

## The Writer's Room

Fiery Mammatus clouds shrouded early morning skies. Jason woke up and looked at the window. He slid Sarah's head off his arm, placing a pillow against her. She didn't know Jason was dying. She was the light in their marriage, believing life consisted of happy endings. Thirsty, he grabbed a robe and went into the kitchen. Reaching for a glass, he noticed a bright light reflecting on the countertop. Squinting his eyes, he peered through a window at what appeared to be a luminous beam coming from outside.

Going into the garden, a stream of light flickered through a small bush. It was a book, mystical, glowing. Jason had never seen anything like it, and despite the uncertainties, he was drawn to it. As he grasped it, a spark began at his fingers, racing through his body, creating an electrical surge, pulsating within his ears. Jason knew instantly he would live; he didn't know why, he just knew he would survive. Jason clutched the book to his chest, looked around, and went inside.

Hours later, Sarah walked into the kitchen to make coffee. "Well, good morning. You're a lively one. I was sure I would be up before you." Sarah paused, waiting for a response. "Okay, so am I talking to myself? What is getting more attention than me?"

"Good morning love. Forgive me; nothing is more important than you." Jason stood, kissed her on her forehead, and turned to leave. "I need a shower; play nice at work."

Jason walked into the bathroom, closed, and locked the door. He had just read his entire life, a history of the worst storms, wars, and tragedies that had passed and what was coming. His heart was racing as a quill between the pages fell. Picking it up, he sat, considering the possibilities.

Frowning, Corvus licked his lips, stumbling into the alcove and passing the threshold as alarms blared. Picking up his pace, he wiped his face with the back of his arm. Corvus searched his pockets for his quill and journal. Turning his head towards the entryway of adjoining tunnels, the sound of footsteps was fast approaching. Corvus knew he'd face considerable consequences if the counsel learnt he defied their instructions. The footsteps stopped in unison as a brisk wind announced the arrival of Draco and lynx. Corvus stood facing the door, placing his hands at his sides as Draco walked in.

"Do you have any idea why we're here Corvus?"

"No Sir."

"Of course, you don't. Have you heard the alarms Corvus?"

"Yes sir, I have. "

“Have you wondered why?”

“No Sir.”

“Have a seat Corvus.”

Corvus sat down, aware Draco and Lynx's presence meant a significant change would occur.

“Corvus, what was your responsibility tonight. Tell me the instructions you were given when you relieved Grus.”

“I was instructed to scribe turmoil and chaos. My primary task was one earthquake, a volcanic eruption, and see that a small town in the villa was infected with a skin devouring bacterium assuring the top scientist there died.”

“Was that all Corvus?”

“I was also informed to have one of the world leaders stricken with an incurable disease.”

Draco sighed balling his fist. Lynx walked up and grabbed his arm.

“Relax, I'll handle it from here Draco. Corvus, where is your scribal journal?”

Corvus looked down at his table, flustered, he looks at the floor. “I must have ...”

“Yes. You dropped it when you broke protocol and traveled through the portal.”

“But...”

Lynx raised his right finger to his lips, silencing Corvus while raising his left-hand motioning two guardians into the room. They approached carrying restraints and placed them on Corvus' hands. Corvus winced.

Lynx looked Corvus in the eyes. “Do you know why we named you Corvus at a young age? It means crow, and you managed to keep the attributes we hoped you would overcome, tossing those of significance.” Stepping aside now, Lynx nodded for them to take him away; and as they did, Corvus whimpered.

As guardians left, Draco sat at Corvus' seat while Lynx called for the watchers.

“How in the world did this happen without anyone knowing Lynx?”

“Someone always knows Draco, we just need to find who. For now, we must put our energy into finding where that journal is and hope it didn't fall in the wrong hands.

Sarah left for the day as Jason wrote. With each stroke of the quill, letters and words formed, taking flight, disappearing into the atmosphere, accomplishing his instructions. Disease, famine, and war are gone. His mark was now on the pages. His soul became one with the quill and its power now possessed him. Jason's eyes became glassy with each stroke of the quill, seduced by the power he held.

Watchers traveled through the portal, prepared to do whatever necessary to protect their identity and retrieve the journal. Looking towards the clouds, they spotted

the manipulation and saw where the words were filtering from. With speed, they entered the house with Jason oblivious to their presence.

“You know what we have to do Lepus?”

“I didn’t become a watcher to kill anyone. That’s for death scribes. I have an idea, but it’s going to take both of us. Can I trust you Formax?”

“Sure, but if it goes wrong, it’s on you.”

“That’s fine.” Formax lifted his head, releasing a sound that shook the walls. They then found Jason collapsed on the floor. Carrying him to the kitchen, Lepus sat him in a chair while Formax journaled before they left.

Jason woke at the kitchen table as his phone rang. Confused about how he got in the kitchen; he grabbed his phone and answered it.

“Hello.”

“Hello. Is Jason available?”

“This is Jason.”

“This is Sherry from Dr. Sullivan’s office calling about your test results. You’ll be happy to know everything came back negative.”

“Thank you.”

Jason disconnected the phone and sat staring at the book on the counter.