life? I had a family, but with the magick, it was everything but normal.

“Before either of you were born, your mother and I already had our share of battles. We were tired. That’s why we stationed ourselves in a small town. We were hiding. When Lynne was born, our lives changed. Four years passed, and you were born. Everything was perfect, or so I thought.

“By the time Lynne turned eleven, your mother suddenly wanted back into the game. We discussed the matters at length, and I finally gave in. We decided she could leave with Lynne in order to train her in the ways of the old. For ten years, your sister has been training in magick with your mother, while you lived a quiet life with me.”

She was fuming. “Where are they now?! And the truth!”

“They moved back home where your mom grew up. In Wales.”

“You told me she ran off! Overseas though? You obviously left that part out!” Mery stopped herself and breathed. “I... I don’t know what to say. I mean, I guess I could be mad and jealous and all. Lynne’s probably got all these cool powers now. Anyway, it sounds like mom’s the big culprit here, running off with Lynne. But, it don’t matter dad. You obviously only did what you thought was best for me, right?”

“So I thought.” A sigh escaped his lips. “So I thought. Also, I’ve kept something else from you. I haven’t heard from her or Lynne in five years. We always kept in touch, and Lynne was doing well in her studies. But five years ago, everything stopped. I did everything to find them. It was as if she just disappeared into a void, and I’m at a loss.”

Mery said nothing to this. She only stared at the ground, pondering. “Dad, there’s something I didn’t tell you either. The three boys, they said they’d come back to me soon. They told me to prepare myself mentally and emotionally, and when it’s time, I’d have to go.”

Douglas said nothing. He merely stared at the ground. *Damn. I knew this was going to happen.*