

AUTHOR OF THE BESTSELLING SERIES DRAGONS IN OUR MIDST

BRYAN DAVIS

LAST
OF THE
NEPHILIM

ORACLES OF FIRE

BOOK THREE

PRAISE FOR *LAST OF THE NEPHILIM*

Last of the Nephilim was absolutely AMAZING! Bryan Davis brings back characters that make you feel like you're meeting again with old friends, as well as bringing in new people, a different dimension, an old enemy, and an intense battle scene written only as Mr. Davis can.

KURTIS ENNS (Age 17)

This is an amazing book that has no bounds. It is so captivating and wonderful I didn't eat dinner one night. Of course, its spiritual level was off the charts, amazing. Mr. Davis has written the best book in the series yet, and I can't wait for the next one.

DUSTIN JAMES (Age 13)

Marvelous! A plot so stirring, . . . that it made me feel as if I was walking side by side with each of the characters. The depth of this book is unlike any other book I have ever read. A thrilling, hair raising, mouth gaping book! Mr. Davis has done it again!

KRISTA CULVER (Age 15)

Bryan Davis has once again captivated my mind in a fantasy world of good and evil. Opening this book is like opening a doorway into another world. You'll be rapidly turning the pages until you reach the end, only to find yourself wanting more. I had an incredibly hard time putting this book down, and you will too!

MARIAH HOLLOWAY (Age 13)

Last of the Nephilim is an exhilarating continuation of the amazing story that Bryan Davis has so expertly woven. With a spectacular plot and characters that leap off the page and wind into your heart, he has provided readers with another brilliant masterpiece to treasure.

HANNAH ROBERTS (Age 14)

Bryan Davis has outdone himself again! He seamlessly weaves the many developing storylines throughout the Oracles of Fire series, finally bringing them together. Tested and tried throughout their journeys, the characters grow in faith, courage, and love. If only there wasn't a year until the next one!

MADISON UHLENHOFF (Age 15)

I have read most, if not all, of the bestselling young adult fantasy books. There are rare times that one becomes more than reading, but a journey, an experience. Bryan Davis's writing raises the bar of his already excellent quality with *Last of the Nephilim*.

JUSTIN BOYER (Age 18)

This book was spectacular. It was full of excitement and suspense. Out of all the Oracles of Fire and Dragons in our Midst series, this one is by far the best. Once I started reading the book, I could not put it down, even to go to sleep.

COLBY BIDWELL (Age 16)

This book was definitely worth waiting for. Soaring with dragons, fighting evil, and learning to trust God—I felt like I was really there. It inspired my faith in God and helped me in my walk with Jesus.

KARISSA DUMBACHER (Age 10)

One of the most eye-opening books I have read, *Last of the Nephilim* justly conveys the ultimate sacrifice of laying down one's life for a friend in a way that no other book has portrayed.

CALEB RICHARD (Age 15)

I am captivated by this story. It is full of adventure and suspense. Everything is so vivid when reading that it is like watching a movie.

TANNER BROTHERTON (Age 15)

This book is AWESOME, definitely deserving of a place on my bookshelf. I read it under the covers after my lights were supposed to be out, it was so good! It wraps up where *Enoch's Ghost* left off, and I can't wait to read more of the adventure!

ADAM MEYERS (Age 14)

I have read the entire series and rate this book as the best yet! The battles between good and evil are suspenseful and draw the reader closer to God.

COLEBY BROTHERTON (Age 14)

Who could not love this book? *Last of the Nephilim* is filled with action and excitement, making it almost impossible to put down. Readers of all ages will enjoy this excellent book.

CORY MCGINNIS (Age 15)

This book is truly amazing! I couldn't stop reading it! *Last of the Nephilim* has to be the best book I've ever read, and it's a great addition to the masterfully written Oracles of Fire series.

KEEGAN PULZ (Age 13)

THIS BOOK ROCKS! I thought it was one of the most adventure-filled, plot-twisting books Mr. Davis has ever done! This book will spin the world off its axis. It provides a wonderful springboard for the final book in the Oracles of Fire series.

L.A. CLARK (Age 17)

Bryan Davis's books are the best books I have ever read, and this one was no exception. Reading about Billy, Walter, Elam, and Gabriel inspires me to stand against evil and to trust God more for my life.

JOSH DUMBACHER (Age 13)

The book was exhilarating, an honor just to read it. You'll be mesmerized, and you'll want to read it again and again.

DANIEL TURKEY (Age 13)

DRAGONS IN OUR MIDST STORY WORLD READING ORDER

Dragons in Our Midst

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Circles of Seven

Tears of a Dragon

Oracles of Fire

Eye of the Oracle

Enoch's Ghost

Last of the Nephilim

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From the Ashes: The Bones of Makaidos, Part 2

Children of the Bard

Song of the Ovulum

From the Mouth of Elijah

The Seventh Door

Omega Dragon

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My Soul to Take
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BRYAN DAVIS

LAST
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NEPHILIM

ORACLES OF FIRE

BOOK THREE



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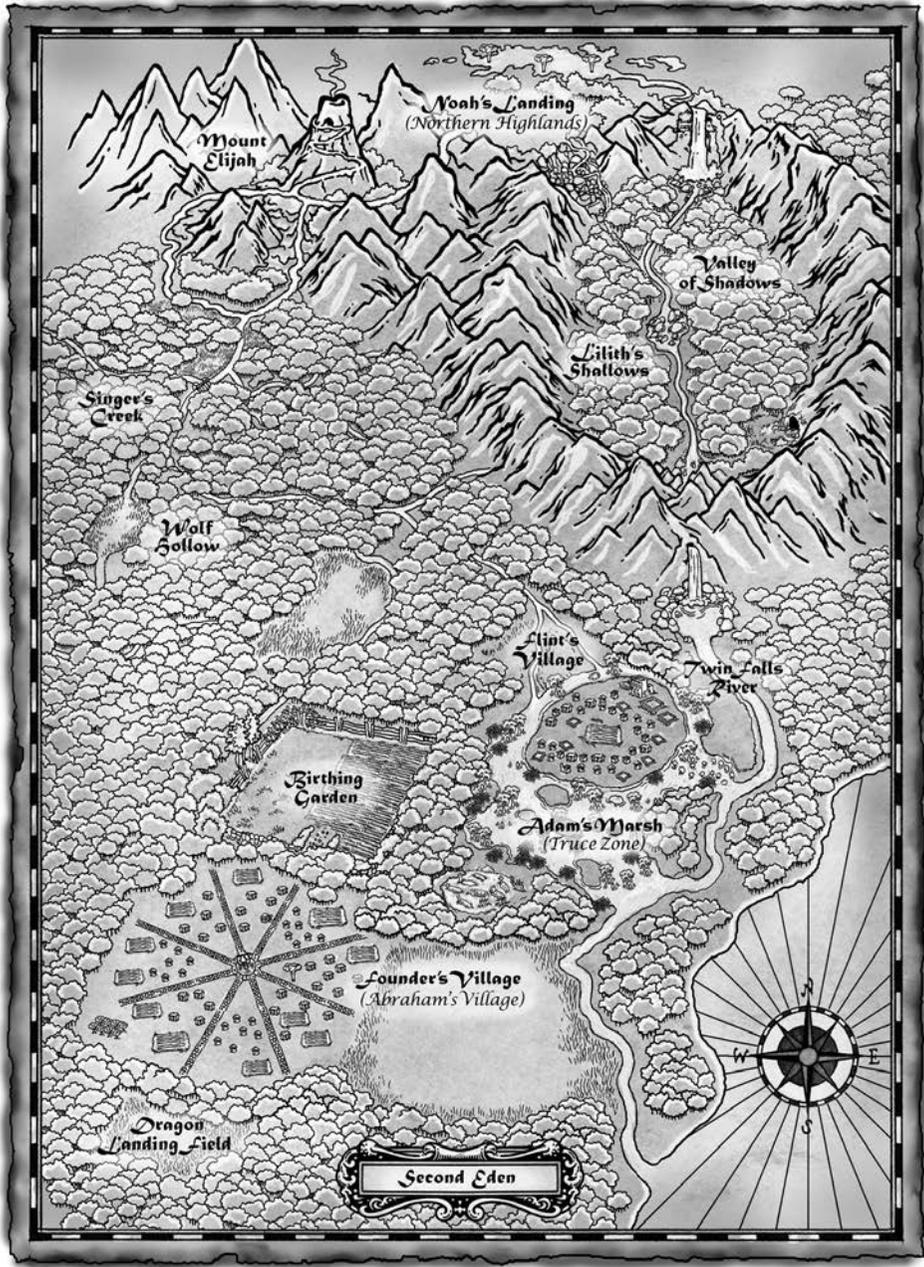


For those who spurn the whispered lie,
The doctrine binding hearts in chains;
For those who shout from rooftops high,
“Free indeed!” in loud refrains.

For those who trample underfoot
The broken bonds of fetters tossed;
For those who rise from ash and soot,
Forever cleansed, forever washed.

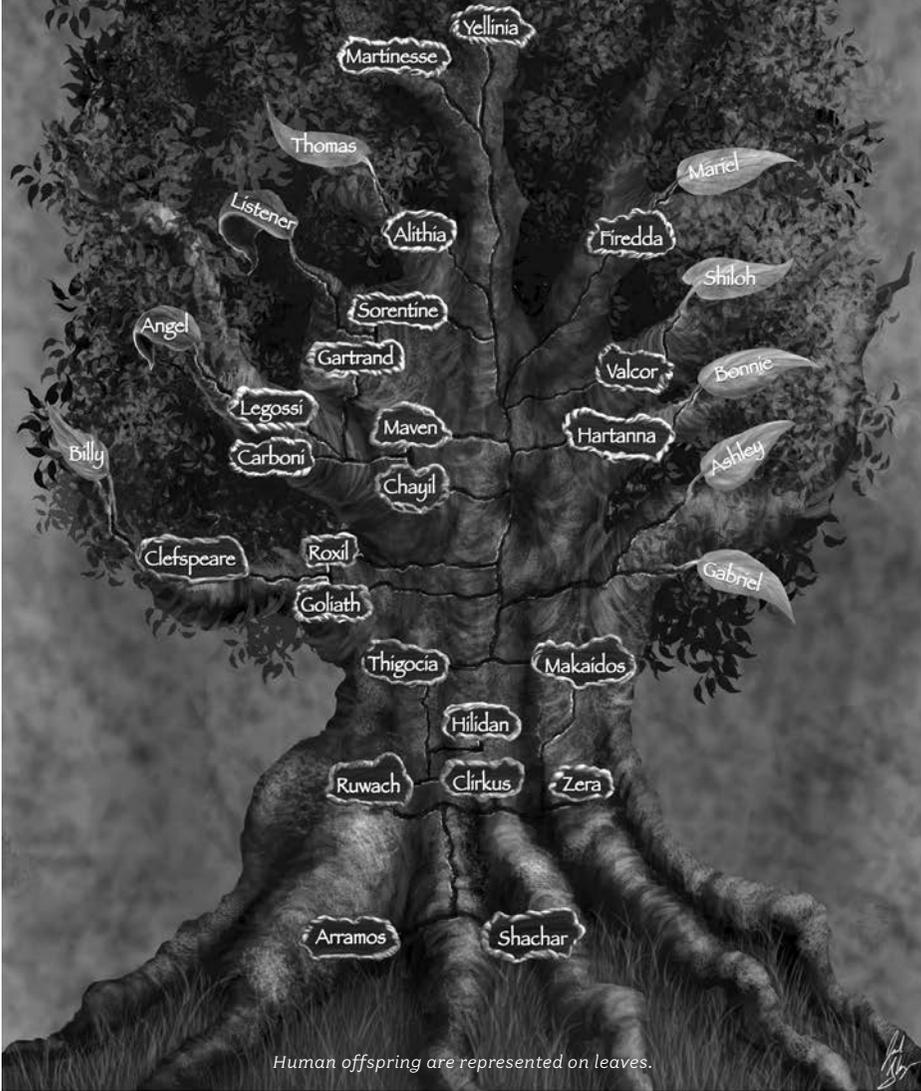
A story strange, a story wild,
That begs the reader to impart
The joy of life to man and child
To break the chains that bind their hearts.





Second Eden

DRAGON LINEAGE



Human offspring are represented on leaves.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

- Abigail**—the human name of dragon Roxil; previously called Jasmine as a human
- Abraham**—the human name of dragon Arramos; reborn in Second Eden as the Prophet (not to be confused with the physical dragon form of Arramos later possessed by the devil)
- Acacia**—an Oracle of Fire; twin to Mara (Saphira Adi)
- Albatross**—a dragon belonging to Abraham
- Alithia**—a dragon; as a human goes by the name Kaylee
- Angel**—the wife of Dragon; widowed mother of Candle and Listener
- Arramos**—a dragon; mate of Shachar; father of Makaidos; grandfather of Thigocia; died in the flood but his body is possessed by the devil while his soul was reborn as Abraham, a human in Second Eden
- Ashley Stalworth**—daughter of Timothy and Hannah (Makaidos and Thigocia)
- Billy Bannister**—son of Jared (Clefspeare) and Marilyn
- Bonnie Silver**—daughter of Irene (Hartanna); previously known as Bonnie Conner
- Candle**—son of Dragon and Angel
- Carboni**—a dragon; as a human goes by the name Elise
- Carl Foley**—a friend of the Bannisters; husband of Catherine; father of Walter
- Catherine Foley**—a friend of the Bannisters; wife of Carl; father of Walter
- Chazaq**—a giant; Mardon's commander
- Clefspeare**—a dragon; son of Goliath and Roxil; as a human goes by the name Jared
- Cliffside**—a guard of the birthing garden in Second Eden
- Dallas**—the human name of dragon Firedda; mother of Mariel
- Dikaios**—a talking horse
- Dorian**—the human name of dragon Yellinia
- Dragon**—the husband of Angel; father of Candle and Listener
- Elam**—son of Shem; grandson of Noah; also known as Markus
- Elise**—the human name of dragon Carboni

- Emerald**—a widow in Second Eden
- Enoch**—a prophet
- Firedda**—a dragon; as a human goes by the name Dallas
- Flint**—Abraham's rebel apprentice
- Gabriel**—son of Timothy and Hannah (Makaidos and Thigocia)
- Gartrand**—a dragon; mate of Sorentine
- Glewlwyd**—the gatekeeper of the Forest of Molech
- Goliath**—a dragon; son of Makaidos and Thigocia; mate of Roxil
- Grackle**—a dragon belonging to Angel
- Greevelow**—a lowlander; husband of Mantika; father of Windor
- Hannah**—the human name of dragon Thigocia; wife of Timothy; mother of Gabriel and Ashley
- Hartanna**—a dragon; daughter of Makaidos and Thigocia; as a human goes by the name Irene
- Irene**—the human name of dragon Hartanna; mother of Bonnie
- Jared**—the human name of dragon Clefspeare; husband of Marilyn; father of Billy
- Jordan**—the human name of dragon Martinesse
- Joseph of Arimathea**—a guide for lost souls; also called Joseph the grail-keeper
- Karen**—adopted sister of Ashley
- Kaylee**—the human name of dragon Alithia; mother of Thomas
- King Arthur**—king of Camelot
- King Nimrod**—an ancient king; father of Mardon
- Lady Morgan Le Faye**—a witch; sister of Elaine (Naamah); previously known as Lilith
- Larry**—Ashley's supercomputer
- Legossi**—a dragon; as a human goes by the name Rebekah
- Lilith**—a witch; sister of Naamah; wife of Samyaza; later known as Lady Morgan Le Faye
- Listener**—daughter of Dragon and Angel
- Lucifer**—a fallen angel, also known as Satan
- Makaidos**—king of the dragons; son of Arramos and Shachar; mate of Thigocia; as a human goes by the name Timothy
- Mantika**—a lowlander; wife of Greevelow; mother of Windor
- Mara**—an Oracle of Fire; twin to Acacia; later known as Sapphira Adi
- Mardon**—an ancient scientist; son of King Nimrod; master of the Nephilim
- Mariel**—daughter of Dallas
- Marilyn**—wife of Jared; mother of Billy
- Marshall Peters**—father of Marilyn; grandfather of Billy; formerly known as Palin
- Martinesse**—a dragon; as a human goes by the name Jordan
- Merlin**—King Arthur's wisest counselor

- Michael**—archangel
- Monique Bannister**—adopted daughter of Jared and Marilyn
- Naamah**—a witch; sister of Lilith (Lady Morgan); wife of Ham; also known as Elaine during the days of King Arthur
- Nabal**—a cruel giant
- Noah**—a patriarch who built an ark to save humans and animals from the great flood
- Paili**—an underborn; wife of Patrick; at times known as Ruth or Sarah, but later returns to being called Paili
- Palin**—Sir Devin’s scribe; later known as Marshall
- Patrick**—the human name of dragon Valcor; later also known as Robert
- Pearl**—wife of Steadfast; a medical worker in Second Eden
- Professor Hamilton**—teacher of Billy, Bonnie, and Walter
- Rebekah**—the human name of dragon Legossi
- Roxil**—a dragon; daughter of Makaidos and Thigocia; mate of Goliath; mother of Clefspeare; as a human goes by the name Jasmine and later Abigail
- Ruth**—an underborn; wife of Patrick; previously known as Paili and later known as Sarah
- Sapphira Adi**—an Oracle of Fire; twin to Acacia; previously known as Mara
- Semiramis**—mother of Mardon
- Shem**—son of Noah; father of Elam
- Shiloh**—daughter of Patrick (Valcor) and Ruth (Paili)
- Sir Devin**—a knight; a slayer of dragons
- Sir Edmund**—guardian to Bonnie and Irene
- Sir Newman**—worker at a castle museum in England
- Sir Winston Barlow**—a knight of Camelot
- Sorentine**—a dragon; mate of Gartrand; as a human goes by the name Tamara
- Steadfast**—husband of Pearl; a medical worker in Second Eden
- Tamara**—the human name of dragon Sorentine
- Thigocia**—a dragon; mate of Makaidos; granddaughter of Arramos and Shachar; as a human goes by the name Hannah
- Thomas**—son of Kaylee
- Timothy**—the human name of dragon Makaidos, husband of Hannah; father of Gabriel and Ashley
- Valcor**—a dragon; son of Makaidos and Thigocia; brother of Hartanna; as a human goes by the names Patrick and Robert
- Valiant**—a village leader in Second Eden
- Walter Foley**—a friend of Billy’s; son of Carl and Catherine; in the line of King Arthur
- Windor**—son of Greevelow and Mantika
- Yellinia**—a dragon; as a human goes by the name Dorian
- Yereq**—a giant; one of the Nephilim

ENOCH'S LAMENT

*When darkness shrouds forgotten lands,
The souls abiding there lament
And ask the altar keeper why
The justice due has not been sent.*

*The persecutors had their day
In spilling blood, exacting toil;
So now expecting vengeance due
The martyrs cry beneath the soil.*

*"The underground still hides our eyes
And spills an evil band on Earth;
O grant our prayer to spring to life
O let us stem this wicked birth."*

*The Oracle of Fire lost
Must bear the sacred secret flame
And join the twin who weeps for her
And walks alone to fight the bane.*

*O God of Heaven hear my plea,
For I alone have seen this dread,
When giants thundered on the Earth,
Consuming hearts and minds like bread.*

*The lass who strides against our foe
Is brave indeed; her faith is rare.
But will the flame of wisdom burn
To keep her from deception's snare?*

*Allow me, Lord, to take her hand
In spirit, flame, or fleshly state
And lead her through the valleys where
Demonic spirits lie in wait.*

*Beneath the altar's seal I pray,
Where martyrs rest in holy gowns,
"O let me rise to crush the snakes
Or sleep until the trumpet sounds."*



CHAPTER 1

BEING DEAD

“Mardon, I know you don’t enjoy being dead, but you must come to grips with reality.”

From her seat on a flat rock, the lithe woman leaned over a stone table, the only furniture amid a collection of oddly shaped boulders draped by a black sky. Her movements troubled the red flame of a pewter-gray candle embedded in a hardened splash of wax on the table’s surface.

Laying her hands over the intertwined fingers of the man sitting opposite her, she spoke with a breathy and ominous voice. “If you try to follow your giants to Second Eden, you will be swept into the Lake of Fire where you will burn with your father forever. Dead souls such as yourself cannot survive outside of Hades.”

As the woman’s long hair fell over his hands, Mardon caressed the ends between his thumb and finger but kept his eyes focused on a rope to his left, both ends of which had been tied to iron stakes, separated by perhaps twenty feet. The golden rope shimmered, quivering as if gently plucked by an invisible finger. A soft hum emanated and drifted to his

ears in a warbling vibrato. It was a song of victory. It had taken him centuries to pull the two worlds together, and now a rope the thickness of a broom handle kept them in place. A huge man, one of Mardon's Nephilim, stood near one of the stakes, his muscular arms folded over his chest, one hand gripping an axe that rested on his shoulder.

"In order to carry out our plans, you must stay on Earth," she continued. "Because of your successful merging of Earth and Hades, no one there will even realize that you're dead."

Mardon returned his gaze to her. In the candle's waltzing glow, her skin took on a tone of blemished scarlet. "Mother, only Yereq and I are skilled enough to lead my giants. My father's dream to build a tower to Heaven will never be realized without one of us."

She pulled her hands back and sat up straight. With a red hood draping the shoulders of her red dress, she seemed covered by a scarlet shroud. After a few seconds of silence, a stern yet subtle growl escaped her crimson throat. "I understand Nimrod's dream far better than you do, and if you don't listen to me, not only will you never ascend to the gates of Heaven, you will also join him and your former mistress in eternal suffering."

"I will listen." His thumbs now pressing together, he nodded. "Go on."

A smile curled her lips, and, with a sparkle in her eye, her voice smoothed into a purr. "Yereq could eventually help us. He has a weakness we can exploit, but we must execute my plan with patience and careful deception. Without perfect timing, we will not be able to persuade the last and greatest of the Nephilim to join our forces. Yet, even if he comes to our aid, we must employ yet another ally, one who served a friend of ours for more than a thousand years."

"A friend of ours? Do you mean Morgan?"

She returned the slightest of nods. "I must carry on my teacher's work, and employing her servant will be of great benefit."

"But Morgan failed. Even after thousands of years of scheming, she failed."

"True. But I learned from her mistakes, and I have recovered her secret weapon." As she lifted a thin chain around her neck, a small crystalline

egg elevated from her bosom, seeming to float in the air on its own. A light flickered within, but the candle's flame made the color impossible to determine.

She passed the chain to Mardon. The egg followed along, floating effortlessly across the table like a tiny dog on a leash. "In this state," she said, "the weapon is more powerful than ever. When the Bannister boy cleaved the candlestone, everyone thought Sir Devin dispersed into the sky, but his light energy had stabilized long before that event. Lord Lucifer guided him to me, and I gave him this new home where he will reside until we can safely resurrect his body."

Mardon draped the chain around his neck. The egg floated back and forth in front of his eyes as if surveying its new bearer. "What good can he do inside this crystal?"

She rose from her seat and walked toward the rope, gesturing for him to follow.

Keeping an eye on the crystal, he tiptoed along the flat stony ground. The egg hovered inches in front of him, keeping the chain slightly aloft. Now that they were out of the influence of the candle's flame, the crystal's inner light grew clear. Two tiny eyes glowed red within. A strange growl entered his mind, like the faint echo of a bad dream.

When his mother reached the giant, she took his axe and kicked the excess rope. With a quick chop, she cut it free from its stake. A loud hiss rose from each severed end, and both pieces flopped around like dying serpents.

She picked up the end that led to the coil, gripping it tightly to keep it from wiggling. "Enoch is mustering a new army, including the Bannister boy and his father and the former and current dragons in the world. Sir Devin will help us locate them before they can all get to Second Eden. At the very least, we can put fear into their hearts and keep them in hiding."

Mardon glanced at the egg. It had moved to a point a few inches in front of his chin. The growl grew louder and seemed to come from within the crystal. "Haven't they lost their dragon powers?" Mardon asked.

“The Bannisters? Yes. As well as all the other dragons, except for Thigocia.” She handed the axe to the giant and set the rope in Mardon’s hand, pushing his fingers closed around it. “Though I haven’t heard whether or not the girl, Bonnie Silver, has retained hers. Still, their current state matters little. It is their potential that we must arrest. Bonnie Silver will be your prime target. If you hold her, you control the boy, and without the two of them, Enoch’s plans will come to nothing.”

Mardon clutched the rope, much thicker now than when he had pulled the two worlds together. Warm to the touch, it felt alive in his grip. “I understand. What is my next step?”

“You will lasso one of their soldiers.” She showed him a ring on her finger, an ornate gold band with a fiery red jewel. “Many of the former dragons and their offspring wear a symbol of their dragon essence, a rubellite ring. Whether they have lost their dragon natures or not, these gems still hold a remnant of that former glory. Devin, having lived within a dragon’s skin, can detect and find the signal, no matter how faint. He is now a dragon-sniffing hound, and his victim, the Silver vixen, will not easily travel beyond the reach of his nose, especially since she has no knowledge that she carries the scent.”

“And I am to use this to bind her,” he said, passing the shimmering rope through his hands.

“In a sense. When you leave this place, the rope will become invisible, and it will stretch without tension and without limit. You are to attach it to Bonnie Silver’s body and tie the other end to an anchor on Earth. Since she will eventually try to get to Second Eden, she will become the other anchor that allows you to bring the worlds together.”

“Wouldn’t it be easier to attach it to one of our giants? They would cooperate fully.”

She nodded at the rope. “Tie it to yourself. You will see.”

Keeping his eye on his mother, Mardon looped the coil around his waist and tied it in a loose knot. As soon as he let go, the knot tightened. Then, like a python, the loop constricted, tighter and tighter. He sucked in his stomach and jammed his fingers behind the rope.

Straining against the painful, viselike hold, he pushed out his breath, but the loop tightened further. He couldn't draw in another gulp of air. Blood rushed to his head as he croaked, "Mother! Help me!"

She looked on with a stoic expression. "Uncomfortable, isn't it?"

He couldn't answer. The rope had slid up to his ribs, and the crushing pain forced him to his knees.

She took the axe again and chopped the rope. It immediately loosened and slipped down to his waist, writhing as Mardon gasped for breath.

She let out a sigh. "I'm afraid this rope has no fondness for corrupt souls."

Grabbing the severed piece, Mardon shot to his feet and slapped it to the ground. "Why did you do that?"

"So you will remember two things." She raised a finger. "One is that this rope will be docile only for a soul that is perfectly pure." As she raised a second finger, a scowl took shape on her face. "The second is that you must follow my instructions to the letter. Your failure to do so in the past led to your physical death and to your bungling with the second tower. I am in no mood for any further disobedience."

He picked up the coil of rope and nodded, trying to keep his own scowl from breaking through. "I will do what you ask."

She leaned the axe against her waist. "After you complete the attachment, keep little Miss Silver on the run for a while. The timing of her arrival in Second Eden must be precise. Make her think you simply want to kill her so she will never suspect your true goal. I'm sure with your knowledge of modern technology, that will be an entertaining game for you."

"Yes, it will." As the crystal floated in front of his nose, he gazed at its blinking eyes and smiled. "I can create quite a frightening nightmare for the little lady."

The growl strengthened again. A voice broke through in his mind, sinister and mocking. "That little lady, as you call her, is a demon witch. We will toy with her for a time, but in the end, we will remove her head and mount it next to the boy's. After all he has done to me, his head will be a prize ornament."

Mardon touched the crystal, now flashing with red light. “Mother, I believe he is speaking to my mind.”

“As I expected,” she said, “Devin has established a connection with your brain. The two of you will be able to converse silently.”

Mardon stared at the two blinking eyes, scarlet and sinister. Would it be safe to try to probe it with his thoughts? Concentrating on the inner light, he spoke in his mind. *Can you hear me?*

“I can hear you,” Devin replied, his voice now more genial, “and I have already read your unguarded thoughts. I’m glad to see that I’m working with an intelligent man who hates dragons almost as much as I do.”

Then we will make a fine team. Mardon glanced at his mother out of the corner of his eye. She tapped her foot and let out an impatient huff. He would have to finish this conversation quickly. *What will be our first step in finding this demon witch, as you call her?*

“We will send some beasts of weaker minds to the Bannister home. That is her most likely place to hide. If that fails to scare out the witch, we will track her down using my dragon-sensing powers.”

Mardon nodded and turned back to his mother. “This is very interesting, indeed. I am impressed with my new ally.”

“And I suggest that you listen to him. His experience in hunting dragons is vast, and his mind is every bit as powerful as yours, so he will not take kindly to apathy, laziness, or cowardice.”

“Laziness? Cowardice?” Mardon scowled. “Mother, I have persevered in my quest for thousands of years.”

She laid a palm on his chest. “You have a soft spot in your heart for a certain spawn by the name of Mara, and it is this weakness that will tempt you to cower in the face of waging war against the dragon army, whether their soldiers are covered in scales and draconic teeth or fine hair and pretty young faces.”

Mardon deepened his scowl and muttered, “She was an experiment. Nothing more. I could dispose of her as I did any of the other useless spawns.”

“You will likely have an opportunity to test your fragile words. If you can generate the necessary violence against Bonnie Silver, perhaps you will succeed against the spawn when the time comes.” Carrying the axe again, she sashayed back to the table and hovered her hand over the candle’s flame, close enough to singe the skin of a normal human. “Because of their misguided loyalty,” she continued, “Bonnie and her mother will separate themselves from the other former dragons, which will benefit our cause. I want you to capture Bonnie and obtain something for me.”

Mardon grasped the egg and pushed it under his shirt. “Very well. What do you want?”

She lifted a finger, now partially blackened by the candle’s smoke. “Cut off her finger and bring it to me with the ring still on it. That will be all we need to make the boy think we hold her and that we will harm her if he doesn’t cooperate. If Enoch succeeds in gathering the other dragons to Second Eden, we will force them to give us their word that they will not join the battle. Then we can release the girl and let her go to Second Eden to stretch our rope between the two worlds.”

“This is all well and good. We will stop the dragons from interfering. But how does that help us win the war?”

As she rubbed her fingers together, sooty dust fell to the table. “With the dragons out of the way, *our* dragon ally will be able to complete the corruption of Second Eden so that it will be ready for the final merging with Hades and Earth. Such a union will open the portals to the Bridgelands for everyone. We can then amass an army that will attack Heaven’s Gate.” She raised a slender arm and rolled her fingers into a fist. “If we cannot ascend to Heaven by invitation, we will take it by force.”

“Corruption is clearly our first weapon, but has anyone in Second Eden succumbed to Lucifer’s fruit?”

“Only one of Abraham’s people,” she said, raising a finger again, now free of soot, “but Abraham has successfully isolated him. We already have a plan to entice another one of his people, someone he won’t be so ready to ostracize. Success is crucial, for that corruption will open the

largest portal, allowing your giants to enter Second Eden. Yet, if that effort fails, there are other ways to ensure that there are no more sinless souls in Second Eden. Our alternative plan will be ready.”

“And what is that?”

She lifted the axe with both hands and rested it on her shoulder. “To kill them all.”