



**SALLY
CAPTIVITY**

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Chapter 1

"Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhh..., they're coming"

"No, don't do that. They'll hear!"

The door cracks open and shouts ring out, "Surprise!!!!!" Lights and music ignite as streamers fly across the auditorium. The look on Jack's face is priceless. Humble yet confident, he didn't lend himself to trickery, but Clair had done a wonderful job with his surprise party.

Jack had recently been selected number five in the first round of the NFL draft. He was going to be a Cardinal and begin his lifelong passion as a professional athlete. Clair held his hand as they approached familiar faces. They walked over to their parents who each gave the other a loving embrace. Many were in attendance including Clair's friends and also the faculty at the school where she taught. Sally and Neaven were also in attendance. After a few moments, they made their way over.

"Jack I am so happy for you and Clair." Sally peers deep into her best friends eyes and returns her gaze toward Jack.

Jack answers her, "Thank you Sally, and also Neaven. At times I didn't think any of us would ever get here."

"Yeah..." Sally retorts, "I know what you mean."

He was referring to their recent successes. Clair had long departed from Gladdale, earning her teaching credential from a nearby University and spending this year teaching at a private school. Sally, Neaven and Jack had all just graduated. Although Jack was a year ahead and went to Arizona State University, he redshirted his first year so he ended up graduating a year late as a fifth-year senior. Now he was in Vermont, and he and Clair were making up for lost time.

Clair shouts at Neaven, "Hey good for nothin', does that camera in your hand work or were you planning on throwin' in at my head like you did that streamer?"

"Ohhh," he bethinks himself, "you noticed that, did you?"

Jack busts out laughing as Neaven takes the photo.

Clair makes light, "Yeah funny now, but wait till you and Sally get hitched..."

"Clairrrrrr..."

"I'm gonna roll a bowling ball down the aisle."

"Alright..." Jack interrupts, "...it's my party so I'll just take over here. Clair, you don't bowl. Neaven, I know you mess with my sweetheart but she messes with you twice as badly. And Sally, well... maybe you should be the voice of reason?"

"No," Sally offers strongly, "I'm still waiting for Clair to explain the me and Neaven hitched thing?"

"Please Sally. You and Neaven make us look like the odd couple, and Jack and I are two peas in a pod."

"It's true." Jack offers.

Clair gets closer to them, "That's why I'm so hard on Neaven, because I know he's not going anywhere."

They all laugh.

The four empty themselves into the crowded room and Sally walks to the window and takes everything in. It felt like yesterday when she and Neaven began dating. It was also on their first date when she saw Clair and Jack together for the first time. It was poetic. All four of them meeting each other for the first time and through the years bonds growing tighter and tighter. What Clair said was the truth. She and Neaven were doing great and her mother absolutely adored him. They would get married, because the last two and a half years they were inseparable. It seemed as though destiny had kept Jack and Clair strong. They were separated four of his five college years, yet here they were today, going strong. While Clair was singular in her focus toward teaching, Jack was likewise focused toward his football. They both had disjointed paths but with the same end. They would end together.

It was also two years since Dr. Hutchinson left for France. He did leave Gladdale in his wake, but his life's purpose finally reached its intended blossom. He passed his six month trial with ease and was elected tenth Primary Member. Sally had seen him twice since he left. Once right after and once vacationing abroad with Neaven before the start of their senior year. But long distance communication was a nuisance. When the two did speak she needed to drive to the FBI office in Burlington for a secure conference meeting. She missed him but in a way was relieved. Since he left she had never been contacted or asked to assist The Cell directly, although she had been asked by Dr. Hutchinson for his assistance.

It was pleasant because it really allowed her to come into her own. She knew small parts of her future but she was left to fill in the blanks with questions. She enjoyed the prospect of her future and she enjoyed it even more knowing Neaven was by her side.

She detached from her inner nostalgia and walked toward Neaven, "Don't forget about tonight, make sure they both come."

Neaven wasn't pleased, "What are you telling me for, you invite them."

"I can't! Remember, I forgot." Sally was upset with herself.

Neaven became realistic, "Shame's the name of that game Sally."

Sally was guilty but as far as she was concerned her mother was really to blame. She insisted Jack and Clair have dinner tonight at her house. Thing is, Sally forgot to tell Clair last week. Time to face the music.

She grabbed Clair and led her away, "Is it possible for you and Jack to eat at Mom's tonight?"

Clair gave her a face, "Ohhhh, Jack's parents are in town and so are mine, and they don't know anyone."

"I know, I know," Sally pleaded with herself. "It's my fault. I forgot to mention it."

Clair kissed her on the cheek as she walked away, "Tell Judy we love her and we'll stop by later this week. Okay."

"Sure thing, she'll be pleased to see the both of you together again." Sally returns to Neaven's side.

"Great." She mutters. "You like turkey?"

"Of course."

"Good, you'll be eating it all week."

Driving into her usual parking spot, Sally entered into her mother's house all alone. Her mother Judy was busy in the kitchen but when she heard the door shut her voice rang out.

"Is everyone here?" She approached the living room.

Sally placed her keys on the table, "No Mom, it's just me. Neaven decided not to come until tomorrow."

"Oh dear," Her mother mumbled, "Aren't they coming?"

"No." Sally uttered in slight annoyance, "I forgot to tell Clair last week so they have plans with their families."

Judy paused and waited until her daughter was finished, "Well, Neaven will just have to stop by daily for leftovers."

Sally smirked, great minds think alike.

As Judy took away place settings she initiated conversation, "Why is your face so long honey?"

Sally answered dutifully, "Well, I was so happy today. All of us together and it was such a blast, but something is just missing."

She already understood, "You graduated and you have no plan B, so you don't know what to do."

Sally doesn't want to admit it, but her mother hit it dead on. She had a great boyfriend and beyond doubt a positive future but currently her calendar was completely blank. Neaven decided to stay in Vermont after graduation and just recently began a management internship with a local ice cream manufacturer. Clair was going to continue to teach summer school and spend time with Jack. So what would she do?

Sally spoke in a bummed out way, "You know Mom, I shouldn't say this but sometimes I think Dr. Hutchinson and everything that happened to me was a big let down. I mean, they led me on. They give me an opportunity, I turned it down, Dr. Hutchinson agrees and God does this beautiful thing where He reinstates Dr. H. I get to watch it all unfold, and now two and a half years later, I'm in no mans land."

Judy eyes her daughter.

"A big part of the reason I am not going to graduate school or pursuing any avenue is because I am waiting for my past to catch up with me."

Judy probed, "Do you want The Cell to offer you a job?"

Sally spouted, "No Mom, I want The Cell to finish what they started!"

"Have you asked them?"

"Mom..." Sally puts her head in her hands and shakes it, "...This is The Cell, and you don't just drop off your resume. Remember how they invited me the first time? They basically need to do that again."

"That's ridiculous." Judy rebukes her.

Sally is taken aback, "What?"

Her mother continues, "You heard me Sally, that's ridiculous. Yes, you were invited the first time, because it is a private organization, and oftentimes, that is how it works. But now that you know who they are, and they know what you can offer, then you are stubborn and hardheaded to believe they must contact you again."

Sally hushes down and listens.

"You even have a great connection in Dr. Hutchinson, so why don't you contact him?" Judy pauses to allow it to fully sink in, "I could answer that question for you, but it was a rhetorical question!"

Sally doesn't even utter a word. She then speaks in a defeated tone, "Can we please eat now?"

About half way through the turkey dinner and Sally decides it's time for them to talk some more.

"I'm proud."

It just came out and her mom doesn't say a thing, just eyes her knowingly. Sally just continues eating after she said it like it wasn't that big of deal.

Her mom meets here there, "Sally... like most purposeful men or women, you are your own worst enemy. I do believe Sally, that everything has happened for a reason, and while you have become disenchanted with The Cell, because they have not acknowledged you in recent years, I believe it has served its purpose."

"You're being spooky Mom; you're starting to sound exactly like Dr. H."

Judy is forward in her response, "That's because he's the person you should be talking to right now, not me and not Clair. But you're right about one thing, your pride seems to be getting the better of you lately."

Sally speared some turkey in slight frustration. She was receiving a double dose of shame currently. First for forgetting about supper and then for her overall way and disposition. She treads lightly because she can tell her mother is in no mood.

"Mom, is all this because you're upset I forgot to tell Clair?"

Her mother became realistic, "It's bigger than that Sally. Yes you forgot, and yes I was upset. But my vehemence is the direct result of my understanding of the

larger picture here. You have been aloof and distant for quite some time, and that same aloofness is the reason why you didn't tell Clair about dinner. It is a manifestation of you keeping everything bottled up inside. When you don't have an answer Sally, you grow aloof, and it's a quality that needs to change. That is why I am upset."

Sally reaches for mercy, "But I don't know what to do Mom! Yes!!! I'm frustrated, because I'm at a loss."

Her mom tries from another angle, "Yes you don't have an answer currently, but it's no answer to clearly distance yourself emotionally and feel sorry for yourself. The answer is to break yourself down and be honest with yourself. I believe had you humbled yourself earlier and talked with Dr. Hutchinson already, then you wouldn't be in this position now. But, in order to do that, you would have needed to admit to yourself your pride, something you obviously weren't interested in doing, so you became remote."

Sally continues to listen. "Honey, the immediate answer that I see from the outside looking in is that you were the problem, and not anyone or anything else. That perspective right there would have given you the ammunition to move forward. You simply did not handle your situation correctly. You cannot just give up and blame your gifts and also some opportunity you had years ago simply because the going gets tough. You need to remain humble and see things in the right context. That you were blocking you, nothing more and nothing less.

Sally ponders the thought.

"Had you admitted your pride months ago, you would have already conversed with Dr. Hutchinson and you would most likely have some clarity."

Her mother was growing impatient so she spoke her next few words without much consideration, "Sally you are gifted in ways I will never understand, perhaps gifted beyond even your father... but Sally, I never saw in your father the emotional shortcomings I see in you."

Sally dropped her fork and pushed hard off the table forcing her chair backward. The chair struck the armoire behind her and she stormed out of the room and headed upstairs.

Her mother put her head down and played with her coffee mug, asking herself. Sally was becoming a special young woman. She had excelled flawlessly; socially,

intellectually, academically, dutifully, spiritually and even emotionally to some extent. She was becoming everything a young woman strove to become. But, perhaps because of her gifts including the baggage associated with those gifts, she always seemed to be her own worst enemy. She would hamstring herself. She was like the person who ran the hundred meter dash in ten seconds flat and half the time would ignore tying her shoelaces. She was a complete contradiction; and contradictions needed discipline, and that was that.

Sally was wide awake and she couldn't sleep. She turned over to read the glow of her clock, 3:03 am. Her heart was palpitating way to fast for this time of night. Ever since her mother tore into her she came upstairs and repeatedly ignored fielding any calls or texts from Neaven. She reasoned if he had just come back with her tonight her mother wouldn't have scolded her. She was angry right now, at both her mother and herself. But within that animosity, she allowed her thoughts to evolve toward some images and remembrances she hadn't considered deeply in years.

She remembered her father, a minister and disciple of Jesus Christ who had died when she was only eleven. Michael Travis was a dutiful man full of the Spirit of the Lord. He had ministered in some American churches but God also called him as an evangelist who ministered in South America, Africa and even China for awhile. Because he was gone much of the time, both before and after she was born, she only sporadically saw him. When she did, she cherished that time greatly. She remembered him as a peacemaker and as the light of her world. When he died, it was extremely hard on her and her mother. Judy had been bereaved of a husband. Even though her mother had ample family support she always seemed to deal with the loss of her husband in her own particular way. Sally reasoned that just like today, back then she also slowly persevered but kept all of her emotions and questions locked up deep inside, introverted and the wrong way. Throughout the years it molded her personality and her mother just stuck her fingers straight into it.

Sally threw the covers off and got up and paced. She eventually sat down in a chair she enjoyed to sit in when she would pray to God. She grabbed the arms of the chair and spoke out loud:

Lord Jesus, I just want to talk right now. I won't see what my mom sees in me. I am too young and emotional right now to see it. But I want to make the right choices. I will get there, and eventually understand what she sees, but for now, all I care about is the next step. Mom brought up dad tonight, and it hurt my feelings. I know my dad was exceptional, he had gifts and you gave him dreams and visions too. I have read a few of his writings. I have never tried to be like him, because I loved him, not who he was, but just him. That is why it hurt tonight, because I don't want to remember him regarding gifts or abilities, I just want to remember him as my dad. I forgive my Mom for what she said tonight and basically how she handled things. I am sure she is partly right but she still made me very, very mad. I don't care how much I am like him or not. Even if I do have his similar calling my memories of him are mine and hers can be hers. I don't want her to talk to me about him in such ways. I have peace when I remember my dad simply. I don't want to make him, or possibly my problems in conjunction with him, complicated. My relationship with him was never complicated. So please Lord, help mom understand that. Help me explain it to her if I have to. She is probably right regarding me. I just don't want to hear it in conjunction with my dad. Thank you Lord, Amen.

She wiped the tears from her eyes and slowly looked around her room. She loved her mom but right now, it just felt like she needed to focus on herself. Her and the responsibilities and all the weight that lay before her, just focus on that. Let everything else exist but that was not her concern right now. There was a time you

had to take care of yourself and for her, that time was now.

Chapter 2

The mood of the hills in the early evening would wash over the homely courtyard of Dr. Hutchinson's rustic accommodation. Rustic was a bit crude since it was Primary Member housing and they always got the best. But Tom Hutchinson had already been there and done that regarding the Babylonian Cell and all it had to offer so this 'cowboys paradise' was now his preverbal 'icing on the cake.'

He chose a large though modest accommodation, at least compared to the other Primary Members. It could comfortably house up to five residents as well as their guests although the people who often visited him were given the option of a beautiful stay in the Candidates accommodation wing. The rooms in this manor were beautifully adorned with furniture and art that reminded him of his time in foreign countries through the years. He chose to decorate the living spaces just as he had decorated his old homestead in Vermont, rural and rugged. Within the confines of his chateau overlooking the Strasburg hillside there were no rivers to behold so there became little need for a balcony, but the distant mountains and beauty of The Compound allowed him to sit outside and soak in all the luxury and elegance that was France. He spent most of his waking hours reading here in this courtyard, as long as the weather permitted. But he decided to be industrious when he built last year to include a seamless inside outside space. The courtyard boasted a heated extended space running indoors which became comfortable in the winter but still offered all the natural views of a summer veranda.

While most of the Candidates and Primary Members were studying in the main rooms of The Compound or inside their spacious cubicles, he was enjoying nature, using the technology of this age by means of mobile devices to study up and prepare himself for the onslaught of questions and conversations that would take place within the walls of the prestigious third level Compound of The Babylonian Cell.

His receives a message from his secure mobile. It was from one of his personal assistants:

Miss Sally Travis has made request for a personal conversation at your convenience. Should I accept or decline?

Dr. Hutchinson thought to himself for a moment. This was a big surprise. Sally had only contacted him when she planned on visiting. Perhaps she intended to take another vacation since her recent graduation from Gladdale? He had quietly hoped, since he left Vermont actually, that Sally would be more assertive in her desire to be a part of what they were doing here. She had practically made zero effort to try and come back to this place. She did perform brilliantly every time he asked for her help, but she never insisted on additional work or even a summer internship, nothing. He wasn't kidding when he told her to stand behind him, that he would allow certain doors in her life regarding The Cell, but he never intended for her to shy away completely. It was something he intended to address upon Sally's urging or after she graduated, whichever came first. Perhaps this was the correct timing.

He texted her back:

At Sally Travis' and my earliest convenience, please arrange our meeting.

He placed his mobile on his lap and gazed upon the hills. Hopefully, he thought, the conversation would be pleasant. He decided to implore the Lord regarding their meeting. Something didn't sit well in his spirit. Something was amiss. If he knew Sally, and he did, this conversation might have some fireworks.

With lunch in hand, Sally knocked on the door which read 'Managers Assistant.' There was a small piece of paper underneath that had been taped, '(In Training).' Neaven opened the door with a smile. He was wearing dark blue overalls and had a laminated badge with his name and picture on it. His hair was out of place as if he had been wearing a hardhat. Sally smiled as soon as she saw him.

"Working man."

Neaven grabbed her by the hand and lead her inside, "Yeah... thanks for bring me lunch, I'm starved."

She giggled, "I'm surprised I can hold it with one hand. They were out of Brontosaurus Burgers so I got you more than a few."

As Neaven sat down and began scrounging he asked, "Aren't you going to eat?"

Sally just walked away, "I'm not hungry."

As Neaven continued to eat, Sally decided to turn her focus off herself, "So how has it been going all week?"

Neaven laughed and smiled, "Man, ten hour days are going to be tough to get used to. College is easy just having a few classes per day. But if I get in good here, I will have some real good options in the future."

"Yeah, I remember we talked about that."

"Exactly, these guys will teach me all about the business from the ground up, so I won't be all wet behind the ears."

Sally's voice became quiet, "Neaven, you're not 'all wet behind the ears.'"

As he swallowed he meet her there, "I feel that way, but I guess everything takes some getting used to."

Those words bore into Sally's spirit and stayed there like a rock sinking to the bottom. Sally then grew quiet and became more distant.

Neaven noticed, "Sally, can I ask you a question?"

"Shoot."

"What's wrong?"

Sally was ashamed. She didn't want to bring anyone down and certainly not Neaven, but she was crestfallen, her circumstances were becoming like quicksand. She blurted out without thinking, "I made a meeting with Dr. H."

Neaven put his cheeseburger down, giving Sally his full attention.

She then continued, "Neaven, I know we said we would give it a try, but something just doesn't feel right. We have been out of school six weeks and I feel lost already. What am I going to do here in Vermont, raise kids?"

Neaven let Sally vent, "I thought that's what we talked about?"

She agreed, "It is what we talked about, and it is what I desire. I want to have children Neaven, and teach

school just like Clair. But this pull on me never goes away. It never ever goes away!"

He knew, all too well, "I know."

She began to plead with her eyes, "And when I try and avoid it, like it's not even there, it actually makes it worse!"

Neaven showed compassion.

"Like spoiled food you can't just ignore it, it'll stink up the place."

He nodded realistically, "So what are you saying honey?"

She braced herself, "I'm saying I am going to talk to Dr. H and be very real with him regarding my emotions and everything else. If anyone can help me, it's probably him."

Neaven inquires, "Why all of the sudden Dr. H, it's kind of coming from out of the blue?"

Sally folds her arms as she turns completely in his direction. "Mom absolutely railroaded me last week."

Neaven crumples up his cheeseburger wrapping, "No wonder, now it makes sense!"

Sally was hesitant, "Yeah... she cut me so deep and even brought up my Fa..." Sally couldn't get the words out before she burst into tears. She bent over due to the extreme amount of emotion she was holding deep inside but Neaven was right there to catch her.

He held her gently as he stroked her hair, "Sally honey."

Sally gripped Neaven so tight he couldn't believe the strength. He held her and said nothing until the tears eventually subsided, and it took a long while. Neaven knew Sally could be emotional but he had never seen this level of repressed emotion. He knew she was prone, but this was just on a different level. His spiritual instincts kicked in.

He sat her down delicately, "Sally honey, sit down." He led her to a chair where he was sitting. "Honey, I understand. I don't know, but I do understand."

Neaven takes a deep breath and exhales as he sits. "I knew Sally, that this was likely, and that everything we talked about was our desire but not necessarily going to happen. Give me at least a little bit of credit that I understand God's ways and that I do know you have a certain purpose outside of your realm of control."

Sally nods as she whimpers.

"Of course we want a quiet life with a nice house and beautiful children."

He meets her at her level, "Me working and you teaching. Of course we want all that. But we serve a God who sends evangelists over seas who sometimes, rarely see their families. We serve a God who allows Fathers to die young and who allows Mothers to raise their children all by themselves, doing the best job they know how. I know your families history Sally, and I have always known in the back of my mind that it was a possibility you would have to go away, either for a little or a lot. Please give me credit that I understood that."

She's a bit reassured, "I do Neaven, but it's just so overwhelming. I don't doubt you, and I don't doubt your submission to His Will, no matter how hard it might be. It's just a burden. I can't explain it but it's almost like instinctually, I know I'm not allowed to have a regular life. It's not my will or my choice; it's just the way it's going to be. It's almost like God prepared me since childhood, so when it happens, I'll be able to handle it."

Neaven zealously gets in her face, "And that's a good thing Sally, and it makes sense. If your entire life is truly going to be burdensome and different, God wouldn't just spring it on you. He would prepare you since childhood. Mentally, emotionally and spiritually."

Sally nods with tears still slowly flowing from her eyes, "Exactly. So that is why I am cautious but also extremely emotional. Because spoiled food in the fridge needs to be dealt with. And if I'm right about all this, it has to be dealt with."

Neaven butts in, "Like I said, I knew your families past. I never believed you created your burden Sally, or your gifts or His purpose for your life. I know you Sally. You're dealing with God's Will the best you're able."

They both grow silent for a moment, Sally then hesitates to speak, "So... I figured Dr. H might help. Mom specifically kept saying Dr. H was the answer and I guess she's right but I don't know." She pauses again, "I guess the life we were planning together ignored Dr. H and the burden so in a way I kind of just grew distant from it and repressed it."

Neaven adds realistically, "Now that makes sense."

She continues, "And this emotion I feel is just reality slapping me in the face. I mean, it clearly needs to be dealt with. One way or another I need to go forward with my life just like you are going forward with yours. God knows I want a family but I also want to do His Will according to this burden that won't go away. It's like the six-hundred pound gorilla on my back that I can't shake. It just never completely goes away."

Neaven nods.

She continues, "And the reality of my father never goes away..."

Neaven keeps his mouth completely shut. There is silence between them.

"I only pray Dr. H helps, I really do."

"Honestly," Neaven sounds optimistic, "He probably will, but just like last time, it may not be the help you want, but the help you need."

Sally looks at him submissively and offers him a rhetorical question, "Why do you think I pushed him out of my mind?"

Neaven nods, a deep knowing and sadness accompanies his eyes.

She drops her head and scratches her chair, "Me talking with Dr. H is me cleaning out my own fridge, and it's never easy."

Neaven grabs Sally and hugs her passionately and then kisses her forehead. "Take courage Sally. Take courage. God will do it. And we'll do it together."

She saw the look in his eyes and she embraces him. It was obvious he was one hundred percent in her corner. It made her feel better so she repeats his final words, "We'll do it together."

Tom Hutchinson is waiting patiently in Dr. Thiery's office. After petitioning the Lord and even fasting for a day he felt led to have a meeting with the head of The Cell, and perhaps make some requests. Dr. Thiery was rarely late so something considerable must be holding him up.

Tom stood up and walked around the office. The Doctor wasn't one for awards or accolades but there were a few hanging on his wall as well as some distinguished pictures with presidents, kings and heads of state. He

also had some beautiful pictures taken from past shuttle missions. Some from the earth and others taken from our solar system. Then, in the corner, he saw a familiar picture hanging. He hadn't noticed it before. It was a picture of the original ten Primary Members from back in 1972, and he was among them.

"I'm glad we righted that wrong." A humble Dr. Thiery offers from the doorway.

Tom doesn't take his eyes off the photo but nods, "Those were strange times. You were right to dismiss me and you were right to invite me back. So I guess two negatives equal a positive."

Dr. Thiery approaches his desk, "You've always had a wonderful perspective to go along with all your agitation."

They laugh in unison as Tom takes his seat.

Dr. Thiery was curious, "So what can I do for you today Tom?"

He got right to it, "Well I need to talk with you about Miss Sally Travis."

His eyes enlarge at the thought, "Miss Travis, delightful, how is she doing back in Vermont?"

Tom crosses his legs, "I am soon to find out. I have a meeting with her tomorrow, at her request."

Dr. Thiery offers him a questioning look.

Tom continues, "It kind of came out of nowhere to be honest."

Dr. Thiery alleges, "If I remember correctly, last time we spoke, weren't you dissuaded by her lack of initiative?"

"Exactly."

"And now?"

Tom answers him, "That's the thing; I have a familiar feeling something is amiss."

"I see." Dr. Thiery then takes off his glasses and sets them on his desk. "Mind if I take a small stab at it?"

"Please do."

"When you told me about Sally's lack of initiative, it got me thinking. I must admit, I have thought quite a lot about it. It is possible Tom, and only a possibility, that Sally feels quite abandoned by us."

Tom nods, "I entertained that notion too, but from my perspective, she is abandoning us."

"How so?"

Tom got candid, "You know I gave her work, straight from my portfolio. And she did remarkably well. I kept waiting for her to take that initiative but she didn't."

Dr. Thiery prods, "Do you believe you could have examined deeper?"

Tom gives himself some room, "Could have, should have, would have... Yes, you're correct. I could have, but knowing Sally the way I do, it needs to come from her. It was the same problem I had with her in the beginning. She likes to set her own rules and force people to play her game. I'm accountable for this girl; even her mother has given me her blessing. So I need to take her to task, and my gut told me to give her work and act accordingly but to wait for her to engage. She never did. I know when I left I told her The Cell would call her but we did, I am The Cell and I gave her work repeatedly."

He nods, "So you believe including Sally with regard to your coursework equaled The Cell utilizing her?"

Tom holds his ground, "Absolutely!"

Dr. Thiery responds, "I agree Tom, but perhaps she doesn't?"

Tom rubs his mouth as Dr. Thiery continues, "All this is hypothetical of course, because we don't know what the meeting will entail, but if Sally is deterred, perhaps she does not feel included."

Tom interrupts, "Although I see your point, and although Sally might be discouraged like you mention. In my opinion, it is absolutely her job to take that initiative, especially after I gave her so much work and attention."

Dr. Thiery calms his conscience, "I agree with you Tom. I and a few others approved all the work you gave her and it was not light reading. Her answers and perspective were stimulating and even yielded results if I remember correctly?"

Tom nods, "Absolutely they did. We even used a few of her responses as examples to train the Candidates. Her answers helped even me. It's just that Sally must come out of her shell. I will no longer allow this young woman to force professionals to play her game."

Dr. Thiery looks at him soberly but with a wry smile. "She's graduated now, hasn't she?"

"Yes, about two months ago."

Dr. Thiery shifts in his seat, "Okay. Tomorrow you will have your meeting with the delightful Miss Sally Travis..."

Tom rolls his eyes because he knew Dr. Thiery was fond of Sally.

He continued, "...and hopefully she will only desire a polite correspondence or perhaps even another stay at our beautiful facility here. To which, if the latter is the case, her holiday will be our graduation gift to her."

Tom offers cynicism, "That's awful thoughtful of you."

Dr. Thiery doesn't miss a beat, "Thank you, and if, and this is a mighty 'if.' If Sally is dissuaded and the two of you 'go to task' so to speak, then this is what you will do. Since I know when you two butt heads you are going to get the better of her, because she is to blame, you are going to be very merciful with this Miss Sally Travis and offer her a fully paid internship, the duration of her choosing, up to two years."

Tom can't believe what he just heard.

Dr. Thiery finishes, "She can study with the Candidates, as she has done previously, and she can finally have the opportunity to really understand what it is we do here."

That was easy, Tom thought to himself.

Dr. Thiery then makes haste, "So either way, I think we'll be seeing Miss Travis shortly."

Tom is humbled, "Sir, you have no idea. My purpose in meeting with you today was to meekly ask your permission to offer Sally a summer internship, if things happened to become complicated tomorrow."

Dr. Thiery looked at him, "Then I've done you one better..." He lifts up his two fingers, "...up to two years. So we are in agreement?"

Tom's face resonated with peace, "We are fully in agreement sir, and thank you."

Dr. Thiery added, "No Tom, Thank you. Remember, you were the one who brought us this jewel in the first place. And we must always remember with the treatment of such a jewel, one must restrain himself, using a smooth and delicate touch, as well as reverence toward the same."

Tom acquiesced because he understood, "Point taken."

Judy is persevering through some tax files lying open on the kitchen table. She enjoyed working in the kitchen area, where it was bright and inviting. Only when she needed the computer would she seclude herself in her office. Sally entered to grab a snack and talk with her mom.

"Mom, I just wanted you to know I am meeting with Dr. H tomorrow." She said it grabbing something to eat, almost as an afterthought.

Judy bites her tongue for a moment. Ever since last week's encounter, there has been a stale tension between the two. Sally did need to hear those words, she thought, but the entire situation has become an ugly one.

Judy nods as she responds, "I think it's the right thing to do. I am sorry everything unfolded the way it did."

Sally eyes the back of her mother but says nothing.

Her mother continues, "I think you know I want the best for you. I'm in your corner Sally, but I had to be honest with what I saw." She turns around to meet Sally's gaze, "You weren't fighting it correctly."

There were a few things Sally actually believed she did slightly better than her mother, and serious consideration before speaking was one of them.

Sally held back. "You might be right."

Judy stood up and confronted her daughter. "Listen, you will talk with Dr. Hutchinson tomorrow, and I hope Sally for your sake and I pray; that you are honest with yourself and also with him. So things can be dealt with, and perhaps put in order. He is a good man and a blessing in your life."

Sally knew her mom was rebuking her again. She was getting the distinct impression the root of most her problems, as well as her mother's current frustration pointed toward one thing. She had not dealt with The Cell or even Dr. H correctly, especially over the last two and a half years. Perhaps all of that was catching up with her.

Possibly, she thought to herself, it also gave Neaven a false sense of hope. Had she been forward with The Cell and Dr. H there might be some solid answers by now; and all the miscellaneous conversations she had with

Neaven regarding children, family and career would have been eradicated. Her not handling things correctly from the get go possibly created all sorts of other problems. She could have infected those closest to her, without even knowing it. Sally bit her lip and nodded.

She probed internally, "I'm starting to see it. There's no guarantee Dr. H or The Cell would even use me, but shying away didn't give them the opportunity to say yes or no. The squeaky wheel gets the grease and I acted proud toward the whole situation. My pride wanted them to invite me back, but I should have been more docile, especially after they did so much for me in the first place."

"Exactly." Her mom exhaled, "Now you're getting it."

"I mean, I am still going to have to sort it all out but I think you're onto something. I kind of shot myself in the foot. Even if The Cell didn't use me I should have made requests. All they could say is no. She paused for distinction, "But mom, there is something else I need to say."

"What is it?"

Sally looks away before she makes proper eye contact, "You need to leave Dad out of it, especially regarding God."

Her mother attempts to hold Sally's hand, "Honey."

Sally interrupts her by putting her hands up, "No Mom. We deal with Dad's passing differently, and I know how I remember him, and it's different with you. You need to respect my relationship with him and not do that again."

Judy backs away and crosses her arms, "I'm sorry."

Sally's eyes begin to well up with tears, "You hurt me so bad Mom."

At that, Judy's knees begin to buckle so she grabs the counter and pulls herself toward her weeping daughter. As they embrace her mom can feel the tension built up in her daughter. They both weep together for a good while. Judy pulls away and looks at Sally.

"I am so sorry I hurt you. I love you so much. It makes me so angry sometimes when I see his strengths in you, because I never want to lose you. And I'm guilty Sally. I am guilty, but it's because I don't want to lose you the way I lost him."

They both weep again and hold each other passionately. Sally can't remember ever crying with her mother this way. Even when her dad died, they cried but not together.

Her mom makes light, "Oh sweetie. You are so precious to me. Can we please sit down for a moment?" Sally nods as they walk to the couch.

Her mother continues, "Honey, there is so much I can say so I pray the Lord helps me."

She bows her head and when she looks up she squeezes Sally's hand, "I have never been secure with the possibility of God having a calling on your life. If you have ever seen strength in me, then know most of it was hiding the fact it has always been difficult for me to watch you bloom into the woman of God you have become. It meant the possibility of your life going in a certain direction, and I feared that direction honey, I feared it greatly. Your father was killed Sally, in a foreign country for preaching the Gospel. He was thirty eight years old and his life was taken from him. I see you and I see him. I saw how God used him and I see how God uses you."

Sally attempts to calm her mother, "I understand. It's something I've had to come to grips with and honestly, I feel like I could never handle that reality."

Her mom looks at Sally with eyes older than hers, "Sally, I have truly given you over into the Lord's hands, I think you know that. But one thing you don't know, that I am confessing to you today because I have already confessed it to God many times, is that it might very well be the death of me. If I lost you the way I lost him, I couldn't take it. I spent years pleading with God to allow you to have a beautiful life. A life filled with joy, happiness and children. A life where you could be a part of a strong family with a good heritage. You have no idea how much I have desired this for you. The thought this may never happen to you is bad, but anything else would be devastating."

Sally needs to say something, "Mom, we both lost Dad. I don't fear martyrdom because I don't think about it for myself. It's almost like lightning striking the same place twice. It already hit our family, so I kind of just release that. But I agree with you regarding everything else. I've never felt like I was going to have a normal life. It's just been my reality since I

was young. Neaven and I talked about that today and we agreed. God's been preparing me since I was young, because that's probably what it's going to take. If, since I was young, I thought I was going to have a normal life, we agreed it'd be pretty hard for God to just jerk me the other direction."

Judy smiles at her observation and Sally continues, "And be like, 'Nope, you're not going to have kids or a husband but you'll be my missionary in a foreign land' ... yeah, that wouldn't work. But if since childhood I had a nagging feeling and even a belief that my life would never be ordinary, then when the extraordinary happens, I'd be prepared."

Her mother pats her knee, "I agree Sally. If things turn toward the direction your father went then God has prepared you. He truly has. I am confessing this to you because I now believe you need to know this about me. I have been confessing it to God for years but you need to know I've wished an easier life for you, so when it comes to any of that or even me checking you regarding Dr. Hutchinson, then you need to know it's my greatest desire that you never talk to Dr. Hutchinson again. I want you to marry Neaven, become a teacher and have children. And you need to know that now."

Sally is relieved at her mother's admission so she meets her there, "Mom, I want that too and so does Neaven. And I thank you for telling me that because it does explain a lot, and I needed to hear it. But we are three Christians who understand and know our God. A burden is a burden and to be honest, what happened three years ago was no joke. It had God's fingerprints all over it."

Her mom nods, "Everyone knows that Sally, trust me they do."

Sally finishes, "So, I'll talk with Dr. H tomorrow and we'll see."

They pause for a moment and then Judy asks a question, "Do you see yourself becoming a missionary like your father? Do you have any discernment regarding what you think God's Will is for your future?"

Sally pauses and looks around, "I don't see myself doing what he did. I don't see myself going to countries that are hostile toward the Gospel. But, I do see myself stepping on toes and being very forthright regarding God's Will. When I was at France, I felt my immaturity.

I felt it so cleanly it enveloped me. But let me tell you something, God could care less. When I spoke, the words and the spiritual translation of those words were so powerful all nine members were about to offer me that seat. And if you think about that deeply, it is very profound. The gifts of God and the calling of God is without repentance. God called an immature nineteen year old to France so God powerfully used that immature nineteen year old. So Mom, I see God a bit different after that experience. I saw my shortcomings Mom, and it just didn't matter. God showed up."

Her Mom smiled because she understood. Actually the explanation helped her tremendously, and it reassured her that God was behind her daughter. She needn't fret or fear. Yes, she had lost her husband in a foreign land and yes, it was overwhelming but God was still in control.

Chapter 3

Sally pulls into the parking lot of the FBI office in Burlington, Vermont. She has her badge and security clearance because she's gone through this routine before. As she waits in line to be cleared for entry, she remembers the last time she saw Dr. H in person. It was a year ago. She and Neaven took a month long vacation to Europe and France was their second stop. They stayed a week, bunking in Dr. H's clandestine accommodation, in separate rooms or course. The stay was exciting and Neaven got to meet Sora, Cross and a few other characters Sally got along with. She hoped today's meeting would be a pleasant bookmark of that beautiful stay.

Upon entry she walked down the hallway escorted by a Federal officer and after showing her passport, badge and security clearance she proceeded to a fingerprint and retinal scan. She then entered a private conference room with an FBI agent and a foreign diplomat. She needn't concern herself with either because their attendance was part of her security clearance and this type of team always attended these meetings. She walked to the head of the table and sat down. At the top of the hour, the face to face secure satellite conference meeting would begin. As she waited patiently Dr. Hutchinson's face popped up and Sally could see her image in the right hand corner. There was text typed on the screen for identification purposes and afterward Dr. Hutchinson was cleared to begin.

He was cordial, "Hello Sally."

And she, candid, "Hi Dr. Hutchinson, thank you for taking the time."

"Don't mention it."

She took a slight breath and began, "Okay, after talking with my mom and people of interest I decided to make this meeting today. It was difficult for me because I have always waited on The Cell but now..."

She paused and looked to him for a response. He offered none so she continued, "...I need to find out where I stand."

He smirked, but very quickly as not to place emphasis on it. He found some humility, "Sally, you have always been in good standing with both me and The Cell, but I have an idea where this is headed."

Sally became more passionate, "You know Dr. Hutchinson, these conversations are usually hard for me, but I think I have mostly worked this one out. Worked out all the kinks. In short, Neaven and I are beginning to plan a life together which neither of us necessarily believe is God's Will. I am open to what you have to say but the only thing I want to add is that the burden is still there and when I ignore it, it just gets worse."

The last statement she made hit him on a personal level. It became easier for him to find a deeper measurement of humility, "Sally, I understand your train of thought. Please continue."

Sally was perplexed. She was hoping, at present, he would add some additional insight or advice. She forges ahead, "Ummm. Well... I mean, I... I don't know. You're the only connection I have."

He decides to help her a bit, "By connection, what do you mean?"

She starts again, "Well, when it comes to this burden, or perhaps what God would desire from me, you have experience with this. You have also been the one God has used in my life. So I'm hoping He will use you again."

He plays along, "What if He will use me, then what?"

Sally looks upon him with vibrant eyes, "That would be great."

Dr. Hutchinson wants to tell Sally about the two year internship, but again, it would need to come from her.

He shifts in his seat, "You know Sally, I, who represent The Cell with regard to your life, must have contacted you eight to ten times during your senior year alone, asking for your assistance with the same work I was doing here in France, the Cell's work in fact. Since I've left, we must have had twenty meetings like this."

Sally just bats her eyes as he carries on.

"So Sally, God has used me. So what can I do for you today?"

He wasn't going to make this easy. Thank God she had already gone round and round with her mother, because this meeting's tone would have set her off. She dug deep and remembered her wounds, and then she surrendered completely, "I need your help Dr. Hutchinson, and if they're willing, the help of The Cell too. If they could

maybe help me, today, I think it would become the catalyst to maybe iron some things out in my life. I don't want to make any mistakes with Neaven, and I do feel led to do the type of work I have done for you and The Cell. I'm asking for a job, or maybe even for your help financially or professionally, where I can do some work, either here or in France?"

He allows her words to linger because they were the words he waited to hear, for quite some time actually.

He spoke, "Sally, you do know I believe you are a prophetess, correct?"

Sally answered him with some fretting in her heart, "Yes, I know."

He persisted, "And this calling won't go away."

She met him there, "Yes, the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

He questions, "Do you know why God does not repent of those things?"

Sally became curious, "Why?"

Dr. Hutchinson was blunt, "Because He is going to judge everything. The gifts He's given you, not to mention everyone else and the callings on all of our lives, one day He will stand in judgment over how we chose to use them for His kingdom purposes. As it applies to you and me this is the sober explanation as to why God doesn't repent. Because He'll judge everything one day, with perfect, flawless judgment. So we better be wise regarding the choices we make within those same callings and gifts!"

Sally was astounded, "That makes sense."

Dr. Hutchinson was direct, "My advice, obey God regarding your calling's burden. Obey it and do not fret, fight it or bury it. God will assist you with Neaven and everything else as long as the two of you remain teachable."

Sally knew what she just heard was the sum of everything she tried to ignore. She spoke in a defeated tone, "Well, what does a prophetess do?"

His eyes widened, "She dwells Sally. She dwells wherever she is currently or wherever she is invited."

Sally eyes her surroundings, "Well, I'm dwelling in Vermont having this conversation with you. What do I do when I leave?"

He gets closer to the camera, "How would you like to dwell in France. Come back here, and do the work God's has for you?"

Her heart sunk but her eyes enlarged. "Oh my God!!!" She paused, not knowing what to say, "Wow... I mean, this is unbelievable. I didn't expect this. I kind of imagined you would give me work here, like you've done the past two years. I didn't think of going back to France."

Dr. Hutchinson wanted clarity so he tried to open her up, "Tell me more, how does this make you feel?"

She wasn't budging, "Conflicted."

He nods because he understands. She then asks again, just to make sure she heard it right, "You're inviting me to France?"

Dr. Hutchinson relented, "Not me, The Cell, Dr. Thierry to be exact. A fully paid internship for up to two years. The duration is your choice. You can stay a week, a month, six months... whatever, up to two years. Your choice."

Sally was speechless, "Wow."

He smirked at her sincerity, "Still feel conflicted?"

"Ummm. The only conflict I feel is Neaven." She stares at Dr. Hutchinson, "Everything else is more than I could have hoped for."

He lets her know she is in charge, "Sally, I don't want to minimize anything. This is your choice. But last time, you also feared because of Neaven, and everything worked out fine."

Sally didn't meet him there, "Yes Dr. Hutchinson but that was for two weeks. This is much longer."

He smiles, "It's a paid internship Sally. You'll be making the same salary as a Candidate. You could afford to fly him up once a month, as long as both of you wanted that."

"That's a ton of money Dr H." Sally shook her head because she remembered what the Candidate's made, "But Neaven already took a job, and he'd likely be stuck here in Vermont."

He reasons, "I understand Sally, like I said, I would not want to minimize anything, but another option would be to bring him with you. Candidates are allowed to bring loved ones just like the Primary Members."

"Yeah, I remember." Sally thinks to herself. "Dr. H, I can't turn this down. My answer is yes. I don't know how long, I will need to talk with Neaven, but I know this is what I should do. I just haven't felt comfortable here in Vermont ever since graduation. I've felt all along like it was time to get going, but I just didn't know where to start." She swallows hard, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Yes."

"How did this happen? I mean, I just asked for a meeting. How was the decision made to invite me now, after all this time?"

Dr. Hutchinson's face held certainty, "Sally, to be frank, this was always in the cards. All you had to do was ask. You would have received probably a summer internship. I don't know if it would have been paid or not, but you would be here right now, and you would have your purpose."

Sally reverts back to her old ways, "So why didn't you just invite me before I graduated? I then would have had something to look forward to."

So he diverts back to his, "Because you never asked. I assumed during your senior year, when we had plenty of these conference calls and you had many opportunities to talk with me regarding your future, that you were going to ask me for advice, but you never did."

She questions him, "So had I asked you a year ago..."

He doesn't even allow her to finish, "I would have recommended The Cell, not graduate school or teaching credentials. And nearing your graduation, I would have conferred with Dr. Thiery regarding a possible summer internship. Who knows, what I am offering you today might have been offered then."

She breaks herself down again, "So my tardiness or my stubbornness created this problem?"

He shakes his head, "Not tardiness, stubbornness." He then asked bluntly, "Clair?"

Sally shook her head no.

His face held an unsure look, "Your mother perhaps?"

"Yup."

He was happily surprised, "Good for her."

Sally gasps, "She made it stick, hard."

He repeats it, "Good for her."

Sally takes her eyes off the screen and looks directly at the camera, and in essence, him. Dr. Hutchinson remembered her wit and laughs while putting his hands up. "Okay Sally, okay. I'm sorry."

Sally returns her gaze to the screen where she can see him clearly.

Dr. Hutchinson then continues, "But Sally. The truth is you need to come out of your shell!"

"Working on it." She says it in haste while brushing some lint off her pants with slight aggravation.

He reads her, "Well, I'm happy you made the meeting and I'm happy you worked out the kinks with your mom because I perceive some blessings in front of you and I think it's time you received them. It's difficult for people who care about you to watch you fight with things you don't need to."

She reasons to herself, "Well, with these positive things in front of me I do feel better. But I also feel ashamed for having handled things the way I did." She adds levelheadedly, "I guess it's a lesson learned and everything evened itself out."

He was impressed, "Good Sally, good. That's a healthy way of looking at it. Here's what you might consider. Talk with your family, and you don't need to make another meeting with me. The paperwork is already there and we'll get you, and perhaps Neaven, on a flight out here ASAP. You just need to let us know the date and possible duration so we can set things up. All the proper forms are located with the paperwork so just fax them to the Burlington office and they'll find their way back here."

She almost forgot, "What is the internship, exactly?"

He bethinks himself, "Of course. You'll be working with the Candidates. But I am sure you will be allowed to continue to assist me. You're going to have a great time Sally and you'll learn plenty. I know you like challenges and trust me, you'll be challenged."

Sally met him there, "I remember last time it was hard so I don't doubt I'll be challenged. It all sounds great Dr. H. Thank you so much for your help. I can't wait to get started."

He's happy for her, "Great Sally. I'll tell everyone back here the good news. Make sure to tell everyone I said hello, especially your mother, Judy."

"I'll tell them." Sally then raises her eyebrow, "I might even make mention to my mom the fact you thought she did a good job rebuking me."

He chuckles and then signs off, "Sure thing Sally, take care."

"Will do."

Text covers the screen again before both images go blank. The secure meeting was now adjourned. The FBI agent knocks on the door and hands Sally her passport, badge and security clearance along with the paperwork Dr. Hutchinson spoke of. Another Federal officer escorts her out of the building.

She sat in her car and slowly glanced at the paperwork. It looked similar to the paperwork she received when she was first invited. It outlined the different internships according to the amount of time she would stay. Of course, the longest one was for twenty-four months. She saw briefings on Candidate studies and a small write up of their daily and weekly activities. She then saw her monthly salary contract/agreement. Gasp! She put the paperwork down and prayed silently in her heart. She felt relieved. Even though she still felt conflicted, she was relieved.

Neaven left work and drove straight to Sally's house. He was waiting to hear the news of Sally's meeting. As he drove down the highway, he reminded himself that no matter what, he would do as he was led since before Sally made this appointment with Dr. H. He pulled his truck into the driveway. Sally heard the engine and ran outside to meet him. The two embraced.

"I'm so glad you're here. Let's get inside so we can talk."

Once inside, Neaven hugs Clair and Judy who have been visiting with Sally for the past hour. There are coffee mugs on the table and Judy grabs a mug for Neaven and gives him a generous pour. Both Sally and Neaven sit down.

Sally is wide eyed, "Well Neaven, Mom and Clair already know. I talked with Dr. H today and they've invited me back!"

Neaven stands up and hugs Sally without abandon. He speaks in her ear, "I'm so happy for you sweetheart."

You deserve it more than you know." He then pulls away and just looks at her.

Sally says excitedly, "There's more Neaven. But before I mention that I want you to know they had already made the decision to invite me back. This wasn't something I forced. The paperwork was already there even before I had my meeting with Dr. H. But here is the great part. You can come with me. We can go together." She smiled with delight.

Neaven smiled back, "Sally that's amazing. Is the trip permanent or what?"

Sally breaks it down, "No, it's a fully paid internship that could last anywhere from a month to up to two years. It's really an outstanding opportunity. It's totally our choice how long we'd stay. I guess they want me to get my feet wet slowly and then go from there."

He took a sip of his coffee, "Sally, I'm happy for you because we both know this was destined for you. All the talks we had before led up to this. But Sally, it's my opinion you should try it out first."

Sally tries to read into what Neaven said, "Please Neaven, tell me exactly how you feel. What fears do you have?"

"No fears," He pauses, but then strengthens his resolve, "I just think you should probably do this by yourself."

All three ladies look at each other with bewilderment. This was unexpected, but Sally was floored by what Neaven said, so she met him there. "Neaven, I'm going to take this!"

Neaven gives her the green light, "I know Sally, and I think you should absolutely go because it's right for you and you have my full blessing. But I don't agree that I should go with you."

Sally was surprised, "So you're ok with me being in France all by myself?"

He works through his emotions, "No, I'm not ok with it, but I've already accepted it. I've had a feeling for quite some time that you were probably eventually going to reconnect with Dr. H and something like this would happen. I prepared for this Sally. In fact, I believe the management internship I was offered was an answer to my prayers. I didn't want to be here doing nothing. I had a feeling you might end up in France this summer and I specifically asked God not to open a door for a job if

you weren't going to France, so we'd both be in the same spot, jobless. When this job came I realized you were probably leaving. I know you Sally, even though you didn't talk about it doesn't mean it wasn't there. I saw the struggle clearly in you."

"Oh Neaven," Judy chimes in, "I saw the struggle in her too, but, you need to see around this? I understand your work here is important but this could be a great opportunity for the both of you."

Neaven understands but had a made up mind, "Mrs. Travis. I am not saying this because I want this, I just don't believe God wants me to go to France. Don't take this the wrong way but I don't think I am supposed to be Sally's chaperone. Sally turned down France once, and she might turn it down again?"

Clair nods realistically and Neaven continues, "There's a small part of me who thinks maybe Sally needs to work France out of her system. And I don't think me quitting my job in order for her to perhaps learn that lesson is realistic."

"Neaven!" Sally shouts with a bit of frustration. "You're coming with me!"

"Sally." He becomes practical, "Have you ever known me to lie or exaggerate?"

She folds her arms, "No."

Continuing, "Then please listen to me now. I'm not lying to you. It's just not God's Will for me to follow you to France. It's His Will I stay here and work."

Judy puts her hand to her head. Clair keeps her mouth shut. She has been to hell and back with her long distance relationship with Jack and as far as she's concerned, God called her to do exactly what Neaven is doing now. Resist the desires of her soul mate. Sally grabs Neaven's arm.

"How can you stay here?"

"Because the same burden that is leading you to France is keeping me here. I'm sorry Sally. Me going to France is the equivalent to you staying here. It's just not where God wants me."

Judy makes a request. "Neaven can I ask something."

"Please do Mrs. Travis."

She is calm in her speech, "You seem to have a made up mind. Where is it coming from exactly?"

Neaven takes a deep breath and exhales, "Ever since Sally left back as a sophomore, I was never the same after that. I always wanted to be with Sally and knew we could be together but I purposely left a big hole open in my heart for something like this. This has always been a reality to me even if Sally never acknowledged it."

Sally interrupts, "I tried to bury it for the right reasons Neaven. We talked about that."

"Yeah, and look where it got you? You did it with the right heart, but all you did was blurred something that should have remained focused. The truth is, I never blurred it, because I believed it was likely to happen. Sally..."

He grabs her hand and strokes it, "...when you talked of marriage and children I listened to you and I hoped, but in the back of my mind I knew there was a good chance it wouldn't happen like that. I think what you blurred I left purposely visible. When we talked the other day, I was not surprised. I was saddened because I didn't want it, but I wasn't surprised. I knew then, right then, you were going back to France."

Sally began to show sorrow, "But Neaven, you said we would do it together."

He reassured her, "We are doing it together sweetheart. We are together, and when you leave we'll still be together, but it'll be different."

"Oh Neaven." Sally stands up and begins to pace. Clair chimes in after a good while but keeps her opinions short and sweet, "Sally, it can work. Look at me and Jack."

Sally glances briefly in Clair's direction. The thought of her not seeing Neaven for months bothered her, "I can't think about this anymore."

Judy asks one last time, "Neaven, you have a made up mind? You won't go with my daughter?"

He exhales again, "Mrs. Travis the last thing I want to do is make life any harder for either of you. I have been thinking about this for two years, but more realistically, the last eight months; ever since I applied to jobs before graduation. At first I said why bother, but something told me to continue applying. When I got the job, I felt a peace regarding my life that I hadn't felt in a long time, before I met Sally actually. I was happy for myself, and all the doubts of where Sally would end up kind of faded into the background. I now

know God wanted me to have this job. Just like He opened doors for Sally in France, He opened this door in Vermont for me. I am sure of it."

Judy accepts Neaven's answer and retreats into the kitchen. Clair gets up and kisses Neaven on the forehead. She wants to encourage him regarding his difficult choice. She then holds Sally's hand as she brushes by her with a guarded smile. After Clair leaves Sally again folds her arms and just stares at Neaven.

Neaven offers pragmatically, "What do you want me to say Sally?"

"Nothing Neaven. I am not mad at you, I am just frustrated. When I think about it, me expecting you to come to France is just as bad as you asking me to stay here, and you haven't done that."

He acknowledges her reasoning, "I'm glad you see it. You are my sweetheart, and my soul mate. I'm not going anywhere and neither are you. We're still together. You never know Sally, you might be so busy in France that you would regret bringing me. What am I going to do in France, follow you around and bring you lunch?"

Sally was reminded of the day she brought him lunch and how heavy she felt that day, and she would never wish that on Neaven.

"Oh Neaven." She reaches forward and kisses him. She kisses him a few times until a tear runs down her cheek. "I'm sorry Neaven, you're right. It's not fair for me to stay and it's not fair for you to go. I need to believe I'll be fine and you'll be fine."

He gets cute, "Believe it, because it's how it's gonna go down." He rubs her nose with an Eskimo kiss.

She smiles as she pulls away, "Oh yeah, one more thing. I'm getting paid pretty well, so the good news is I can fly you out whenever you want."

He had a surprised look on his face, "Seriously?"

"Yeah, seriously! I'm getting paid the same as a full fledged Candidate."

Neaven just shakes his head and rolls his eyes; he remembered she told him the candidates get paid about \$25,000.00 USD per month.

He speaks carnally, "I think you should do the two years."

Sally slaps his arm and makes a gesture.

He relents, "I'm just kidding, just kidding."

She says genuinely, "I've read the contract through. I'll do the probationary six months with the option to stay longer. That seemed like the best option for me."

"Alright, I agree. Six months sounds good. Maybe I can come visit after three or so."

Sally forces some optimism, "It'll work out."

Neaven can tell it's forced, "Don't worry Sally. You'll have peace once you get there and you'll have fun. I am actually excited for you. I bet you have the best opportunity out of everyone who graduated."

Sally had never thought about it in that way, "You're right. I feel lucky actually."

Neaven met her, "We both know it's not luck. This is where you're supposed to be. And with Dr. H there, you'll do great. And I'll come see you in three months."

Sally questioned, "Three months?"

He affirms, "I promise."

After dinner was finished Clair and Neaven left and it gave Sally and Judy the opportunity to talk in depth. They were both still seated at the dinner table.

"I'll pick up."

"No Sally," Her mother interrupts, "Leave it because I want to talk with you in the living room."

They get up and walk to the couch. Sally sits down but Judy grabs a photo album and some folders. She places the folders on Sally's lap but then places the photo album on top and opens it. Sally noticed immediately they were pictures of her family. Her father was in most of the pictures. This was an album Judy kept sacred. Sally had never seen it before.

Sally spoke as she thumbed through the pages, "Mom, I didn't know you had this."

Her mom was hesitant, "I know. It was just for me. It was one of my methods of coping. I would sometimes spend hours looking at this album while you were out or studying. It always brought me peace. I would view the pictures and rekindle memories. What we possibly did that day. Was it a holiday weekend or were we visiting somebody or out of town? I would reminisce years and years just from the photos in this album."

Sally kept looking, "Amazing."

"Yes. It's something very special and meaningful to me. I also have another one. One of just myself and your father, before you were even born."

Sally is beginning to notice her mother differently. Sally always saw her mom as someone who just powered through, but she was truly seeing a different side of her now. It was apparent she was affected in ways Sally couldn't have understood. She was obviously still in love with him. That might be why she never remarried.

Sally asked her a question, "So when you look at the albums and remember him, it's like you're still together?"

Her mom looks at her with pride beaming, "We are still together honey. The Bible says not even death can separate us from the love of Christ. Your father and I loved each other with Christ's love, and that's infinite and eternal."

Sally just shakes her head in amazement and turns another page. Her mother continues, "I had never seen a man demonstrate Christ's love the way your father did, even before his death. I oftentimes have assumed that is the major reason why Christ allowed him to be taken the way he did. Because when you are the real deal Sally, sometimes you are called to make the ultimate sacrifice."

She then takes a deep breath and closes the album on Sally's lap. She gently places it on her own.

Sally looks at her mother, "Thank you for showing it to me. I am sorry if it hurts."

Judy offers a saddened grin, "It's difficult yes, but it's not about me anymore, it's about you."

"Sally." She eyes the folders on her daughters lap, "Those were your fathers. They are his notes, his writings, his lessons and the dreams and visions the Lord gave to him. It took me eight years to sort everything out. I had to read and compile everything from all his boxes and belongings. I took certain stuff out, things of little importance but the core of what he wrote remains. You could probably read them in a few months time but you might want to take your time the way I did. It became soothing in a way to read his writings. I decided Sally, after you came back from France, that if you went back or if you became a missionary that I would place those folders in your lap."

Sally opens one, "So these are everything, everything he penned."

"Yes. I even included some of his notes that you might want to study up on."

Sally looked at all three. There was at most one hundred and fifty pages of material total.

Judy watched her daughter investigate, "You're going to learn another side of your father. And I think it's time you did, because it might help you."

Sally is curious but has no words.

Her mother closes the folder Sally is holding and grabs her daughter's hand, "Honey, I want your full attention so please listen to me."

Sally turns toward her mother as she begins, "You are going to walk your own path. You are your own person, and no one, especially me, would want to take that away from you. I don't want you to think I am merging you and your father together, because I'm not. Reading those folders will help I think. I believe, after you've had time to delve into your fathers words, emotions, fears, beliefs and convictions you will realize you are quite different and for good reason. If there is one thing I can ask of you Sally it would be this."

She becomes rigid, "Honor your father's legacy which he left to you, and when you honor it, don't despise who you are, or what God is calling you to do. I have always desired to shield you away from God's Will but since I cannot I need to tell you this; there is much honor in what your doing so please never forget that. Your father died doing what he believed, and you may never die doing what you believe so you need to live for what you believe. Live it everyday Sally and never forget the honor in the work you're doing. Your father died for that honor. So for that honor Sally, you must live, and live it everyday absolutely to the fullest, to the Glory of God. Because it's worthy Sally, and because God has entrusted it to you. Not to me, not to Neaven, to you."

Sally felt her mother's words reverberating in her conscience. She understood. Her father did die for what he believed, and the Bible says there is no greater love. She absolutely would live passionately for that honor. If death befall her then death befall her but she would make up her mind to live it everyday, she would live for what she believed. In that, she would truly honor her

father's legacy. She would persevere, endure and overcome; whether in life or death. Because the call was honorable and it was all for God's Glory.

Cross Lutherant was sitting at his desk on the third level of The Cell Compound. He was taking a quick lunch and watching the live news feed from his enormous LED monitor which was mounted from the ceiling. A message chimed in from his secure mobile device.

Candidate Member (Joi-427956) update.

This must be important because he rarely received any Candidate information. He turned and opened the database on his laptop and typed in the Candidate Member Security Clearance Number. Information on Sally Travis popped onscreen. She would arrive in three days and once again he was in charge of picking her up. He transferred all her information to his mobile and walked down the hall. He knocked on a door.

A muffled voice responded in French, "Come in."

Cross entered and approached Dr. Thiery but there were others in the office so he needed to be quick.

"Sir, Miss Sally Travis has signed the contract and will be arriving in three days. I have been assigned to escort her to The Compound."

Dr. Thiery spoke without looking up, "Yes, actually she accepted two weeks ago, but is probably only now coming around to making it official."

Cross listened attentively, "Yes sir."

Dr. Thiery looked up, "What duration did she choose?"

Cross returns to his mobile, "She has opted for the six month internship with the option to extend for another 18 months."

Dr. Thiery drops his head and scribbles something, "Fine, make sure her first six months is more akin to a permanent appointment internship. I'm sure she is just being cautious choosing six months with the option for the full two years."

He looks up again, "I want her thoroughly engrained in what we do here. The work is complicated and although

she is bright, she needs to fall in head first. She also needs to work with the best and brightest we have."

Cross repeats what was said, "I understand sir, six months but she'll get the full exposure."

Dr. Thiery shakes his pen, "Absolutely. With Miss Travis we'll allow her to dictate the in's and the out's of her appointment but once she's here, we will dictate."

He tries to get some clarity, "So just so I understand you sir, you don't want her to go through the two week seminar?"

Dr. Thiery looks at him, "No, she has already been through most of that anyway, the first time, remember? Anyway, thoroughbreds are born standing. There's no reason to waste anymore time."

Cross smiled at the comparison, "Understood, I will make the proper notes and I will personally assign her to one of the top Candidate classes, perhaps under Dr. Fedor."

He nods, "Yes, perfect fit."

Cross begins to write on his mobile, "I'll arrange it."

Dr. Thiery persists, "She will certainly be challenged there. She will be amongst our top perceiver Candidates."

Cross finishes, "Yes. I think you're right sir; this is a good course of action for Miss Travis. Sink or swim."

Dr. Thiery eyes him knowingly, "She'll rise. This girl's just waiting to be challenged. Chomping at the bit."

He smiles again at the horse comparison, "Yes sir. Thank you for your time sir."

Cross exits the office and returns to his right down the hall. He leaves a brief message with Dr. Tom Hutchinson regarding Sally's arrival, just in case he wants to welcome her.

Sally was running through the wooded path and as the sun glistened through the pine trees the sparkles it offered seemed to illuminate and mark her path. She was now moving forward with the peace and assuredness she hadn't felt in years. She knew when she left France that she was meant to do similar work. She was good at it, and

its purpose stuck to her bones much in the same way a muse would inspire a poet or the way a businessman's gut instinct would seal the deal. Right now, she needed to think deeply and surround herself around others who would challenge her. But the most overwhelming emotion currently was that it felt right. Going to France right now felt very right.

She turned a corner that led to a large clearing. The running was great at Green Mountain National Forest. It was a bit of a drive but Sally would come here about once a month in order to clear her head. She loved the smell of the fresh pine trees and she enjoyed seeing all the pine cones and needles littering the edges of the running trails. There were also plenty of wild flowers and scenic views to enjoy.

She timed it right driving out here. She would usually run for a few miles and then rest and eat some lunch. After an hour or so of waiting for her food to digest, time usually spent reading, she would return to exercising. It was just a great time being alone to contemplate everything.

Earlier she had read some of her father's work in the folders her mom gave her. It was the straight forward kind of stuff she thought she'd find; some teachings and some interpretations of characters in the Bible. Her father thought the way she did but seemed to lack some prophetic insight into the scriptures. It was like Dr. H said. Only a prophetess could have written the paper that got her invited to The Cell because they have the tools and the gift of prophetic insight into the scriptures. Whereas a teacher would grab a Bible and teach, she could grab a Bible and prophesy. Her father was more along the lines of a seasoned teacher.

But his heart was mended into his work. She could see in his writings and by the questions he would ask how emotional he would become within his pursuit of God and the scriptures. He was truly a very zealous man who was in love with the Creator. The love almost seemed to be a consuming love. She would read more, a little at a time or as she felt led. It took her mom eight years so it would probably take her a few if she truly took her time. And she wanted to, because this was very important and she didn't want to rush it.

She was leaving the day after tomorrow. She had already spent the last ten or so days saying goodbye to

Neaven, Clair, her mom and a bunch of other people. It was a gracious time where she and they reminisced about the past but thought of what could be of their futures. Clair hinted about being with Jack in Arizona. She would probably get a job and eventually they would marry. Vermont would feel empty without Clair so that was one positive to her being at France. But with Neaven staying behind she would truly be challenged. One thing that made it easier was Neaven's resolve. He just seemed so inspired about everything, like even though they would be apart, that it was going to be a purposeful and powerful time for each of them. His sturdiness and inner strength regarding the situation often steadied her. He was so confident lately that his attitude somehow balanced her out.

As she narrowed down and around she came upon a straightaway. It was away from the clearing and as her path narrowed she thought about the job she would do in France. It was going to be a tremendous amount of study and discipline. She would again be surrounded by some of the most intelligent people in the world. She didn't quite know how to feel about that. The trail narrowed yet again so she deepened her focus.

The house was decorated and full of jovial people. The music and festivities spoke more of a homecoming party than a goodbye. Sally was leaving tomorrow and her mom and friends were going to bid her a happy farewell and safe passage.

Sally acted surprised as if she hadn't figured it out, "Mexican! How do you guys know these things? I love Mexican food!"

Neaven and Clair weren't really playing along because they were carrying the heavy food, but Clair offers her usual flair, "What are you talking about Sally girl? You eat your weight in Mexican at least twice a month."

"Yeah," Jack adds carrying the last of it, "And who knows where she puts it. If I packed away that many tacos I'd be a linebacker instead of a quarterback."

Sally goes along with their chaffing as she tastes the guacamole, "I don't eat that much, Mexican or otherwise."

Clair finishes the thought, "Sally, you probably eat more than Neaven. And Neaven eats like a horse. Right Neaven, first dinner, second dinner, third dinner, forth dinner..."

Everyone close enough to hear laughed at the candor. Judy had ordered from Sally's favorite Mexican restaurant and it smelt delicious. Sally grabbed Neaven from behind once he set down the food and she just held him tight. She would miss him so much once she was gone, but she would be happy for him that he was doing something for himself. She had thought about the question he raised. Wouldn't he be bored in France? She had to admit that Neaven would probably be miserable there. It was better that he stay here. They were both going to advance on their life pathways only to come together somewhere down the line, just like Jack and Clair had. The two had reminded her and Neaven many times over the last few days, that absence does make the heart grow fonder.

Judy snaps a picture of all of them sitting down eating. She then approaches, "I'm going to miss you honey. The house will feel so alone without you."

Sally swallows her food and rubs her feet against the ground, "I know mom. I'll miss you and everyone else tons. And France will feel so alone without all of you, but, it'll be okay."

Her mom encourages, "Yes Sally. I remember when I went off to college and it was one of the best times of my life. You're going to learn a lot, about life and about yourself."

Clair is still in a jesting mood, "Just watch out for those European men, they can get real fresh real quick."

Sally laughs, "Clair you'll never change."

Clair adds, "Why would I want to?"

Sally takes a stab at it, "Okay smarty pants. How would you even know, have you ever been to Europe?"

Clair shakes her fork in Sally's direction, "Questioning me, are you? To answer your question, no Sally girl, I haven't. But I've meet more of my fair share of horn dog tourists, exchange students and professionals, all European and they like to grab what doesn't belong to them."

Jack laughs because Clair was an extremely good looking woman so he imagined the thought. She finishes,

"And you can always tell when they're around because you can smell them from miles away."

That was over the top. A few of them shouted, "Clair!"

Clair explained, "The cologne, the cologne. They splash that stuff on like they're taking a bird bath. And let me tell you Sally, if you can smell a man from about fifty feet away, there's a good chance he's gonna grab somethin'."

They all shook their heads, wondering perhaps what happened in Clair's childhood that molded her to think the way she did.

Sally smiles toward Neaven and then continues, "Okay Clair, I'll make sure I keep my eyes peeled."

Clair becomes serious, "You'd better, because I won't be around to protect you. So keep your head up and your eyes extremely open."

She stands up and walks over to Sally. They hug and rub each others backs sincerely. Sally then hugs her again and whispers something into her ear. Clair smiles and walks back to sit next to Jack.

After they all finish eating everyone leaves the table except Sally and Neaven. Neaven offers her support, "You'll be safe. All that stuff Clair said was just her way of reminding you how much she loves you and how badly she'll miss you. Everyone is going to miss you, especially me."

Sally makes light, "Neaven, I want to thank you for being so strong lately. You have been steady as a rock these last few weeks and it has helped me immensely."

"Don't mention it."

She continues, "I am actually really impressed with your demeanor. You just seem so solid and focused. It's your new job, isn't it? Plus the way God confirmed things in your life? You're kind of coming into your own."

Neaven became realistic, "You know honey I think it's everything. God has helped me with my resolve by confirming everything but I have just felt more sturdy over the last year or so regarding life in general. It's funny because I have always been a happy go lucky guy but maybe circumstances are calming me down. I've noticed I'm becoming more like my father."

Sally considered his words, "Well your dad's a great guy. Hard worker and very calm and patient."

Neaven wants to know how she's holding up, "How are you? Are you ready and packed?"

She nods, "Everything's ready to go. I even packed Lavender." She smiles, reminding him of the stuffed alligator he won for her on their first date at the fair.

He grabs her hand in remembrance and she continues, "Tomorrow, Mom will drive me to Rutland (Southern Vermont Regional Airport). I have a chartered flight to Burlington International. From Burlington, I go straight to Strasbourg, France."

"Is Dr. H meeting you?"

Sally shrugged her shoulders, "I don't know."

They look at each other for a moment.

Neaven is sad but optimistic, "I will miss you dearly honey. And I will visit you in three months time."

Sally's face reflects his sadness, "I'll be ready. By then I'll be completely settled in, just waiting to see you again."

Neaven reassured her with calm consent, "You'll see me soon."

They hug for a brief period and then leer into each others eyes. Neaven puts his forehead on Sally's and they both slowly shut their eyes. They make the attempt to forever ingrain and capture this moment.

Chapter 4

Cross is waiting in the Mercedes Stretch Limousine BINZ while Cell Military Security escorts Sally off the plane and through airport customs. As Sally approached the car the driver opened the door and Cross filed out. He greeted Sally with a hug and kisses on both cheeks.

"Wow, kisses. Thank you Mr. Lutherant."

Cross steps back and smiles at her, "Great to see you and hear your lovely voice again Miss Travis. You look rested and well."

Sally looked up at him, "I actually slept great on the flight. I am rearing to go."

Cross steps away from the door so Sally could enter. As both get seated and comfortable, Cross speaks to the driver in French and all three cars leave the airport.

Cross begins a candid discussion with her. "Sally, would you like to talk about your internship a bit or do you want to wait until later?"

Sally grabs something to drink, "No. I can talk now."

"Good. Dr. Thiery has assigned you to Dr. Fedor's team. He is currently overseeing a few candidate teams. You will probably rotate for a few weeks until you can settle into one team."

She nods, "Okay."

Cross lowers his gaze, "Sally, normally there is a two week seminar but Dr. Thiery wants you to forgo that and start immediately. It's a bit of an honor but also a test. He's giving you a lot of credit by waiving off these formalities."

Sally adds with a bit of realism, "Sounds familiar."

He meets her there, "Well, you were already cleared last time and actually, since you impressed everyone, this seems the correct course of procession."

She chimes in with agreement, "Perfect."

"Good." Cross grabs some items beside him. "Dr. Hutchinson wanted to be here but was called away at the last minute. He won't be back for a few days."

Sally nods, understanding he is probably extremely busy.

Cross continues, "You're going to stay in the Candidate housing. We built three new wings since you were last here so you're going to be very comfortable. As you probably remember, they are quite nice."

Sally was excited, "They're great. Sora's place was amazing."

"Yes Sora. You'll see her soon too." He thumbs through some files.

Sally adds with eager expectation. "I can't wait. Will I be working with her?"

Cross bethinks. "If I remember correctly, she is running between Dr. Fedor's team and Henryrk's team currently, so you'll work a bit with her, perhaps."

Sally enjoys hearing that news. "When will I actually begin?"

Cross offers her his full attention, "You have the option to start tomorrow if you want. Or you could take a few days to get settled."

Sally had a made up mind, "I'll start tomorrow. I don't want to wait."

He looked at her with a questioning eye, "I have your first assignment with the team here and you can even begin doing some research tonight if you'd like."

He grabs her coursework file and hands it to her. "It's self explanatory."

She takes the file and becomes familiar with it. It has a list of the team members with her name included. She does not see Sora's name on this particular list. Off to the right is an outline of the daily assignments over the next five days, each day with a different topic. It also clearly explains the agenda and preconceived goals per day beginning with research and study, then brainstorming, discussions, and ultimately, Q's and A's.

Cross interrupts her train of thought, "When we get to your accommodation, you can order food or whatever. Everything is the same as it was before. If you need anything press the red button on your phone and a Candidate assistant will ring you back. Your accommodation is already set up with your office including computers and mobile devices. Just read the instructions in the user guides."

Sally is animated, "Wow, I'm excited. Everything is going to be so new and fresh. I feel different than I thought I'd feel Mr. Lutherant. Since I was already here before, I thought I would feel like I was more of a

routine, almost more systematic. But I feel totally different than that. I actually feel like I am coming here for the first time."

Cross remembers her youth, "It should be a very fun time for you. New and exciting. Soak up all you can and remember both Dr. Hutchinson and I are here for you, anytime you need us. Okay?"

Sally nods her head in remembrance, "I remember how helpful you were last time so thank you for your willingness Mr. Lutherant. I can't wait to do this type of work again. It really inspires me."

Cross smiles as the car enters The Compound, "Go ahead and enjoy all you can, you deserve it." He hands her the apartment keys and information. "Keys and pertinent information."

As Sally nears the corner she sees the door to her apartment. She opens her leather mini folder which Cross gave her because it contained her keys. They looked like small credit cards. She inserts the key and the door chimes and a small purple LED light turns bright. The door pops open and Sally walks inside.

It was a beautiful corner apartment, located on the third level. Looking straight ahead it had a balcony that opened right off the main living space. The apartment was an open concept floor plan so it looked very spacious. Over to the left a beautiful fish tank sat against the wall and illuminated it. As Sally walked toward the kitchen she asked the driver to please place her luggage in the main bedroom. She couldn't stop looking at the space, it was just unbelievable. A place like this in Vermont would be upwards to \$700,000 USD. The accommodation boasted two bedrooms with two adjoining full luxury bathrooms. The third room offered a plush office space loaded to the brim with electronic equipment and gadgets. This apartment could comfortably house four to six people.

The kitchen was huge with an island and plenty of space to cook. In fact, all the accommodations at The Cell had spacious kitchens because cooking was a huge activity here. The Candidates were regulated to The Compound so many learned how to cook or found other meaningful hobbies to keep them busy. Sally recalled

Sora enjoyed horseback riding and even opted to take care of the horses in her spare time. Others fumbled around with electronics and computers. Most though became homebodies and learned how to cook and entertain. Hospitality instructors, chefs and wine sommelier's were available who would teach them everything from cooking to food preparation, wine instruction, dinner party information, entertainment and the like. Candidates were permanently on campus so The Cell offered them many options to stay busy and satisfied.

Sally made her way to the back of the apartment as the driver let himself out. She thanked him and he responded in kind. As she walked into the main bedroom she noticed it was huge and so was its bathroom. When she first stayed at her 'castle like' accommodation three years ago, the bedroom was likewise huge. She peeked into the second bedroom and adjacent bath and then went straight into her office. There, on the desk and table was everything she'd need. Three laptops, three tablets, two mobile devices, one of which all candidates were instructed to carry at all times. A book of instructions was supplied for each but Sally only needed to read the user manual for the mobile device she was instructed to carry, she was already savvy regarding the others. The desk also boasted a printer/scanner/fax/copier. On the second shelf was a nice system to play all her music, she would only need to plug in her tablet to access her music files. There was also a TV in the corner with all the accessories she'd need. She noticed her bedroom also boasted a TV which was hidden at the foot of her bed. It would rise if she wanted to watch or lower if she didn't.

She had to remind herself she was hungry because her excitement level was off the charts. She also needed to get going because she would be busy studying the rest of the night. Making her way to the kitchen, she walked to the phone near the dining room table. She remembered this setup. Sally pressed the red button and the phone rang immediately. She picked up.

"Yes Miss Travis."

"Can you connect me with dining please?"

"One moment."

Sally walked over to the fridge and opened it. It was stocked. She noticed to the left of the fridge was an empty wine fridge.

A voice spoke, "This is dining Miss Travis what would you like?"

"Hello, I'd like a hamburger with dinner salad please, no dressing."

"Any dessert?"

Sally noticed her fridge was stocked with a special dessert.

"No thank you."

"We'll be there in fifteen minutes Miss Travis."

"Okay, thank you."

Sally hung up. One of the perks of being a Candidate was twenty four hour room service with full menu, all at no charge. Sally walked back to the fridge and capriciously took out the dessert tray. It was chockfull of pastries and éclairs with a note beside it.

We didn't forget! Glad to have you back!

Signed Dr. Hutchinson, Cross Lutherant and Sora Arpin with a giant burgundy imprinted lipstick kiss that was obviously Sora's doing. Wow, Sally thought as she sat down placing the pastries on the table. I can't wait to get going. She then looked around the room in bewilderment. I really am back.

Dr. Hutchinson is roaming the halls looking for the correct discussion room. He passes by and see's Dr. Fedor. He decides to ask him so he knocks on the door and is waved in.

"Good Morning Saunders. Where can I find Miss Sally Travis?"

"Hello Tom, she's here. In the back." Dr. Fedor points toward the back of the room. Sally's head pops up in the middle of a thought and Tom smiles when he sees her.

He turns back to Dr. Fedor, "Mind if I borrow her till the afternoon?"

"I don't mind at all." Dr. Fedor addresses Sally, "Miss Travis, feel free to join Tom this morning."

Sally looks to the doorway and sees Dr. Hutchinson. She jumps up and grabs her belongings and walks toward the door. The rest of the class is deep in discussions so they barely notice. Sally exits as Dr. Hutchinson

holds the door open. Once in the hall, Sally jumps toward him and embraces him. Dr. Hutchinson laughs and hugs her back.

Sally squeals, "Dr. H. I'm so happy to finally see you."

Dr. Hutchinson puts the side of his head on the top of hers, "I'm happy to see you too Sally. I'm extremely proud of you. That you've made your way back."

Sally pulls away and just looks at him for a moment. Her tremendous smile holds all the words he needs to hear. He smiles back as they begin to walk down the hall.

Dr. Hutchinson makes small talk, "How's your week been?"

She exhales, "It's been such an exciting week and I've met the most interesting people."

He makes light, "Interesting, that's probably one way to put it."

"Well," She looks at him, "Some are more interesting than others. But I am managing."

Dr. Hutchinson envied Sally's youth. He remembered himself at her age. Everything was so new and exciting. He coveted her interest so he followed her rationale with nostalgia.

Sally continued, "This was my fifth day in discussions and I'm starting to get the hang of it. It really feels a lot like your class back at Gladdale."

He met her reasoning, "I modeled all my classes after what I learned here. With students who are enlightened it's more about the students thinking and the teacher guiding those thoughts as opposed to a teacher teaching."

"Exactly." Sally agrees, "Dr. Fedor and the other Candidate instructors don't even teach really. They just encourage us within our study. Sometimes they talk but in most cases the ideas and trains of thought come directly from us Candidates."

As they continue walking away from the exit they approach Dr. Hutchinson's economy vehicle. It was an electric mini car about the size of a smart car. They jump in and head for his accommodation. Once they park and settle down into the kitchen area, they begin talking. Dr. Hutchinson pours the coffee and begins.

"So have you seen Sora?" He asked it with a smile.

With some heavy emphasis Sally answers him, "We've spent every evening together, first eating and then studying; and then usually eating again."

They laugh.

"She has also introduced me to so many new people, some even in my own building."

He was inquisitive, "So how do you like your apartment?"

She became wide-eyed, "What's not to like, it's amazing. I'll probably never live in an apartment like that ever again."

He doesn't know if he should say it but does anyway, "I actually picked it out for you."

Sally sets her coffee down, "No! Really?"

He explains, "Well, I thought it'd be a good idea for me to choose a place at The Compound you'd enjoy. I visited the older wings and after viewing the newer ones I thought it was a no brainer. They're more modern and I figured you'd want a nice view. Most of the available apartments in the older wings were on the first floor."

Sally is taken aback, "Wow, Dr. H hooked me up. Thank you."

"Don't mention it. Plus Sora's wing is kind of adjacent to yours so that worked too."

"See's so close. I also like it that I can see the trail from my balcony. I walk the first half mile because it's rugged and then once the path evens out I run. It's fun and scenic."

He was analytical, "What about the road around The Compound. If I remember correctly, you liked to run that road the last time you were here, didn't you?"

Sally remembered, "Yeah, that was great too. But since I have more time on my hands and I already know The Compound well, I am exploring."

Dr. Hutchinson laughs. This girl's wit and banter were something else, the latter she likely picked up from good ol' Clair.

Dr. Hutchinson brushes his pant leg and changes the subject, "Well, I'm sorry I couldn't be here when you arrived. I wanted to."

Sally swallowed her coffee quickly, "It worked out Dr. H, because I kind of felt thrown into the fire. But I think I needed that actually. I couldn't be happier."

He inquired, "So what do you think so far?"

"Honestly?" Sally became open-minded, "The lifestyle is unbelievable but I can tell the work and study is going to challenge me on many different levels."

"How so?"

"Well..." She shrinks away but then remembers who she's talking to, "...It's not really Christian so I am forced to think outside my usual spiritual box. I don't mind that because I need to be more well rounded for this type of work anyway. Some of the brainstorming discussions are intense and some of the Candidates don't use much empathy or even much of a conscience with regard to their arguments. I had one discussion, with regard to propaganda, and this guy's opinion was like insane."

Dr. Hutchinson snickers.

"I mean, he's like," And she mimics The Candidates voice, "'yeah, it's great these people can be controlled and brainwashed so easily.'"

Dr. Hutchinson shakes his head, "What did you say to that?"

She looked at him meekly but honestly, "We had it out a bit but then I realized some people here are not very open to certain social ideas or values. They are not very ideological. They twist stuff and even blindly back some of the horrible, outdated systems and rationales of thought. If you're the type of person who is willing to call good evil and evil good then I can't say anything to you."

Dr. Hutchinson helps her, "Sally, you're sharp as a tack. It might take others a month to learn what you learned in a week. Remember, you're not here to win arguments, especially with those types of Candidates. Let the discussions happen and eventually, the cream will rise to the top."

She recollected, "Yeah. He has tried to goad me a few other times, but I just ignored him."

"Good. Maybe he likes you?"

Sally just shook her head, "And, you know, little things like that but I think in a few months I will be at full stride. I am keeping my mouth shut and observing more so I can learn exactly what I'm supposed to do here. I want to be a good Candidate and not just someone with skills who has potential. I can actually see myself taking more of a back seat the way some of the seasoned Candidate instructors do. It seems the mouthy ones, like that one guy, only add more questions and confusion. I

never see much in the way of solutions or answers from any of them."

Dr. Hutchinson nodded, "You're correct. He sounds like a devils advocate type who simply hasn't become seasoned or secure yet. If you remember, back in Vermont, I played that role more than a few times."

She affixed her view to his observation, "Yes, but yours got results."

He nodded knowingly, "You have to be willing to evolve, and he might be stubborn. He also might need more seasoning. I'm sure Dr. Fedor will eventually call him on it. Sally, I've learned the most helpful guy or gal in the room says little but when they do open up, their comments are usually profound and timely. That is usually the secure person who knows their place and who understands discussion. But, that doesn't mean the others are not needed. Imagine if everyone were like that, quiet and secure, you'd have no discussion."

Sally's eyes became dovelike, "Your right Dr. H. That makes a lot of sense. He talks more than everyone but I can imagine him not saying much and the conversations might be very stale and unimaginative. His methodical thinking inspires me to dig deeper and to think more independently."

Dr. Hutchinson nods with understanding, "Exactly. Different personalities are needed to spurn discussions and even to agitate from time to time. Even though some personalities are more difficult to relate to, but that also becomes a personality issue with regard to those who are not willing to relate to those with difficult personality types. Think tanks have much more to do with the actual discussions than they do just 'smart people.' Sometimes smart people don't do well here because they can't communicate, express themselves or even learn from others on a willing basis, regardless of personality types. So, judge rightly Sally but always remember mercy because there are many in's and out's you'll need to consider and then reconsider time and time again."

Sally was beside herself with his explanation, "Once again you understand Dr. H. What I was still trying to figure out, you already knew. Can we do this like once a week; keeping me up to par and everything?" She laughed and drank her coffee.

He knew she was joking, "How has the entire 'prodigy' thing worked out, especially since you were

offered the Primary Seat already?" His question held more emphasis than the others.

Sally shrugs, "You know me Dr. H, I don't think that way about myself. This has always been more of a burden than a blessing. But Sora has told me some. She just told me not to take offense because a few Candidates have quietly voiced that I got lucky or it was because The Cell was desperate for an agitator and so because of my connection with you, I got an easy in."

He looked at her, "What do you think?"

She shrugged her shoulders, "I agree..." She then adds outspokenly, "...If they weren't looking for an agitator I would have never been called and if I didn't know you I would have never been invited. I did get an easy in. I also think there was luck involved."

Dr. Hutchinson kept quiet.

"So I am just going to keep my head down and do my work. I will let my future speak for itself. I will not even focus on the past, unless I must."

His facial expression changed drastically, "Now tell me what you really think."

Sally looked upon him genuinely. She remembered pleasantries were sometimes not realistic when getting to the root of the matter. She tries it again, "I did get lucky and it was an easy in but God arranged it that way for a reason. I don't expect others to see it but that's how I see it. I also did a good job the two weeks I was here and it wasn't easy, that I promise you. I had to obey God even in an area where I didn't want to. On a carnal level, I wanted that seat even though in retrospect I shouldn't have received it. God used me powerfully in a prophetic manner because I chose to remain spiritually minded rather than carnally minded. It was His Will you be highlighted at the end, and that frame of mind did not come from me, it was completely spiritual. It's not easy to obey in that area, especially if you covet something for yourself. It becomes more difficult to spiritually discern in that place, and I felt that struggle in the days leading up to my Stand Up. Had I not remained in the correct spiritual frame of mind, taking on the mind of Christ rather than my own mind, I would have probably missed it entirely."

Sally bites her tongue before she continues again, "I think the truth lies somewhere in-between... so there's truth to what they say but also a lot of truth in what

they're not saying. I see what happened back then and I don't see it with regard to Primary Member or Candidate Member or Cell Member or anything like that, but simply God choosing me and using me. So it's kind of an inaccurate question Dr. H." Sally laughs at the thought and takes a swig of her coffee.

"Inaccurate?" Dr. Hutchinson lifts one eyebrow because he knew it was Sally's Modus Operandi to vividly point out inaccurate questions.

Sally answers him, "Yes, because although God called a prodigy, he used a Christian. That's how I see it."

"Elaborate."

She swallows more coffee and addresses him, "You're initial question was the 'prodigy' question in relation to what people thought. I see what happened here three years ago as God using a Christian, a disciple of Christ. Yes I might be a prodigy but that's putting the cart before the horse in my opinion. I felt like more of an obedient Christian standing up before The Cell then I did a prodigy. So when you see it that way there isn't much substance to people contemplating 'the prodigy question' with regard to what happened three years ago or even today. I don't see it the way they do and I'm the one who lived it. A lot went out the door when I stood before that panel three years ago and what remained was God's calling on an obedient Christian."

"Sally." Dr. Hutchinson elicits, "That is a wonderful and humble response, and I agree with all of it. I will only add many people will be jealous of you because they don't believe the way you do. You have a 'knowing' that you belong; whereas others are probably still trying to prove it to themselves. And Sally, there is quiet confidence and an authority in your knowing, and people likely misread it. They don't understand you, so they probably justify themselves by judging you."

He gets detailed, "Because you're a Christian, that 'knowing' is the result of a pruning of your faith and belief, as well as His calling on your life which has ultimately become the burden of which you speak, and trust me it all translates. Whereas others who are not Christian will wrestle with their gifts and talents in conjunction with The Cell, and that will become their 'knowing.' Yours has more to do with the burden you hold and the faith entrusted to you by God, and your

accountability regarding both. It's a job to them, but it's a calling to you, and one you must obey. So although the same efforts and emotions apply, it's a different resolve altogether. That resolve will be praised by few and persecuted by many."

Sally understood because it was a profound concept.

She asked him a question, "So, the fact God the Father is pruning me plus the burden of the call makes it different for me? It makes it more like my duty, almost like a soldier's duty?"

"Sally," Dr. H continues the thought, "It makes it entirely different for you. Because you're not trying to prove it to yourself or operate so much in the flesh, then the translation becomes different for you. It reveals itself as duty and authority and those were the qualities Dr. Thiery and the others saw in you and why they offered you that tenth seat. You have an authority via your burden and your God given faith that others will not have, and because God the Father has pruned you to stand in that burden and faith, you're secure there even though you're young. It's as vast a difference as the ocean is to the land, the electrical is to the mechanical and the spirit is to the flesh. Their both useful, only different, and on several levels. God backs and honors the spiritual but chooses to use the flesh as well. It's not my opinion, it's just what the Bible declares and how it works. Just remember, a dolphin is not going to jump onto land and agree with a tiger and a tiger isn't going to take a dip in the ocean and agree with a dolphin. You're different Sally so everything that becomes translated will be interpreted differently."

Sally takes it all in, "Wow, you made it clear. That makes sense."

He finishes, "So when you hear of people berating you or anything remember that perspective and find your peace. Your job is different because it's not your job, it's your burden and God's calling on your life. Therefore, the conversion and translation is different, the motivations are most likely different and the overall resolve is different. An example might be like when someone does something just so they can get something back. At the root of that action, selfishness becomes the motivation. Whereas someone else does the same exact thing because they view it as the right thing to do, now grace has become their motivation. The same exact

action, but very different motivations. It's a crude analogy and doesn't fully apply to the difference between a job vs. a burden slash calling but you get the idea. It proves how motivations, translations and resolves can be very different even when the same action or choice is applied."

Sally's eyes flicker with the insight, "I understand Dr. H. I can see it even clearer now. I need to stay true to my roots, and since I am a born again Christian, I believe my purpose, as you say, is different. And you expounded on what I said previously because that is exactly what it felt like three years ago. I was a Christian standing before that panel, not a prodigy. When God shows up, everything else becomes a distant second. So your words right now confirm so much of what I have been mulling over. I will run with that perspective more securely now Dr. Hutchinson, thank you. My outlook has already begun to change."

He is glad he was able to help her, "Good Sally. You are truly spiritually gifted and you have all the tools; in wisdom, knowledge, spiritual understanding and the like. You have so much to offer us so don't allow land animals to stumble you up."

She smiles at the comparison as he concludes, "Just glide over the waters like the dolphin you are and don't let anything or anyone deeply affect you. Obey God and do His Will and He will prosper your learning."

Chapter 5

Sora Arpin is at the stalls using a body brush to clean one of her favorite Camargue horses 'Ballet.' The gray mare was a beautiful sight to behold, a bit on the small side but had a narrow coarse head giving way to a sturdy muscular body. A tall thick mane rounded out her straight upright shoulders. It was Sora's therapy to come down here and take care of the horses. The Cell had fine stables and a staff to perform the majority of the work but Sora didn't mind spending time next to the same horses she rode on a weekly basis.

In fact, many of the prominent guests who would visit The Compound or who were on assignment were encouraged to take a ride on one of these magnificent animals. Sora would sometimes even chaperone. Sally was walking down and saw Sora afar off. As she neared the stables and could smell the surroundings and a smile rose on her face. It was humble work taking care of the horses, no doubt, but if you loved the horses then you loved the work. At least that's what Sora told her.

Sora had become her best friend in France since she arrived last month. The two were practically inseparable. Sally believed Sora was possibly going out of her way in an effort to make her feel so at home, but she didn't mind all the extra attention. And it wasn't because they had a lot in common in terms of hobbies or activities. Whereas Sora loved to shop and spend time with the horses Sally enjoyed exercise and quiet meditation and relaxation. What ultimately brought them together was their zest for life. Their unquenchable spirits complemented and motivated each other. Sora looked up as Sally approached.

"Hey girl!"

"Hey Sally love, cold today isn't it?"

"It is. I was surprised to see you out here."

"I came for a ride but it's too brisk outside so I thought I'd do some hard work to get the blood flowing. It keeps me warm and this gal right here loves the attention."

Sora was using long strokes to brush the animal but only after she cleaned the hair with a quick motion up and down.

Sally was curious, "Is this your favorite?"

Sora shook her head and smiled, "They're all my favorite Sally, but we get along most beautifully, don't we?" She grabbed the mare's face and rubbed her nose against it, "This is one I simply couldn't live without."

"She's beautiful."

Sora acknowledged, "Her name is 'Ballet,' and the crew knows by now with regard to this particular beauty, I'm in charge." She continued to work, "Sally, would you like to try?"

"Sure."

Sora picked up the mane comb and showed her how to use it. Sally noticed the comb would be easier than the body brush.

Sora continued, "Camargue horses have thick and long manes, so this comb is a good tool for this particular breed."

Sally grabs the comb and mimics Sora's example. She uses it to clean and fluff the mane. The horse responds positively with a brush against Sally's arm.

"She likes you," Sora says matter or factly, "That was her way of saying hello."

Sally continued to comb the hair, "Hello 'Ballet,' you seem to have a nice temperament."

Sora reasoned, "These breeds do, but this one can be a bit *feisty*." She says it with a churning of her nose.

Sally giggles, "That reminds me of someone I know."

Sora quits working and looks directly at her, "Oh really, who'd that be."

Sally doesn't even look her direction, "That'd be you."

Sora was quick to exchange, "Or you love, what about your no-nonsense manner. You're the oldest shrimp I know."

Sally laughs, "I'm not a shrimp." Sally looks her up and down, "And you're not much bigger than me."

"You're a cute little shrimp Sally love, that's who you are."

Sally adds, "Interesting how we get along with pets or animals that are like us but usually not with people. If a person is a lot like us we tend to judge but if it's an animal, we fall in love."

Sora quits working again, "Woman, do you ever stop thinking?"

Sally shrugs, "Use it or lose it. That's what I say."

Sora peers out of the corner of her eye, "You need to lose some of it. You might make sense but that doesn't mean you're not annoying."

Sally gasps, "Sorrraaaa."

"I'm kidding love, just kidding." Sora resumes working, "You're not annoying Sally just... different."

Sally gives her a facial expression of her own. Sora was as rare as they came.

They continued, "So then, I guess... since we're in the thinking mood, the reason we get along so well is because we're opposites. Opposites attract, that sort of thing?"

Sally concurs, "Yes. I think we get along because we're so different and we're from different sides of the world?"

Sora adds humor, "Yes, I think if I exercised as much as you we'd stop jogging together and begin to race each other, and then we'd eventually end up resenting one another."

Sally added, "Or if I rode with you we'd eventually reach some open field or winery and we'd race."

"I have the solution," Sora quips, "You go ahead and run and I'll ride 'Ballet' here and whoever wins, that's the end of talking about such matters."

Sally continued working, "That'd be the end of it?"

Sora turned in Sally's direction, "Sure, then I can have my bragging rights and that'd be the end of it."

"Okay."

"Okay what?"

Sally adds frankly, "Okay, lets race."

Sora drops her brush to her side, "You can't be serious?"

"No, I am serious. But I don't only jog, I exercise. I also enjoy swimming. So let's race, but in the pool."

Sora begins to laugh and she slightly bends over. She then points a finger and straightens herself out. "Sally love, you're one tough cookie."

Sally kept brushing, "Oh it's all in fun. Whistle while you work. We have to spice things up on this Compound just to keep it interesting."

"Isn't that the truth? That reminds me; I wanted to ask you if you were interested in coming with me off Compound next week?"

"Off Compound?"

"Yes," Sora quits working and walks toward her, "You're allowed, you just need permission but I think they'd definitely give it to you."

"Where?"

"I'm going to Paris, kind of where we went last time."

Sally thinks to herself. She would love to go off Compound, but it wasn't a guarantee for Candidates. She also wanted to visit Germany since she hadn't gone before.

Sora had Sally's full attention so she walked toward her, "I want to go but we get so few opportunities to go off Compound I kind of wanted to visit Germany."

Sora shook her head, "The problem with that Sally is we are only allowed a day pass and one day is no good for visiting Germany, unless you want to go opposite Strasbourg which is basically just another Strasbourg but on the Germany side. Much of that culture has already permeated across the boarder so if you've been to Strasbourg, you've been to that side of Germany."

"Oh yeah..." Sally thinks to herself, "I kind of assumed a longer day was possible. So you can't see much?"

Sora shook her head no, "That's assuming they'd even let you go. Crossing the boarder for us at The Cell is kind of a big deal, so you would need extra clearance. Paris is the preferred destination for the Candidates who get a one day pass."

Sally questioned, "Do you already have yours?"

"Yup. So you would need to get yours ASAP. Talk to Dr. Fedor tomorrow and ask for his approval. If he says yes, come to me and I'll take you to that office because I've been there many times. You're with him next week aren't you?"

"Yeah," Sally responded, "the shuffling is done and I am now permanent in that grouping. And even if he is gone next week he is still who I need to ask since he is the head of the group. Isn't that correct?"

"Correct, the Candidate instructors would need to ask Dr. Fedor on your behalf."

Sally decides, "Sooo..., I'll ask him first thing tomorrow."

Sora returns to brushing, "Great, it'll be just like old times."

Sally become more interested as she got back to combing, "What will we do there?"

Sora walked away from Sally, to the front of the horse, "It's up to us. I have ordered plenty of clothes and makeup so I need to pick those things up," Sally laughs, "And of course there is that matter of The Bibliothèque nationale de France, a library I must visit. I have an appointment with one of the lead researchers there. She has been assisting me for the past month, doing some busywork for me. She has emailed me notes and I will need to go over them with her for about an hour or two just for clarity. We'll actually do that first and get it out of the way then we'll have the rest of the day and evening for ourselves."

Perfect Sally thought. She would love to visit the National Library of France. She'll bring her dad's folders and catch up, "That actually sounds great, and I've wanted to visit that library."

Sora again stops working and turns to face Sally, "It's a great modern Library Sally. Who knows, you might meet a cute guy?"

Sally shows her a wry face, "A cute guy, I already have a cute guy."

Sora shakes her head in amusement, "Just for talking Sally, geez... live a little."

Sally becomes serious again as she combs through the mare, "Hey, I'll ask tomorrow and call you immediately if I get the approval. Then we'll go to that office."

Sora smiles at Sally's initiative, "Perfect. I can't wait."

Sally is tapping her fingers as her laptop boots up. She can't wait to get on Skype so she can see and talk to Neaven. They commonly scheduled two dates a week, Wednesday and Saturday. She would have to stay up till 12:00 am but it was a small price to pay to spend some extra time with him. His smiling face appeared.

She squealed, "Neavennn..."

He laughed, "Sally sweetheart. How are you doing?"

She was delighted, "Great. Neaven honey, it's so good to see your face. I've missed you so much."

Sally then noticed his attire, "Wow, you look great!"

Neaven looked at his shirt, "Yeah, I decided to dress up like we were on a real date."

"How thoughtful," She gushed. "You're so sweet Neaven, how'd you get so sweet?"

His face held a snide look, "Practice. I was at work and I thought of how much I missed you and how badly I wanted to see you. I then thought of how awesome it would be to go on an actual date with you tonight so I figured we'd do just that."

Sally looked on him with desire, "Well, you look dashing and I wish we could go on that date tonight."

He asked, "Where would you chose, you're choice?"

She smiled, "Easy, Mexican. That's one food style that is lacking here in France. I would give anything for a real taco back home with some homemade guacamole on the side."

Neaven changed the subject, "Well, how's it been?"

Sally took a drink of water, "Things are going smoothly. Remember, I'm going to Paris Friday with Sora?"

Neaven cuts in, "Right."

Sally shrugged her shoulders, "And it should be a great time. It'll be a long day but worth it."

Neaven recollected, "The drive is long, isn't it?"

Sally nodded, "Yes. But I remember the drive last time and it wasn't so bad. The drive offers wonderful views of France. Plus, Sora is a ball of laughs so the time will probably fly by."

Neaven looks upon her, "Good, be safe."

Sally has a sure look on her face as she answers him, "We have a driver and four military service guards escorting us at all times. So I'm probably safer here in France than you are in Vermont."

Neaven nodded. All that protection helped him not worry so much. Even though Sally was far away, she was safe.

Sally continued, "Don't worry Neaven, I am very, very safe."

Neaven backed off the camera in a prideful way, "I know honey, I just sometimes say what I'm thinking. How have the discussions gone, anything new or interesting?"

Sally leans back, "You know, I was going to talk about that last time. It's really different because I am noticing their entire program, at least the one I'm in for beginners, is not really about figuring things out or answering questions but learning how to think differently and approach things differently, also dealing with different personality types."

Neaven lets on like he's following her train of thought.

She continues, "It's like a tennis player that has a ton of potential and all the sudden a great instructor says, 'you're a budding prospect, let me have a few years to tweak your techniques and teach you all about the game and then you can take your talent and make better use of it. So then, during that two years, they just talk about the game and the techniques but rarely play.

"I feel like I am not even hitting a ball right now, I am learning about the game itself and all about the different techniques and frames of mind I will need to hit that ball. I am also learning about the thinking processes in general as well as the job we're supposed to do here. But the idea of answering questions and basically figuring things out, no; that is not what we're doing currently."

Neaven follows, "So you're almost like in a classroom learning about tennis and technique and not even playing at all? You're not answering questions your learning how a proper Think Tank operates?"

"Exactly," Sally offers, "We are learning how to be a part of a think tank. We have discussions but the goal is to think differently, question differently and most importantly, get along with others who have different personalities and who go about things very differently. No one really cares if you have a good opinion about something because everyone here is knowledgeable. It is all about how you are soaking up the training. I am told this is what all Candidates go through at the beginning so all great thinkers can utilize the same techniques and have the same foundation to start from. Once that is solid then whatever gifts or talents we have can shine here because we are all starting on the same page."

"Kind of like basic training in the Army." He offers, "Everyone must do it in order to learn and appreciate the chain of command. It makes sense."

Sally appreciates the comparison, "Yeah, exactly. It was kind of a wake up call but when you think about it, they can't just have a whole bunch of gifted individuals all trying to jockey for attention or trying to solve everything independently. It's more about a team effort, almost like an assembly line way of thinking. All Candidates are a part of that machine. Now I totally understand more clearly why they needed an agitator three years ago, they were missing that aspect of the machine. Everyone will eventually have different jobs but all the same purpose. Like when you build a car on an assembly line, not everyone does the upholstery. Some do the fenders, others, the engine... Another does the paint, but all for the same car. What they have in common is they are all mechanical when it comes to building that car. All us Candidates think logically but we come from different fields. We need certain aspects in us to be broken down until we can all learn one process or one method. That is really what they are teaching my group right now and it's one hundred percent of our focus."

Neaven inquired, "How new are the other Candidates in your group?"

Sally recalled, "I am the newest but we have three less than six months and all the others less than a year. Essentially, all of us are just beginning. It takes time. For some, longer than others. I have been here a month and I can see it will take over a year for me to grasp this stuff. It took Sora about two years. A lot of it is based on psychology and sociology. It revolves around the different personalities and emotional baggage we hang onto because these Think Tanks don't operate well outside of a synergistic group. It becomes a huge part of the training because all the monkey wrenches need to be addressed and worked out of us. The psychological factors are really prominent once you see them for what they are. I wouldn't normally do this type of training but I now understand for a Think Tank environment it is necessary. It's like a gardener putting on gloves when eradicating thorn bushes. Without the gloves, he would pierce his hands and slow himself down immensely. These techniques need to be adhered to when participating in a

serious Think Tank environment. Without them, we'll just be tripping over ourselves ignorantly and ultimately slowing the process down. At the end of the day, when you think about it, that is characteristically what an assembly line is used for, more efficient building. You can build without one but ultimately, it is far less efficient."

Sally and Neaven continue talking for about an hour. The time passes effortlessly and outside the apartment, the wind swirls. Sally can hear the soft voice of the wind touching the windows all around her third level balcony. She could see the moon, beautiful and accenting the hills with a vibrant glow that also partly illuminated the grass and wildflowers. The entire spectacle created a beautiful background and it inspired her as she spoke with Neaven.

France was a majestic place that seemed almost timeless to her. When she was here, it was as if she were on God's time. She was currently in an amazing atmosphere talking to an amazing boyfriend and in two days she would be in one of the most beautiful and respected cities in the world. Things had truly come full circle for her. Her emotions were absorbing and then cleaving onto her new found reality. It was time for her to relax and to take it all in.

She was packed and ready go. Off to Paris tomorrow with Sora and her credit cards, Sally laughed at the thought. She would need to go to sleep around 6:00 pm so she could wake up and leave at 4:30 am. That would not be a problem since she had been sleeping beautifully ever since she arrived.

She decided to thumb through one of her fathers folders. She would be reading even more tomorrow at the library but wanted to glance over a few things that had already revealed their significance. She took out some papers that were amazing actually. They were of a dream her father had and subsequently, the contents of that dream. The first page described the dream in detail and the second page was a computation of numbers. A sequence of numbers relating to the alphabet with multiples of 6. A = 6, B = 12, C = 18... Z = 156. According to this pattern, you were able to apply certain words with a

numerical value. What was interesting was on the bottom of the page, it had one word equaling a certain number. The handwritten line looked like this:

Computer = 666

She computed the numbers for herself and indeed, the word 'computer' did equal 666. Her father had the dream in early 1994, about two years before he died. He also had some liner notes at the bottom of the second page. The name Dr. Milton Hamill with an address and phone number. Then, scribbled underneath in her father's handwriting yet with a different pen, was a contact for an assistant at the same number. The name, Cuinn Alexander. It was written almost as if he was rushed when he wrote Cuinn's name, but it certainly was his writing. Sally had already searched for the name Dr. Hamill and saw he was a retired University professor. He was a former professor at the University of California at Berkeley. He was a respected computer scientist. A search for Cuinn Alexander yielded nothing. She thought perhaps, once she finished reading all of her fathers folders, she might contact Dr. Milton Hamill and ask him some questions. Namely, did he know her father? But that was not interesting right now. The most interesting thing was the fact her father did receive some powerful dreams and visions and one of them was a huge clue with regard to 666, which was the numerical value of The Beast out of the Sea, the son of perdition who we refer to as the antichrist.

She thumbed through the papers again and put them back into the folder. She would have time tomorrow to read and reflect on these pages. But now she needed to sleep. Sleep was the most important factor so she could be well rested. Tomorrow was going to be an exciting, valuable day. She dropped the folder next to her backpack and went into her bedroom. After brushing her teeth and getting ready for bed she turned off the light and went to sleep.

"I can't wait to check out all my new booty." Sora was beaming and her smile lit up the cab of their vehicle.

Sally knew exactly what Sora was referring to. All the clothes, shoes and makeup she would drag home tonight on their way back to The Compound. Sora then added, "Yeah, and of course, I've got something for you too."

Sally was looking out the window, "Sora you didn't have to do that."

Sora rebuked her, "Hogwash Sally, the moment I learnt you were coming back I went straight to my tablet and purchased you a gift from one of my favorite stores here in Paris."

Sally looked at her with slight intimidation, "Sora, you spoil me."

Sora gazed with self esteem beaming, "That's what Paris is all about silly, spoiling yourself and others. And with great hope and dedication I am going to continue to bring you to this city so it will one day rub off on you."

Sally added realistically, "I love the city Sora; I'm just not a huge shopper."

Sora adds with pleasure, "We'll change that."

Sally asks a question, "What if Sora, by you hanging out with me, that you actually end up shopping less."

The words didn't even leave Sally's lips before Sora broke out into a gaudy laugh. "Good luck with that one Sally. My mother taught me well. I was brought up with it. When most people were in church or watching football on the telly we were at Harrods burnin' up the plastic."

Sally giggles, "Sora you're too much."

Sora rolls down the privacy partition and speaks to the driver in French. They have a small conversation then the window rolls up.

"We're almost there Sally. We are within city limits."

"Yeah, I can see that. Are we going to the Library first?"

Sora gets her things ready, "Yup. We should be less than two hours."

After about twenty minutes the two cars pulled up to the library. Sally looked at all four structures and they were bigger than she had imagined. They resembled four large 'L' shaped buildings.

Sora pointed, "We're going into that building right there." The driver got out and opened the door and both

filed out. Sally took a deep breath and smelt Paris for the first time in three years. It smelt wonderful.

Sora was antsy, "Let's get a move on Sally love. I want to get in and out."

Sally understood, "Sure thing."

Both ladies walk toward the building while four male military Security guards follow closely behind. Two circle in front of them before they reach the entrance and they open the doors.

One guard immediately flashes a badge and asks to speak to the lead manager and the lead technician, both of whom he knew by name. The manager comes out from behind the doors.

"Yes, we've been expecting you. Please follow me and I will take you to our lead technician and Head of security."

One guard follows the man while the other three stay behind.

One of the guards speaks to Sora, "I will follow you to the third level to meet with the researcher." He looks at another guard, "And you can escort Miss Sally Travis to wherever she would like to go."

He then told the last guard to stay put until the first guard returned.

Sora addressed Sally, "Okay Love, I'll see you in two hours."

Sally smiled, "Can't wait, have fun researching!"

As they left Sally knew the routine so she turned to the guard assigned to her, "I just need a quiet place to study."

Sally's guard walked over to a librarian and had a quick conversation. Sally could see the librarian pointing and offering instructions.

Her guard returned, "There is a quiet reading and study area on the second floor, or would you prefer a higher level?"

Sally reasoned, "No, that's fine."

Sally just stood waiting for her guard to work through his procedures. The guard finally returned and beckoned Sally to follow him to the elevator. Once inside, they went to the second level.

They walked down the hall and Sally decided to walk past the first study room just to explore. She noticed there was another smaller room and a few book shelves and

beyond that, an even smaller and quaint room. It was perfect.

She turned and spoke to her guard, "This is ideal, I'll study here. Thank you."

She pulls out a chair and sits down. This room was proper. Located on a wing of the second level, it was isolated and far removed from everything and everyone else. She thought she was fortunate to find it. There were only a few others in the room and it was cordoned off by a large bookshelf behind her. Her guard stood beside the opening as he took out a paper and began reading. It looked to her like he was reading the sports page of a newspaper. Every once and awhile he would speak and hold his earpiece. The table where she sat was long and was constructed of dark mahogany. It faced windows that were tinted with a light blue hue. The windows made the room appear brighter than it actually was.

She took out her folder and spread a few of the pages across the desk. After she had been studying for about forty minutes, a man who seemed to be an employee tapped the other readers on the shoulder one at a time. They each gathered their belongings and left. Sally was waiting for a tap herself but the employee just ignored her and upon exiting, spoke to her guard in French. She couldn't hear much but heard her guard mutter in French 'thank you' as the employee walked away.

A couple of minutes later her guard turned around and began talking with someone. Sally then heard a weird noise. It grabbed her attention because it sounded like a thud or collapse. Like someone dropped a huge backpack. She kept waiting for her guard to come back but her mind was put at ease because she could still hear them talking. She turned around and continued reading. As she did, she noticed the talking stopped but she heard footsteps return back to the corner. Good, she thought to herself, her guard was now back. She sensed him approaching but before she could look up and turn around she saw a piece of paper slide across the desk and hit her hand. Her heart stopped, but upon examining the paper it nearly exploded in her chest. Adrenalin coursed through her veins and her heart began to palpitate because something was definitely wrong. She turned to see the back of a man walking away and it wasn't her guard.

"Oh my God." Sally in a panic looked around for him but he was nowhere to be found. She saw another man standing slightly back from where her guard first stood.

The man whose back faced her spoke, "Please, remain quiet Miss Travis and read the paper I placed beside you."

Her hand was trembling so she couldn't grab the paper but she saw some writing on the bottom. It looked to be an identical copy of the paper she was currently reading. It was her fathers 666 calculation dream. How was this even possible, she thought? It seemed to be the same paper but a rough copy. It even had the same scribbles on the bottom in her father's handwriting, with the names Cuinn Alexander and Dr. Milton Hamill.

He attempts to assure her, "I'm not your enemy Miss Travis. Far from it, I'm actually on your side."

Once her hand began trembling less she clutched the paper and looked closer. She compared the two side by side. It was a dead ringer, an exact copy of her fathers. But how, how did he get it?"

He spoke again, "Please Miss Travis, do not make a sound or move because the guard has already been subdued."

Sally froze in fear. Her body literally froze and she stiffened up. Her hands clinched into fists and she felt her body grow cold.

The man hadn't turned around yet. He was at the end of the table facing the wall. Sally slowly came to her wits.

She tried to speak but it took a few moments. "Who are you?"

The man turned and walked toward the window but then turned in Sally's direction instead. He then faced her.

"My name is on that paper Miss Travis."

"Cuinn?"

He smiles, "Why not Dr. Hamill?"

She was scared but answered anyway, "You're not old enough."

"That's true," He admits as he continues walking opposite her. "You're father gave me that paper and we talked extensively regarding it, some..." He waves his hand, "...years ago."

He turns to look her right in the eye, "But don't worry Miss Travis, we'll get to that shortly."

Sally felt something cold touch and then pinch the back of her neck and everything went black.

Chapter 6

As Sally slowly came to she took hold of the coarse blanket and moved it to the side. She was groggy and it felt like she had slept for a week. The bed was extremely unfamiliar to her.

"She's up." Sally heard someone yell.

She couldn't open her eyes but could make out a hazy impression of someone seated in a chair about five feet away. She then heard a door open and the footsteps of others entering. She felt a prick in her arm and realized she was given another shot but was too out of it to resist. Then, very quickly, she became much more alert. Her blurred eyesight and headache were subsiding and she felt a sudden burst of energy. Leaning up, she could now see four people clearly. The man seated looked to be a soldier type and was holding a large machine gun. There were two people dressed in white lab coats and then there was the man she saw at the library.

He spoke, "They just gave you something to counteract the drug we administered at the library. Your body should be cleared of both by nightfall. Are you hungry?"

Sally tried to focus, "Where am I?"

He motioned for the two doctors and guard to exit. After they did, he resumed, "If you don't recall Miss Travis, my name is Cuinn Alexander, and we already briefly met at the library. I asked them to leave because it is very important you begin trusting me. I promise you Miss Travis, no harm will befall you in this place. I want you to feel as though we are still back in the library and you and I just met and we are having a polite conversation. I want you to feel safe and secure."

Sally looked around and offered bluntly, "You kidnapped me and now you want me to feel safe?"

He met her directness, "Just because we took you doesn't mean we intend to harm you. Kidnapping isn't necessarily bad; it is the motives as to why we kidnapped you that make our actions either necessary or unnecessary."

Sally asked him forthrightly, "Have you ever been kidnapped?"

He was a bit taken with her manor, "No, I haven't"

She held the back of her head because it hurt, "Try it sometime."

He smirked and looked down. "Point taken. You'll learn in due time we mean you no harm. In fact, such an action would contradict what we're trying to do here."

"What about Sora, my friend, and what about the guards?"

He answered her, "They're fine. Our securities teams both physical and technical ran a smooth operation. We dismantled the security in the library and then we went in. We took the guard out with the same injection we gave to you so at this precise moment he is probably coming to. The other three guards were not touched and neither was your friend Sora. You were our only target and objective. Everyone else we ignored."

Sally's curiosity got the better of her, "Who are you?"

He looked on her slyly, "We'll get to that." He then began to pace.

"How long was I out?"

He spoke colorlessly, "You've been in our possession for nearly twenty-four hours."

Sally became stubborn, "How did you take me? The Cell has good security?"

He seemed annoyed at her simplicity, "Perhaps back at The Compound the Cell has good security, but four guards off Compound aren't enough. But I'll break it down for you. We swept the entire floor, all the way past the elevators so by the time we had you in our possession we were able to make our way seamlessly back inside the service elevators and into the basement where we had cars waiting. We easily dismantled their security cameras, eyes in the sky so to speak, so when we carried you out no one even knew we had taken you."

Sally remembered the man dressed as an employee who tapped everyone, except her, on the shoulder.

She asked him straightly, "So that wasn't an employee who cleared the people out?"

He shook his head, "No, he's one of us. He also took out your guard and then administered the shot in your neck. We had four men in total clearing all the way past the elevators. It was a simple yet efficient operation. Our people had all the necessary library identification, badges and uniforms. We also had another technical team on the outside that interrupted their

security cameras and also placed detailed information of our employees on their servers. That library has over three hundred employees so no one was the wiser. It was the perfect location to implement our plan. It wasn't crowded early in the morning and the security was simple to control and bypass. The only possible mishap would have been them assigning more than one guard to you. Luckily for them that didn't happen."

Sally became agitated, "Why am I here?"

He barely held up one hand, "Miss Travis. We are going to get to that but first why don't you eat. Through that door," He points to a door at the foot of the bed, "Is a washroom and changes of clothes. Don't try to leave because this door..." He points to the door he just entered, "...will remain locked and there will always be a guard stationed outside. If you need anything, knock and calmly step away. Once you have cleaned up he will bring you your food."

She became anxious, "No. Tell me why I'm here." She then glared at him.

He lifted up his hand again, "I promise, once you eat, I will come back and we will talk. You will have your answers then." He didn't even allow her a response. He quickly exited and then disappeared down the hall.

Sally put her hands on her face and began to cry. It was a bitter and harsh howl. She was frightened and became overwhelmingly fearful. She had never felt these emotions before. They were more powerful than she thought she could bear. After about five minutes she slowly got up and opened the door to the washroom. She went to the sink and splashed some water on her face, to clear the tears. She kept doing it until nearly half of her sweatshirt was drenched.

She spoke to herself calmly in the mirror, "Wake up Sally, wake up." She said it louder the second time in an effort to spurn herself out of her morbid state. She kept looking at herself. She was a mess, but she didn't want to acknowledge that. She kept staring and focusing, looking herself in the eyes until she found some resolve. She spoke aloud again because it seemed to help.

"Just hang in there. Hang on. They haven't hurt you. Find out what all this is about and then go from there. But until then, hold on, just hold on."

She methodically entered the shower and, placing the towel on top, she closed the door behind her. She

undressed inside the shower and threw her clothes outside and onto the floor. She bathed and allowed the hot water to drown away some of her sorrow. She then dried off and covered herself well. She exited and put on some fresh clothes that were lying on a bench, all without unwrapping her towel. There were probably ten items of each, underwear, socks, pants, shirts and sweatshirts. They were brand new and comfortable. After she was fully dressed she returned to the main room and noticed some walking shoes at the foot of her bed. She put them on. Her boots and the clothes she wore to the library were no where to be found.

Something rushed to her remembrance, "My Backpack!!!" She said it aloud with terror in her voice. Her backpack contained all three of her father's folders. If it had gone missing, she would be devastated. She put her hand on her forehead and sat down again. She then thought to herself. This was foreign territory for her. She needed to cultivate a very different mindset. She would need to learn how to become a captive. Ask questions only when necessary. Say very little, only what they ask. Speak only when spoken to. She was going to ask about the backpack, but separate from that, she decided to say very little. She resolved it all in her heart.

She knocked on the door and then stepped away. The guard opened.

"Can I have some food please, just a little?"

He nodded, "I'll bring it now."

It only took about two minutes. He opened the door and handed her the food. It looked delicious.

The guard spoke to her as she sat down, "He'll come back after your finished eating, just knock on the door again."

Sally brushed her wet hair away from her face, "Okay, thank you."

"You're welcome." Was all he offered.

Cross was holding Sally's backpack and walking down the third level of The Cell Compound. With him was the head of Cell Security, the guards who escorted Sally and some engineers. They entered Dr. Thiery's office where Tom Hutchinson and others were already gathered.

Cross handed the backpack to Tom, "Here is her backpack. This note was inside."

Dr. Thiery grabbed the note and read it aloud. "We will return Miss Travis shortly. She will not be harmed."

He looked up. A small amount of hope resonated behind his eyes, "That is all it says." He looked at those standing next to Cross, "Explain how this happened, what do you know?"

"Sir..." The Head of security spoke, "...from the little we've gathered this was not only a planned operation but it was highly strategic. They went straight for her like they knew where she'd be. We were able to get a picture of someone we believe was involved and according to our facial recognition database, he is a former member of the SISMI (Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Militare) Italian Military Security, which we now refer to as the AISE."

They look at each other because a small handful of The Cell Military Security came from that Italian Military division. Italy was a part of NATO and therefore willingly offered some of their talent.

Tom questions, "Were any of the guards assigned to Sally once a part, or did they ever, associate with that division?"

Head of security spoke to reassure him, "We have already checked. No. None of them had any associations with that division."

Dr. Thiery was relieved, "Good. So this suspect is now a mercenary, a hired gun of some sort?"

He nods, "That is what we've gathered. He disappeared three years ago and was assumed either dead or perhaps a rogue agent."

Tom asked, "How did you manage to get his picture?"

The Head of security held up his hand, "That takes us to the operation. These people were extremely prepared and very sophisticated. This is what we know so far. They were able to break into the security and computer systems at the library and upload information on four phantom employees. We know this because a librarian on the second level, who had previously been informed of Miss Travis and her security detail's arrival, was approached by a gentleman claiming to be an employee who had been reassigned to clear that particular wing. He had the uniform, badge and ID. When she ran his

information on her computer, there he was, on their system as a high ranking associate manager. She then noticed there were three other employees helping the man so she asked to see their ID's as well. She entered them into her database and their files came on screen. Everything checked out perfectly."

Tom questioned, "But they were not employees?"

He looks at him knowingly, "No, because only minutes after they took Miss Travis, their profiles vanished from off their servers. When we tried to locate any usable information, only one picture remained; but only because the same savvy Librarian, noticing something had gone awry, immediately saved the photo on her computer screen onto her desktop. Had she not done that, we'd have nothing."

Dr. Thiery was curious, "Was this suspect the one in charge?"

He shook his head, "No, he was the last one she checked in. That's why his image was still on her computer screen. He didn't even speak to her, just handed her his fake badge and ID. She is doing a rendition of the man she believed to be in charge and we'll have that picture shortly."

Dr. Thiery became upset, "How were they able to accomplish this. We are supposed to be prepared for these types of scenarios?"

He took a deep breath, "Those four men cleared a path for Miss Travis to be taken to the elevators totally unseen. The head suspect told the librarian they were instructed to clear whichever wing Miss Travis was in. After speaking with a few of the people at the library we learned these four guards were tapping everyone on the shoulder and asking them to move to another wing, but on the same floor. Everyone did. They then cordoned off the entire area."

Dr. Hutchinson butts in, "And this same savvy librarian didn't think that strange, clearing an entire wing of a library?"

He looked on him, "Her supervisors backed her. She said once their ID's checked out, she believed they were reassigned in order to make our security's team easier. They told her this was their entire purpose for being on the second floor. The clearing of the wing made sense to her, for security purposes. It wasn't until after the four men suddenly vanished that she got suspicious. She

walked to where Sally was seated and it was empty. She then ran back to her desk and called security and saved the image to her desktop. At that moment, it was confirmed that our guys could not communicate with the guard protecting Miss Travis. These two guards..." he motions behind him, "...were watching the cameras in the main security room when the Librarian called it in. They immediately tried to contact the guard and when he didn't respond they rushed upstairs and asked the Librarian where Sally had been positioned. They checked, and the room was empty with no trace of Miss Travis or the guard. They eventually located the guard in the service elevator and yes, he had been drugged. Miss Travis was nowhere to be found."

Dr. Thiery spoke to the three guards who had escorted Sally, "Guards, couldn't you see on the cameras something was amiss."

One of the guards answered hesitantly, "The system had a glitch, but the lead engineers reassured us it had been glitchy all week. At first, we called both guards protecting Miss Arpin and Miss Travis and all was well. At the second glitch we called again, and yes, all was well; but the second glitch lasted longer than the first. It seems that was all the window they needed. Next thing we knew someone was on the line talking with their Head of security. He turned to us and asked us to radio both guards to confirm. Miss Arpin's guard answered, Miss Travis' didn't."

Dr. Thiery gets upset again, "So you lost the cameras twice and that didn't set off red flags?"

He wasn't as hesitant this time, "We contacted the guards both times and they responded both times. That's our protocol, and we followed it. But the second glitch lasted longer, and during that small window they took out our guard and took Miss Travis."

Tom chimes in an effort to calm Dr. Thiery down, "So you have no tape on this."

He spoke apologetically, "We have tape on the phantom employees clearing the room, but no tape on Miss Travis being taken. It happened in a matter of two to three minutes. The second glitch happened, we called, they answered. Three minutes later the Librarian was on the phone talking to their Head of security. We immediately called and only Miss Arpin's guard answered."

Dr. Thiery was irate, "And glitches are normal in this instance?"

The guards looked at each other slowly to calm his mood, "Had we gone up, we couldn't have seen the entrances and exits. Since the lead engineers told us it had been glitchy all week, and since both guards responded both times we called, we waited.

"We have to follow protocol sir, not just a gut instinct. Our protocol isn't to rush to assumptions and lose our eye on the sky. Both Miss Arpin and Miss Travis had guards with them, protecting them. If we happen to lose our eye on the sky because of a glitch our protocol within the security center is to make contact with our guards and wait. If the glitch had lasted longer than five minutes we would have gone up. We timed it afterwards. From the time we called the guards to check in to the time the Librarian phoned Head of security was three minutes seventeen seconds."

The Cell's Head of security jumps in, "These were professional's sir. They created the perfect window and executed flawlessly. Whoever is responsible for taking Miss Travis created those glitches. They breached their security and computer systems and they did it up to a week in advance. They had identification, uniforms and badges. I have read all three of these men's reports and I have cleared them of any negligence or wrong doing. In this type of scenario sir, guarding Candidates off Compound, it is easier to implement offense rather than defense."

He then pointed to the older guard, "This man has been with us for twenty-two years and has consistently held the cleanest record out of all Candidate military guards."

Dr. Thiery pointed at the man, "Yes, I know him. He is a good man. But nothing like this has ever happened. We need to get to the bottom of this."

The older guard then speaks, "Sir, can I say something?" Dr. Thiery nods and the guard continues, "I've been doing security detail for over thirty years, twenty-two here at The Cell. I've discharged my weapon more than a dozen times in the line of duty..." He then looked at every single person in the room and continued, "...nothing was amiss from a security standpoint. The library was the perfect place to implement this type of abduction. The only thing that would have helped was to

have more guards physically there, at Miss Travis' side. Our security details are simply too small for this type of operation so far off Compound. According to what I have compiled, considering the technical and military savvy and the overall scope of this operation, we were out manned and outgunned. Whatever drug that took out our guard protecting Miss Travis was of military grade, we know that for certain. To be very honest sir, I'm very upset Miss Travis was taken, but I'm even more surprised none of us were shot in the process."

There was a certain authority in his voice and everyone sensed it. Dr. Thiery looked at the Head of security, "Was there anything these men could have done differently?"

He shook his head no, "After the second glitch, only a hunch or gut instinct could have led them upstairs earlier. It would have taken them a couple minutes, even if they ran, because the security center is at the back whereas Miss Travis was studying closer to the front. They probably would have arrived at the second floor stairwell entrance just in time to meet the kidnapers walking into the service elevator. There probably would have been gunfire," Dr. Thiery looks at Dr. Hutchinson and the Head of security continues, "...assuming there were only four kidnapers it would have been four against two..." Dr. Hutchinson partly covers his face, "With Miss Travis caught in the crossfire."

Dr. Thiery cleared his throat and Dr. Hutchinson removed his hands from his face and shifted in his seat. No one said anything for a moment. Dr. Thiery finally spoke, "I'm seeing this differently now. Had these two gone up," He pointed to two of the guards, "This could have ended differently, even more horrible than it is now?"

The Head of security spoke again, "If you're asking for my opinion sir. If these men had gone upstairs immediately after the second glitch, there absolutely would have been gunfire. Our guards would not have allowed Miss Travis to be taken. But, even in their greatest efforts to save Miss Travis they would have been shot and killed. And Miss Travis would still be taken, or even worse, wounded or even killed."

Dr. Thiery looks at Tom, "So we were, as this guard already mentioned, outgunned."

"Yes." The Head of security concurred, "Whoever took Miss Travis went through a tremendous amount of effort to do so. They had all the sophistication and technology at their disposal. The team that carried this out was military trained, and the picture of the SISMI military suspect and the drug they used on our guard further confirms those suspicions. There is no doubt in my mind the team that successfully implemented and executed this operation would have done anything and everything to leave that place with Miss Travis alive, even if that meant killing everybody in their way."

Everyone is speechless after that declaration. He then offered a small amount of comfort, "We are going to make sure this never happens again. In the future, we will be better prepared for something like this. You have my word Dr. Thiery. But now, I must return downstairs. All the boarders have been notified and we have every law enforcement division in France, including Interpol, looking for her. It won't be long sir."

Dr. Thiery nods and dismissed them so they exit.

Dr. Hutchinson speaks, "There's a glimmer of hope these men are so professional, so good at what they do, that perhaps they will make good on their word and return Sally unharmed? Perhaps if they were amateurs there'd be little hope of that?"

Dr. Thiery offers him little optimism. He is just blown away at what has transpired over the last two days. They never considered it plausible or possible. He then remembered his duty toward professionalism, "Tom, I think you should go back to Vermont later tonight and inform Sally's family, personally."

Tom has an alarmed look on his face, "Do you think we should tell them? What if they return Sally safe a week from now? Should we needlessly worry them?"

Dr. Thiery respectfully acknowledges him, "I know Tom, but especially now, after all that has happened, we must remain professional first and foremost. A young woman under our protection has been kidnapped and her family needs to know."

Dr. Hutchinson conjures to mind. In this day of mobile technology, not to mention the fast pace of life, Sally's family, and no doubt Neaven as well, would know in a matter of days that something was amiss. He couldn't lie to them, even if he was trying to protect them emotionally.

He finally affirms, "I'll leave tonight."

Sally's plate was sitting on the bed next to her as she prayed in her spirit. This Cuinn character was coming back and would supposedly have answers for her. She was growing fearful regarding those answers so she decided to pray. The door opened and it startled her.

The guard entered and took her plate and left without saying a word. Sally could see him walking down the hall. Great, she thought, now Cuinn was coming immediately. She no longer had the option of praying any longer. She made a quick petition to God as she heard footsteps approaching. She saw Cuinn walk in front of the guard and enter into the room. The guard remained outside.

He asked her a stale question to begin, "How was your food?"

Sally didn't want to answer but did anyway, "It was good. Thank you."

He smiled at her, "You're welcome. You'll eat well here."

He takes a deep breath and exhales as he turns to grab a chair. He places it nearer to Sally and sits down.

He offers her willingly, "I am ready to answer your questions now."

She doesn't hesitate as she blurts out the words, "Why am I here!"

He eyes her with intensity, "Because of your father."

Sally had been thinking about the copy Cuinn had of her father's dream so she pressed him, "Did you know him?"

He brushes his shoe, "Yes. I knew him casually."

Sally wants more, a lot more, "Okay, how did you know him?"

He seemed annoyed but answered her anyway, "Miss Travis. Your father contacted me back in 1994. Well, that's not entirely true, he actually contacted Dr. Milton Hamill and his department but back then I was Dr. Hamill's assistant."

Sally interrupted, "Why? Why would he contact you or even Dr. Hamill for that matter?"

He shakes his foot and answers her, "It was regarding the dream. It isn't written in the notes but in the same 666 dream your father audibly heard the name 'Dr. Milton Hamill,' and that is why his name is written at the bottom of the page. After some research your father learned of Dr. Hamill's position at Berkeley and noticed he was a computer expert. He quickly sought to contact him but he got me instead."

She was confused, "But didn't my father want to talk to Dr. Hamill?"

He looked upon her snidely, "He did actually but Dr. Hamill did not want to talk to him. Dr. Hamill asked me what it was regarding and once I asked your father and then consequently showed Dr. Hamill all the evidence of your fathers 666 dream, he was not interested in conversations regarding such topics. But I was interested, so I promptly asked Dr. Hamill if I could continue correspondence and he gave me his approval. Your father, according to his discernment at the time, then believed I was the one he was meant to correspond with all along. I quickly helped him get a computer and a modem up and running so we could talk via email."

What Cuinn just said made sense. She remembered that computer. He bought it with haste and then spent hours on it. She remembered it clearly. In fact, that computer was still in the basement along with some of his other belongings.

Sally offers, "I remember that computer."

He nods, "Yes, well we talked via email and had some very interesting conversations over the next say six to eight months. Your father and his dreams and visions peeked my curiosity. As our dialogues neared to an end I asked him to contact me in the future, if anything new came about. But I never heard back from him."

"He past away." Sally offered as she turned from him.

He looked in her direction, "I know all about your father's early demise and I truly am sorry for your family's loss."

Sally was frustrated, "So why am I here?"

He wiped his shoe again, "Because Miss Travis, your father had many dreams and visions. Do you remember the one that involved you?"

Sally didn't know what to say. She had not read even a quarter of her father's papers but she didn't want

to offer him that information. She decided to play it safe, "I can't remember?"

He read into her, "I think you'd remember this one, but let me refresh your memory." He stood up and paced. "It was a dream your father had very soon after his 666 dream. He was sitting at a small desk and penning something in a beautiful golden book. The book was also small and much like an adult sitting in a small desk he was hunched over the book, not letting anyone see what was written. After a while, your father closed the book and leaned back as much as he was able because of the smallness of the desk. Then, clearly visible on the front of the book the words written 'God's Revelation.'"

Sally had never read or heard about this dream, Cuinn continued, "He was then taken to another scene. In this scene you, as a young child, were sitting in a chair behind a big desk. You were also writing in a golden book, but your book was much larger than your fathers and you weren't hunched over the book trying to hide its contents. When you finished, you also closed the book and leaned back. You're book also said, 'God's Revelation.' This was the end of the dream."

Sally keeps her mouth shut. He finishes, "The interpretation is obvious. Where he did a little, you'll do a lot." He eyes her with some resolve, almost as if he's commanding it be done so, "In the dream you were also more liberal with your revelations, not seeking to hide the contents but more willing to share."

Sally can't hold back any longer. "I don't believe you. Even if my father had that dream he would have never shared it with you or anyone else for that matter. It involved our family so it would have been off limits and completely private, just like the dream implies. You yourself said he was private with God's Revelations so how am I to believe he would share anything with you."

He allows Sally to vent but then brings reality back into the equation, "Because you're correct, he didn't share that dream with me any more than you voluntarily came her and agreed to stay. Just like I took you yesterday, I took what belonged to him many years ago. I helped him set up the computer and modem so I could steal the contents off his hard drive. I have all his writings, even after he died when your mother would sporadically go online and answer emails on his behalf. How do you think we intercepted you at the

library Friday morning? I have been on Sora Arpin's mobile ever since you arrived back in Strasbourg and I have been on Neaven's computer for months. I knew everything ahead of time. And you're correct, Neaven did look nice on your last computer date. He dresses up well."

Just hearing Neaven's name from his lips made her cringe. He had a way of getting very passionate and affirmative in a forceful way without getting too angry. He was a brute, no doubt. She had nothing more to say to him.

He takes a deep breath and downshifts after he notices Sally is visibly shaken and offended.

He sits down, "I'm sorry Miss Travis. I must admit my own insecurities at the moment. This is new territory for me. I am not the one who usually interrogates those we've taken, especially face to face like this. This is likely as unsettling for me as it is for you, which is why I got upset, so please forgive my outburst. I did not mean to annoy you."

Sally doesn't trust him but nods anyway.

He holds up his hand, "Look Miss Travis..."

She interrupts him in a firm tone, "Call me Sally."

At that, he looks into her eyes and shame enters his soul. He can no longer fix his gaze on her. He exits the room completely unnerved.

Dr. Hutchinson arrived early this morning but waited all afternoon in his hotel for Judy Travis to return from work. She usually got home around five o'clock and he felt it best to arrive promptly and to speak with her as soon as possible. On the trip out he tried to reason the best way to inform her that Sally had been taken, but then understood there was no 'best way.' This was going to be horrible but somehow, somehow, the Lord would get them through.

The entourage arrived a little after five. Security had been beefed up ever since Sally was taken and now instead of Dr. Hutchinson travelling with two Military escorts he had six. They were instructed to stay in the car and observe. Only he would exit and approach the door. He took a deep breath and filed out. He walked to the entrance of where previously, he would

ring the doorbell only to see Judy or Sally's smiling face with the aroma of a freshly cooked meal lingering in the background. But now, instead of the smiley faces, it would be a lone overwhelmed Mother coping with the possible bereavement of her daughter. He didn't know what to do so he shook his head and rang the doorbell. He heard a latch and then the door opened.

Judy Travis opened the door and looked into the eyes of a somber Dr. Hutchinson. She knew instantly.

"Nooooo..." She grabbed onto his coat and slowly fell to the floor. She burst into tears and howled. Dr. Hutchinson fell to his knees and tried to hold her tight. She kept yelling, "Nooooo... Nooooo... Nooooo..."

Dr. Hutchinson was overcome with emotion but the Lord helped him to speak. "Judy. Sally's been kidnapped. But we're going to get her back, I promise you."

Judy continued to cry and wail, rocking her body back and forth as she lay hunched on the ground inside her own doorway. Some of the neighbors heard her lamentation so they attempted to console her but security exited the vehicles and stopped them.

Dr. Hutchinson spoke again, "It's not over Judy, it's not over. We're going to get her back."

She continued to moan and bewail as Dr. Hutchinson held her head firmly against his chest. Tears were now dripping from his checks also.

They had to get her back, he thought as he consoled her. Whoever took Sally would probably get into contact with them shortly and then they would have their chance to intercept. Every agency and law division in France was looking for her. She had to turn up, sooner or later.

Chapter 7

Cuinn was talking to some scientists and looking over data compiled over the last twenty-four hours. Everything was ahead of schedule and the science was promising. They truly were making steady progress. He took some of the data and went into his office to study it more in-depth.

A head peered through his door about five minutes later, "When's the last time you spoke?"

He didn't even look up, "A day ago."

The man cleared his throat, "Well, if you're interested in moving forward I suggest you get on it."

"I agree." He picked up his phone and called the guard. "Inform Miss Travis we'll be having a meeting in a few minutes."

He placed the phone on his desk and rubbed his face harshly. He then got up and left the building and walked to the facility where Sally was housed. He made a quick detour and went into the washroom down the hall. He cupped his hands with water and splashed his face. He did it a second and third time. He looked in the mirror as he dried his face. He exited the bathroom and immediately went to the room where she was held. As soon as the guard saw him approaching he stood up and opened the door. Sally was watching TV.

He entered, "Comfortable."

"I guess?" Sally mumbled as she barely made eye contact.

"I was hoping we could talk some more."

She turned off the TV and sat up. "I will talk with you but only if you agree to answer some of my questions."

He nodded, "As long as I'm able, you'll get no games from me. If you ask a question I can answer, I will."

Sally was candid, "Okay. First off, I want to call my mother."

He shook his head, "You cannot talk with anyone. But just to place your mind at ease, ever since you've arrived we've taken pictures of you in this room. I'm sure you've noticed by now in all four corners," He points around, "Cameras record your every move. Yesterday, we sent some footage."

Sally's spirit was quenched. She really wanted to talk with her mom and also Neaven.

He continues, "So I am sure your mother has been made aware you are here, safe. We show further evidence via the files that the recordings are current. They contain the time and date. So yesterday, everybody knew you were safe."

Sally became curious, "Where is here, am I still in France?"

"Yes, in France. But that is all I can say."

"How long will I be stuck here?"

He was forthright, "That depends on two things. If you cooperate, you'll be out of here faster. But if it takes time to get information and results, and we are not able to successfully test according to that information, then it could be longer."

She questioned, "Tests? Information?"

He meets here there, "Remember that golden book you were scribbling in your father's dream Miss Travis?"

She reminded him, "I told you, you can call me Sally."

He rebuked her, "When I'm comfortable doing so I will. Do you remember the book?"

She shied away, "Yes."

"We want that book, what it contains. We want the revelation, the mysteries. I tried to get that information out of your father but he did not have those answers. The dream revealed that perhaps you would have those answers. That's why you're here. We need to be certain."

Sally tried to follow, "Please get more specific, what answers?"

He shrugs his shoulders, "666."

Sally repeats the numbers in an emotional tone, "666!? I just read that dream last week, I don't know anything about it yet."

He seemed displeased, "Sally, we know your modus operandi, and how you are moved to study the way you do. In fact, you're not the only person we've talked with regarding this. We have questioned many who claim to have similar gifts as yours and who claim to have received dreams and visions like your father. We know a lot, but we don't know everything. We still lack the information we'll need to move forward."

Sally became intimidated, "So you want me to tell you who 666 is?"

He shook his head, "Not who Sally, what. What is 666, and in conjunction with the dream your father had, I'm sure you have some interesting and clever observations."

Sally thought to herself. She did have answers regarding the end times and some of the questions people have claimed to know concerning the two beasts and the image of the beast. The Lord had actually been stirring her over the last few years to research and study in these areas.

She became optimistic, "Will you give me time to study?"

He seemed anxious, "Yes, but we are on a serious timeline so your study will run in tandem with me asking you questions, plenty of questions. Once we have the answers we are looking for, I promise I will release you."

Sally tried to slip it in, "I need my backpack with my father's notes."

He cuts her off mid sentence, "That backpack is not here. We left it with the guard at the library when we took you; it is probably in the hands of The Cell."

Sally became agitated, "I need that backpack."
"For what?"

Sally comes clean, "I haven't read most of it, it might have other information I can use."

He shakes his head, "I wasn't kidding when I told you I hacked your father's computer. I have read everything in those folders and the only information that was applicable to our causes here was the 666 dream and the dream concerning you. Everything else your father wrote didn't relate."

Sally questions him, "Why didn't you let me keep the backpack anyway, just in case?"

Sophistication rises on his face, "We couldn't take the chance. It or you might have had a tracking device. We brought only your body."

Sally then remembered when she first woke up, she had on a different set of clothes. She understood the relevance but felt cold inside.

He noticed she was ashamed, "Tracking devices can be so small, we couldn't take the chance." He then offered nothing more than a plea. "Will you help us?"

She looked him in the eye, "Yes, but because I have no other choice. I promise I will give you what I have because I want out of here."

He shrugged his shoulders, "Of course. You give us what we want and you'll be out of here as soon as possible. Don't fret over your fathers backpack either, or any other assistance you might have gotten from it. In the dream your book was much larger than his. Use the 666 dream as a foundation and finish his work. It is our belief these answers were always meant to come from you."

He said that last statement so confidently it was almost as if he believed in her gifts more than she did. No wonder they kidnapped her so blatantly, these people really believed. She broke away from her inner clamor.

She made a request, "I need a Bible (KJV) and a notepad, and an internet connection would be nice."

He took out lip balm and moistened his lips, "I'll get you the first two. The third will only come if you give us something to work with; and you will be supervised at all times if you are granted an internet connection. The internet will be a privilege not a guarantee. In the meantime, if you have anything you need looked up, make a list and I'll make it happen."

Sally is inquisitive as to why they want these answers but decides to remain quiet and ask nothing.

She is blunt, "As soon as you bring those I'll get started."

He meets her there as he puts the balm back in his pocket, "I'll have them brought to you at once. Let the guard know when you want to talk with me and if I don't hear from you in a few days I'll check back. Besides that, how are you being treated?"

She looked away from him, "I'm treated well, but I just want to go home. Everyone is probably worried sick over me."

He holds up his hand, "Due time. Get us everything you understand regarding 666 and make sure it applies to technology. We are interested in the technology aspect of it and how technology will translate regarding the spiritual, since Christianity is based on the spiritual and these are the answers we seek. Ephesians 3:10 makes it very clear the mysteries of Christ and his Revelations will be made manifest to the world through His church. Make sure to go deep, in every possible direction because

I will be asking plenty of questions, especially if you are vague in your explanations."

Sally was enticed, "You know those bible verses?"

He answered her, "I know more than you think Miss Travis, yet I still lack such insights. Give me these revelations and I will release you."

Cuinn turned to knock on the door and the guard opened. He instructed the guard regarding her requests and left quickly. Sally picked away at the blanket on her bed. It was time to do what she did best, got alone with God and received any revelation He was willing to offer her. She would need to spend the rest of the day deep in prayer. Yes, she would need to pray and meditate. She decided to fast for the rest of the day to humble herself before The Lord. She reasoned if God would not answer her speedily in this place, then when would He ever? She bowed her head and began beseeching The Lord.

The process, unlike any other she had participated in when contending for the revelation of God, was yielding results. She had already prayed and petitioned for wisdom according to the book of James. She was in very different surroundings so she was quick to humble herself on all levels to ensure she represented to God she clearly understood the seriousness of the matter. Usually, when contending for God's answers, she would pray for wisdom sporadically as she would travel to different libraries. She would even exercise in conjunction with studying. But because she was a captive here, she had none of those luxuries and decided to pray for wisdom and revelation rather than rely on her tried and true methods of abiding in Christ and allowing her tools and gifts to hedge their way toward the correct spiritual questions which in turn would eventually yield God's answers. The spiritual process in this place was interesting and separate from the fact she worried about her well being, she had peace doing the work here.

Traveling and driving her car was replaced with pacing and exercising was replaced with more prayer and more petitioning. At the end of the day, it was hard work. The Lord was helping her immensely, mostly with regard to the editing of what was and wasn't important.

He greatly helped her to narrow down her focus. She already had a good foundation regarding some of this stuff because of past studying but being trapped in this place was proving to become intense fuel for the fire regarding God's revelation language.

She knocked on the door and the guard opened.

"I need to see him."

"Right away."

Sally got all her notes together and just sat at the edge of her bed. Cuinn walked in after about five minutes.

"Let's get started with part one."

"Are you ready?" He was surprised.

She was certain, "I'm ready for the first part. There will most likely be three parts. I will begin today so I better understand what you need so if I must, I will study differently for the other two parts; which will be more technical in their construct and probably more focused on the answers you seek. This will be more of a feeling out process, so we can be on the same page."

"Makes sense." He calls to the guard. "Send someone to my office and retrieve my briefcase." He looks at Sally, "So what's the topic?"

She nods her head yes, "I need to create a solid foundation, just in case, so I am going to thoroughly explain the difference between understanding and wisdom and I'm going to highlight understanding. You'll notice those two words directly apply to 666. Hence the verse..."

He holds up his hand, "Wait until I get my briefcase."

She stops talking but continues to thumb through her Bible. Another guard hands him his case. He takes out a recording device and sets it on the floor. He attaches two microphones and hands one of them to Sally and she pins it on her sweatshirt. He pins the other to himself and turns on the recording device. He takes out an electronic bible, pen and pad of paper.

He looks at her, "Go ahead, begin."

"Okay, let's start with this verse."

Revelation 3:18

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast:

for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

"Notice this verse has the words wisdom and understanding. Most have not focused on this verse clearly and have lost focus on what it is truly saying to us. It says, ...here is wisdom. Then it says, ...let him that hath understanding count. So it is making a clear distinction we must learn to appreciate, the difference between wisdom and understanding. I will attempt to explain in part one, it is not wisdom that counts the number of the beast, but it is wise to understand that understanding will do so."

He lifts his head at the difference, "I see."

She continues, "It is basically saying the person who counts the number will be a man or woman of understanding and only someone with wisdom will discern that difference. So, the question becomes, what is the solid difference between wisdom and understanding? I will attempt to explain that in part one. Let's begin with King Solomon."

1 Kings 3: 9,11

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

"It will be complex as I attempt to break it down so please pay close attention. I promise I will try and tie everything together seamlessly by the end of part one.

"These verses expound on the fact the basic difference between wisdom and understanding is that understanding is the accepted knowledge between good and evil. When Adam and Eve ate from the tree of the knowledge between good and evil they received knowledge but also the ability to one day achieve understanding..

and I am going to prove today how understanding becomes humanities main goal, above and beyond even wisdom. Here are some more verses."

Hebrews 5:14

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

"Notice it associates the ability to discern between good and evil with someone who is older, someone who has lived a long life and who has learned and exercised their senses in order to not only recognize between good and evil but to act accordingly, which becomes integrity. That word 'senses' in the Greek actually means 'understanding.' If you substitute that word, the verse makes even more sense. Hence, 'Even those who by reason of use have their understanding exercised to discern both good and evil. Here are two more verses."

Proverbs 3:19

The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

Proverbs 24:3

Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:

"Notice in these verses it makes a clear distinction between wisdom and understanding. Just as the heavens are higher and more dignified than the earth, especially regarding God's perfect judgment with regard to establishing the heavens, so is the basic concept of understanding in correlation to wisdom. And just as establishing a house is more honorable than building a house, so is the basic concept of understanding in correlation with wisdom. Here is another good verse."

Deuteronomy 4:6

Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

"Notice in the beginning of the verse. Notice the words keep and do. Then notice the words wisdom and understanding. It attributes keeping with wisdom and doing with understanding. Once again, understanding is not only a deep knowledge concerning the difference between good and evil, it involves integrity and thus doing it... or... obeying, if you will. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil gave us the knowledge or discernment between good and evil but it did not give us any integrity or understanding with regard to exercising thus. Eating from the tree gave us the blueprint but we had yet to build character. The integrity becomes the doing of what we know and the understanding is the 'why' of it all. Why it is so important for us to choose to do right and obey. It is obeying your conscience, no matter how big or small, and ultimately understanding why it is so important to do that. This is understanding. I'll try and explain it clearer. James expounds a bit."

James 4:17

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

"But I also love this verse that explains Jesus Christ's obedience to the Father."

Hebrews 5:8-9

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

"It says right here that even Jesus Christ learned, and that he learned obedience. But not in the way we think. Jesus was sinless, he never varied from the Law

of Moses... but being born of a woman and growing up and partaking of the sufferings of this world; he now understood as a man why his obedience was so important. He understood what type of torment and suffering was caused by disobedience. In Him obeying, and then consequently suffering as a result of his obedience, Jesus was taught why... the 'why' of it all. Why it was so important to always obey and to never vary. His obedient sufferings taught him a distinct aspect of understanding. The 'why.' He always automatically obeyed the Father but now he had understanding as to 'why' it was so important to do so. That's understanding... a deep conscience understanding as to 'why' it is so crucial to do what's right. As a man Jesus Christ now understood that... and this became a big part of the reason he was 'made perfect' as our high priest and intercessor.

He interrupts, "But King Solomon clearly had understanding and he did not do as Jesus Christ did, but eventually strayed."

Sally was impressed, "Yes, you're correct... but there is a variance." Sally adjusts herself, "And now, because you addressed that variance, you're really going to need to pay attention. Allow me to break it down."

"Back in the Old Testament times God granted King Solomon wisdom and understanding. The Bible also says he was granted 'largeness of heart' which became a level of empathy over the people he did rule. The thing is Solomon, in asking for understanding, was without knowing it setting himself up for a fall. And God, in granting it, basically gave him the opportunity to fail. Let me explain."

"Back in the Old Testament times Israel, who became God's particular people after Abraham, were never a spiritual body but a carnal body entrusted with the commandments. Their job was not to be spiritual but rather to obey. Only some of the priests, prophets and judges were 'filled with the spirit.' The rest of Israel just obeyed the commandments carnally. This was God's burden upon them and they mostly failed. And I will expound more on that later but look what the Bible says. In this verse Nathan the prophet is prophesying to King David about his son, Solomon."

2 Samuel 7:12-16

And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

"Notice what it says, 'my mercy will not depart from him.' Ever. Also that God would establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. So, even though Solomon failed, there was a method to the madness. Allow me to digress."

He smiled at her wit as she continued, "Since Jesus Christ came into the world and died for our sins, we who believe and are born again are spiritual, born again with the Holy Spirit. The church is considered spiritual Israel because whereas in the past, Israel was simply Israel, we are spiritually grafted in... thus spiritual Israel. This makes a huge difference and is what Jesus Christ was referring to when he discussed new wine into new wineskins. The fact we are now spiritual is reflected by that new wineskin. Solomon, although granted understanding and largeness of heart, lacked integrity and ultimately character. This is very important for us to focus on.

"Because he lacked the character and integrity to obey, he eventually faltered. Israel also eventually faltered but for a different reason, because they lacked the vision to understand why they should obey. The priests were commissioned to assist with that vision because they were spiritual and again, the people were carnal. Someone who is spiritual will hold that vision automatically, thus, the spiritual priests held the spiritual vision for all Israel.

"The Bible says where there is no vision, the people perish. If perfectly instructed by the priests

then Israel, in obeying the commandments, would have mimicked a spiritual body because the vision they commonly held would have been made plain and thus all Israel would have at that time reflected a spiritual body; because of the singular spiritual vision granted to them by their spiritual priests but also in conjunction with them obeying the commandments. Israel's victory when the walls of Jericho fell comes to mind. But oftentimes, because the spiritual priests did not do their jobs on a spiritual level, Israel was left without a vision... so they perished.

"This is the difference between how it worked back then and how it works now. Back then the spiritual people or priests were supposed to instruct and grant vision to the congregation of Israel. A people's vision is spiritual and also equals their understanding. But essentially, Israel would have then had the vision and direction to obey what they knew, because what they knew was the commandments. This 'vision' given to them by the spiritual priests would have become their 'understanding.' It was a process and if any aspect of it broke down, Israel would become unsuccessful. It did break down. And guess what, it broke down for Solomon as well.

"So, 'understanding' before Jesus Christ came had a slightly different tone than understanding after Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead. Before, understanding became more like a carnal test and now for the Christian it becomes more like the standard... right next to obedience. King David was our example and is why Jesus bragged on him. This is because King David's Old Testament persecuted walk mirrors our Christian sanctifying walk. The short answer is understanding in the Old Testament did not automatically include integrity or character but understanding for the spiritual man under Jesus Christ cannot be raised up separate from the integrity process. Today integrity, character and understanding must go hand and hand. We know from King Solomon's example that simply wasn't the case.

"Now, even though God granted King Solomon largeness of heart along with understanding, because he was never trained up through a process of 'learning' understanding in conjunction with an integrity/character process, the largeness of heart simply was not enough to maintain a strict obedience and worship toward God. King

David was trained in the wilderness for decades before he became king, and believe it or not, this became the difference. He was not granted anything but was forced to 'learn' understanding. Forced to learn the integrity process and to appreciate wisdom as a tool, not as a gift. Bit by bit, hour by hour all of these traits were forged into him in the wilderness. Via these processes he also learned to hold empathy over the people he governed. Because he was forced to learn slowly and under such harsh circumstances, he held a fear of God that Solomon never learned to appreciate.

"King David did not have Solomon's understanding but had ten times the integrity. Therefore, what King David knew to do... he did... and ultimately that's understanding! On the contrary, what King Solomon knew to do, he often times ignored, and his actions lacked understanding. This is because although King Solomon had understanding, he lacked the integrity aspect of the understanding process. This is because he never earned it like King David did. God just granted it to King Solomon... handing it to him on a silver platter, so he didn't do well with it. But King David was forced to learn understanding in the hold or wilderness... and coupled with the integrity and empathy processes, he became a more complete King.

"That takes us to current day. A spiritual man, or Christian, will never have understanding separate from the integrity process. In other words, there will be no Christian equivalents of King Solomon. Just like the Hebrews verse I already mentioned. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses (or understanding) exercised to discern both good and evil. You see, it is now a foregone process that a willing Christian must endure in order to overcome. A Christian will never be granted understanding such as King Solomon was. For the Christian it is a life walk where wisdom coupled with understanding coupled with integrity coupled with character coupled with empathy will all rise up together.

"It's no coincidence Jesus himself lifted up King David and he became an example to us, because back in the old Testament his spiritual faith walk resembled the future Christian walk. The difference is it was given to Solomon... so... because no process, no integrity. That is the main reason God told King David his mercy would not

depart from his son. Because God knew that King Solomon, in requesting understanding, was basically asking for the opportunity to fail... because it would have been nearly impossible for King Solomon to receive the understanding he did with such a deficit of integrity and continue to obey over the long run. That is why God gave him the opportunity to fail, because Solomon's example, when we search, becomes a schoolmaster for us just like Israel and the law become our schoolmasters. Look at these two verses and see what they don't have in common."

Deuteronomy 6:5

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Matthew 22:37

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

He spoke, "The Old Testament Deuteronomy version says 'might' and the Matthew New Testament version says 'mind.'"

"Exactly," Sally continues, "That's because in the Old Testament they were a carnal body so they were admonished to try hard via their might but in the New Testament we are admonished to submit to the spiritual and obey via our minds. The mind of the spirit if you will, which becomes our understanding. This is a good example of how big the differences are between 'understanding' in the Old and New Testament and why God allowed the huge variance between King Solomon and King David. We must not remain willfully ignorant of how God chooses to operate. Has my answer sufficed?"

He was impressed as he continued to think on some of the things she just mentioned, "More than sufficed, please continue."

"Thank you. So, in knowing how we receive understanding as a Christian, via a sanctifying, obedient walk... the verse in Revelation is referring to understating and placing wisdom a distant second, just as many of the verses I have thus referenced have revealed.

"For this reason, it must be clearly understood whoever will eventually count the number of the beast will be a man of understanding. He won't deceive himself. Wisdom is the correct application of the knowledge you possess. For example, how you would fight a war according to the information you have on your enemy. Knowledge is information and wisdom is the correct application of that information. Understanding becomes associated with obedience via integrity... or the doing of it and 'why' it is so important you do it. That is why I really needed to go deep once you asked the King Solomon question because there is such a tremendous variance between what is given as a gift and what is earned as a character trait or tool. For us, understanding and integrity grow up together; just like a tree. Its roots, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit grow up together. But this idea is mostly misunderstood and not really addressed.

"Again, understanding is a deep knowing as to 'why' it is so important to do what is right and then integrity becomes the doing of it. For example, a person who has a deep knowing that something is wrong but does it anyway is not a man of understanding. Ultimately, this person lacks both understanding and integrity because the 'why' of it all is consciously ignored and they continue in willful disobedience. This concept really highlights this verse I mentioned earlier."

James 4:17

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

"God makes no bones about it. The more understanding King Solomon had equaled a greater capacity for him to sin. The more he knew and ignored, the more he sinned. Notice the word ignore and then couple it with the word ignorance. King Solomon was in willful ignorance when he ignored what he understood. God calls that type of ignorance sin."

He interrupts, "... I see. I do. So, understanding is not only the deep knowing between good and evil it is why the doing of what is right is so essential? The understanding is not only knowing... it is really the

knowing 'why' and then integrity becomes the doing of it?"

Sally nods slowly, "Exactly. King Solomon's choice to do evil toward the end of his life ignored his understanding and because he knew the difference... because he understood the 'why' of it all, he was ultimately acting in willful ignorance. If you know the difference but ignore your conscience then ultimately you're in a state of self imposed ignorance. A lot of people assume ignorance is simply a lack of knowledge but that is not always the case. There is a deeper meaning. There is an willful ignorance that contains both knowledge and wisdom but ultimately ignores understanding, which is the deep knowledge and application of the difference between good and evil... so the same knowledge and wisdom that is then implemented completely separate from and ignoring understanding then becomes corrupt, wrong, evil, bad, negative and thus, ignorant.

"For example, in my opinion an atomic bomb fits that description nicely. The technology in that bomb utilizes knowledge and wisdom, but... ask yourself a question. Was it understanding to build such a weapon? Knowing what we know with regard to mankind's struggle between good and evil should we have built it? Understanding would tell you no. So, ultimately, because the building of a nuclear device completely ignores our understanding then any knowledge or wisdom associated with such a device becomes corrupted and evil. An atomic bomb fits the description of 'willful ignorance' nicely, I think."

He nods his head and smirks as she continues. "So regarding the counting of the number 666 it will indeed be a man of understanding. A man who is not only wise and knowledgeable but a man who, because of his integrity and character, does according to his conscience and has learned the deep importance of the correct discerning between good and evil and why it is so important to obey. He will not be some prodigy who can hack a computer at age eight."

Sally holds her hand up and apologies, "Sorry."

He smiles, "No offense taken."

"He will likely be an older gentleman who has absolutely learned the importance of integrity within the understanding process and has grown wise regarding it. He will be a doer, someone who works with his conscience

and who holds himself very accountable regarding the choices he makes. He will be practiced and exercised with regard to his understanding, having crucified the old man and who has a conscious understanding of why it is so important to continuously walk in the Spirit and thus obey. He will most likely be a very obedient Christian who is submissive to the Spirit who is not even that bright or even that learned. But, he will know his God and he will have become a true disciple of Christ, without hypocrisy."

He chimes in. "Now I see why you needed to explain the understanding aspect so clearly. Your definition of who will count the number of the beast is so vastly different than what many have expected that a clear definition of understanding is needed in order to substantiate your argument."

"Exactly," Sally continues, "Once you see its understanding and not wisdom and once you have the true definition of understanding it makes perfect sense. It's not about a smart person, it's about a man of understanding. Vast, vast difference."

He tapped on his notepad, "I really enjoyed the aspect of Israel and how it was part of the priests job to give the people vision which translated to their spiritual understanding, or their 'why' of it all. I believe you are correct that back then, the people were not spiritual but heavily relied on the spirituality of the priests to offer them Godly vision and purpose. If the priests were to falter the people would pay the price, no spirit and no vision. If they don't know 'why' they should be doing something then even if they know what to do, it makes it so much easier to give up."

Sally was impressed and inspired, "Exactly, you got it. The priests were entrusted to maintain their spirituality and to hold that spiritual vision for the people. It was to become Israel's doing, mostly 'why' it was so important for Israel to obey the commandments. If you put yourself in their shoes, and you look at the fact you have all these commandments, statutes and ordinances and then the 'why' of it all gets lost in the translation, your only going to see these things as heavy burdens without any kind of purpose. But, if the priests maintain their spirituality and they are sober regarding their purpose and have a clear vision for the people and they administer that vision faithfully, then the

commandments, statutes and ordinances come alive and are no longer a burden but become a particular people's wisdom who are ordained for God's purposes.

"Spiritual priests would lead to vision for the people and vision for the people would lead to a congregation with Godly resolve and purpose. When the priests strayed from offering the people vision or the 'why' of it all, the people lost their reason to obey the commandments. The commandments eventually became only a burden they really didn't understand and were no longer inspired to perform. The 'why' was their understanding so when this was lost due to the priests not offering the people vision, they no longer understood. Just like the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers all contain the commandments, statutes and ordinances. The books are complete and lack nothing. But God didn't stop there.

Sally becomes passionate, "There is also the Book of Deuteronomy, where Moses uses God's heart to admonishes Israel with regard to the commandments, statutes and ordinances. In the same way a father would gently place his child on his lap and instruct him with love and tenderness, in that way God used Moses via the book of Deuteronomy to inspire and instruct His people Israel. If you have eyes to see... Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers become the knowing or the reading of the law but Deuteronomy becomes the why, the 'why' of it all, the 'spiritual vision' if you will and absolutely Israel's 'understanding.' That book offers great purpose.

"If you don't know 'why' you should obey it allows for almost every single obstacle to come into play even if you have the desire. Moses was about to go to his death, but before he did God's heart reverberated through that prophet in an effort to grant Israel their future spiritual vision and understanding. In my opinion, the book of Deuteronomy is the greatest book ever to be penned. Jesus himself quoted from the book of Deuteronomy during his testing in the wilderness because Deuteronomy, at its core, is an intensely spiritual book... and not only for its content, but also for its arrangement within the Old Testament. The mere existence of that book, right after the law is given, is why it is so poignant. It demonstrates God's heart in a completely different way regarding the law. It demonstrates a human God. A God who not only gives the law but then offers the 'why' of it all, thus granting his people vision. A

God who values a people's purpose and insight into the matter, not just blind obedience. It foreshadows Christ's union to the law through his death and resurrection. It's the enigma, because the book of Deuteronomy, not to mention the fact it even exists where it does, can be considered God's entire heart summed up into one book."

He just stared at her as she finished. She was concise yet passionate and the authority making its way through her as she spoke was a sight to behold. He had now seen with his own eyes and heard with his own two ears why others deemed this girl so special. This is why her father's dream highlighted her so. She was as big of an enigma as the book of Deuteronomy, he thought to himself as he stared at her. Perhaps that's why she understood the book.

He offered her some praise, "Enlightening. I am actually beginning to believe today was not about you getting situated but rather me. I am going to need to have some time to process what you said and then time to think about it some more. I already have tons of questions coming to the forefront. It's amazing. I really see and understand what you said quite clearly."

Sally offers, "Good, take your time and study as much as you'd like because I would like at least another day to finish my study on the two beasts of revelation, in conjunction with technology and also the image of the beast. I will have that for you the day after tomorrow."

He nods his head, "Okay." He then takes off his microphone and she removes hers. He places the recording device and all its contents and his notes in his briefcase.

He affirms, "We'll meet up the day after tomorrow then."

Sally looks on him with resolve, "I'll be ready."

Chapter 8

It had been two days since Sally had seen Cuinn. Her study was intense and she wanted more time but God had led her to go ahead and have the meeting and do not delay. She figured He was going to honor her.

Sally knocked on the door and stepped away. The guard entered.

"I'm ready."

"I'll let him know."

Sally went back to her bed and arranged all her notes. She now had three bibles as well as an electronic concordance so she could study more intently. It had served her well, all the studying she had done in the last few years. God was speaking and because she was in the position to receive, she was listening. Cuinn walked in.

"So you're ready?" He seemed to have doubts.

"Yes." She met him purposely and forged ahead, "I am going to review part two, thoroughly, and if you have any questions I can answer them today or perhaps tomorrow."

He took out the recorder and microphones, "Let's see what you got and we'll go from there."

Sally was curious, "Did our last conversation spurn you to think?"

"Actually, it did. I tested a lot of what you said and the more I dug, the more I saw how solid your perceptions were. I am impressed, but we do need to tackle the technology aspect of it. Your spiritual insights are amazing but they need to apply to the technical."

Sally nodded, "That's what I hope to accomplish in parts two and three."

He crossed his legs and placed his notes and electronic bible on his lap.

Sally begins, "Okay, I am going to talk about revelation 13. The two beasts and the image of the Beast, which I believe will be technology personified. But I must warn you, I jump around a lot in an effort to make the scriptures and my interpretation meld. I absolutely must do this because there is so much speculation involved and I need to build certain layers one by one, in order to reach the top properly. My

example to you would be this. A painter will pick up and set down many different brushes and utilize many different colors over the course of one painting, backgrounds and foregrounds etc, etc. Similarly, I must utilize different scriptures and adjoining scriptures as well as ideas and speculations in order for my painting of the end times to be properly understood, because again, this is yet for the future. I will start with the image. I am going to give a quick overview, then after that, build everything up... then probably build it up yet again. Let's begin."

He smiles at her demeanor.

Sally raises her voice.

Revelation 13:14-15

And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

"Notice a few things in this verse. Once this 'image' is created by the public, the authority and power and I believe, prestige, will revert away from the two beasts and toward the 'image.' Notice the verse says, 'that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.' This 'image' will both speak and will cause and from this point forward will usurp the power from both the false prophet and the antichrist. It will be fully in charge, no doubt, once the false prophet gives it life. Notice the last part. Once this 'image' has life, it will be worshipped. It says, 'as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.' It doesn't mention the other two beasts. Once the 'image' has life, it is now the main recipient of the world's worship. Those who choose to receive the mark

and worship the 'image' will live and those who oppose will be killed.

"Again, I need to hammer down it is the 'image' which is in charge once it has life, not the antichrist or false prophet. I need to lay this groundwork because it is critical to the rest of my interpretation, because it has much to do with technology... not to mention most who have attempted to interpret Revelation 13 totally ignore the image's role during the end times. I hope my explanation today will prove that if you choose to ignore the image's role during the end times, you will become ripe for deception.

"But, I want to digress for a moment and ask the question, why is it called the image. The scripture says the world, or public, creates this image. The false prophet who is the beast out of the earth, will commission the world to do so, 'saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.' You see, the public builds this thing, not the two beasts. This is important and cannot be overlooked. Just like the wisdom/understanding I explained two days ago, if you don't understand these things on a deep level, you'll likely miss it. That is what I hope to do here today. Paint the entire picture so you can see it clearly."

She pauses before her next sentence, "There is something called a 'brand image,'"

He interrupts her, "I know it well."

"Good, but let me explain it anyway, just for my own understanding. A brand image is the image the people or consumers hold regarding a particular brand. Brands are usually popular products, people or companies. Coca Cola is a good example of a powerful brand. So is Ford Motors. The companies themselves work very hard to have the public opinion on their side by way of a good image. They themselves want a strong brand but they also want the public's image or opinion of their brand to be strong as well. Companies have little power over the image in the people and that is why they try so hard to have a strong successful brand. When the false prophet commissions the public to create the image, he is basically asking the public for their image of the beast brand, which is the technical beast system, which if you have eyes to see, is certainly a brand in its own right.

By that time the beast out of the sea, or the antichrist, son of perdition will have received a deadly wound and lived.

"Revelation 13:12 says, 'whose deadly wound was healed.'

"And Revelation 13:14, 'that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.'

"So the public will already be familiar with the beast and his system, which will be technical in its origin and computer based and driven. Now, I must set that paintbrush down for a moment because I need to add additional background in order to qualify what this all leads to, basically the foreground.

She adjusts herself and looks at him trying to bring everything to her remembrance. "The technical beast system is basically Satan's system which he has created ever since the Tower of Babel. It has since evolved to become a power control system based on technology. Over the last two centuries... mechanical, electrical and now computers and technology have come to the forefront. These inventions have rounded out Satan's mystery of iniquity talked about in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 and have allowed him to fully implement his desires toward mankind and the earth. That desire is first... total control, and then... total worship. I want to add right now, because I fear God, that it is not my intention to point the finger at Satan.

Jude 9

Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

"I am presenting these things in the hopes of bringing to the surface truths Christians would need to see clearly, so they will not be deceived. My desire is to humbly expose the works of darkness. This is also one of the reasons I have only partly studied these things before I got here, because they should never be the Christian's primary focus.

Ephesians 5:11

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

"That said, the beast system is still evolving and in the end will be based on control and worship and if you have eyes to see, it becomes Satan's counterfeit reign to Jesus' thousand year millennial reign on earth. Satan's entire goal has been to use mankind to implement his system, much like little worker bees, which over the last two centuries has become quite operational. Then, in the very end, to raise up his two beasts as his representatives in order to usher in his appearance on earth. I will avoid any references toward Satan's usages in the political and religious arenas because I know your focus is solely technical.

She pauses for a moment, "Speaking of technical,"

Cuinn smiled, Sally was bright eyed and even passionate when she spoke. It was enjoyable watching and listening to her.

"Let's get back to the image man will create in praise of Satan's beast and the beast system as a whole. The antichrist, who becomes the proverbial tip of the spear with regard to the system, will be powerfully used of Satan to mesmerize the world. Even the bible says the people will wonder after the beast.

Revelation 13:3-4

... and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?

"The dragon is Satan and he and his beast system will give the antichrist much power and attention. The people will wonder after him because of this power but also because his deadly wound is healed. Now, I believe Satan will use technology to raise up the antichrist after his deadly wound. It is very important you understand Satan will use certain scientists and technologies during the end times much in the same way God uses his church and Holy Spirit. Satan is a counterfeit, and this is his time. He wants all the

glory and he wants his creation to receive that glory. His creation was first mechanical, then electrical. These two became the basis for all computers. Eventually AI (Artificial Intelligence) will be said to have arrived and of course, our industrious building of the computer made all this possible.

"Just like my father's dream. 666=computer. In the end, computers will be everything and will encompass everything. The mark of the beast will be based on the computer so it is ignorant to believe that technology will touch a person's hand or forehead but not comprise the entire system. The entire system is absolutely based on the computer. The image of the beast mentioned in the book of Revelation will be a giant supercomputer and I believe even the antichrists deadly wound will be healed using computer technology. Everything *must* be based on the computer because again, if you have eyes to see, the computer is Satan's counterfeit for man. God created man from the dust of the earth and Satan, using sinful man, has created computers from the dust of the earth. I will explain that in part three.

Cuinn looked at her with intense resolve. She just peaked his curiosity.

She continued, "Just like pacemakers are used in the body to assist with the living, in the end, computers will encompass Satan's beast system and even the antichrist himself to inspire, unite and mesmerize the world. The computers will be very real but the AI will be a deception. I will explain more later.

She grabbed some more notes, "The public is going to be enthralled and euphoric when they create the image of the beast, which the false prophet commissions them to build. This aspect is important because I believe the bible makes it clear he doesn't give the public a set of instructions or a blueprint. He is asking for 'their' image so I believe he is asking for their inspiration and for their artistic technical expression of the beast brand and his system. I am attempting to articulate how the false prophet will not control this aspect. This will be mankind's heart and soul 'image' regarding the brand of the beast and the technological system they crave, which I believe he will also personify. There might even be websites created where people can zealously go online and give their input or ideas regarding this very special image. When the public finally creates

their image to his system, Satan will now have everything perfectly in place. The antichrist's deadly wound will be healed using beast technology. The false prophet will be using words and miracles to inspire and deceive the public at large. And Satan will have his vehicle or house with which he will declare himself god over all the earth. I will now break everything down and explain it in precise detail."

Sally sets her notes down and talks expressively with her hands, "I already gave explanation on how I believe the antichrists deadly wound will be healed using beast technology. I used the example of the pacemaker and you probably know better than I do that there exists technology, even now, that could assist with such a procedure. It could be said a defibrillator is a 'technology' that raises someone from the dead. When a person's heart has stopped and a nurse, EMT or doctor 'zap' him back, this could not happen separate from harnessed electricity via the mechanical defibrillator. We also have examples from science fiction movies where characters are healed using technology. Darth Vader from the Star Wars series and Iron Man from the Marvel comics could be coined as examples. These movies could be considered predictive programming, if you believe that sort of thing. Basically greasing the wheels so when the technology is made public, the people will already be conditioned to believe it and receive it gladly. They think it's cool when they see it on the big screen so what will be their reaction when they see it in real life? This type of technology might also explain the antichrist's unbelievable sway over the people and also how persuasive he is. But, if this type of technology is one day possible, it should be clearly understood how admired and even revered this person would be.

Revelation 13:3-4

...and all the world wondered after the beast.
And they worshipped the dragon which gave
power unto the beast: and they worshipped the
beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast?
who is able to make war with him?

"You can take this exact verse and apply it to Iron Man today. His deadly wound was healed! Technology

saved his life and he has now made himself an unstoppable military force, even a one man show. Who could make war with Iron Man! Who is like Iron Man! It's quite obvious if a real life Iron Man existed today, the world would absolutely worship and go after him.

"Now, it is here that I must focus more on what I clearly believe to be the heart of all this technology with regard to Satan's desires. This is where it might get tough to follow because my interpretation not only highlights my beliefs it also must untie previous inaccurate beliefs in order to dissolve doubts. But again, this is because others have completely ignored the image and only focused on the antichrist. Of course, when you do this, you create all sorts of problems that people like me must eventually undo. Tedious work, like untying knots in a fishing line. I also want to make it very clear in talking about Satan's mystery of iniquity being built over the last two centuries that I do not judge the first builders of the mechanical and electrical capabilities on earth nor do I judge those who create or use technology today. I myself use technology so to believe I would judge another user is ignorant. God judges the motivations of the heart. Therefore, if you use these capabilities for the right reasons, like the defibrillator, then God is your judge. For example, you can use a knife to prepare dinner or you can use it to stab someone in the heart. These technologies in and of themselves are not evil, but evil men and Satan will be judged by God for how they chose to use them. That said, let's continue.

She handles some of her notes, "I said earlier that computers were Satan's counterfeit for man. This is true and I also believe this is why Satan only gives limited power to the antichrist and false prophet but not absolute rule and authority. It must be clearly understood that these two beasts are not the finality of Satan's plan, no... no..... no. Far from it! In fact, if you understand correctly, the two beasts are just two of his powerful agents here on earth, his leader and his magician; one out of the sea and the other out of the earth. Their purpose is to set the stage and to get everything ready. To make the world wonder after the beast system of technology... technology that can one day perhaps even save, enhance or prolong their own lives. To get as many people aligned for deception and to get

the public to build the image. They were never meant to be the final recipients of worship like many teachers claim. Most miss this entirely and throughout this interpretation I am basically undoing that harm.

"The reason the two beasts will not be the final recipients of worship is simple. Satan will not allow anything relating to God's creation to receive final glory, praise and worship which he covets for himself. The antichrist, although part technology, will also be a human being created in the image of God. This guy was born of a man and woman here on earth and since God created man, woman, marriage (intercourse) and procreation, Satan will not allow any part of that to taint his final regime here on earth, especially in light of him. Didn't Satan use Cain? Didn't Satan use Nimrod? Didn't Satan enter into Judas? Guess what, it won't happen in the end time, Satan's time, because he knows his time is short. If you have eyes to see this is entirely why the technology beast system was created in the first place. This is even why we have computers today.

"I am going to explain it to the tilt all throughout this interpretation. Consider this logic. God is the creator of man, the sun, the moon, the stars and the earth... among other things. God even created Satan. It might be hard to accept but Satan is one of God's masterpieces. Let me give you an example.

"Let's say you're a painter and you paint ten pictures. And people come to you and say they worship you as a painter. That is like us worshiping God. He is the artist, sculptor, painter and the creator of the universe. Now let's say those same people say, 'No, we don't worship you but your paintings are so beautiful we worship them.' This is the equivalent to us worshiping man, the sun, moon, stars and the earth, or even Satan himself, because these are all God's creations, His paintings if you will. Now, of course God does not want us to worship his creations, but by this example I hope you see how God could perhaps be flattered when we admire His creations. When you look at a cliff overlooking the ocean and say, 'Wow, that's beautiful,' I'm sure God appreciates the complement, although He would not want you to worship it. This is where it gets interesting. Satan's plan all along was to totally bypass anything having to do with God's original creations, particularly

man, because Satan, and Satan alone, wants all the worship in the end. Even revelation says the world will worship the dragon.

Revelation 13:3-4

...and all the world wondered after the beast.
And they worshipped the dragon which gave
power unto the beast:

"The dragon is Satan. This is confirmed by Revelation 12 which I will highlight later. So, Satan's plan from the beginning was to absolutely bypass man so he alone would receive mankind's worship. Guess what, computers will now allow him to do just that.

"So, with that understood, Satan now needs a vessel to possess, since he has rejected the idea of a human vessel in these end times. Let me not forget to mention Satan also desired mankind to be fully willing to give him a vessel separate from force. That is why it is so important for the public to willingly create this vessel. So, in mankind building the vessel, Satan attempts to mimic God's desire that we do these things willingly, out of a passionate heart. The bible even makes it clear mankind will be inspired and enthusiastic to do so. The false prophet, via deceit, will initiate all of this. So what is this vessel?"

Sally's facial countenance holds an austere look, "It's the image of the beast. The image of the beast will eventually house Satan. The very same image sinful man will lovingly build to signify their desire and lust for his technical beast system. The image will be a giant supercomputer and once Satan possesses it, the image will then speak and cause. But the false prophet will use words to deceive the public as to the real truth, which is Satan has possessed the image. He will instead lie and claim computers are now capable of AI (Artificial Intelligence) technology. Like I mentioned before, the AI will be a deception and I will explain more on that shortly. But for now, let's finally investigate how Satan plans to inhabit this image. I just want to reiterate, per Revelation 13:15, it is the image of the beast, once it has life, that it... and only it... will speak and cause mankind to either worship it or die. Allow me to reiterate the verse which explains the

beast out of the earth, also referred to as the false prophet. It also offers us insight as to the image.

Revelation 13:14-15

And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

"At this point, both the antichrist and the false prophet will still have some authority especially since mankind will still view them as personifications and representatives of the beast system, but make no mistake about it. From this point forward, according to scripture, the image of the beast is not only in charge, it will receive the world's worship at that time, via the mark of the beast. You can reference the mark of the beast in Revelation 13:16-18. In fact, both the antichrist and false prophet will likely be required to receive the mark of the beast. They will likely do this not only to show their allegiance but also as examples to all mankind that this new technology is good. But now, onto Revelation 12, where I will explain how Satan truly accomplishes this feat.

Revelation 12:7-9

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

"First off, I want to point out how this verse substantiates Revelation 13:4, that Satan is indeed the dragon; notice the above verse where it clearly calls Satan the dragon.

"Then look at Revelation 13:4 'and they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast:'

"It is all very clear. Revelation 13 introduces the two beasts and the image and verse 4 clearly states that Satan, the dragon, will receive worship at that time. It is not a coincidence all this happens right after Revelation 12 where the dragon Satan is cast to the earth. If you discern correctly, revelation 12 is the event in heaven of Satan being cast to the earth and revelation 13 becomes the earthly perspective of this happening. I have already briefly outlined how Satan is worshiped via the image and mark of the beast, but I am about to make it very, very clear. Beyond reproach in my opinion.

"Revelation 12 will become the background of my explanation and I will eventually convey Revelation 13 as my foreground. But please be patient. Around mid-tribulation, around the time the antichrist's deadly wound is healed and the false prophet commission's mankind to build the image of the beast, there is war in heaven. Satan will be cast out. I am going to prove that when this happens, he will be cast out of heaven and upon entering earth's atmosphere his fall will mimic lightning and Satan will be ushered by the false prophet into the image. But let's not get too ahead of ourselves. I'll start from the beginning.

Revelation 12:12-13

Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

"I am going to focus on the technology aspect but also rationally explain how all this will take place. Let me ask you a question. According to the verse I just

read what is the first thing Satan does when cast to the earth? He persecutes. And what is the first thing the image of the beast does once the false prophet gives it 'life?' It persecutes; causing all mankind to receive the mark or be killed. This is no fluke or coincidence. The image will be built and then per Daniel 9:27 will be placed in the corner, extremity or the 'wing' of the temple in Jerusalem. Everything will be in place. I do not believe the image will have a power source. The bible makes it clear the false prophet will have the power to give 'life' to the image of the beast. He does not give the image power, but via power he gives the image 'life.' Very important you understand that distinction. So, this image will just be sitting there, doing nothing. Like an unplugged computer without a battery sitting on the desert floor. Now read what it says about the false prophet.

Revelation 13:11-13,15

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

"This false prophet, or beast out of the earth, will have power to do miracles but also deceive mankind via words. He will speak as a dragon. One of the miracles he does is to call down fire or lightning from heaven to earth, and he will do it in the sight of men. So in Revelation 12 the dragon, or Satan, is cast to the earth. There will be a ceremony, an event, at Jerusalem. It will be the coronation of Satan with his image, and the world will be watching via technology.

"At the precise moment Michael and his angels cast Satan to the earth, the false prophet will perform his miracle in Jerusalem, calling down fire from heaven. Using power he will then give 'life' to the image by redirecting that lightning and pointing it directly into the image thus igniting the image with Satan. Upon entering the image Satan's power will then reactivate the computer and he will successfully possess it at that time. The image will then speak and cause mankind to worship it via the mark or be killed. Please consider this verse from Jesus Christ.

Luke 10:18

And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

"Make no mistake about it. When Satan falls from heaven he will be cast out by Michael and his angels and per Luke 10:18, it will appear to the world watching as lightning fall from heaven. You think it's a coincidence from earth the false prophet will have the power to perform his miracle of making fire come down from heaven? It's not a coincidence. The two occasions in scripture become one event. Satan falling like lightning plus the false prophet's ability to both call fire from heaven but also give 'life' unto the image is no coincidence. He has specifically been given that power for this purpose. It is also not a coincidence the scripture specifically points out that the false prophet has power to 'maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.' It specifically uses the words, 'in the sight of men.' This is not to be overlooked because this coronation must be a huge event in order for the false prophet to successfully deceive the inhabitants of the earth. Also, supernatural powers such as these are usually not permitted in the sight of many. God designed it that way so the average onlooker will not easily be persuaded or deceived. Simply put, God does not permit witchcraft to be out in the open. Seekers must truly go out of their way in an effort to join with these things. So, if you discern correctly, the fact the false prophet has the power to do these miracles in the sight of the entire earth is a game changer in and of itself.

"Just to iron out the semantics, fire from heaven is no doubt lightning so according to my interpretation, Luke 10:18 and Revelation 13:13 meld perfectly. Notice also Jesus uses the word 'beheld.' That word speaks of past, present and future. Once you understand Jesus is God and He exists outside of time, the scripture makes perfect sense. As an example I coin Jesus' transfiguration in Mark chapter nine.

"Also, examine the fact the false prophet speaks as a dragon so he will utilize all the words, terminology, speech and rhetoric to thoroughly convince the world of this deception. The deception will be that AI (Artificial Intelligence), has come to us. That all computers will one day speak and be conscious, just like the image they're witnessing, and that they will be instrumental in assisting mankind to evolve and eventually ascend and transcend. They'll help us to live for a thousand years, and even beyond. Computers will no longer be baseless instruments which mundanely assist us day to day. No, they are now awake, aware, highly intelligent, and they know; just like humans! But again, this will be a horrible deception because it will actually be Satan speaking and causing through the image.

"But let me ask you a question. Imagine if you didn't know the bible or you knew it loosely. Imagine seeing all this happen and honestly ask yourself if it wouldn't be the most brilliant fantastic thing you've ever witnessed? Then ask yourself if you wouldn't be persuaded and pressured to get the mark. I think it's clear, if my interpretation is correct, that this event will be so compelling it will lead many to heavily desire what they are witnessing. They're just going to be awestruck. Jesus isn't kidding when he warns us to remain watchful and prayerful in these end times. But I am going to expound even more in a moment, and make it clearer, so you can see the entire truth of the matter.

"The false prophet has been given this power by the dragon, via the first beast, to put on a show. Using both miracles and words to deceive the world and enslave mankind. Satan does all this in an attempt to separate man from God. The bible claims all who receive the mark will be damned.

Revelation 14:9-11

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

"So to recap, Satan will fall from heaven like lightning and via the false prophet's magic show, will be ushered straight into the image to receive mankind's worship at that time. I am going to continue to illustrate these points so you can see them as precisely as possible.

"Remember when I mentioned the image will be placed in the temple, on a 'wing' or extremity.

He answers her, "Yes, I recall; even from my own readings."

She nods, "Good."

Daniel 9:27

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

"The word 'overspreading' means 'wing or extremity.' Now, I have read evidence that states the original place for the Holy of Holies is not even close to where the excavators and archeologists plan to build the 3rd temple. Perhaps this is all planned. This evidence places the presumed 3rd temple in a different location than the first and second temples. So, by default, since the temple's location will be different,

so will it's Holy of Holies. According to this evidence, the original location of the Holy of Holies just so happens to be located on a 'wing' or extremity from this future 3rd temple location.

"So essentially, when the 3rd temple is built and when they begin to offer sacrifice, at that exact moment the original location of the Holy of Holies will be a stones throw away from that spot. I tentatively speculate when this image is placed on a 'wing,' as mentioned per Daniel 9:27, it might be placed directly on top of the original location of the original Holy of Holies. Again, this will be a short distance away or 'extremity' from the new 3rd temple location. So, just like in the first Indiana Jones movie regarding the Ark of the Covenant, they're digging in the wrong place."

Cuinn can't help but snicker, Sally notices and smiles but then continues.

"But, what I just mentioned is speculation, what is not speculation is just as God visited the people via the Holy of Holies in the Old Testament, Satan will now visit mankind via the image man built. Just as Israel constructed the Ark of the Covenant for God to inhabit, placing it within the temple, inside the Holy of Holies... mankind in the end will construct the image of the beast, the Ark of their Covenant/lusts/desires for Satan's technical beast system, for Satan to also inhabit. Therefore, the image of the beast is actually Satan's clever counterfeit for Israel's Ark of the Covenant. As mentioned previously, the image will then be given 'life' and will speak and cause all mankind to take the mark or die. The mark no doubt equates to their worship and complete devotion to his system, especially considering Jesus' words in Revelation 14:9-11.

"From that moment forward, every time a human utilizes that mark, whether to buy groceries or to gain access to a certain city or place, whatever, all that information will be uploaded into the supercomputer image that Satan has possessed. He will be receiving mankind's worship at that time. Every scan is a prayer and every usage is an act of worship. That is why there is no forgiveness for those who take the mark, because the user has forfeited God completely and has given themselves wholeheartedly over to technology and the complete worship of Satan and his beast system. They have rejected the man Jesus, who is the Christ, and instead

embraced Satan's counterfeit for man, and Satan's image, the computer. The mark of the beast will be a computer application in the right hand or in the forehead. The amount of worship the image and thus Satan will receive at that time will greatly rival any amount of worship God the Father or Jesus Christ has ever received on earth times ten. I will not say the worship is as blessed, but, it's a lot."

He asks a question, "Why won't it be as blessed?"

Sally speaks as led by the Spirit, "Simply because mankind willingly built the image, that's true, but once possessed by Satan, mankind will then be forced to receive the mark of the beast or be killed. Just as Hitler forced Germany to obey, Satan, once he has inhabited the image, will force mankind to worship and obey him. Some will do so happily and even willingly, but most won't; just as some willingly followed Hitler but most didn't, nevertheless, they too eventually succumbed to their fear and obeyed. All who worship the Father through Jesus Christ accept Him willingly as their Lord and Savior, so their future worship is blessed. Therefore, for that reason, Satan and his image might get tons of worship, but because it's mostly forced, and because fear is the motive for many, it's not as blessed.

"I can also get into the fact Jesus Christ willingly died on the cross for our sins, the greatest self sacrifice one can make. Therefore, even if we hold a fear or reverence for God, it is primarily based on Jesus' first act of self sacrifice. Christians, in reverencing or fearing God are basically returning the favor. Christ conquered death. So if we fear death, we most certainly should fear Christ. But Satan, on the other hand, has not sacrificed anything for mankind that we should worship, reverence or fear him. In fact, it's the opposite, Satan has greatly used and abused mankind. This really becomes the difference."

He is impressed with her explanation as she continues, "Again, we need to view the fact Satan's mystery of iniquity is very successful. Satan's mystery of iniquity attempts to rival Jesus' mystery of Christ found in the book of Ephesians and Colossians. This mystery of iniquity gets everything in place *before* Satan is cast out of the heavens by Michael and his angels. It is very critical we understand this because if things were not in place then it couldn't be an event. The

image becomes a dwelling, habitation or 'hideout' if you will, where Satan can continue his deception, his mystery of iniquity, from earth.

"Right now he is doing it in his greatest spot to deceive, the heavens. Even Jesus calls Satan 'the prince of this world' but make no mistake about it, Satan deceives the world *from* the heavens.

"For he is according to Ephesians 2:2, 'the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' The spirit that now works in the children of disobedience *is* his mystery of iniquity and that same spirit will lead disobedient man, in the end, to construct his image. It is also interesting to note, in two of the three verses when Jesus referred to Satan as the prince of this world, He used it in conjunction with the world being judged at that time. We know at mid-tribulation, when Satan is cast out and into the image, the world is then judged.

John 12:31, 16:11

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

"In the heavens, Satan has had access to not only hideout, but to fully construct his mystery of iniquity over vast periods of time, millennia even. That's why Paul the apostle said, even in his day, that the mystery of iniquity was at work.

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8

For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

"It's been working ever since the tower of Babel, possibly even before that. But understand this, once

cast out; his ability to deceive the nations becomes greatly limited. It's not a coincidence at this time the antichrist is revealed for who he truly is; the man of sin and the son of perdition. That is why it is so essential Satan has everything in place ahead of time. The technology, the computer beast system, the antichrist receiving the world's respect and admiration after his deadly wound is healed, the false prophet influencing and deceiving mankind using words and miracles and ultimately, the supercomputer image the public builds which becomes Satan's shroud here on earth. All of this must be completed before he is cast to the earth. Without all this done ahead of time, he would have missed his window of opportunity to continue to deceive while on earth.

"Imagine if you will a magician who gets caught in the act. The allure is now gone and he can't get it back. Satan's magic trick in the end will be flawless, absolutely flawless, and the false prophet becomes his magician to usher it all in and deceive the people. When Satan is ultimately cast to the earth, he knows that everything changes. Like a bird, whose wings have been clipped, he really loses so much at that time. But, with the antichrist, false prophet and the image of the beast in place, this essentially allows him to continue to function, hidden behind the scenes. Satan's wings may be clipped but the earth is now his cage and via computers and the two beasts he remains in complete control over everything.

"Please permit me to reiterate once again. Because everything is in place, it allows this unfortunate situation for Satan, because the bible says Satan is mad because he knows his time is short... not to mention it is easier for him to deceive from the heavens, it now allows for this misfortune to instead become a major event. Without the false prophet there to put on a show and without the world watching and the image erected, he's got very little to work with, especially regarding his ability to remain hidden. Can't you see? Satan takes this horrible occasion in his existence, getting cast out of heaven, and twists it to make the world think it's his coming out party! He's really angry but deceives the world so everyone thinks this is a good thing. Their eventual enslavement will be a good thing. The image, false prophet and antichrist as well as the deception

that AI will be the new trend, a bona fide extension of their normal lives. And guess what, the bible isn't kidding. Jesus makes it very clear in Matthew 24 the people will go all in. Look, even now at how mankind excessively worship's technology! It'll come to its climax just before the end with the image and mark of the beast.

"The bible says the antichrist will worship a God of forces. I believe it is biblical according to my interpretation this corresponds to the image of the beast. Allow me to present my reasoning.

Daniel 11:38

But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

"That god is technology and by way of his mystery of iniquity Satan is the author of that technology on earth. So, by default, the antichrist will honor and worship Satan. Just as Christians worship the Father via Christ mankind receiving the mark will worship the dragon via his child, the computer. It all fits. The god the antichrist honors with gold, silver and precious stones, that his fathers knew not is technology. With Satan possessing it as technologies author here on earth. The antichrist will worship the god of technology but also the 'God of forces,' Satan himself. Allow me to build the foundation for a final exposition of Daniel 11:38.

"It is my interpretation the antichrist will honor the image man builds with gold, silver and with precious stones and pleasant things. The very same image which houses and disguises Satan. So, in essence, he'll honor Satan with gold, silver and precious stones and pleasant things. Please consider this verse which speaks of the King of Tyrus but no doubt implies Satan.

Ezekiel 28:12-15

Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and

perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

"Do you see anything familiar? When the antichrist honors the image he does so with the same coverings Lucifer, or Satan, had in the beginning. It says it right there, in the midst of Eden, the garden of God. The same precious stones and gold Satan had in the beginning he will be arrayed with once again, but this time by the antichrist rather than by God. This is how antichrist will honor Satan, by reverting him back to his former splendor.

"This image supercomputer that Satan possesses will be decked out with all these precious stones, pleasant things and so Satan, by way of the image, will finish with the same pomp he started with. I believe in the Ezekiel verse, when it mentions Satan was adorned with tabrets and pipes, that these were constructed with gold and maybe even silver which Daniel 11:38 also mentions. Therefore, when the antichrist honors the image with precious stones, he'll exactly mimic the stones mentioned in the Ezekiel verse and when he honors it with gold, silver and pleasant things, he'll mimic the golden pipes and perhaps silver tabrets or timbrels Satan had in the beginning. Golden pipes are even mentioned in Zechariah 4:12, demonstrating God's usage of the two in conjunction.

"It is starting to become pretty clear, isn't it? I actually believe in the beginning, Satan was created to be a walking instrument but also a user of that instrument. This is very important to understand. I want you to remember that word 'user' in conjunction with Satan possessing the image/computer because I'm going to

cover it more but also in part three. But back to Satan as an instrument. I believe the golden pipes signify he was much like an organ. The silver tabrets or timbrels acted as the beat or the rhythm to that organ. The music, which was amplified through the golden pipes, came via the precious stones. I believe the precious stones were supernaturally used by Satan much in the same way you or I would use keys on a piano. The sound emanated from these stones. Therefore, the precious stones were not only for looks as much as they were for sound.

"But more to the point, this image is what the antichrist, and I also believe the false prophet, will honor in an effort to deceive mankind. I hope by now I have made it abundantly clear the antichrist and false prophet are not the focus of the world's worship but rather cloth, dress and honor the image that Satan possesses. When the entire world watches the antichrist honor and adorn the image with such grandeur, they'll know exactly who's in charge and exactly where to direct their worship.

"What is also interesting to note and highlight is this. When Satan possesses the image and begins to cause and speak, it will probably look a lot like what AI is assumed to look like today. It will most likely be fascinating to watch if not down right intimidating. In fact, if you've seen computer generated images on the big screen it will most likely appear a lot like that, if not even more spectacular, perhaps even in three or four dimensions. Remember, Satan has access to heavens and dimensions we don't. So, perhaps when he is cast to the earth he'll bring some of those heavens, or those dimensions, to us. This is why even today some are using and talking so much about CGI, AI, transhumanism and the idea of evolving and ascending. Most that enjoy considering these things are just entertaining and or being entertained, but they are unknowingly greasing the cogs and setting the stage. According to Satan's mystery of iniquity here on earth, people are slowly being programmed to mull over and consider these things, even find favor in them. So, when you understand it this way, when the technology finally does happen, mankind will be desensitized and nonreactive toward it.

"Something else to contemplate. Because of the deception of AI, mankind will not knowingly worship Satan, at least not in the beginning. They'll worship

the power that created the technology, which is Satan nonetheless and I'll clarify and resolve Daniel 11:38 in a moment. But the point is, Satan doesn't care if people are deceived as long as they take his mark and worship his image. He's now killed two birds with one stone. He's got mankind away from God and worshipping him.

"Okay, I want to recap before I bring a final clarification to Daniel 11:38. Just as born again Christians worship Jesus, by default, they are also worshipping the Father. In the end mankind will worship technology (mark/image of the beast), and by default, they'll worship its Father (Satan). Notice again the first part of the verse because I want to highlight it in two different ways.

"Daniel 11:38, 'But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces:'

"It's right there. In his estate. Or, in his place. Or even, in his pedestal. In Hebrew the word 'estate' means base, stand or pedestal. The image of the beast which Satan possesses is an image dedicated to the antichrist, whose deadly wound is healed using technology. So, instead of the antichrist worshipping the antichrist, he will honor the technical image dedicated to himself. 'In his estate he shall honor.' Let me drive it home by completely explaining the verse. Let's read the entire verse one more time and you're going to be shocked.

Daniel 11:38

But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

"Notice the word 'god' and the word 'honour' are mentioned twice because they imply two different gods. The first 'God' is capitalized and the second 'god' is not. This is not an accident. The 'God of forces' which is capitalized refers to Satan which, if you know the scriptures, Satan is always capitalized. The second smaller 'god' refers to his son, technology, whom his fathers knew not. Read it a few times and it should sink in.

"So, as you can see, there is some clever wording going on here. The antichrist, in place of himself, honors Satan. He will also honor the little 'g' the 'god' technology by covering the image with precious stones and pleasant things. You see, the antichrist is really honoring Satan and his child technology all in one single action. The antichrist cannot physically cover Satan with pleasant things because he is inside the image, so he also honors his child, technology, by adorning the technical image with beautiful stones, gold, silver and pleasant things. In doing thus, he is symbolically counterfeiting the church's worship of the Father and Son. He is displaying to the world, and to the sons of disobedience, how they should worship. He is telling them, don't honor God the Father via Jesus Christ. Instead, do as I have done. Honor Satan via his child, technology. Therefore, Satan replaces the Father and technology replaces the Son. You can see how all this eventually brings about God's wrath on the beast kingdom.

"Makes sense." Cuinn offers her as much. "What else?"

Sally recalls her train of thought, "Before I go any further I want to first mention in part three I will expound much more on the Father/Son and Satan/technology aspect as I prove the computer is ultimately Satan's counterfeit for man as well as his creation. This creation will then, in the end, be constructed into his perfect image. That said, in this interpretation I tried to explore how many have focused more on the antichrist as opposed to the image of the beast. I hope I have clarified how that is an ignorant view and will lead to nowhere, fast. If Christian's chose to focus on the antichrist instead of the image and technology, it could prep them for deception because they'll be focusing on the demonic when in reality the demonic will come by way of our technology. The false prophet and antichrist, not to mention the image, are going to be too cunning and even the bible in Matthew 24 says the deceptions will be so powerful even some of the elect might be deceived. When you place technology in its rightful place, the forefront, then you open your eyes to many of the levels and angles which will be used in an effort to deceive.

"Imagine if Satan and his angels we're able to bring down to earth the fourth and fifth dimensions, you

think that'd get a few people's attention? This entire situation is no joke and either is the revelation. Anyone who tries to play games and ignore scripture in the end times will lose. We as Christians must go to the source or to the root regarding this revelation if we hope to find secure closure with this world, and Jesus is trying to assist us with His book of Revelation, which my interpretation is based upon. And I have tried to highlight in this interpretation that focus is Satan, his image and the computer/technology beast system which was built by way of his mystery of iniquity using the sons of disobedience. Christ has his bride in the end but we must remember so does Satan. In fact, let's go in a little different direction before I conclude.

"The image of the beast is mentioned in scripture elsewhere. Jesus refers to the image himself but never talks about the antichrist until the book of Revelation. But He doesn't call it an image, he calls it an idol.

Matthew 24:15

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

"People have assumed this to be the antichrist but it is not, nothing could be further from the truth and I hope I have already partly explained that but here I will attempt to explain it even further. This abomination of desolation Jesus refers to in Matthew 24 is the image of the beast. Now I will expound on this belief. Idols in the Old Testament were considered abominations. Anything that received man's worship, especially if it was created by a craftsman, was considered an abomination.

Deuteronomy 27:15

Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.

"Back then a molten image or graven image was the closest a person could get to technology, especially regarding the spirit realm... since it has been said many of these images and idols would become possessed by demons. In the end, Satan will possess the image, idol or abomination man creates with the work of their hands just as demons have possessed idols and images for millennia, and make no mistake about it, the greatest master craftsmen computer designers of this age will create this image Satan will inhabit. Jesus Christ makes it very clear this abomination will be the instrument which causes desolation. Recall this verse.

Revelation 13:15

...that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

"Anyone not willing to receive the mark and thus worship the image will be killed. It is the image of the beast that *causes* them to be killed, or makes them desolate... not the antichrist or the false prophet. It is the image, the work of man's hands (abomination/idol), which makes desolate (kills those without the mark). Jesus quotes it perfectly, the abomination of desolation. The work of man's hands that destroys.

"The reason Jesus didn't outright call it an image or idol in Matthew 24 is because He hadn't yet died and rose from the dead. But make no mistake about it, in His Revelation, the book of Revelation, Jesus doesn't mince words. Now that He's risen from the dead He comes powerfully to John on the isle of Patmos as a judge with fire behind his eyes, so He no longer quotes Daniel but directly calls it an idol, or an image. When you take into account my interpretation of Deuteronomy 27:15 it becomes clear the abomination Jesus references from Daniel and the Image He speaks about in His Revelation are one in the same.

"Now, regarding the two beasts in relation to the image. The bible does say in Revelation 13:16 that the false prophet does *cause* everyone to receive a mark, but you must rightly divide, this is only after the image first speaks and *causes* all to worship it or be killed.

So essentially, the false prophet is just implementing what the image has already declared. He is basically following orders much in the same way a secretary would book an appointment the boss ordained. It is very important you understand that. Now, once the mark is implemented I believe the antichrist will wage wars in an attempt to spread the mark, but once again, it is still Satan's original bidding once he possesses his image that all receive his mark or die. So the antichrist, in doing thus, is following orders just like the false prophet.

"Many people assume the mark will be emphasized person to person but I believe if a nation refuses the mark, the image and Satan will declare war on that nation and he'll use the antichrist as his instrument. The antichrist and false prophet therefore become Satan's right and left hand men. But it is Satan who, from the beginning, declares... take the mark or die. So it is Satan who causes, and no one else.

"The two beast's entire purpose, before Satan is cast to the earth, is to become popular, deceive mankind and get that image built. Then, to place it on a 'wing' or extremity of the 3rd temple in preparation for his arrival. Just to add some fuel to my interpretation, notice also in Matthew 24:15, Jesus mentions this abomination will stand in the holy place. It can be said this 'holy place' is none other than the original Holy of Holies I talked about earlier. But reiterating, this is just my speculation and doesn't need to happen in order to qualify all the verses I have mentioned throughout this interpretation with regard to the image. Now, let me again quote Daniel whom Jesus referenced. I already quoted Daniel 9:27 earlier which makes reference to 'the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate,' which word 'overspreading' means 'wing or extremity.' Now this verse.

Daniel 11:31

And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.

"Notice the last part. It says, 'they shall place...' Who are they? I already explained it earlier. They are the people who build the image. The craftsmen, the ones who create this idol, this public display of their expression of the beast and his system. This cannot possibly be the antichrist unless you believe 'they' are going to 'place' a live human being anywhere. The antichrist's deadly wound will have already been healed by this point and he will be perfectly capable of placing himself wherever he wants. This verse makes another strong argument this is the image because you don't 'place' a human being anywhere. You 'place' a computer, idol or the ark of their covenant/lusts/desires/technology/image/idol somewhere. The word 'place' has a direct meaning 'to put' or 'set.' If you break down the verse is basically says this. This is my interpretation of the verse.

Daniel 11:31 (My Interpretation)

And the antichrist's army will come to power, and they'll defile the temple, and stop the sacrifice by the priests, and will erect the image of the beast who will cause all to receive the mark or die.

"All the evidence fits. I have considered many other interpretations and after careful review I have concluded most have glaring holes. Even if my interpretation is not perfect, I cannot even discern small holes in it. If you have studied long enough other explanations truly lack revelation. Some ignore the image outright and claim the antichrist is the image. This is not scriptural, and I will prove it using both reason and scripture.

"First off, it clearly makes zero sense, since obviously the dragon will need a place to command the world as well as mankind's worship once he is cast to the earth. My explanation of Satan needing to remain hidden while on earth is of real importance here. You think Satan, when hurled to the earth, is going to hide in some cave; or will he rather hide in plain sight, in the supercomputer as a puppet master where he can deceive the world and use the false prophet to convince them that AI is here and worthy to be worshiped? The image will be

his earthly domain, his habitation, and everything I have outlined in this interpretation makes that reality make sense.

"Recall when I told you to remember the word 'user' in conjunction with Satan operating himself as an instrument? Satan, as the end user of his own creation, the computer, will operate it better than anyone ever could. Satan is the master programmer, the master engineer and the premier architect. So, just as the Father possessed his son Jesus Christ here on earth, so to Satan must possess his child, the image supercomputer. And don't con yourself, when he does, he'll operate it flawlessly, better than any programmer ever could. Just like as anointed cherub he played flawless music in Eden, the garden of God.

"I also briefly explained that Satan won't possess the antichrist because that would equate to God's creation, man, in the end receiving worship. Satan won't allow this. It must only be him and his child that receives mankind's worship in the end. And, I already explained these are the same two gods of Daniel 11:38, Satan and technology. And what a coincidence, by creating the supercomputer and possessing it, Satan has meticulously bypassed man. Satan possessed Judas back in the day because there were no computers around. Now that he's finally built them he will never choose man over his own child. Satan wants to destroy man, not use him, and in the end he'll use his child, the computer, to do just that. God the Father's child Jesus Christ freed and saved mankind and Satan's child, the computer, will enslave and destroy it.

"The book of Revelation even says that three unclean spirits like frogs come out of three mouths: the beast/antichrist, the false prophet and the dragon. Here is the verse.

Revelation 16:13

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

That verse mentions the word 'mouth' three times. So you can't believe the dragon is inside the antichrist

because that would equal three frogs and two mouths. But, if the dragon is in the image, you now have three separate entities so the scripture makes sense. Out of the mouth of the image, out of the mouth of the antichrist and out of the mouth of the false prophet. Trying to reason the antichrist and Satan are one in the same will never qualify that verse.

"Even if one still believes Satan will possess the antichrist then please explain to me the image? How does it speak? And why does the image demand worship via the mark and not the antichrist? Also, why does the antichrist honor it with precious stones, gold, silver and pleasant things? And please don't tell me you're going to fall for the AI deception nonsense because that means there is a good chance you'll be one of the elect who can be deceived according to Jesus' words in Matthew 24:24. And the most overwhelming evidence that I have highlighted all throughout this interpretation, the fact the false prophet commissions man to build an image to the beast.

"Revelation 13:14, 'saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.'

"Allow me to illustrate. The image compasses the entire reason for the false prophet's existence. Firstly, the false prophet makes the antichrist look good, and he is probably instrumental in explaining his deadly wound being healed. All this is very important because the antichrist must be the center of attention and even worshipped in order for the image to eventually be built. But, once those things have happened, the false prophet then commissions the world to create the image. They will do so willingly, it will be their loving expression of the fact the beast is alive and technology healed his moral wound. Then, once it is created, it is placed on a wing of the 3rd temple and he will magically usher Satan directly into it via lightning. He then speaks like a dragon, using words to con mankind into believing AI has arrived and all our diligent work in building computers made it possible. He will then tell them AI is a force for good. That it is their god worthy to be worshiped.

"The image is just one gigantic satanic magic trick and we know every magic trick needs a magician. The antichrist coming on the scene, surviving a mortal wound

and as a result being worshiped is just the setting of the stage for the image to be built. Without all those things happening they'd be no image. But, because they happen on purpose, once the image is built this gives way for the false prophet along with all his bag of tricks. The antichrist then himself honors the image. When you read Revelation 13 and you discern the difference between the antichrist and false prophet, then you'll see it better. The simple truth is everything ascribed to the false prophet really boils down to the image. Of course, he needs to first uplift the antichrist or else mankind would never build an image. When you see it for what it is, it's quite plain and clear what's happening here. The antichrist and false prophet are just two instruments to set the stage and once Satan possesses the image they become his right and left hand men.

"But, if you still believe the image and antichrist are one and the same, let me finally eradicate that notion, using only scripture.

"The Antichrist has already been wounded and healed long before mankind is commissioned by the false prophet to build the image. Then, once the image is placed on a wing, the false prophet will give 'life' unto the image. So here is the correct order of it, and this leaves off my interpretation and speculation entirely. The timetable below is purely based on scripture.

1. Antichrist deadly wound is healed. (Rev 13:3,14)
2. The False prophet commissions mankind to make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. (Rev 13:14)
3. Mankind makes the image. Sometime after the image is created, it is placed on a wing in the 3rd temple and the false prophet gives it 'life.' (Daniel 9:27, Rev 13:14-15)

"You see. When the false prophet finally gives the image life, by that time, the antichrist has long been healed of his deadly wound. That's scripture. Consider this also. It is going to take the world time to build this image, and during all that time, the antichrist will be healed of his deadly wound. They're going to base this image on the fact his deadly wound was healed, so in their eyes, he is worthy of this image or this type of

exaltation. Scripture makes it clear they are two very separate affairs, and they take place at two different time intervals.

"The image is built *then* the false prophet gives it 'life.' One more time, just for clarity.

Revelation 13:11-15

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

"So, the order of it is the final evidence. The world is commissioned to build the image in praise of the fact the antichrist's deadly wound has already been healed. The truth is, the antichrist is up and running long before the image is even commissioned to be built.

Sally concludes with a question, "I hope I have outlined the matter well. Do you have any questions?"

He tapped his pen on his notebook, "You painted the picture well. I agree, regarding the image and Satan possessing the image rather than the person of the antichrist. You make a good argument and conceptualize your logic well. According to everything you've said, I think you're correct. The timetables don't add up. I have read the entire bible a few times and the book of Revelation many times and I never thought the antichrist and the image were the same thing. I followed your

reasoning clearly. A lot makes sense but some of it is open to speculation. The AI speculation is a bit fuzzy but a good assumption nonetheless. If Satan is inside this image then when he speaks through it, AI might sound like a good explanation. Or as you stated, a deception. Do you have any thoughts on what kind of technology could possibly heal the antichrist's deadly wound? Does the bible clarify if the antichrist is raised from the dead?"

Sally places her notes down, "The bible does not clarify if the antichrist is raised from the dead, it only mentions,

She thumbs her bible, "In Revelation 13:3 'And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.'

She continues, "Some have assumed this indicates a head wound, but that is an assumption. It does say his deadly wound is healed, and all the world wonders after the beast. It could be reasoned that the wound is so great that, once healed, the world is astonished.

"It also says in Revelation 13:14, 'which had the wound by a sword, and did live.'

"And this verse pertains to the false prophet commissioning the world to build the image in praise of the antichrist's ability to be healed.. in spite of the wound. But to answer your question more precisely, the bible does not specify if the antichrist rises from the dead."

He looks squarely at her, "What do you think, best guess?"

She has a curious gesture as she speculates, "Just a guess, but I do think he will rise from the dead. I believe he will receive such a wound that it will be nearly impossible to believe he can survive. I think he will be missing for a day or two and the world will believe he's dead, but then suddenly, he'll appear, alive and well. I believe technology will be behind it and the world will at that time be made aware that such technology exists. Once this happens, I think the world will wonder after him, and possibly see him as the most powerful amazing man on the planet. Almost how the world right now would view a real life Iron Man or someone with power over the elements such as Darth Vader. They'll make the image frantically because they'll be sold on the technology once they see his deadly wound healed. It'll

give them hope regarding their own lives. But what type of technology, that's not my thing?"

"Well," he shifts in his seat, "That's a problem because those are the kind of answers we'll need. What you've told me is great and I'll study some more but I know what I need to hear and I haven't heard it yet."

Sally takes a stab at it, "You want me to explain the technology?!?!"

He shakes his head in slight frustration, "We'll come up with the technology. You just give us some direction. According to your spiritual insight, what technology could raise someone from the dead?"

Sally bites the inside of her cheek, "Please don't be annoyed but part three was going to possibly go in that direction."

He shakes his head again, holding back his anger. He speaks bluntly, "Give me what you have now!"

Sally is pressed to ask a question, "You are obviously working on this technology so maybe it will help if I know what hasn't worked for you?"

He eyes her with some resolve, "You want us to tell you what we've been working on?"

Sally's body language exudes confidence, "Only so I can help. If I know what mistakes you've made, maybe I can give you answers?"

He believes her, "Obviously we've created technology, technology that has failed us, repeatedly. Attempting to usurp the heart and brain in conjunction with supernatural elements we don't understand, mostly the spiritual."

Sally asks, "Interesting, so you're trying to usurp the physical heart by counterfeiting the soul and you're trying to usurp the physical brain by counterfeiting the mind."

He looks at her, that was interesting. "Say that again."

She repeats it slower, "The brain, on a spiritual level, is aided by the mind and the heart, on a spiritual level, is aided by the soul."

He becomes eager, "How then, can science and technology spiritually mimic the mind and soul? There must be a way?"

"What have you tried?"

He becomes more zealous, "With the heart we've tried electricity. We've tried artificial hearts with

DNA strands we've grown via our current technology. Regarding the brain, we work primarily with the cells. The Neurons and the Glial. Some of the work is promising but we hit walls to frequently to believe we are on the right track."

Sally wants to say something but holds back. She stares at him. She was going to say it tomorrow anyway so she might as well get it over with. "You're digging in the wrong place."

His eyes enlarge, she knew something. "What?"

She says hesitantly, "If what you told me is true, then you're concentrating too much on the physical. Way too much on the hardware aspect of the human body."

He interrupts her, "Hardware aspect, what do you mean?"

She says it plainly, "I mean, focus on the software aspect. I wasn't kidding when I told you the computer is Satan's counterfeit for man. That's what Satan's mystery of iniquity has done in using, by way of inspiration, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. To reverse engineer and map the human body and genome in order to create Satan's counterfeit for man, the computer. Just as computers have both software and hardware, and they're both physical, and the software does much of the writing onto the more physical hardware. It is the same with the human body."

"I can tell you know more. Give it to me, what is it?" His voice was at a fevered pitch.

She exhales and says it slowly, "The human body's software is the blood."

After he hears those words he puts his hand on his forehead and stares at the ceiling. She continues, "Our blood acts as the software for our bodies. The mind utilizes the blood and so does the soul. Our blood working as our software writes onto our more physical hardware, our hearts and brains via our spiritual minds and spiritual souls. Just as in the case of a bodily virus the cells within our blood will involuntarily envelop and mark those cells. Much in the same way our blood will write onto our brain and heart concerning our voluntary mind perceptions and soul choices. So, if you're looking for a bridge between the two, between the physical brain/heart and the spiritual mind/soul, you should start with what's in between. The blood."

He is astounded; in an effort to fully grasp it he repeats it. "You mean a bridge between the heart and soul and a bridge between the brain and..."

Sally interrupts him midsentence, "The brain and mind. Yes, by our voluntary actions our spiritual minds and spiritual souls use our blood as software to write onto our more physical brain and heart. Software is still physical, it's just, soft. And it's a different type of physical with an entirely different purpose, just like software in a computer is a different type of physical and has an entirely different purpose than the more simplistic hardware. I will explain more tomorrow because I am not done studying but by tomorrow I should be able to help you more."

He takes off his microphone and opens the door as though he's in awe. Sally can see him say something to the guard in passing as he exits her view. The guard immediately enters and grabs his briefcase and all his belongings. Sally hands him her microphone and he leaves. She must have said something that struck him, she reasoned? No matter, she'd finishing studying tonight and hopefully by tomorrow, once part three was done, she could leave this place. She began gathering her notes.

Cuinn makes his way back to the laboratory where much of the testing is done. He couldn't believe it. She might have just handed him the missing link, the skeleton key with which they would unlock all the technology they had previously worked on. Much of the testing and technology had not focused on the blood. It was almost an afterthought at this point, but as he reasoned he realized much of their testing could be repurposed toward the blood. They had done so much work, he rationalized as he entered the main building; some of it had to correlate.

He burst the lab doors open and walked straight near the back. Some of the scientists noticed his demeanor and stopped working. He made eye contact with the lead scientist and approached him. The two met in the vicinity where by now, many if not all were watching them. He spoke three words to him, loudly.

"It's the blood."

Chapter 9

Sally woke up to a ringing in her ears. It was probably the stress that was multiplying day by day as she was held captive in this place. As always, once the guard noticed she was awake, he would bring breakfast quickly. Sally didn't like eating before she had a chance to shower and get ready but such luxuries had lost their meaning. She was used to the mundane routine. Wake up, eat, shower, pray, study. She would watch TV if she got extremely bored but that just reminded her she wasn't free, so it offered little consolation.

Things would be different today. Cuinn had already instructed her, late last night, that he wanted the next series of information but that she would need to record it by herself. Basically, turn on the recorder and speak into the microphone. The revelation of the blood held such high significance that it became priority one for Cuinn and his team of doctors and scientists. Sally would finish her work, but it seemed everyone was working today.

She grabbed her notes and arranged them. She had studied deep into the night and now she couldn't sleep. It was as if the revelation was in control, causing her to sleepwalk into this final series of information which might lead to the opening these prison doors. She desperately wanted to finish, but something told her she had already finished but didn't know it. Ever since she mentioned the word blood there had been a feeding frenzy going on. Cuinn was so excited it looked to her as if he had birthed his firstborn.

She grabbed the recorder and placed it squarely on the chair, the one Cuinn usually sat in. She made sure everything was ready. She would eat, study some more and then shower. She would then come back into this room and finish part three regarding the technology as pertaining to the spiritual, or at least the technology pertaining to the spiritual as far as she could discern. She grabbed her fork and began eating.

Sally was rocking back and forth praying to her God. She was asking for clarity so she could finish what she

started. She wanted out of this place, and giving these people as much information was the key. She was pleading with the Lord for a safe passage out, for that information that would set her free.

Lord,

You know what these people want to hear. Help that come out of my mouth so I can go home. I try not to demand anything from you but I want out of this place. I fear you so I also submit to Your Will, but I quietly hope and pray Your Will is to not keep me here any longer. You know if I will eventually make it out of this place, so please, help me to discern and understand Your Will. I am going to finish the last series today. Please help it ring true. Please help me give the answers that will unlock my captivity. If You could open prison doors for apostle Peter and apostle Paul, You surely can speak through me to open these doors. I trust in You Lord. I am honored to be Your disciple and I give You all the glory. Amen

Everything that had happened had been a despairing surreal process. Surreal in that it was dynamic but despairing in that she was captive, held against her will but somehow, within the scheme of things, under God's supernatural protection she felt peace. This is how Paul and Peter the apostles must have felt, she considered as she arranged her notes. Locked up and God knowing all too well. What would get her out of here? What words, questions or answers would help her leave this place? Not healthy Sally girl, she rebuked herself, just do the work!

She grabbed her notes, hit play and opened her mouth, widely.

"In part three I will consummate all three parts into one joint understanding. I will begin part three now. I have already alluded to understanding regarding

the blood and my belief it becomes a soft physical bridge, or software, between the more physical brain and heart and the spiritual traits of the human body, the mind and soul. I will expound more on this later. I would now like to explain, in detail, how Satan used his mystery of iniquity in conjunction with mankind to create the computer as his counterfeit to man. Man might have built the computer but Satan was the architect and designer just as God wrote the bible but man was His architect and designer here on earth. For biblical clarification I refer to Ephesians 2:1-3 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 respectively.

"Now, the bible explains man was created as body, spirit and soul. I believe Satan has created the computer in an attempt to counterfeit those three aspects specifically. We will start with the body and end with the soul.

"The Bible says man was created from the dust of the earth.

Genesis 2:7

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

"This verse makes it plain man was created from the dust of the ground. Here is a definition of silicon from an online source:

Silicon is the eighth most common element in the universe by mass. Over 90% of the earth's crust is composed of silicate minerals making silicon the second most abundant element in the earth's crust, second only to oxygen. It is most widely distributed in dust and sands.

"Notice the last sentence specifically mentions the words dust and sands. Computers chips, electrical circuits, semiconductors, microprocessors, and transistors are all made from silicon. This is where Silicon Valley, which became the hub for a large number of silicon chip groundbreaking discoveries, got it's

name. Silicon, which becomes the physical base for computer hardware, comes directly from the dust of the earth. It perfectly counterfeits man with regard to bodily composition.

Man is body = Dust of the earth.

Computer hardware base = Dust of the earth.

"To be more exacting. Microprocessors become Satan's counterfeit for the heart and hard drives become Satan's counterfeit for the brain. I am going to expound more on this in the spirit and soul sections.

"Now, let's go onto the explanation of the spirit. A computer is not just physical, there is an electrical component. This comes via a power plug inserted into a wall or a charged battery. If you know anything about the cells in our body, they do not work separate from electricity. Neuron electrical synapse, wavelengths and even the cells in our body conduct, contain, pass and utilize electricity. The atoms in our body's cells are the location where science has detected a positive, negative and neutral charge. These charges make up an aspect of the human body's electrical current. I am coming around to the notion science has detected charges within the atoms of our cells but this is really just a very astute observation of our spirits. Allow me to deviate.

"Mankind has harnessed the power of the atom, a crude replica of our sun, via the splitting of the atom. This could also be understood as a breach of the spirit. Basically man taking a powered spiritual component, the atom, and by way of breaching it unleashing an uncontrolled thermonuclear fusion. The sun is a controlled thermonuclear fusion showing the difference between man's attempt to breach the spirit and God's. God's is stable, man's isn't. God's sustains life and man's threatens it. But, getting back to my original point, science readily detects our spirit via the atom and since our bodies are comprised of an uncountable number of atoms, we are truly spiritual beings.

Genesis 9:4

But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

Leviticus 17:10-11

And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

"Here the bible makes a distinction and explains the life of the flesh is in the blood. It also says that blood makes atonement for the soul, and we know from scripture Jesus Christ's blood made atonement for all mankind. That's Hebrews 9:11-14 and Ephesians 1:5-7. So please consider this verse.

Isaiah 53:10

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

Notice the verse says, 'when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.' We know Jesus Christ's blood was the offering for mankind's sin but in this verse it doesn't use the word blood, it uses the word soul. This is a distinction we need to consider. It seems the blood not only holds the life of the flesh but also becomes intrinsic and possibly even, on a metaphysical level, interchangeable with the soul. But, just to clarify concerning the spirit we need to understand the spirit within the blood becomes the 'life,' power and energy, or the battery if you will, of the flesh. However, taking into consideration the blood in the grand scheme of things there is much more to it than that and I will expound shortly. I want to first include another scripture I believe is applicable.

Genesis 4:10

And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

"This was Abel's blood after his brother Cain killed him. God makes it very clear Abel's body was not crying out to Him, his blood was. The life of the flesh is 'in' the blood. I believe this 'life' of the flesh pertains to us in the spiritual sense, regarding man's spirit, metaphysically speaking like a googol of tiny battery cells which science detects as atoms within the blood, because I do not claim to fully understand these things. But, just as the blood is relevant to the spirit it is also relevant to the soul. For that reason, I believe the mind and soul within man will, by way of the spirit within the blood, utilize the charged atoms for their respective purposes. But again, the entire process is spiritual. The mind using the soft blood and its energy to write onto our physical brain is a spiritual process. Therefore, contained within our blood is both its laser or light etching ability as well as its power source. Choice and learning thus becomes a spiritual process and the retention of what is learned or experienced is carnal. So, it's the whole journey not the destination kind of thing.

"Science is just now coming up with technology called all-optical magnetization reversal. This is magnetization reversal by circularly polarized light. This method will one day be used to store data in a computer hard drive. So, just as I've explained how the light in our blood will etch onto our brains, science is just now making headway into utilizing light in a similar way.

Sally shifts and balances the microphone, "With that briefly clarified, on a primitive basis man's spirit is thus electrical, but I believe it is more dynamic than that. Before you have electrical you have fire and before you have fire you have light. Light gives way to fire and electricity is simply fire contained, harnessed or regulated, by man. Our human spirit is actually light but science detects it via its electrical charges within the atom, but our spirits are so much more than simple

electrical charges. Science is merely looking at the last end of the spectrum. They don't have the knowhow or technology to test the body for light, only for electricity. Therefore, science can't finish the thought. Our spirits are light and science is far, far away from detecting light within the human body.

"I will attempt to break it down as I understand it. I believe the spirit of man resides within the entire body but, via the mind of man, that spirit becomes more central toward the brain region. This might crudely explain wavelengths and the 'firing' of neurons. Basically there is spirit, light or an electric charge within every atom or aspect of the human body but man, via his mind, concentrates control of that spirit through the blood within the brain region. It is here that the blood, or software, will use light to etch onto our brains according to what was processed through the heart yet perceived by our mind. The mind utilizes the blood to utilize the brain, including the 'life' or spirit within that blood, to both perceive and then write instructions on our brain... which instructions were first processed by our heart in the same way a computers hardware will, via the software, take what is processed and then write it onto the hard drive. The act of the software writing onto the hard drive is similar to the blood writing unto the brain. The mind has perceived the will that was processed through the heart and has etched dynamic instructions on the brain. An understanding has been created and so has a memory.

"This is my answer as to why a baby or child will learn so quickly while developing. They are indeed like a sponge, their heart and brain soaking in the essence of life and language by way of their blood. They are tender when young so the natural synergy between their blood, mind and brain have not been corrupted. The handoffs are pure and there is less of a contradiction, hypocrisy or restriction regarding the process. So, we see there is indeed a relational synergy to this spiritual process. The mind, utilizing our brain region, utilizes the spirit within the blood and perceives what was processed through the heart. It then uses atoms or light within the blood to etch logical instructions including memories and patterns onto our brain.

Man is Spirit = light.

Computers are electrical = light in the form of fire contained or electricity. Electric plug/battery.

"A battery and its cells are a counterfeit for our human body cells containing atoms. It's reverse engineering so it's not nearly as sophisticated. But, we must understand in the end, all harnessed electricity, including batteries, are a counterfeit for the spirit.

"The last aspect of man is the soul. Just as the spiritual mind uses man's spirit so to the spiritual soul uses man's spirit. It does this by utilizing the spirit within the 'life' of the flesh which is in the blood. The soul, utilizing our heart region, utilizes the spirit via the blood and writes and processes the will of man on and through the heart. The soul of man is the 'will' or choices of man. At the end of life, all the choices you made and all the words you spoke will reflect your soul.

"I will attempt to break it down. I believe the spirit of man resides within the entire body but, via the soul of man, that spirit becomes more central toward the heart region. This might crudely explain cardiomyocytes or "excitable cells" within the heart and the amount of energy they produce, both mechanical and electrical. There is spirit, light or an electric charge within every atom or aspect of the human body but man, via his soul, concentrates control of that spirit through the blood within the heart region. It is here the blood, or software, will process onto our hearts according to our soul's desire. The soul utilizes the blood to utilize the heart, including the 'life' or spirit within the blood to process the will onto and through our heart just like the hand on the keyboard inputs data and the software takes the data and processes it via the microprocessor. The microprocessor is the soul/heart of the computer because nothing is processed separate from an action, will or command. The microprocessor is also static and preprogrammed according to a base set of instructions just as our heart conscience is. Whatever becomes processed, commanded or 'willed' is then perceived by the mind and either ends up on the hard drive/brain or is automatically deleted and discarded upon deep sleep. All this data is transferred and methodized by the software or blood. So there is a relational synergy to this spiritual process. The soul, utilizing our heart region, utilizes the spirit via the

blood and uses light to process and etch the will onto and through our heart and to our mind for consideration.

Sally's voice breaks. She becomes more passionate as sweat slowly begins to coat her forehead, "I now must include these verses in order to qualify what I have thus said. Hopefully, what I mention from here on out will bring a final understanding to all three parts. You can consider this my conclusion. Contemplate these verses please."

Jeremiah 31:33

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Hebrews 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Hebrews 10:16

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

"Hopefully you observe they are the same verse but simply referenced twice in the New Testament. Notice right off the bat these verses speak of writing onto the hearts and minds. You must also understand if you perform a concordance search of the entire KJV bible, you will never locate the word brain. Therefore, in certain instances we can consider the word mind to imply the word brain. This offers some biblical credibility to what I have said here. It should be obvious according to these verses it is possible to write onto both the heart and brain. With that in mind, let's go even further.

"The author in the New Testament makes slight variations and even interchanges words liberally. We must also take into account this is the same author. Both of the final verses come from the same book, the book of Hebrews. I will place them in order, first to third, so we can analyze them.

I will put my law in their inward parts
I will put my laws into their mind
I will put my laws into their hearts

"As you can see, the author of the book of Hebrews substituted the two words 'mind' and 'hearts.' The original words spoken by Jeremiah the prophet in the Old Testament were 'inward parts.' Clearly, when the bible was penned, science was not of utmost consideration. That is why I believe the exact ordering of the wording is not as necessary as you'd assume. For the same exact reason God never explains the role of the blood. The explanation of it is simply not necessary or edifying for the Christian walk. But, by God's grace, it's coming to his church now, in these end times both to open their eyes and warn and convince them they should take this deception and this information very seriously. My crude explanation, because I feel led of God not to even attempt to dissect these verses any longer, is this. On a synergistic level, which I've already explained, since the blood is the avenue for all these things anyway then it all comes down to voluntary choice or a person's will.

"One last verse to tie it all in.

Proverbs 3:3

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

"So, it becomes clear God can write these things onto our heart and brain but so can we. There is another bible verse, Proverbs 7:3, which mentions writing something onto the table of your heart so that verse confirms this verse. But back to the verse I just read. This verse admonishes us not to forsake mercy and truth. Both mercy and truth need to be processed, discerned and understood by the individual separate from a given law or

a preset set of instructions. And we as individuals, and not God, are admonished in the scriptures to write mercy and truth upon our hearts.

"Our conscience becomes a good example of God predetermining the writing of something onto our heart. Just like the microprocessor which eventually processes our keystroke commands, our hearts are prewritten with certain base instructions. Possibly, we stole these preordained instructions when our ancestors, Adam and Eve ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But, since God is the creator of both man and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, including our will to choose, He is ultimately the source.

Man is soul = The Will.

Computers are soul = Must have a user to issue a command which is then processed through the microprocessor. AI (Artificial Intelligence) is a deception.

"A user's soul or 'will' becomes the soul of the computer. Whatever person uses the computer their soul becomes the soul, will (or command) of the computer. The computer simply reflects the image of the user's soul or desire. I hope I have explained and clarified how the entire computer, as a whole with its user, becomes Satan's counterfeit for man.

"The big difference between the spirit and the soul, with regard to the computer, becomes the user. But if you step back and consider if man didn't exist, there'd be no computer batteries or harnessed electricity anyway, you perceive it a bit differently. So, although computers have spirits via electricity, a user had to create that electricity. Same with the microprocessor, a user had to create that. So, in one form or another, a computers body, spirit and soul all require users. Just at different stages regarding a computers automated lifespan.

"Let me give you an example by refocusing more on the soul with regard to a user. Let's say there are two computers; same make, model, hardware and software. The only difference is one is not connected to the internet. Say the user on the computer without the connection only uses a program to write short stories. This user has written two thousand short stories, all stored on the hard drive. The other user is the opposite. He only

surf's the web looking at videos and pictures. They both use the computer's hardware and software but the content is different. Thus, one computer will have a hard drive full of short stories and the other will have a hard drive filled with temporary cache files and probably viruses from surfing the web."

Sally stops momentarily to laugh at her own joke, she then continues, "Why is the content different you ask? Simple, because the will and command of the two users were different. If you had a program on both computers that recorded their screen activity, you could watch them at your leisure and learn a lot about both users.

"So, a computer needs its user to round out its soul. It is kind of like that old movie by Stephen King, Christine. The 1958 Plymouth Fury comes alive. We all know a car driving itself is ridiculous. But, once you get a driver behind that wheel then everything the 'possessed' car did on it's own is now not only believable, but commonplace in everyday life. So you see the user or operator makes all the difference. It completes it. It makes it make sense.

"A computer has no will separate from the user who operates it. But that should be no coincidence since the entire idea of Satan's mystery of iniquity is to confound users and con them into believing computers have, by and large, been created for them. They were not. They were created for Satan as the cherry on top of his mystery of iniquity but he needs man to believe they were created for them. The reason? So man will fall completely and emphatically in love with computers and adapt them and integrate them into every level of their society and personal lives. But trust me, if they knew the real reason computers were being created their perspectives would likely change and that really becomes the difference. The perspective.

"That is why AI (artificial intelligence) will be such a cunning deception. It is impossible for a computer to 'know' separate from a user. It is impossible for a computer to will or command, separate from a user. Like I already explained in part two and you even agreed with me, Satan will possess the image of the beast and he will then 'cause' and 'command' to be worshipped. He will at that time become that computer's user, just like he was the musical instruments user in

the garden of Eden. And mankind will soon learn what Satan's real intensions are. And it's not to play funny apps or talk on the phone for hours. It'll be. Hey user! You over there. Yes you, I'm talking to you! Get over here user! Now, you have a choice to make. Worship me via the computer application in your right hand or forehead or you can do that other thing. Die!"

Sally crosses her legs in an effort to become more serious. She couldn't help it really. A healthy sense of humor was an important factor when holding such intense revelation. She had cultured that sense of humor all her life.

She exhaled sharply and refocused, "I don't know if Satan, or the other angels for that matter, have a soul. What I do know is they are eternal beings meaning they will always exist.

Revelation 20:10

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

"Jude 1:13 also alludes to the fact the angels which kept not their first estate will be punished forever. The only reason mankind will live on eternally after death is because we have a soul. Therefore, it can be reasoned an angel's immortality is directly comparable to a man's soul. Their immortality, basically the fact they will exist forever, parallel's our soul.

"So, with that understood. Satan will possess his own counterfeit creation of man and he will become the soul or end user of that computer. The image will then become the extension of his will or command. He will be the soul of that machine. Just as any user is the soul of their own personal computer at home, the image of the beast will contain his immortal being or soul. That's often why a work computer feels so much different than your computer at home. My explanation of the soul regarding the computer is a big reason why. In a weird way, the image of the beast will be Satan's personal computer.

"He won't have a PC or a Macintosh or a tablet or an iPhone or a blackberry or any of those things. No,

he'll have his own giant supercomputer. One made personally to suit his image, custom made, if you will. Adorned with precious stones, gold and silver, all to reflect his image. God made man in His own image and Satan will have a computer constructed in his. A clever counterfeit. And, just as man is made in God's image the computer, in the end, will most certainly have Satan's. And make no mistake about it, all who take that mark are part of his image. Rejecting God's image, they will take Satan's image on their right hand or forehead. These people were created in the image of God but they have rejected God and instead chose Satan, his image and his brand. And no doubt, he will reign as king over them.

Job 41:33-34

Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.

"I want to address two more things before I conclude. First, I want to expound on Satan and his beast system in relation to God creating man in his own image. If you've understood thus far, the computer is Satan's image but so is his system. I will explain as best I can, because again, these things are yet for the future.

"What God was able to accomplish in one step and in one day took Satan two steps and six thousand years. Satan also needed man's help. In one day God was not only able to create man but more importantly, He was able to create man perfectly in His own image. What took God one day will take Satan six thousand years. To create something in your own image sounds like one step but in the construct of the powers available to this world it becomes two steps. Allow me to explain.

"Satan does not have God's powers and cannot create something at will. Just like man cannot build a house or family in one day, Satan cannot create his beast system in one moment in time and perfectly make it fit his image. For this reason, Satan has been forced, because of his own limitations, to first create his beast system over six thousand years and then once that system is operational, he must use the system itself to create a computer in his perfect image.

"For six thousand years Satan has been using man to build that system. This system is made up of all the powers this world has to offer. The system uses technology, military, superpowers of economic, political and religious establishment; all to align everything and to erect Satan's perfect will and system. Of course, it has taken six thousand years to get the world, mankind and its technology where he wants it. Twentieth century technology was the biggest piece of the puzzle. It's the glue which, in the end, will hold everything and everyone together. With technology, even separate from the AI deception, the entire planet can be policed and controlled at one point and time. Like I mentioned in part two Satan is the prince of the power of the air and even when cast to the earth he will still have satellites in the heavens and wireless here on earth.

"These realities really become essential for the beast system's brand and image to work in the people. Without the technology, nothing else mattered. Science didn't even matter separate from the technology coming to the forefront. It has taken six thousand years of man's evolutionary knowhow to play catch up with Satan and his desires. So, with this understood, Satan has needed the world, mankind and six thousand years to usher his system to the forefront. His technical 'tower of Babel' if you will. Satan will now use his creation, his beast system to rule and control the world and mankind. But, Satan's not done.

"Remember, God created man in his own image all in one day. Now that Satan has his creation, he now needs the perfect image of himself regarding that creation. Satan doesn't have God's powers so he is forced to use imagination and symbolism. That is why there is complexity to everything. But, once you understand the basis or the foundation of thought behind the reasoning, it becomes simpler to understand. Satan has used man from the beginning to erect his technological Babel so it should be no surprise when man is called upon once again to create the image of the beast. Once the image is erected and the antichrist decorates it with gold and precious stones, at that time Satan's creation the computer will finally reflect his perfect image. That image, in a symbolic way, will perfectly counterfeit God's act of creating man in His own image. The image of the beast therefore becomes Satan's creation in his own

image. Once he possesses it, it will reflect his likeness or his image.

"Twentieth century technology, science, computers, wireless, and eventually the mark of the beast becomes the mark of success of his system. Technology, not to mention man's enslavement to it will be the starch binding everything together. The image of the brand has become solidified within mankind. They love and even lust after their technology. Technology also gives the illusion and the charade that Satan is both omnipresent and omnipotent. Omnipresent meaning he is everywhere at the same time (police state) and omnipotent meaning he has infinite power and authority (mark of the beast). Technology truly becomes Satan's lifeblood. Or, iron mixed with miry clay in Daniel 2:41 regarding the mark of the beast computer application in the right hand or forehead.

"The last thing I want to glance over is God creating man and then breathing life into man.

Genesis 2:7

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

"A lot of people use this verse and then say God breathed a soul into man. The verse doesn't say that. It says God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And after that breath, man became a living soul.

"I believe just like the small cloud that arose out of the ocean when Elijah prayed, a cloud that ended the drought and brought much needed moisture to the land. I believe just as that cloud moistened the parched earth, in the same way God's breath of life added moisture and electrical current to Adam's dry earthly body. God's breath within Adam's nostrils was like a thunderous storm cloud that sparked life and gave moisture to the arid minerals of his body. The lightning and moisture of the storm cloud represent God's breath entering his body and making him whole, and then, Adam became a living soul. Once God's attributes were breathed into Adam's dry bones, it was then, that he was amongst the living.

"I am not trying to give nature God's glory. I am doing the opposite. Just like God created Adam's body He also created the storm clouds in Elijah's day. God's creation is good. And what if He made the storm clouds as an earthly replica and reminder of his first breath into Adam?

"God said when He, in the future, would bring a cloud; He would place a rainbow in the cloud as a reminder to Himself... of His covenant with every living creature that He would not flood the earth ever again. We must remember, with rainbows, come rain clouds. And with rain clouds, come thunderous lightning. Just as God uses rainbows on earth as in heaven, a rainbow round about His throne, I believe He uses storm clouds and lightning as a reminder to us. He wants us to recognize He breathed life into all of us. That HE IS the Giver of all life. First to the plants and to the animals in the field, and then to our earthly bodies that do toil in them. To God be the glory. Amen and Amen."

Days passed and Sally heard nothing from Cuinn. She had requested by way of the guard at least ten times to have a meeting with him but there was no word as yet. She was growing impatient. It had been four days since she recorded the final part of her series, part three. She could sense there was a lot of activity going on in and around the complex. The only thing that had changed was she was now allowed out of her room.

In leaving her room, and venturing around, she learned she was held on a small campus like plot of ground with many buildings surrounded by large grassy areas. It helped her a bit to see and interact with other people, even if she barely spoke to them except for a polite hello and goodbye. The people she encountered seemed to know she was being held captive because a guard followed her at all times. He would just walk behind her and usually say nothing. It wasn't awkward though because there were many guards walking on the grounds carrying machine guns.

She was allowed three places. The building where she was housed, another building all the way in the back where she could workout and even go swimming if she liked, and a cafeteria with an entertainment wing where

people lounged and watched TV and played games. She would only briefly interact with people at these locations. Presumably they worked here, wherever here was?

She had made the most of the gym and cafeteria time but only barely spent time in the entertainment wing or in the building where her captivity room was located. She refused to interact with the same people she could see marching past her window everyday. Seeing them made her feel even more like a prisoner. They would sometimes look, as they passed by during the day, almost as if they were glancing at some animal stuck in a cage.

"The entertainment wing was difficult too, although she did feel led to spend some time there, to demonstrate she was a good sport. If she could convince others she was comfortable, maybe they'd let her go. Anyway, she felt she had to represent. Not to flaunt herself as the victim, so when she was in the entertainment wing, she mustered up all the resolve she could and played nice and acted secure. They wouldn't break me, she thought, they can keep me here but they won't beat me. I'll even show them as much.

She contemplated often about her mom and Neaven. These were the most difficult times. She cringed and sorrowed at the thought of both of them being affected. She knew how she would feel if Neaven were taken. As she imagined the thought she didn't think she would manage. But some consolation was available. She remembered the final weeks she spent with Neaven. He had changed; no longer was he the rustic schoolboy clamoring for attention and making jokes at his every whim. He had matured greatly over the last two years. She was thankful for the sturdiness she saw in him, it was likely getting him through.

She also pondered about her mother. They had talked, before she left, about her father. Her mother had come clean and told her she couldn't handle it if she was to lose Sally the way she lost him. No doubt Dr. H was right by her side, helping her cope right now. Neaven was probably there too. But her mother was very strong, perhaps too strong. Sally knew most of her mother's anguish and pain rearing its ugly head during her final weeks in Vermont had more to do with her mother's repressed emotions regarding her deceased husband than it had to do with her. Her words were

merely directed toward her in those exchanges. The fact she was now coming of age probably prompted her mother to open up some of the repression and relive some of the tension regarding God's difficult Will that had continuously hindered her family. But it would never be so real as the emotions and fears that were surely coming to the forefront now. Without a doubt, everyone must be feeling it back at Vermont, and perhaps even in France. Sally's entire existence seemed as though it was a blessed curse. She was the enigma; and her family was probably coping with the pain and reality of trying to solve that puzzle. At times, Sally wondered if God had given her a special gift, a gift to remain optimistic in times like these. She did not emotionally wrestle with the idea of abandoning her faith, but she did think about it. She wondered if that were a gift too. To contemplate yet never consider.

The guard entered after alerting with a knock, "Cuinn is ready to see you now. I will take you to him after we bring you your evening meal."

Sally was relieved, "I'm glad."

He nodded and closed the door.

Finally, she thought. She would state her case, plead with Cuinn to release her as he had promised. She had done the work. Keeping her here would not matter since she had no more insight. She took a deep breath, exhaled and thought to herself. She had to remain calm in spite of her emotions right now. Emotions were the enemy. Emotions were only real if she acted upon them, otherwise, they were simply between her and God. She wouldn't act upon her emotions when she talked with Cuinn tonight. She would remain calm and collective.

Chapter 10

Sally stood outside a building she had seen in passing but had never entered. It was behind two gates, with plenty of security between the two. There were four guards accompanying her. Usually there was only the one but this building obviously had heightened security, and probably for good purpose. She posed little threat though so it must be a formality. The lead guard spoke.

"Miss Travis, you are entering the main hub at our laboratory facility here. This is where Cuinn's office is located. You are to be on your best behavior and do not meddle or stray once you enter through these doors, is that understood?"

"I won't." Sally was truly intimidated. The guards at The Cell never got her on edge. Most likely, it was because she was not an employee but a prisoner here. Nevertheless, she was extremely anxious to see Cuinn. The two guards inserted their keys simultaneously on opposite sides of the doors. After a few seconds, there was a click and the doors opened to more guards standing and working on the other side. They all entered through a series of detectors like you would see in the airports. There were also dogs present. She had to stand still as they sniffed her clothes and even the guards were not immune to this treatment.

Once through they proceeded to walk toward a lit hallway leading to a wide corridor. On the left side were offices and on the right looked to be a huge laboratory, with doctors and scientists hard at work. There were guards with guns stationed all around the facility. Sally focused straight ahead, she didn't need any more problems. The guards suddenly came to a stop and the head guard opened a door on her left. Sally could clearly see Cuinn seated in the office. He motioned to her with his hand.

"Please enter." The head guard inspected her with an unpleasant stare.

She walked into the room and stood beside the chair. She heard the door shut behind her. Cuinn crossed his arms and leaned back, not saying a word. Sally was nervous so she rested her fingers on the arm of the chair. Cuinn looked at her fingers and when she

noticed, she pulled her hand up quickly and grasped her sweatpants.

He motioned to the chair, "Please sit down."

She sat, rather quickly actually. As she did she clenched her fists again in an attempt to control all her fears.

He spoke candidly, "Everything you gave us at the end of part two and at the beginning of part three has led us in different directions. We have made progress, more progress in the last week than we had in over six months."

Sally swallowed hard. Hearing his voice made her more nervous, if that were even possible.

He continued, "Based on what we're seeing now, we will have technology readily available to us, very soon, to assist with the basic development of our human species. Your information and your perspectives in these recordings did something very interesting here at our lab. Your words brought out the curiosities of many of the scientists and doctors, and they evolved within their own ideas very quickly. Their theories, based on your logic, reason and spiritual insights, developed as well."

Sally spoke even though she didn't want to, "I'm glad I could help."

He looked upon her with more seriousness, "You did more than help. You gave these doctors the foundation they would need. Once you created that foundation, all they had to do was use their gifts and brilliant minds to give your theories legs. With much of our testing now directed toward the blood, we have already begun to implement new testing models that will assist mankind with everything from longer life to perhaps one day raising the dead. Once we understood the blood was both the bridge and the software everything opened up. We're now tweaking technology to assist the mind and soul rather than trying to usurp it. And like the blood, the technology is flowing. It's expanding in a way we never thought. We have brainstormed over twenty different directions in the last three days and soon, because of these routes, we will hold the keys to our species advanced development."

He is hesitant, "You should pat yourself on the back. You've done everything we knew you could. The rest will now be upon our shoulders."

Sally chimes in desperately, "Can I leave?"

He eyes her with slight frustration, "I told you from the beginning you would leave this place, and you will, shortly."

Sally can't hold back. She cries out, "When is shortly?"

Cuinn stands up quickly and taps his desk as he looks at her, "You'll be gone in three days."

Sally takes a deep breath and begins to cry. Her hands coat her face as she wipes away the tears. She had no reason to believe him but she did anyway. She continued to clean her face with her sweatshirt sleeve.

Cuinn sat down and again, leaned back in his chair and it made a loud creaking noise, "Do you have any questions?"

She looked up, "What about my family?"

He nodded, "Based on our intelligence, Dr. Tom Hutchinson went to Vermont after we took you, probably to help your family, but he returned two days ago. I don't know if your family is in France because we haven't checked. But Dr. Hutchinson is off The Compound, staying at a cabin about an hour from it. Our plan is to drop you off near his location."

"So you don't know anything about my family?" Sally was desperate.

"Only that we have sent footage, of you, in your room every day for the last four days. I am sure they are alerting your family, wherever they are. But don't worry, you'll be back with them shortly."

Sally felt as if she were about to come out of her skin. "Can I say something?"

He nods.

"I am so thankful that you told me I would leave in three days, but can you sedate me or something. I am going to go frantic over the next three days, not knowing if you'll really let me go."

"Sally," He spoke quickly, perceiving she was coming apart at the seams, "You'll be okay, just try and calm yourself down. And if you do have panic attacks, we will sedate you, I promise."

Sally's countenance changed after he finished speaking. She looked upon him with hope, "You finally said my name."

He hadn't called her Sally since she arrived, even though she had given him permission many times. He obviously didn't feel comfortable saying it.

He closed his eyes and nodded, "I did just say your name, didn't I? Well, that's probably because I know for certain now that it's all over. And I am happy for you. So perhaps, that is why I no longer have the same insecurities as I did in the first place." He then offered her a polite smile.

Sally felt even more hope coming to the surface, "So it's really over, nothing can reverse it?"

He seemed certain, "It's over. The only reason we are not taking you now is because we need to ensure the location is safe. Two days is not long enough for our team specialists to make that call. By this Friday, we'll have Dr. Hutchinson's security detail down pat, and with that, we can release you safely."

She took a few deep breaths because what he said made sense. "Okay, I'm already calming down some. I'm just so overwhelmed here."

He nods, "I understand. We all do. So we want to make the last three days as comfortable as possible. Over the next three days we are going to assign to you the same military team that brought you to my office."

He points outside, "Those four guards will shadow you from the time you wake up, to the time you fall asleep. They will also be the team who will drop you off, so become familiar with them. In the meantime, you will have full access. Morning, noon and night you are free to visit any of the facilities you have visited thus far. Go swimming, eat as much as you want and feel free to roam the three buildings and their surroundings, as often as you'd like, even into the late hours of the night."

That was good to hear. She was currently only allowed out for a few hours at a time, and she always felt rushed. Now she would be on parole. She was liberated from her depressing room whenever she liked. She could go to the cafeteria, even if it was right before dinner. She could lounge around outside or workout whenever she felt the impulse.

She showed some appreciation but also some restraint, "That will take some of the stigma out of it. I will feel a lot less bothered."

He smiled, "That's the point. You'll be free soon so we want you to ease back into that mode. When you leave, you'll be much more relaxed."

"Thank you. Thank you very much." She offered.

"No." He stood up, "Young Miss Sally Travis. Thank you."

She nodded her head, reflecting some acceptance. "Can I go now?"

He walked toward the door, "Yes, your privileges begin immediately, so feel free to roam if you want, go for a walk. It's a nice night."

A smile lighted on her face, "That sounds refreshing actually."

She stood up, turned and walked to the door. He opened it and she filed outside. Cuinn looked pleased as he examined the guards escorting her. He then noticed Sally walk graciously down the hall.

Dr. Thiery was unable to relax. He managed to hold down the fort since the unbelievable happened. Cross Lutherant and many of the lead administrators had taken the helm, with regard to The Cell but also with the investigational duties in order to locate her. They had their own team at The Compound doing everything they could even in the event she were voluntarily released. Ever since she was taken evidence was systematically ushered into their hands. Sally was priority one. They not only wanted her back but also wanted the highly sophisticated kidnapers brought up on charges. To ensure a message would be sent, and that this kind of thing would never happen again.

Local law enforcement was not given jurisdiction or much accountability. They mostly were eyes and ears on the street. Every patrol car in France had Sally's picture on a continuous loop. Her picture would pop up on their computer screens twenty or thirty times a shift, to keep her at the forefront of their minds. If she went out or escaped, they'd likely see her. It wasn't realistic she had crossed any borders so she would likely be found in France. The biggest fear, the fear no one dared bring up in Dr. Thiery's or Dr. Hutchinson's presence, was that she could be murdered rather than returned. No one talked about it. It was attempted once, but that man, who worked for Interpol, was escorted off Compound and would not be returning.

Cross entered Dr. Thiery's office. The door had been left wide open since Sally was taken weeks ago.

Cross looked confident, "Sir, we have an update."

Dr. Thiery turned quickly and noticed Cross looked hopeful.

Cross continued, "We received another feed, this time it came from a computer in the Bourgogne region, the city of Dijon. From The Police Municipale office. One of the officer's computers got the same virus as the others. Interpol retrieved the content. Same folder and file name."

Dr. Thiery was apprehensive, "Today's date?"

Cross smiled, "Today's date. The footage was of her preparing to leave the room after eating what appeared to be breakfast."

Dr. Thiery leaned back to consider, "So she's still safe. How did she look?"

Cross was optimistic, "Actually sir, that is why I have come so quickly. This morning, she was actually smiling."

Dr. Thiery put his hands on his desk and his jaw dropped slightly. "Are you certain of this? It was her?"

"Absolutely sir." Cross seemed certain and continued, "I saw the footage myself, not more than ten minutes ago."

Dr. Thiery put his knuckles to his mouth. He had refused to view the footage after seeing the first few. It made him too angry watching Sally hunkered down in some depressing room. The guard seated outside, whose face had been purposely disfigured, also bothered him to no end. The entire spectacle gnawed at him.

He removed his hand, "So what do you think?"

Cross was assured, "She looked like the same Sally we see here. She had that light back in her eyes."

He put his head down as a few hopeful tears made their way to the surface, just enough to coat his eyes. He grabbed the same cloth he used to clean his glasses and lightly rubbed his eyes.

He set down the cloth and spoke directly to Cross, "Dr. Hutchinson and Sally's family will be thrilled to receive that update. That is good news indeed. It seems they might make good on their word and release her?"

Cross nodded, "That is what we're hoping. Interpol is still working hard, following every lead and shaking down the usual known offenders. But even they seem

hopeful after viewing today's footage. I have a feeling we'll see her soon sir."

Dr. Thiery sat back and spoke plainly with his friend, "We know it's not a usual kidnapping. They don't want money or anything. The fact they send footage almost everyday is telling in and of itself. They obviously want us to have some kind of piece of mind. Presumably, they are using her in the same way we did, but again, so strange."

"Yes." Cross reasoned, "She's certainly gifted but no one knows why she was singled out. We know from past footage she's done plenty of studying in that room but who knows what kind of information they're trying to get from of her."

Dr. Thiery put his fingers to his lips. "Our assumption, that the people who took her must be desperate, that is our best guess. You don't kidnap someone like Miss Travis, with her security clearance and guard detail, unless you must. They probably believe she has answers very few people possess. And they must be extremely desperate for those answers."

Cross brings to light, "Sally's perspective on things might be the reason why. According to our testing and scientific evaluations, not to mention Dr. Hutchinson's valued opinion, she could possibly be one of the most gifted perceivers and deciphers on the planet. It's safe to assume whoever took her wants something deciphered. But, we won't know until she is returned to us. And she tells us exactly what she was speaking into that microphone and what was written on all those pages."

Dr. Thiery took a stab at it, "And those pages were penned there. Because they left her backpack and all her belongings in the library when they took her."

"Yes." Cross agreed, "Our belief she is doing research for them is possibly accurate. She is likely solving riddles they themselves cannot solve, or at least attempting to solve them anyway."

Dr. Thiery is guileless, "That's a lot of trouble to go through. To go kidnap someone just because you want some questions answered. They must be important questions, or at least those who took her believe them to be important."

Cross was realistic, "Well, that's basically what we do here. But rather than kidnapping people we invite them. But we desire answers all the same."

Dr. Thiery thought logically, "If someone were conned into believing the answers were so important that a person should be kidnapped, then yes, you're correct. Scientists, especially nuclear scientists, are often kept under lock and key for this very same reason. But what can she reveal to them? They found nothing in any of her computers or in her belongings. Hopefully, she'll be returned to us safely. Then we'll ask her ourselves. We'll have our answers."

Cross attempted to encourage him once again, "Hopefully, your correct sir. But I wanted you to know immediately, so keep your spirits up and know we're doing all we can. Interpol is on top of this and so are we."

Dr. Thiery nodded in appreciation, "Thank you Cross my friend."

Cross exited the office. He left a sober Dr. Thiery to contemplate and consider everything.

There was excitement and laughter filling the cafeteria as Sally entered. The guards had already adopted the routine of finding good seating, something with enough space for all of them. There was little need to follow Sally once they entered the food court because there was only one realistic exit. Two other guards blocked the entertainment wing's entrance and exit.

"I'm going okay?" Sally exclaimed once they found their seats.

The guards just nodded as they sat down. The large round table was located in the back near all the windows. Sally made her way to the pizza café and stood in line until it was her turn.

The attendant welcomed her, "What can I get for you dear?"

Sally was hungry, "I'll have two slices of pepperoni, salad and orange juice please."

The lady was kind as she handed her a number corresponding with her order. "Here is your number dear."

Sally grabbed it, "Thank you."

As she made her way back to the table, most in her path stared at her. She was used to it by now. It didn't bother her as much as it did in the beginning. Not to mention the fact she already had one foot out the

door. She just smiled in herself and returned to her table.

The head guard spoke as soon as he saw her return, "You three go and get some food, if we're still talking once you return, sit over there until we're done." He pointed to a secluded area about fifteen feet away.

"Yes sir." They said it in unison and left.

Sally put her hands together and held them tight once she was alone with the man. Every time a guard spoke directly to her in this place she got antsy.

He looked upon her with stern eyes, "I have something for you. Cuinn gave them to me so I could show them to you."

He took out some papers and handed them to her, "These are yours, correct?"

She took the papers and unfolded them. For some reason they had been folded into an unsymmetrical shape. She was surprised when she saw them clearly. They were her notes, on the 666 paper she was working on at the library the day she was taken. She turned to the last two pages. It was her father's 666 dream and the computation of numbers adding to 666. The original one, and not the copy.

Sally answered him, "They're mine. These were at the library. The first pages are my notes and the last two pages are my father's."

She showed him the last two pages clearly, "The first page describes his 666 dream and the second page is his computation of numbers. I thought these were left with my backpack?"

The guard spoke once he noticed she pulled away the pages, "Cuinn specifically said they were the papers that didn't make it into your backpack. He grabbed them quickly. And because he didn't have time to put them inside your backpack, he folded them and put them in his pocket while we carried you, your guard and your backpack into the service elevators. I assume they must be important since he saved them?"

Sally didn't say anything but just looked them over. She remembered she was scribbling notes when she saw Cuinn for the first time. The notes regarding perspectives she barely started at the library were finalized here. Ironic, she thought.

She finally answered the guard, "They are important, to me. I'm glad they were not lost."

He held out his hand to retrieve them, "Have you got a good look at them?"

"Yes," She looked at him and pondered why.

He took them from her hands, "I'll need them back. When you leave this place, they'll be on your person."

Made sense. She wasn't allowed anything to write on or write with at this point. They had taken all of those things out of her room. They were making sure she didn't take notes regarding the facility, the people and her location. Writing things down helped with memory, and they didn't want her remembering anything she could use against them.

Sally offered him a polite thank you for showing the pages to her but he said nothing in return. He only eyeballed one guard who was returning. The guard then sat down next to Sally.

"I'm leaving, watch her."

"Yes sir."

Sally watched the head guard get up and leave. She didn't like talking to any of them. The more they spoke to her, the more they reminded her she was a prisoner. Things were at their best when she could put them completely out of her mind. Her food arrived. It was hot and smelt delicious. Even though the crust was thin the cheese was melting onto the plate. The salad was hearty and colorful. She was hungry so she dug in. She took a slice of pizza and put it in her mouth and chewed, it was seasoned perfectly. All the food was very good here. It was comfort food and she loved comfort food. How ironic. Comfort food in prison. Of course, there were items that were healthier, but even while on the outside she would only eat food that tasted good. Beside Mexican food, Italian food was one of her favorites. She had tried the lasagna and calzones earlier in the week and they were fantastic. She reminisced as she chewed her food.

If Cuinn were telling the truth, she'd be gone the day after tomorrow. She wanted it to be true. Every once and awhile she would have to admonish herself to stop fretting. It was easy for her to get anxious. When she didn't check herself, she would tense up in her spirit. This would produce a splitting headache. She wanted to believe she was leaving but it was hard to imagine. If she found herself in a negative state of mind, it would usually turn bad and fast.

For that reason, she often forced herself to put it all out of her mind. It helped her to make believe she was in a different place. These four guards were strangers, just a coincidence they were seated next to her. They were probably army personnel from some nearby Fort who just so happened to sit at her table. Soon she would meet up with Clair and after leaving this restaurant, they would laugh together all afternoon. She would tell these army personnel where they were going, of course, but only because they were curious. And only because they were flirting with Clair. She smiled at the thought as she continued eating.

She decided to change directions a bit. She would think on Sora, the last meaningful person she was with. She remembered when they were at the stables, talking about Paris. The same wonderful Sora who loved so freely and selflessly she thought to invite her. Sally missed their camaraderie, and wished they could be together again. She thought back on the conversation they had at those stables. They were talking about the horses. They also spoke about Germany and about the rightful destination that would be Paris. Sora explained to her they needed to visit the library, and she remembered thinking it could be fun. She then thought of something else. She recalled the exchange.

Sora plainly said, "Who knows, you might meet a cute guy?"

That was strange. She did meet a cute guy. Although she couldn't stand the sight of him, Cuinn Alexander was a pleasant looking man.

What else, what else did Sora say? Sally racked her brain. She recalled telling Sora she already had a cute guy, in Neaven, Sora then responded, "Just for talking Sally, geez... live a little."

Wow! She thought on it. All she had done with Cuinn was talked. Talked, talked, talked, talked and talked. More than she ever wanted to. Yeah, Sally brought everything to mind. "Come to Paris; meet a cute guy and live a little. Just for talking."

No thanks Sora. It's so strange because everything Sora said, in jesting, came true. Sora's innocent jargon in some wicked convoluted way actually happened. Weird, sally thought to herself and she took a bite of her salad. Accuracy and truth is important but the devil is in the details. Sora never mentioned a devil.

Chapter 11

Today was the day. If Cuinn were telling the truth, she would once again taste freedom. Independence so free and pure she would never again forsake its meaning or importance. She didn't know how everything was going to unfold, she only knew they would arrive shortly and prepare her for departure.

The last few days were uneventful to say the least. She did have the privilege of using the internet last night; of course she was monitored by her guards and some woman with beady, watchful eyes. She surfed the web and looked over current events. Just the use of an electronic device reminded her of all she had missed in the previous weeks. She couldn't wait to get out of here.

She glanced around at her room. This room that held her captive and kept her away from family, friends and purposes. A room that forced her to forfeit her rights and her desires yet brought her closer to her God. She did solid work in this room, but she doubted it had anything to do with this place. It surely had more to do with the God who honored her in this place.

This past week though she was growing desperate. Fretting over even the smallest of emotions. It was likely God showed up powerfully in the beginning because she couldn't handle being here much longer. Had God not assisted with the study and helped her understand some of these mysteries on a basic level, her time in this place might have doubled, or even quadrupled. She would have lost it, no doubt. She would have absolutely gone frantic, probably etching on the walls much in the same way a jailed prisoner lashes out in defiance while at the same time attempting to achieve some semblance of emotional control over their circumstances.

She noticed a troop approaching. She stood up but didn't understand why. First, they knocked on the door.

She tried to shout but due to nervousness her voice broke, "Come... in."

The door opened and about ten people filed into the room. All her guards, Cuinn and about five doctors behind him.

"Miss Travis," Cuinn looked upon her dutifully, "These doctors are going to sedate you much in the same

way you were sedated when you arrived here. You will then wake up in a different location. Do you have any questions?"

"No." She was scared but ready to go.

Cuinn admired her spunk. But he did desire one last conversation with her. He turned to those behind him, "Leave us."

Everyone filed out, but the guards turned to face the windows watching her every move. Cuinn pulled up a chair.

"Please sit down." He paused in order to read her. She sat down in the chair and folded her hands as calmly as she could.

He was curious, "Do you have anything you want to say before you leave us?"

She didn't speak but shook her head indicating she didn't.

He forged ahead, "Miss Travis, or Sally rather, I can apologize for the fact we took you. But I discern, in the grand scheme of things, that would appear shallow and disingenuous. I can only stand on the fact we needed your help and we did you no harm while you were in this place. Wouldn't you agree?"

"I agree." She offered him as much.

"Yes," He paced, "We certainly needed your help. And you did help us, perhaps on a level more than you will ever know. I want to remind you of the dream I shared with you. Hopefully you will read it for yourself one day and you will know I am telling you the truth. I did steal that dream from your father; the one which alluded to the fact God's revelation would be greater in your life than it was in his. Hopefully, one day you will realize there was a purpose for all this. And for all that you've done here."

Sally rolled her eyes and Cuinn noticed. Repressed emotions which she didn't want to unravel but came to the surface regardless.

He was quick, "Your emotions beguile you. Speak up Sally, I'm listening. You're leaving this place anyway. Shortly de facto. So please, enlighten me with your unique perspective regarding your accusations toward me. Surely they've been welling up inside you for quite some time. Here is your chance. Push back. You have my permission."

Sally wasn't one to back down from a challenge, especially a verbal one, but she took the higher ground.

"You have your reasons. If I find the dream you spoke of in my father's belongings then I will be compelled, no doubt. But since I cannot be certain at this point it is better for me to reserve that right than to speak presumptuously."

Cuinn grimaced, "Fair enough. Then why don't you tell me how you feel about me, for example."

Sally spoke freely, "I don't know you well enough to make any distinction. You kidnapped me and demanded information from me. I don't know who you are separate from that."

He understood her reasoning so he was compelled to offer her some clarity, "Then let me briefly tell you who I am."

He spoke in her direction, openly, "In the beginning I grew up normally, but I was an only child, such as yourself. I was a driven individual, investigating everything no matter how big or small. Much like yourself, the country where I was born considered me a prodigy. For this reason, I was taken from my family and placed in an institution where my abilities and gifts would eventually soar, but first they needed to be watched over, cultured and honed."

When Sally heard those words she actually sympathized for him. She remembered how difficult it was for her at a young age to cope with how different she was from the other kids. But she was never taken from her family and put into some institution. That would have been horrible, she thought. She listened differently as he continued.

"After my training I eventually found my way to the States, the University of California Berkeley to be exact, where I received my Masters by the age of nineteen. It was at this time I corresponded with your father. And trust me, Miss Sally Travis, when I tell you the conversations I had with your father changed my life."

He began to pace even more. Almost as if he were getting slightly nervous. Sally moved back on her bed just to distance herself from his walking space.

He continued without really noticing her, "When your father told me the 666 dream, everything changed for me. It was like a monkey wrench being thrown into my

perfect cog and balance. It seized much of my pride because I thought I had everything figured out, even at the tender age of nineteen. As I said before, I would investigate everything, and that dream was no different. Its existence consumed me and the thought that my mind would not perfectly wrap around it's every meaning became torturous to me.

"Of course, I do not have your gifts or the gifts of your father. But whatever gifts I had I used in an attempt to draw strength and insight about the idea of a possible 'God' who created this earth and who has ordained life for you and for me. I must admit, I couldn't always wrap my head around certain concepts which I read in the bible but nevertheless, after careful study and evaluation I was impacted by it's content and by it's consistency. And yes, within time the inevitable happened. As I was investigating God He was pursuing me. He was doing something deep, on the inside. I made my confession of faith, and I became a born again believer."

Sally dropped her head upon hearing those last words. She doubted he noticed because he was so in himself he wasn't looking at her. She lifted her head and looked at him, biting her lip from the inside as he continued, "After I became a born again believer, God's providence was resting upon me and I became a very, very successful man. I became wealthy, very wealthy in fact and I was able to use my wealth to help many people and to move forward with my quest of solving the God riddle. It was at this time I felt I was given divine purpose by God, to fulfill His will during these end times. What you see all around you is part of that attempt. All the work we are doing in this place is one grand expression, an expression which will be revealed in due time."

He turned and looked at her squarely but with intensity behind his eyes, "I would like to tell you more but it's a surprise. So now, do you have anything to say?"

Sally moved her clenched hands to her lips and straightened them out as she did. It was all in an attempt to calm herself down. She didn't want to say the wrong thing and end up buried in this place, but his passionate speech elicited a response.

She spoke as seriously as she could, all without chattering, "So you're a Christian. You're doing God's work and a surprise is coming."

He laughed at her mechanical response. He had spent enough time with her to know that answer didn't come from the heart.

He played along though, "Basically yes. Once you see the surprise you'll understand more. I'm actually counting on it. Because whether you like it or not, you're going to continue to be a large piece of this puzzle."

Sally became scared and angry at his reaction, "Why do you attempt to control me?"

He becomes hesitant once he notices he's startled her, "No, Sally. You have it all wrong. I am not controlling you. Like yourself, I must do the Lord's bidding. We are both in God's tedious, tight grip. It has never been my will or desire to bring you here nor do I have any desire for you to be wrongly affected in the future. It is God's Will these things have happened. It actually has nothing to do with me."

Sally repeats his train of thought, "So God wanted me brought here?"

He reads her sarcasm but continues, "Yes."

She says it again, "God wanted you to kidnap me. Take me away from people who care about me, probably causing my mom a heart attack. This was God's Will and you are obeying God by doing these things?"

He didn't even blink, "Yes."

Sally could no longer hold back, no matter what the reciprocation. "I think you need to read the bible again, you missed a spot."

He didn't mind her nerve or resolve but felt he needed to make his point definitively. He became humorless once again. "Don't patronize me young lady. You are wise in ways I'll never understand but the reality is this. Life has not become your instructor yet. You'll learn in time God's Will can often be the sickest most brutal thing imaginable. I would have liked nothing more then to get these answers from you under the most beautiful of settings. I needed these answers from you, that is why it was God's Will I take you.

"You need to understand everything differently, from our vantage point. Once you returned to France the only way to get these answers was to take you. We simply couldn't wait another two years for you to finish at The Cell and taking you while in America would have been suicide. Your security clearance over in the States

would have become our worst nightmare. We could have never gotten you safely back to our facilities here in Europe. Our chances of success maybe would have been around two percent, and what if something had gone wrong? You could have been injured or killed?

"Trust me young, young Miss Sally Travis. I would have liked nothing better than to have stayed in that library and simply talked to you over the course of three days, but you know as well as I do that you are the property of The Babylonian Cell. The only way we could get these answers from you was to kidnap you once you left the safety of The Compound. So yes, it became God's Will that I take you here in Europe."

Sally thought to herself. She still didn't believe him but he was right about one thing. She never would have, on a purely voluntarily level, given him these answers. If these answers were going to be human on paper they would need to be forced out of her. She was not going to independently do this work.

He continued, understanding she was contemplating everything he said. "We have been asking people for years the questions we asked you. You're not the first person we've kidnapped, nor will you be the last. We're doing an important work here and nothing infringes upon it. Had you taken that tenth seat years ago, we would have taken you even sooner."

Those words struck her. They had obviously been planning this for quite some time.

Cuinn became more sadistic, "Why don't you ask your mother regarding the difficulty of God's Will? She knows that reality all too well, doesn't she Miss Travis?"

Sally offered him no response. He continued, "Her husband was not kidnapped for doing God's work, he was murdered, in cold blood. Why don't you ask God the Father about the difficulty of His Agonizing Will? He willingly allowed his Son to be crucified by evildoers and sinners. You think us taking you, clothing you, housing you and feeding you gourmet meals and perhaps your mother losing some sleep takes precedence over the thousands of Christians being tortured, murdered and thrown into prison each and every year.

He looked away from her knowing he made his point, "God knows I would never willingly harm you. Us talking you was always going to result in us returning you, and God knew that. Man's laws tell us we cannot kidnap you

but God's laws, not to mention the laws of nature, justify our actions if the positives outweigh the negatives, and in this case they surely do. So, understanding this, my conscience is clean. You'll see your mother again and she'll hold you in her arms. We've done you no harm. And because of the answers we now possess, we're all the better for it. You can even reason we helped The Cell understand they have breaches in their security. So when you return to them, tell them I said, 'you're welcome.'"

Sally was dumbfounded so she offered him some truth as she saw it, "You're not double minded, I'll give you that."

He wanted more, "So what do you think, and don't lie to me because I am simply curious. I investigate everything and right now I am investigating you."

Sally was beginning to fret so she tried to be as forthright as possible without setting him off, again.

She spoke plainly to him, "You don't know me very well if you think I am going to judge you outright. I hate it that you took me and that is why I rolled my eyes but I am not your judge. You have explained yourself and now I see in your mind, you feel justified. And, if you believe you're justified in what you've done then I cannot judge you because God is your judge. I'll tell you something you may not know, because if you're headed down the road I believe you're on it should do you some good. God holds the permissions to use me because I contemplate many things yet never consider much. It's a gift, so I remain humble. I have contemplated everything you've said but it doesn't go to a place deep inside me for consideration. So, if you've properly followed my train of thought, that is precisely the reason why you've gotten so many answers from me. The same person who gave you those answers all last week and the week before is the same person who won't judge you today. Is that clear enough for you?"

He looked upon her. She was clever in every sense of the word. "Well spoken. I do understand you. You are the entire package, an improvement from your father no doubt. I learned much from him, but I learned even more from you. The dream has been fulfilled."

He lifted the empty chair and placed it back in the corner, where it was located the day she arrived.

He then spoke to her, in earnest, "You are going to return now to where you belong. You have nothing to fear from me or the people behind me. Please put your mind at ease and be assured no harm will come to you. When I told you that you are still a part of this puzzle I meant with regard to your ability to explain things. I am sure people will have questions in the future, when the surprise happens, and I am quite certain they will come directly to you for answers. So you have nothing to fear from us, and I am sorry if saying it the way I did frightened you. Our time is most certainly over."

He turned around and faced the door. Sally felt led to ask one last question. "Why, exactly, are you doing all this?"

He didn't turn around but continued to face the door, "I told you. This is all God's Will and I am simply an obedient Christian, His Messenger."

The door opened and he vanished behind the sea of people. The doctors reentered with the guards in tow.

One of the women doctor's spoke, "I'm going to administer this injection and you are going to feel very sleepy and then go completely under. Do you have any questions?"

Sally laid back and shook her head no. The head military guard spoke as the doctor took hold of Sally's arm, "You'll awake in a van with the four of us. We're going to drive you back and release you safely."

His stern face was the last thing she saw as the medicine took hold. She quickly fell asleep.

The noise of metal creaking and shocks giving way to terrain became louder and louder. Her jaw and mouth tingled as she woke slowly from her deep slumber. She was in a car, a van to be exact, heading up a mountain road. She straightened her head and when she did, the guard whose shoulder she was resting on noticed.

"She's up."

Sally was groggy so she spoke with a voice deeper than usual, "How long was I out?"

The head guard, seated on her right, answered her, "Only a few hours. Go ahead and come to because we need to drop you off immediately. We've been waiting over an hour for you to wake up. Are you ready?"

"Yes, please drop me off now." Sally didn't care if she had to crawl on all fours, she just wanted out of this van and away from these people. The head guard signaled the driver and he made a sharp u-turn, driving over some rough terrain and back onto the dirt road. They were headed back down the mountain.

"We're about five minutes away."

Sally grabbed something around her waist, "What's this belt thing on my waist?"

"It has your belongings inside. Now listen, we are going to drop you off walking distance from the cabin. There is Cell security at the cabin so we cannot take the chance of getting too close. We're going to open the door, you'll file out and we'll leave. Here is a small flashlight that will assist you and guide your steps."

He handed it to her and showed her how it worked.

He became more serious, "Please don't turn it on until after we've driven away for at least two minutes. I actually want you to file out, stand still and count to one hundred and twenty before turning the light on. Once you turn the light on, follow the road about a quarter mile down and Cell security should see you. The cabin is on the left. Repeat the instructions."

"File out, stand still and count to one hundred and twenty. Turn the light on; follow the road a quarter mile down. The cabin is on the left."

"Good. Inform them not to follow us, because we've booby trapped the road were taking out of here. If they even attempt to follow us down that road we'll activate the landmines and they and probably other innocents will die. Now you wouldn't want that, would you?"

Sally became alarmed, "I'll tell them not to follow you, that you've booby trapped the road and innocent people will die."

The driver looked at her through the rear view mirror. His eyes pierced straight through hers even though she was afraid. These men weren't joking. It was obvious if she didn't follow those simple instructions, all bets were off involving her safety and the safety of others.

She pleads, "I promise. Please don't hurt anyone!"

The driver then removed his horrible gaze from her. Her heart was pounding and she noticed she was sweating. She tried to concentrate on her breathing in an attempt to calm herself down. The van continued to make a few

turns and after a sharp turn around a corner, almost like a cul-de-sac turn, the van stopped and the driver turned off all the lights.

The head guard pointed, "See that street there?"

She tried to straighten out her vision, "Yes, I can see it."

The guard kept pointing, "We're going to turn on that street and go a few hundred feet down, completely out of view. We are then going to release you. Do as I have instructed and you won't be hurt."

He signaled to the driver and the three guards grabbed their automatic guns tightly. The driver took out his side arm and chambered a round then held the weapon on top of the steering wheel. He then put on what seemed to be night vision goggles. He began to drive slowly toward the dirt road, all while steering with gun in tow. She continued to focus on her breathing, reminding herself to take deep breaths. The van slowly turned the corner and crept forward about fifty feet past the clearing. Then, all of a sudden, headlights appeared. They popped up out of nowhere.

The driver threw the night vision goggles off and shouted, "Abort... Abort!!!"

The head guard sprung into action, swinging the van door violently open and before she knew what was happening, she was thrown out the vehicle. She hit the ground with minimal force but soon found herself rolling and then falling down a steep ravine. She fell quickly as her body forged through bushes and over small rocks. She tried to stop the momentum, using any and all methods but her speed was too great. She slammed hard against the bedrock floor.

'Thud!!!'

Sally let out a bloodcurdling scream. She could feel rocks and running water beneath her. She was in tremendous pain, it reverberated throughout her entire body. Her arm and her stomach hurt badly and she could feel something sticking out of her side. She could hear the van roaring away and skidding on the pavement as it turned the corner. She grabbed her side to check it. Her body had been pierced with what felt like a stick. She made it onto her knees slowly. Yes, she was bleeding badly from her side. She could feel the hot blood spilling out.

"Oh my God," She cried out. She had never seen this much blood. It was soaking her sweatpants and top. She needed help, badly. She cried out as loud as she could. She did it a second and third time.

"Help please!...Help me!...Somebody please help me!"

She thought she was going to pass out but when she didn't, she felt a small surge of strength. She tried to get to her feet. She then noticed her right ankle was injured badly. She couldn't push off it. She was able to see a little bit because of the light the moon offered. She could see clearly the road was about thirty feet up. She then heard and saw a truck quickly drive by. She yelled but it just kept going. She would need to crawl back up, there was no other option.

She lost the flashlight somewhere so she would try and locate it. She pushed with her left leg and crawled on her right knee. She made it about ten feet up and luckily, she found the flashlight. She turned it on and flashed around. She could clearly see the top part was steeper than she thought.

She looked far to the right and noticed if she crawled about twenty feet in that direction, the ravine was not as steep at the top. It would be her best bet. She put the flashlight in her belt pouch. She forged her way to the right and hung onto some small bushes and trees to steady her. The small rocks hurt her knee but she had to ignore the pain. She was losing strength, so she tried to move as fast as she could. She made it over toward the more gradual part of the ravine. After a few slips she was able to scoot up the last part and she finally made it onto the road. She lay down on her back, trying to catch her breath. She did this only for a moment and then slowly turned and got back on her knees.

She took out the flashlight and put the light in her mouth. She used all her force to make it to her feet. She felt enormous pain when she did, so much she shrieked. She couldn't put any force on her right ankle so she decided to get back on her knees. She then crawled, using her good arm to aim the flashlight and her forearm and elbow to steady her. She felt herself slowly passing in and out of consciousness. She knew she had lost a lot of blood. She didn't know how much farther she could make it. She decided to scream for a final time, maybe she was close enough that someone would hear

her. She took a deep breath and cried out as loud as she could...

"Someone..... Please... help me!"

She exerted so much energy she felt her last amount of consciousness slip away. Her head hit the dirt and her body slumped to the side. She lay there in a fetal position, slipping in and out of consciousness. She couldn't move.

Then, suddenly, she heard some noises and people talking in the distance and could feel someone lay her onto her back. She then felt a warm hand touch her cold, bloodied shriveled body. She heard Dr. Hutchinson voice whispering into her ear.

"You're safe Sally. You're going to be all right!"

He clinched her hand tight, "You're going to be all right!"

Sally slowly drifted and eventually lost all consciousness.

Dr. Thiery was seated in the lounge with a few of his confidants. They were talking about some of the upcoming meetings and assignments that needed to quickly get underway. The door flew open and one of Dr. Thiery's private security guards barged in.

His eyes met Dr. Thiery's, "We've got her!"

Dr. Thiery jumped to his feet. "Sally!"

"Yes sir. They released her, near Dr. Tom Hutchinson's cabin. She's safe, but she's injured. They're taking her to the nearest hospital."

Dr. Thiery's expression became fearful, "Injured! Where's Cross?"

"He's coming sir, right away."

Dr. Thiery excused himself and began walking down the hallway in an effort to meet Cross head on. He rounded a corner and made eye contact with Cross quickly approaching.

He was in no mood for pleasantries, "Where is she Cross?"

Cross held up his hand noticing how upset he was, "She's headed to Besançon immediately. She needs immediate medical attention."

Dr. Thiery's face turned red, "Get her here Cross. Now!"

Cross was taken aback. Again, he tried to reason with him, "She needs to go to the hospital sir."

Dr. Thiery's eyes became inflamed and he shouted furiously, "Send our chopper and our medical team and bring her to our facility now!"

The halls shook and Cross got right on it. Dr. Thiery went to his office to calm himself down. He'd be damned if he was going to give anyone else an opportunity to apprehend her. The Compound was the only place she'd be safe. Cross entered after a few minutes still holding the phone to his ear. He was barking instructions but then lowered the phone momentarily.

"The police in Besançon have been informed and are waiting at Jean Minjoz hospital. That hospital has a chopper and an Air-Evac medical team who, upon her arrival, will fly her directly to our facility here in Strasbourg."

Dr. Thiery was still visibly upset, "How soon?"

Cross told the person on the other line to hold for a moment, "It should be less than one hour sir."

"Fine." Dr. Thiery then spoke as if he were really only speaking to himself, "Sally will come home, where she belongs. And we will find these people who did this to her once we are able to talk to her."

Cross noticed Dr. Thiery's inner clamor, "No doubt sir. Try and rest a bit. This is good news."

Dr. Thiery eyeballed Cross as he stepped outside. The fact Sally had been injured was raising up some deep seated emotions. He wasn't pleased. But once her saw her safe, under his protection and smiling her pleasant smile once again, his anger would be abated. He prepared himself for Sally's arrival.

Chapter 12

The room was the brightest she'd seen in months. It was full of people, most notably her mother and Neaven. Where was she right now, she thought to herself, as she lifted her head in a dazed and confused manner? It appeared she was in some sort of hospital.

"She's awake." Neaven ran over and clung to Sally's free hand. Her mother got up and placed her hand on her daughter's forehead and calmly stroked her hair. Sally began to weep once she felt the warm touch of her mother's hand. Many in the room followed suit.

"Oh my sweetheart. You're back and your safe. No one's going to harm you anymore!" Her mom wiped away her tears but also her own. "You made it. Whatever you went through, it's now over."

Sally mumbled quietly, "I'm sorry." She tried to say more but the pain was unbearable. It stopped her from sobbing heavily because when she did, her body shook and that brought the pain level way up. Her ankle hurt and so did her side. Her entire right arm felt swollen and numb but she couldn't see it; it was hiding behind a huge cast. She also had agonizing throbbing in her facial area and jaw.

She turned and forced a smile in Neaven's direction, "Where am I?"

Neaven spoke, "Your at The Cell's Compound honey, in the infirmary. They flew me and your mom out as soon as they found you. We've been here, by your side all afternoon."

A doctor made his way into the room.

"Sally, I know you're in pain but we're going to help you, okay. You have just undergone surgery for your arm and your side. You had a puncture wound right here, a perforating trauma where a stick made it all the way through and out your side. We removed the branch and stitched you up and we're watching you for infections, specifically in that area. We also operated on your arm. Your humerus bone suffered a comminuted fracture so we inserted a plate to ensure a complete healing of the bone. And your ankle is sprained badly. We did x-rays and nothing seems to be broken but the swelling is exaggerated because somehow, the ankle was sprained in

more than one direction, which is not a common injury. So we might opt to perform surgery later."

"The ankle hurts bad." Sally mumbled.

The doctor nodded and gave her something for the pain, "It's extremely swollen so the pain will take some time to subside, but what I just gave you should help."

Dr. Thiery walked in and right to Sally's bedside. His hand replaced her mother's and he stroked her forehead.

He noticed she had been crying, "Under the circumstances my dear, how do you feel?"

She nodded she felt okay.

Dr. Thiery made eye contact with Sally's mother and then back on Sally, "We are going to find who did this to you. Did they harm you on purpose my dear. Is that what we're all seeing here?"

She shook her head no.

Dr. Thiery looked at the doctor.

The doctor asked her a candid question. "Sally, your ankle sprain was so bad I suspected someone had purposely twisted it, back and forth." He showed her, using his hands.

Again, she shook her head no.

He asked bluntly, "How did it get sprained like that?"

She swallowed deep and then spoke, the pain medication was helping thank God, "They threw me out of the van and I sprained my ankle and then I rolled down the ravine. I tried to stop with my feet so that made it worse."

The doctor chimed in, "A fall like that explains all the cuts and bruises. So you fell down a ravine? That's where all your injuries came from?"

Sally nodded her head yes.

Dr. Thiery spoke with anger, "Why did they throw you down a ravine?"

Sally looked at him, "They meant to let me go peacefully but they spotted an approaching car."

Dr. Thiery looked in the corner where Sally couldn't see. She continued, "They threw me out because they had to get away."

Dr. Thiery spoke in the direction of the corner. "What car could that have been?"

She heard Dr. Hutchinson's voice. "Let me call my security team."

Sally whispered when she heard his voice, "Dr. Hutchinson."

Sally's mother tried to get his attention, "She's calling for you Tom."

Dr. Hutchinson came over and held Sally's hand. As soon as she saw him, she cried even harder. She clinched his hand tight. Tom spoke into his phone, "Get in here please, right now, all four of you."

Four guards entered the room.

Dr. Hutchinson spoke, "Yesterday, around the time we found her, was there another vehicle leaving the cabin area back down the dirt road?"

One of the guards answered him, "Yes sir Dr. Hutchinson. Remember, there was an electrical crew out there all afternoon. We checked them out thoroughly and I have all their information in my log. Badge numbers, names, everything. They were repairing some old lines all the way past the creek and up on the other side. Our road was their quickest route so they parked their work truck on the edge of it."

Dr. Hutchinson nodded, "I remember now. We talked about them near supper time."

The guards affirmed and Dr. Hutchinson continued, "They were there yesterday. Until how late?"

The guard answered him again, "I checked on them about 7:30pm and they were still there. Said they were almost done."

Dr. Hutchinson continued, "It must have been their work truck the kidnappers spotted. That road is usually unoccupied. It only leads to the cabin and then extends past it around five hundred feet where it comes to a halt around a wooded area."

Sally spoke, "I yelled for it to stop but it was driving so fast. I saw the top and it looked like a truck."

Dr. Thiery chimed in, "Get a hold of them and find out what they saw. You did check them out thoroughly, didn't you?"

The guard was secure in his response, "Yes sir. I got two of their supervisors on the phone and everything was confirmed. I didn't even allow them to hand me a number. I called the cities power division myself and asked for their managers names. I also watched them work for almost two hours. They were authorized to be there."

"It wasn't them." Sally whispered in an effort to calm Dr. Thiery's fears, "That was horrible timing but it wasn't them. They were just about to let me go until they saw headlights approaching."

Everyone was contemplating and Sally spoke again, "I know who took me."

"Who?" Dr. Thiery's eyes cringed and everyone became attentive to what Sally said next.

She bethought, "His name is Cuinn Alexander, and he's here in France."

At that, the Cell's Head of security sprang into action taking many of the guards with him. Dr. Hutchinson's face held a blank stare and Dr. Thiery's, a questioning look.

Sally was exhausted, "I'm tired."

The doctor held up his hands, "Yes, she must rest now." The doctor ushered everyone out but the family and Dr. Thiery. Dr. Hutchinson quickly told Sally goodbye and kissed her on the cheek. She kissed him back.

She said something to him, "Thank you Dr. H. I heard you whisper into my ear."

He smiled as tears welled up behind his eyes, "Rest Sally. We love you so much and are beside ourselves now that you are safe." He left after telling Judy and Neaven goodbye.

Sally grabbed Neaven's hand which was holding a rail on her bedside, "I'm so glad to see you. Your eyes look so tired."

Neaven began to cry and Judy came around to comfort him, "I haven't slept in weeks Sally. Clair and I have been sleeping at your mom's house. We've been a team, helping each other tremendously."

Sally stroked Neaven's arm to comfort him, "Where is Clair?"

Judy spoke, "She wanted to come and even came to the airport. But they only allowed Neaven and myself on the plane. Since Neaven is your boyfriend of three years he is considered family but Clair isn't."

Sally nodded.

"You know how stubborn Clair is. She almost pushed herself onto that plane. She wanted to be here so badly but you'll see her soon enough. She is looking after everything back in Vermont."

Neaven broke in, "We're staying here until you get better and then we're all going back home."

Sally knew of the trauma her kidnapping must have caused everyone so she remained quiet. She was in no position to dictate anything anymore. Whatever helped her family cope right now was the appropriate thing to do.

Sally took a deep breath, "Thank God I'm back. I don't know what I would have done had they held me any longer. I was fretting everyday."

"It's over Sally." Neaven looked at Judy. "We're together now and we'll get through this."

She nodded.

Dr. Thiery just stood there and said nothing. Sally noticed his demeanor. She reached her arm in his direction. He walked over meekly and took her hand, she whispered in his direction, "What's wrong?"

He didn't like seeing her in this condition. She had cuts all over her arms and legs and her entire body was bruised. She also had stitches above her eyebrow and that area was bruised badly. Her jaw appeared to be swollen.

He swallowed and spoke, "I can not, at this time, accept what happened to you my dear. It's going to take me a long time to accept our failures. I wish they had taken me instead."

Sally shifted and then did the best she could to smile. She looked on him with grace, "It's not your fault. When you hear the whole story I think you'll understand."

He spoke frankly, "Our job was to keep you safe and we failed to do that. It will take some time to accept that we failed you."

Sally looked on him with tears flowing from her eyes, "I'm safe now. Please don't focus on that anymore Dr. Thiery. You're one of the greatest men I know."

Her reassurance and decency eased his conscience a bit. Here she was, he thought to himself, experiencing incredible agony and she was trying to console him. Shame was not an emotion Dr. Thiery was comfortable with, so he got right.

"Sally. Get well and rest. I think you need to spend a lot of time with the people closest to you. We will talk at length later. Right now we have a name, so we'll see what we can find."

She nodded and pulled his hand toward her. He acquiesced and embraced her. He held her for longer than

a moment. He pulled away with tears welling behind his eyes. A few escaped.

"Thank God you're safe my dear. Thank God."

He looked in Judy and Neaven's direction and gestured. He then left the room to allow the three some much needed private time.

Cuinn was reading test studies and results from the last few days. The results were promising and the consensus was it was just a matter of time before a big breakthrough would come. He flipped through some charts and scribbled down some notes.

A secretary knocked on the door and then the door opened, "They're waiting. All four are present."

He turned in her direction, "I'll be right in."

He stood up and walked out his office and back around the main lab. From there, he walked into some sort of observation room. The room was large and located all around this room, along side it's walls, were doors which opened into offices or other service rooms. Compacted within the middle of the observation room was yet another room with one long table running down the middle. This room was called, 'The Guild' room. It was a transparent room. Windows allowed you to see everything inside and even the ceiling was transparent. It was like a large glass box with a stable concrete foundation. It was the heart of this observation room and its center piece, the reason for its existence actually. People would stand inside the room and observe the goings on within this Guild room. Currently the four guards were seated at the table inside the Guild room. Cuinn made eye contact with each of them as he circled around and walked toward the entrance. As soon as he touched the doorknob, about twenty or so guards began to file out of the offices and service rooms located all along side the observation room's walls. They completely surrounded The Guild room with machine guns in check. The four guards squirmed in their seats when they saw the ensemble of guards gathered.

Cuinn found his seat at the head of the table. He spoke at them, "Do you know why you're here?"

The head guard was the first to speak, "The drop off didn't go as planned."

He wants answers, "What happened?"

The same guard answered him, "Sir. Everything was going fine. We made the final turn onto the dirt road and soon after that we noticed headlights approaching. We had to abort. I opened the van door, threw her out as fast as I could and then we left. As you can clearly see, after spending three days in the safe house, the whole team made it back safe and secure. We were not followed at any time so there was no need for violence after the drop off."

Cuinn said nothing. He stared squarely at all four guards.

The driver added something, "Sir. I think everything considered, it was a success. None of us were detected and the package was dropped off with little to no harm."

Cuinn spoke plainly with contempt behind his words, "Apart from the fact she almost died. I think you're correct, it was a success."

The four guards looked at each other in utter bewilderment.

The head guard shook his head, "How?"

Cuinn then offered, matter of fact, "When you opened the van door and threw her out you tossed her straight toward a ravine. She tumbled down that ravine breaking her bones and puncturing her stomach. She required two different surgeries and it's going to take months for her to fully recover. If they ever wanted a reason to come after us, now you have certainly given it to them."

Cuinn became enraged, "I told you! No mistakes, especially with this one! Her security clearance is higher than yours for Christ's sake. She's looked over not only by the American Government, FBI and CIA but by NATO's military and intelligence forces, both in Europe and overseas. Interpol and every stiff with a badge in France knows this girl, on a first name basis. They've been searching for a month. There's no explaining this away. You turned the heat up completely on this one!"

The head guard speaks, "Sir, please consider. We were not the team responsible for evaluating the location and drop. We were here, with the girl for three days once you decided to release her. In our briefing, we were told there was a ravine but sir, it was pitch black. The van's headlights and interior lights were off. I

myself couldn't see a thing except for headlights from a distance!"

He questioned him, "So you knew there was a ravine?"

The driver looked at the head guard but said nothing, the head guard answered Cuinn, "Sir, we did know. I did not intentionally throw her into that ravine. I thought I was throwing her onto the road, the middle of it, actually."

The driver added, "Sir. When I saw the headlights I yelled abort, immediately. I then turned the van and at that precise moment Lieutenant Bailey opened the door and got rid of the package. She must have stumbled into the ravine, by accident sir."

He pointed to the head guard but spoke in the driver's direction, "So you don't think you threw her into that ravine?"

They all answered him in unison since they all knew they were in hot water, "No sir, we didn't."

The driver added, "Sir. She landed on her feet and probably rolled into the ravine by accident. So it was not a matter of us knowing about the ravine, it was more a matter of her not knowing about it. I think if she knew a ravine was there, she would have avoided it."

That made some sense, Cuinn then reasoned within himself.

Lieutenant Bailey confirmed, "She was our captive sir, and honestly, I think she panicked. Once she understood she was free and outside the van, she probably did everything possible to get away from us. I agree with Harmon. She likely fell down that ravine because she didn't have knowledge it existed. And I want to state for the record, and I believe I speak on behalf of all my men, I would like to affirm to our commanding officers and to you sir, we carry cyanide capsules for a reason. We are not allowed to get caught. Please consider that, and we resign ourselves to your judgment."

Cuinn nodded, "Fair enough. This conversation has been recorded and we will consider your verbal report." He points to the two Officers who remained mostly silent. "Do you two have anything to add, on your own behalf?"

They both answered in unison, "Lieutenant Bailey speaks on our behalf."

He stood up, "Fine. These guards standing outside will escort you to your guarded barracks. You are not

under arrest but your details have been suspended. Until such time you are either reinstated or not. You and your men are dismissed Lieutenant."

They stood up and saluted him. They exited and were disarmed the moment they stepped outside the Guild room. Cuinn watched them walk unashamedly toward the exit with stern expressions on all their faces.

He remained seated for quite some time. This was his room after all, this Guild Room. It was the place he would come to contemplate many things. He had grown accustomed to it, and it to him. From here, he could view the entire observation room other than a small portion behind him, which only made up about ten percent of the room. Looking right and left, he could see rooms on both sides, probably seven on each. Then, looking straight ahead, he could see three more rooms but the room in the middle was the largest. It had many windows, in order for people standing in the observation room to look inside. Currently, the room was gloomy and somber. Cuinn tapped his fingers on the strong table which could seat at least twenty comfortably. He tapped his fingers for quite some time.

Chapter 13

The Head of Cell security was making his way up to the third level. He was not alone. An informant had been hand delivered by the AISE (Agenzia Informazioni e Sicurezza Esterna). This was the agency formally known as the SISMI or Italy's Military Intelligence Agency. His face was hidden under a baseball cap, makeup, mustache, beard and a fake nose. Looking closely you could tell he was wearing a disguise but from about ten feet away he looked authentic. Nevertheless, one could not make out his facial structure or appearance. He was hidden in plain sight.

The two made their way outside Dr. Thiery's office. In tow were Cell Military guards and the two AISE agents who delivered the man. He knocked on the door.

"Come in." Dr. Thiery spoke in French.

Only the Head of security entered.

"Sir."

Dr. Thiery motioned toward a chair, "Please sit down."

"Thank you."

He addressed Dr. Thiery, "As you know, Miss Travis is stable but we have not been able to spend as much time with her as we had hoped, since some of the swelling has worsened. The doctors tell us we should be able to do a full interview by next week.

"Understood. Time is certainly of the essence but having her back safely is what matters most. We'll let her mind clear of the medication and her body of the pain. It would do little good right now to try and get sensitive information from her."

"Exactly." He concurs, "But, I do have some good news to report sir."

Dr. Thiery looks at him unknowingly yet with a grin, "I'm listening."

He forges ahead, "Just this morning, the AISE brought us a fellow. Someone who has been instructed to discuss with you information on the man known as Cuinn Alexander."

He offers a feeble smile, "Interesting." He leans back in his chair and places his hands together, "Isn't the only suspect in this case, other than Cuinn Alexander himself, a former agent of the AISE/SISMI?"

The Head of security eyes him knowingly, "You're correct sir. The photo we got from the library is indeed that of a former AISE/SISMI agent."

Dr. Thiery taps his fingers one against the other, "And now the same agency is bringing us a man who has information on the subject. I'm not flattered."

He makes a gesture with his hand, "Sir, you know as well as I do sometimes these methods are the methods which solve cases. Hear him out. Even if he happens to be a shady fellow."

"Bring him in but," He points a rigid finger, "Stand in the corner and eyeball this person, rebuke him if need be."

"Of course sir." He walked to the door and opened it, eyeing the man. "Come in, and be on your best behavior now!"

Dr. Thiery watched as a short yet sturdy man made his way into his office. He was wearing a disguise so he couldn't make out much. The man sat down and even though he was wearing glasses Dr. Thiery could feel the man staring at him.

Dr. Thiery was candid, "Who are you?"

He spoke English but with a heavy Italian accent, "I will answer your questions and speak on a need to know basis. Who I am is not important."

Dr. Thiery was in no mood for games, "Listen, you appear to me like some sort of scoundrel. We are not the ones wearing disguises!"

The man put up his hand, "Look, I will not win any arguments with you, of that I am sure. I am here to give you information."

Dr. Thiery got angry and took the picture with the rogue SISMI agent and slammed it on his desk. "Who's this, your partner?"

He used one finger to push the photo away, "That's none of my concern."

Dr. Thiery barks his orders. "Get the AISE agents in here, now!"

"Yes sir." The Head of security brought the agents inside.

Dr. Thiery turned his full attention and anger in their direction, "Is this a game? Are we playing games here? Disguises and such." He motions toward the fellow, "I am not amused. Your superiors will here of this, I assure you. The only people who wear disguises are

scoundrels and guilty men. Now I want answers and I want them now!" Dr. Thiery was clearly bent over what happened to Sally. It seemed his emotions were getting the better of him.

One of the AISE agents spoke quietly in French, "Sir, this man is here to help you. He is wearing a disguise at the direct command of our superiors, to mask his true identity. But not all who wear disguises are guilty, I assure you. Try talking to him rather than at him."

Dr. Thiery returned his gaze at the man. He hadn't moved a muscle. He decided to employ a calmer approach, even though he wasn't in the mood.

He lowered his voice but it still held authority, "Tell me what you know."

The two AISE agents voluntarily left.

The man began speaking, "Much of what I know I will offer on a need to know basis. The AISE superiors have commanded me to help you but I have rigid guidelines regarding what I can and cannot discuss. With that understood, let's begin.

"Cuinn Alexander was a highly gifted scientist and computer engineer. He was educated in both Europe and the States but eventually made his way back to Europe. What I'm about to tell you might be difficult for you to stomach, but I assure you, it is the truth.

"Cuinn became a wealthy man back in the 90's, betting on the stock market and buying and selling bonds. Don't ask me where he got the money but I will speculate later. Remember, this was the dot-com era, and he traded in stocks with a keen insight into technology. While others traded in energy, fuels, corporations but also shorted the market, his sole focus was on computer technology including smaller companies utilizing that technology. He dabbled in websites, software companies and start ups; all with an earnest interest and inside track on emerging applied sciences and mobile telecommunications. It was almost as if he had foreknowledge that computers, websites and telecommunication devices, not to mention the software they would need, were quickly moving to the forefront. By around 1998, his net worth was in the tens of millions of dollars. It was at this time he headed back to Europe, but he continued to trade stocks in both Europe and the States over the next few years."

Dr. Thiery turned his attention toward the Head of his Security. This was getting interesting.

He continued, "The reason you have little information regarding Cuinn is because early on he purposed to stay out of the limelight. It was a sacrifice for him to leave the States because his earliest quest was to become a brilliant scientist and to advance technology. This is actually why he went to school in the States, they were as advanced as anyone at the time. Nevertheless, I believe the major reason for moving back to Europe in 1998 was to keep himself and his budding fortune out of the public eye. I am attempting to make very clear Cuinn didn't have any desires for the lavish lifestyle or the fame that usually accompanies it. I am going to prove to you, beyond doubt, he needed his money for a different more sinister purpose. His entire reason for gaining wealth was because of his drive to advance technology."

He placed his elbow on his knee and turned his gaze on the Head of security and then back to Dr. Thiery, "This is where you're going to have to believe me whether you want to or not. I am willingly giving you this information and it is the truth so I would advise you to listen very carefully and consider what I'm about to say."

Dr. Thiery nods and when the man notices his acquiescence he continues, "When he came back over to Europe his identity slowly began to change. What is way too much of a coincidence is he was completely out of the technology stocks before the dot-com bubble burst in 2000. Cuinn made tons of money playing the technology angle of the market yet suffered almost zero losses once it crashed. This was not by chance. He obviously had insider information, in order to remain ahead of the curve. Now here is the astonishing part. From 1998 to 2004 his net worth grew from tens of millions of dollars to almost two billion Euros. Now, it's true some investors have accomplished this feat, but those are extreme gains. I tentatively speculate, and I will attempt to prove my speculation later, that the same people who gave him the initial seed money to invest also endowed him with about a billion Euros once he came back to Europe because he had proved himself faithful."

Dr. Thiery interrupts, "Wait. So the same people who offered him insider trading also gave him start up

money? And once he proved himself they further rewarded him with a billion Euros? Your speculative abilities had better be second to none. That last part doesn't make much sense."

The man suggests, "I know how it sounds but I will prove there is a much greater agenda here than money. But please allow me to continue."

Dr. Thiery nods and then man continues, "Insider trading on this level reeks of friends in high places. This is where I suspect he got his initial seed money to invest, probably a few million dollars. Remember when I mentioned once he came back to Europe in 1998 his identity slowly began to change?"

Dr. Thiery answers him, "Yes, I do."

He nodded, "By 2004, the man formerly known as Cuinn Alexander was operating under a completely new false identity, and from what I have learned, he uses that identity flawlessly, and on every continent he's visited."

Dr. Thiery became apprehensive upon hearing those words. If this fact were true then this charade went far deeper than money would suggest.

He continued now that he noticed he had gotten Dr. Thiery's full attention, "Fingerprints, retinal scans, passports, birth certificate, DNA; the works. Just to give these words some teeth, Cuinn Alexander graduated from the University of California at Berkeley back in the late 80's. All records on that campus, not to mention his passport information and his California driver's license have all been altered to reflect his new identity. Cuinn Alexander no longer exists. So, understanding this, he doesn't just have a new identity today. His entire life as Cuinn Alexander past, present and future have all been erased. You need to ask yourself what type of people possess the power to modify sensitive information like that on two separate continents."

Dr. Thiery glanced at his Head of security and even he was shaking his head.

The man's voice escalated, "I have even seen, with my own two eyes, his original birth certificate hung on his wall. It's hung in the same frame right next to his new fake birth certificate. Perhaps he is only showing off but I believe he does it in an effort to remain grounded, so he doesn't forget where he came from."

Dr. Thiery interrupts, "So what is his new identity?"

He takes a deep breath, "I have been instructed not to give you his new identity. If you want to get upset, speak with the men who brought me here?"

Dr. Thiery looks to the Head of security then back to the man, "You've told us old information, everything ten, twenty years ago. What is he involved in now?"

The man wipes his forehead, "Good question. I can tell you with certainty, everything I have told you so far is the truth. From here on out, my descriptions will lend themselves to speculation. With that clearly understood, let me tell you about the man today."

He gets more comfortable in his chair, "He is, without a doubt in my mind, and within all his endeavors, backed by the wealthiest most powerful men on the planet. He is in league with them, mostly as their chief scientist but also as a mid level yes man. He does their bidding in many different areas because I believe he has shown himself as a loyal apologist toward their cause. And what, may you ask, are their desires toward this cause?"

Dr. Thiery's gaze is fixated on the man.

He continues dutifully, "Transhumanism. The evolution of us *Homo sapiens*. They have two main goals with regard to Transhumanism. Number one, extending the lengths of their lives and number two, eventually intermingling technology with their bodies. Instead of a genetic mutation or cyborg they seek to create a technical adaptation of their physical bodies. But not all that sci-fi junk you see on TV. The end result will not be a mechanical human body but merely their human bodies assisted with advanced technical abilities.

"Not like a pacemaker or an artificial arm. More like technical devices in the brain which would add cognitive abilities and memory. They also seek to utilize genetic coding which would enhance and prolong life. These people hate the bible but believe much of it. They know the bible explains *Homo sapiens* use to live to almost a thousand years old. They want to use technology to bypass God and unlock *Homo sapiens* full potential. It's all about the fountain of youth. They want to use technology to avoid death. Live forever, either in their bodies or in another body. They'll accomplish this by creating cloned bodies. They are also

seeking a technology that might preserve their souls after their natural body dies. They will then take this technology which holds their souls and reapply it either to a future cloned body or even a technical machine."

Dr. Thiery was listening but didn't know where all this was going.

The man read into Dr. Thiery's doubts, "I have heard first hand, since going completely in league with these wealthy sponsors over the last few years, that Cuinn's net worth has gone from billions to somewhere over one hundred billion Euros. We know for certain his net worth is over five billion Euros yet he continues building on a large scale, all without draining these accounts. So where is the money coming from? And if this is just my speculation then how does this man have over five billion Euros which can easily be accounted for!"

Dr. Thiery asks, "Can you prove to me this man has five billion Euros? If you can, I'll be more inclined to believe you."

He nods, "The men, the AISE agents who brought me will testify of this evidence. They've seen it, just ask them."

Dr. Thiery instructed his Head of security to ask the AISE agents regarding this information.

The man continued as the Head of security opened the door and conferred with them, "And I have no real evidence as to why they are giving him so much money or how he has managed to get in so good with them but I will speculate if you will permit me."

The Head of security shut the door and confirmed what the man said. The two agents not only confirmed this evidence but said a fax would be forthcoming from the AISE Director himself, confirming the man's net worth. But his name would be withheld in order to conceal his new identity.

Dr. Thiery was suspicious but permitted the man to continue with his speculation. The man continued with resolve, "As I mentioned before, this man came back to Europe and after five years or so had a couple billion Euros in Swiss bank accounts. Now, this is what I want you to focus on. This man forfeited his entire life, his identity if you will. And over the last fourteen years has instead chosen a life of total obscurity. Now, I don't know about you, but if I were an unbelievably

affluent individual who had the legal right to live anywhere in the world, I doubt I would have chosen his path, even if one day it might lead to some power. This guy could have lived the ultimate flamboyant lifestyle, but instead chose to live and to work in the shadows, like some mad scientist with the elite's fingers on his pulse.

"The super wealthy elite are often possessed with gaining more power and wealth, no matter what the cost. Many of them live behind the scenes and go completely undetected. Their lives are not very fun, but are rather burdened with purpose. These people are not worth billions, they're worth trillions and you'll never even know their names. You'll never hear of them in some magazine or on the TV, ever, because they own the ability to remain hidden. I speculate Cuinn has got in good with these men not so much because he had something to offer as a brilliant scientist, but because he was willing to make the same ultimate sacrifices.

"Remaining completely hidden and becoming possessed with a task. Nothing from his lineage stands out where he could have been born into privilege and nothing from his ancestry shows his origins were somehow far removed from these powerful people. His mother was not some maid to the super rich, so he is not the bastard child of some wealthy elite. It must be that he is cut from the same cloth as these men. He is consumed with a task and has forfeited his carnal rights in the pursuit of that task. Not to mention, as I have previously speculated, they probably bankrolled him from the beginning. So, not only does he owe these men but they must have seen something in him right from the get go. I can also tell you I have met the man personally and have evaluated his work ethic and his demeanor."

He became passionate, "This man is not the average driven individual. He is a highly possessed individual with just as much charisma as half the people in any congress. He is unbelievably talented and I suppose it doesn't hurt to mention he is cunningly attractive. All his decisions and intensions have merit, I can testify of that. This is their guy."

Dr. Thiery nodded, he knew of the super rich and the powerful elite who straddled the governments behind the scenes. Much to do about nothing.

He continued, "So, considering the fact he is in so good with them and they have so much invested in him, which is evidenced by the fact, and not speculation, that they have changed his entire identity past, present and future."

Dr. Thiery asks, "You don't believe his own wealth did that for him?"

He shook his head no, "The process started back when he was only worth tens of millions, when he first moved back to Europe. Plus, money could only buy the people who could have made all those changes, both in Europe and America, and that is not likely. Money didn't change his identity, power did. Cuinn by himself is not that powerful, but the people standing behind him certainly are.

"And I have evidence Cuinn is preparing to break away and eventually go his own way, and the elite know this and are allowing it. Like I mentioned before, Cuinn has been building. He has built many facilities, retreats and homes all around Europe in the past few years and no one can account to where the money is coming from. But understand this, the facilities are run by and are protected by military personnel here in Europe. Translated, these facilities are currently protected by the elite who influence governments and their militaries. That's another fact I can verify for you, if you'd wish. So, understanding all this evidence the elite know what he's planning. And according to this evidence Cuinn and his elite sponsors are working together and are in cahoots but in time they will separate, probably in an attempt to take the focus completely off the elite sponsors and only onto Cuinn himself. And this explains why Cuinn needs all his money. Once he separates from the elite he'll be on his own."

Dr. Thiery assumes, "They're setting him up to be their fall guy."

He shakes his head no, "Not so much. I do believe they are getting ready to separate and I do agree they're doing it to fully protect themselves, but I don't think Cuinn is headed for a fall. He has been equipped with monies, facilities, professional contacts, personal contacts and a small army of military and mercenary men to run his facilities. He's being set up, absolutely, but not for a fall, but for something else."

Dr. Thiery asks the question, "What?"

He seemed reserved in his answer, "I don't know but the super rich never stray far from their modus operandi. They always remain hidden, always. That won't change. They enjoy being the puppet masters. Cuinn was raised up to work with them and to help them toward their goals, scientifically, but he's also been bankrolled so that one day he'll be released to fend for himself. The elite will watch, from a safe distance, and see what unfolds.

"But make no mistake about it. Cuinn's power structure will remain a stark reality. This is why he has the money he does, because he's not going anywhere. And this is why I have this evidence to give you today. It has been going on for quite some time. When he's finally on his own, he'll be separate from the elite but it will only be a mirage because he'll be quite powerful in his own right, and the elite granted him that power.

"Everything I have witnessed transpiring over the last ten years will come to fruition. When he finally does break away, the powerful men and politicians standing on the world stage will know who he is and will stand at a distance. They will not impede or hinder him at all. At that time Cuinn might not have tremendous power but he'll have a far reaching influence and the elite, hiding in the shadows, will absolutely protect him. They won't protect him by granting him enormous power, no, they'll protect him by ensuring those with enormous power stay out of his way. He'll be given a very, very long leash. Because, just as the studies that slowly take place in the realm of science, the elite's must observe and record what transpires. What happens from here on out, with regard to Cuinn's life, will become the elite's new science project. They'll watch and they'll learn.

"Now, this is what you, Dr. Thiery, in light of everything I have just mentioned, must consider. And please be honest with yourself. If anything were to interfere with this process, the entire scientific evaluation would become devalued. For this reason, Cuinn Alexander is today, and has been over the last fourteen years, completely off limits. And no one can touch him, not even you."

It was a good thing a huge desk separated the two men because Dr. Thiery became enraged. "I'll touch him." He spoke in a fiercely stubborn tone.

The man had no fight in him. He simply spoke these words quietly and confidently, "No you won't. I've been sent here for two reasons. To willingly offer you this information and to help you understand Cuinn's completely untouchable. These elite have invested everything in him. Nothing will get in the way of that. Even a powerful man such as yourself cannot interfere. If you attempt to make noise and come against him you'll take on so much resistance you'll be bathing in it. And I have some extra information for you, just so you'll be somewhat sufficed."

The man then crossed his arms and relaxed for a moment, "I know why you want this man so badly. I know he took someone from you. Someone you value who was returned to you a short while ago."

Dr. Thiery was obviously angry but the man forged ahead anyway, "Returned her damaged, but it was not his doing. Just so you know, the Lieutenant who threw her from that vehicle, which resulted in all her injuries, was executed by firing squad two days ago. Cuinn ordered it. This Lieutenant was shot over twenty times. Cuinn made an example out of him. The two agents who brought me here are going to give you detailed information on this Lieutenant. Confirm it with the injured woman and you'll know I'm telling you the truth."

Dr. Thiery didn't like to hear this news, but hearing of the Lieutenant's death defused him a bit. He would need to consider everything because nothing would change the fact Sally was horribly injured. But he had to be realistic. He didn't rise to his level of prominence by ignoring the obvious. If Cuinn killed the man who caused Sally all this harm then Cuinn was guilty of kidnapping, but not much else.

Dr. Thiery decided to play nice, "I will most certainly talk with her and if everything checks out, I'll consider it. But Cuinn Alexander will never be off limits in my book. I'll touch him. With both hands."

"Refreshing." The man makes light as he offers Dr. Thiery a smile, "To each his own, that's my motto. I am no fan of Cuinn Alexander. His money and influence has corrupted many. I'd like to see him behind bars just as much as you, perhaps even more. But the facts are still the facts. And I hope you do consider them, and consider them well. This is a man who has been working with the top scientists and doctors, many of whom have

'disappeared' or been 'kidnapped' in the last ten years. Either that, or their deaths have been completely falsified. I know, because I've seen some of these men and women and they are very much alive, most enjoying life actually. They are working with Cuinn, who by now is in some secret facility totally off grid. They switch facilities every few years, and from my evidence Cuinn has at least three more built. He also has private residences and retreats from which they can operate. Based on what he has constructed today, he can go from facility to facility undetected for the next ten years. And you won't find these facilities or even his residences because you can't get within a quarter mile of any of them. They're completely off grid and their airspace is restricted. They're under full military protection, authorized by their respective governments."

Dr. Thiery crossed his arms, "You know a lot. Worked for him did you?"

The man became coy, "I'm not at liberty to discuss, but you're a smart man. You figure it out."

Dr. Thiery takes the picture of the SISMI agent from the library and calmly places it against an object causing it to stand upright. The man then gazed at the picture he had already been shown. Dr. Thiery then reverberates in a monotone voice, "Maybe you have someone on the inside, someone Cuinn has turned perhaps?"

The man didn't even budge. But he leaned forward and lowered his sunglasses so Dr. Thiery could see his eyes. He then calmly leaned back.

At that, Dr. Thiery grimaced. He then briefly glanced at his Head of security and then back again, "Anything else?"

The man was content, "What else would you like to know?"

Dr. Thiery might win every argument with this man but gamesmanship was obviously this man's ally. He decided to fight another day. He leaned back comfortably, "So he's truly untouchable, as you say?"

The man noticed Dr. Thiery's submissive response so he offered him a peace of mind, "Yes. Even now I am sitting here doing his bidding. They want Cuinn left alone and I am sitting here telling you to do just that, and I am not a friend to this man. When it comes to these elite men behind the scenes, people like me are used to do their bidding whether we want to or not. I am

not telling you to leave him alone because I want you too. I am telling you to leave him alone because I am being commanded to tell you that by superiors at the AISE. Cuinn most likely killed that Lieutenant simply to suffice you. It's probably his misguided way of apologizing because, according to what I can surmise, she wasn't to be harmed. How do you think information on the Lieutenant's death leaked so quickly? One reason, because he wanted you to have access to this information!

"Men like you and I are given these glimpses for one reason, to understand we have no power, and to begrudgingly accept it. Everything I have witnessed in the last ten years has taught me one thing, and it's the one thing they want me to repeat as often as possible. All of this is untouchable. Him, them; completely untouchable. And not because that's the way it should be, but because that's the way it's going to be."

Dr. Thiery looked to his Head of security one more time and then motioned for him to come forward. He whispered something into his ear and he abruptly left.

Dr. Thiery taps his desk, "He'll be returning shortly. Be patient."

The man looks around, "Do you have any water?"

Dr. Thiery points over his shoulder, "In the small fridge behind you, help yourself."

The Head of security reentered and was holding a briefcase. He placed it on Dr. Thiery's desk. The man took a large swig of his water.

Dr. Thiery stood up, "This is for your family. I know who you are and I am indebted to the service you have done for your country. Take this money and help as much as you're able, yours and all the families of those still undercover."

The man placed the cap on his water, stood up and shook Dr. Thiery's hand, firmly. He then turned to shake the hand of Dr. Thiery's Head of security.

He spoke assertively, "I have heard about this place for quite some time and because you're handing me this briefcase, the rumors must be true. You do honest work here."

He took the briefcase and tipped his hat. He then calmly made his way out. The two AISE agents snicker when they see the briefcase.

One of them makes wise, "That looks heavy, need me to carry it?"

"No." He rebukes, "It's for our families. The families of those agents still undercover."

Dr. Thiery cautions his Head of security, "Go make sure that money stays with him. He probably outranks those two anyway."

"You got it sir." He heads out quickly to catch up with the group.

Dr. Thiery is left to ponder everything. The conversation left a bad taste in his mouth but one he could accept, for now. The gentleman in the disguise was obviously an agent of the AISE but the man in the picture had probably become corrupt. Perhaps he was an undercover agent at one time, perhaps he wasn't. But he was most likely one of the agents this man was referring to when he mentioned Cuinn's ability to corrupt using both money and influence. That considered, Italians still made the best deep cover agents. Their instincts were second to none and they had a knack for using their gut instinct in perfect unison with their reason, when highly trained of course. When this man tipped his glasses, he saw his eyes. He had terrible, terrible eyes. The eyes of a sharpshooter actually. Someone who knows about your death about three seconds before you find out.

This man had likely spent years in deep cover working around this Cuinn fellow. And no doubt he knew much. Much more than he was divulging. At the end of the day, after forging through all the nonsense, they were on the same team. This was not only a man of justice but also a realistic man who, because of his experience, knew justice wasn't always possible. Dr. Thiery had learned that lesson all too well throughout the years. Had Sally been killed then what this man said wouldn't have mattered. He would have become fully invested in Cuinn's death, no matter what the personal cost. But because she was safe, and because presumably the Lieutenant who harmed her had been dealt with, he remained sensible. But he would find out for sure once he talked with Sally.

The Head of security returned with an envelope and a fax.

He spoke with a grimace, "We got them on one of our transports so the money won't be an issue, but they have the paperwork nonetheless. I've reviewed the fax from the AISE Director and everything checks out. You can

review it at your leisure but our analysts verified its validity. I also took a glance at the file they gave you. It's not for the faint of heart.

Dr. Thiery assumed as much. The Head of security continued, "I talked quickly with two of my guards who are former SISMI and they recognized the two agents as low level agents who couldn't possibly outrank an undercover agent."

Dr. Thiery interrupted, "Deep cover agent. That man didn't spend weeks or months in any operation. He most likely spent five or six years learning all he could as a deep cover agent within Cuinn's operation. He likely got outed by that other scoundrel, whose photo we got from the librarian. He must have been very important or else he'd surely be dead. Deep cover agents have tough, tough lives. He probably didn't see his family during those five or six years."

He concurred, "I thought he was an agent too. But what gave it away. How are you so certain?"

Dr. Thiery bethought, "A few things. The two agents were too quick to assist him. If he had been some mercenary they would have allowed me to scream at him for hours. He also used the word 'we' on more than one occasion, a parapraxis, so he's not working alone but he's part of a team. And when he took down his glasses, not only did he infer he had knowledge regarding the former agent in question, but I saw his eyes."

Dr. Thiery looked squarely on his Head of security, "You do know Italians make the best deep cover operatives, don't you?"

He thought on it, "I thought women did sir?"

Dr. Thiery began to chuckle, "I suppose you do have a point. But for this type of military assignment, you'd need a man. Hand me that envelope and fax?"

"Certainly sir." He stepped forward and placed them in his hands.

Dr. Thiery opened the file as he placed the fax on his desk. It contained two pictures and a few typed pages outlining the career of the Lieutenant. One of the pictures presented a large African-American gentleman with a fully shaved head. He was standing at ease and holding a machine gun, staring straight into the camera. The other picture wasn't as pleasant. It was the same man lying on the ground. His chest, riddled with bullet holes. His blood was seeping everywhere.

He filed them away. He would show Sally the first picture. If it was indeed the same man who was the cause of all her physical pain, he would be somewhat sufficed. But he wouldn't forget. Not Cuinn Alexander or all the information. No, he would never forget. Any of it.

It was a shiny afternoon and Sally was seated outside taking in all the beauty which surrounded her. Dr. Hutchinson's courtyard was a serene place where she could rest and find her footing. Feeling safe, back behind the massive walls of The Compound was exactly what she needed. The birds would come in and feed from the lavish bird feeders Dr. Hutchinson kept well stocked. It had been two and a half weeks since she arrived here clinging to life. She was feeling much better but still needed plenty of help just to manage throughout her day.

Her mother and Neaven had decided to allow her to fully recuperate here, at The Cell, where she would be protected. They had eased into life, and since they were all together again, it was comfortable. Neaven did leave his job but was told he was welcome back anytime; they'd even make room for him in need be. Neaven and Judy were currently shopping in Strasbourg. Her mother had never been to France so she was enjoying the culture. Neaven was taking her to all the restaurants and places he and Sally visited when they came for holiday over a year ago.

Yesterday, Dr. Thiery and the task force they assembled questioned her for many, many hours. They asked her everything from the location of the place she stayed to the information she gave Cuinn. They clearly understood he took her because of his desires toward technology. The team had only been given limited information regarding what Dr. Thiery had learned about Cuinn Alexander. Dr. Thiery reasoned if they were able to breach Cuinn's world and bring him to justice then so be it. He would not tell the task force, whose entire purpose was to bring Cuinn to justice, that he was beyond reach. They would go forward with the investigation. If Cuinn was truly untouchable then this process would reveal that.

It was also at this time Sally informed the team, including Dr. Thiery and her mother, that Cuinn Alexander knew her father. This was a difficult concept for them

to wrap their minds around but the evidence was undeniable. First off, her mother admitted to remembering her husband setting up the computer with the help of 'some guy' from Berkeley. He later divulged to her he had engaged in deep scientific and spiritual conversations with this man, and that he believed it was God's will, according to the 666 dream, to have these conversations with him. She even recalled her husband using his first name on occasion, 'Cuinn.'

If that were not enough, the original copy of the dream and the notes were returned with Sally inside the belt around her waist. Those pages partly confirmed the reason she was taken was because of the 666 dream. The fact Cuinn Alexander's name was clearly written on the page was undeniable. Sally's mother confirmed the handwriting. Claiming the penmanship was that of her deceased husband. She also confirmed the name 'Cuinn Alexander' was clearly jotted down on the page when she handed the folders to Sally. She, nor Sally for that matter, had written anything on any of these pages.

The last overwhelming evidence was the other dream Cuinn told Sally while in captivity. The dream about her eventually holding more revelation than her father. Sally, upon returning to The Compound and leaving the infirmary, requested her backpack. Once she had it, she searched for proof that the dream did exist. She found it, in the second folder. The dream was written clearly and again, in her father's handwriting. There it was; undeniable proof Cuinn had access to her father's private belongings. It was the exact same dream Cuinn told her, word for word. When Sally revealed this information to the task force and showed them the proof of the dream, it was the evidence that sealed it. This Cuinn Alexander might be a twisted fellow but he was telling the truth. Undeniably, he had communications with Sally's father. With that fact clearly understood and accepted, they asked a few remaining questions and left for the day.

They came again this morning and asked a final series of questions. Dr. Thiery showed her a picture of a man. Sally confirmed it was indeed the head of the four man security team who not only tailed her before her release but who was responsible for dropping her off at Dr. H's cabin. She affirmed he was indeed the man who grabbed her and threw her out of the van. She supposed, since they had his picture, they were nearing an arrest.

But this wasn't the case. They had his picture but had no idea where he was at the time of his execution. She was not told about the man's death.

As it turned out, the truck that whizzed by her that night was the electrical crew. They reported seeing only a plume of smoke but never saw a car or even headlights. When they were informed of Sally and her injuries they claimed to have never seen or heard her. It was as Sally had mentioned, a horribly timed coincidence. She had no idea why God would have allowed that truck to be there at that exact time. She then reasoned it could have been worse. The truck could have been even closer as soon as their van turned that corner. Then, those guards might have overacted and used their guns. She figured she would perhaps in time know why God allowed such an awful thing to happen to her. She tried not to think about it though. And approaching was a person who never failed to break her away from thinking to deeply about things.

"Sora!"

Sora approached and made her way into the courtyard, with coffee in hand, "Man! Dr. H has some style. I've never seen it fully from the inside."

Sally glanced around, "Yeah, it's awesome isn't it. Take a seat."

Sora sat down right next to her, "How's the arm and leg?"

Sally made a wry face, "Thank God the swelling on the ankle has finally gone down a lot. They say they will begin therapy in a week or so. The arm still aches. And we can't forget about the side."

Sora looks at what Sally is showing her, finally seeing the damage that was under her elastic waistband. "What's it feel like."

Sally's countenance held a sober look, "It feels mostly bruised now but it basically felt like I'd been stabbed. There is no other way to describe it. It is also what continues to bother me the most because it restricts my movement. And forget about when I sleep, I can't turn over."

Sora speaks in a motherly tone, "You look like you've fought a war dear."

Sally shook her head, "Yeah, well, I'll tell you one thing. All this has humbled me. I appreciate a lot more people who are injured for doing their jobs. It's a

reality to me now. It's weird because it completely humbles and angers you all at the same time. I don't think I've ever experienced, at the exact same time, those mixed emotions? Interesting?"

Sora rolls her eyes, "God Sally you'll never change. Don't think! I'm here now. You know, the one who doesn't think unless she must!"

Sally laughed but held her side when she did, she had learned that trick, "Oh Sora. Back home I have Clair and here I have you. I thank God for you Sora. It has been so awesome to have met you. You are one of the reasons I was excited to return."

Sora's expression becomes gracious, "The feeling is mutual dear. You're a very unique person Miss Sally Travis, and I thoroughly enjoy myself around such uniqueness."

They both quiet down and soak up their surroundings. Sora takes a sip of her coffee. Sally decided it was time to talk openly with her. They had already spent time together but she didn't talk about what happened.

"Sora, what happened back at the library?"

Sora locked eyes with Sally and her face held a deep somber proclamation, one Sally had never seen her wear. She spoke slowly, "I was researching with that lady I told you about when the guard who was with me was alerted. He grabbed me quickly and we were out the door. I assumed they had already taken you away in the other car until I saw it parked. I screamed at both the guard and driver to tell me where you were and they told me to be quiet."

Sally listened intently as Sora continued. "They were busy, radioing the nearest police station and getting all the information they could, so they couldn't be bothered. After about fifteen minutes sitting in the police station I overheard one of the officers make a comment. They said all the ruckus was over a girl who was kidnapped. I shouted at him in French and asked who was kidnapped. After noticing my driver seated next to me he told me some woman, last name 'Travis,' was taken at the library."

Sora shook her head and put her hands out, "Sally, my entire body became cold. I mean, my entire body. I actually thought I was peeing in my pants."

Sally looked on Sora with compassion as she continued, "I am not joking. My body's reaction was almost a full shutdown and I thought I was basically peeing in my pants because I couldn't feel anything. I now know, because the doctors told me, I went into a severe shock. It lasted a few hours. Then after the shock, I was severely depressed for weeks. I did nothing Sally, no studying or anything. People at The Cell thought it proper to have my family and friends come out to visit. They helped me a lot, but it was a difficult time for many."

Sally said nothing but thought on it. Her kidnapping had impacted so many, and she sensed it. She asked another question, "What was it like, here?"

Sora looked Sally in the eye, "You know Sally, I really don't know because like I said, I was completely out of it. I did hear many people around this place were jaded. People talked a lot about it and many people who knew you and who live in your apartment wing were visiting the chapel daily, praying for your safe return."

Sally had a look of serenity on her face, "Yeah I know about that. A few have visited and told me the chapel was full in the evenings."

Tears then overcame her as she remembered those desperate nights held in that disgusting room. She began to sob. Sora sprang up like something vaulted her from her seat. She cuddled Sally, delicately, trying not to cause her additional pain. She said nothing, but held her until the tears subsided.

"I just, I don't know. My emotions are still all over the place. I don't even know how to feel."

Sora got on her knees so she could look Sally straight into her eyes. She spoke kindly and softly, "It's okay Sally love. You don't need to figure anything out right now. I know you Sally, and you probably want to, but I think it is more important for you to find peace right now. Answers will come. Please be patient."

Sally heard Sora's words as though God Himself were speaking. Sora then said one more thing, "And don't worry about the future either. Think about nothing, absolutely nothing but the present."

Sally sniffled and wiped her nose so Sora got up and found some Kleenexes inside. She brought the entire box.

"I'm sure these have come in useful. I've gone through many myself."

Sally laughed as she grabbed a Kleenex, "Yes. They've probably ordered extra just for us."

Sora sat back down after consoling her. Sally then made light, "Sora can I tell you something weird."

"Under the circumstances, yes."

Sora was always game. "Remember when we talked about going to Paris down at the stables?"

"Of course I do."

"Do you remember joking that I might meet a cute guy there and that I should just loosen up and talk to him, you know, live a little."

Sora smirked and then smiled, "Yes, I do remember. You also mentioned you *already* had a cute guy, Neaven, which is why I then told you to live a little." She said the words as she leaned back comfortably.

Sally smiled, "Exactly. Don't take this the wrong way because when I was there, under their powers, I began to get a bit paranoid. I remember thinking. Sora's words came true, because I did meet a cute guy. The main guy who took me, Cuinn, was attractive and guess what, all we did was talk. We talked and talked and talked! So while I was there, and I thought on that, it blew my mind. Like, what you spoke in jesting came true. So in a way your words became both useful but also scary. Scary because they came true but useful because you spoke them."

Sora looked around for a moment and spoke as she did, "I could not imagine what it was like for you there. If you tell me you began to get a bit paranoid then I believe you."

She then became visibly upset, "But that thing, that creature. That wicked, wicked, wicked monster who took you. That is no man Sally. He's an animal, a brute beast actually. And brute beasts are not cute, they're beasts."

Sally heard her plainly, "I could have used you in there."

Sora listened as she continued, "I could have used some of that resolve. When I was in that horrible place I wasn't thinking normally or rationally. It was like my primal instincts kicked in and I was thinking more like a scared animal. I hated it. It's something I cannot begin to explain."

Sora jumped in trying not to sound too insensitive, "Then don't love. Let's talk about more positive things if you'd like. If you need to talk about what happened then you know we can talk all day and night, but if you don't have to, why should you?"

Sally knew talking about it just reminded everyone of the anguish they endured not knowing if she'd ever be returned alive, so she relented, "Yeah, that's a good point Sora. I'll talk about it if I must but you're right, if I don't *need* to I should focus on positive things."

"Absolutely Sally." She raised an eyebrow and used plenty of emphasis, "You're in *the present* now, and all that nonsense means nothing to your place in time right now, your present. Try to only think and live in the now. It will help I believe."

Sally reached out with her one good arm, "Please give me another hug Sora, you're a godsend."

"Gladly."

The two embraced and held each other softly and Sora kissed Sally repeatedly on the cheek and forehead.

Chapter 14

There was a meeting back at the facility which housed all the species which were required for testing, experimentation and observation. Non human primates such as monkeys and baboons filled these dormitory facilities but also rats, mice, rabbits, guinea pigs and even some amphibians and birds. There were five domiciles and two testing areas holding all these creatures. Cuinn was a very, very busy man so he was not privy to the day to day appointments going on in these facilities. The top scientists in these locations would prepare daily updates for him to mull over. He usually spoke with Dr. Bernard Wade once the doctor had gathered all the appropriate information.

Cuinn walked into his office, "Dr. Wade, are you ready?"

"Yes sir. Let me get the results." He stood up and walked to the front of his desk. He grabbed some files and they exited the room heading toward a private conference room.

Cuinn was impatient, "Tell me what you have."

"Oh sir. Good news. Phase one, as you already know, has been successful yielding many results. But the mistakes it revealed led us to improve upon them. I am happy to inform you phase two is up and running."

He opened the door to the conference room and both filed in. They found their chairs and sat down.

He continued, "And so far, as of this morning, phase two is one hundred percent successful."

Cuinn looked optimistic, "One hundred percent? No fatalities?"

He took off his glasses, "None sir. Everything is proceeding quite beautifully. All one thousand non human primates are alive and well."

"Very good." Cuinn was surprised, he hadn't expected such good news.

He spoke almost remotely, "Begin phase three and euthanize all the monkeys and baboons from phase one. We'll need those personnel and resources for the third trials."

"Understood. It will be completed by this afternoon. We should be up and running with phase three by late night tomorrow, at the very latest."

Cuinn was curious, "How long do we need to study these primates in order to move forward with Operation Edicius?"

Dr. Wade opened his files, "Sir, the length of time we recommend is at least one year. We need that time, to study the ill effects of the surgeries and equipment. Not to mention there is still a bit of a quandary whether or not the primates will fully adhere to the technology. Then there's the possibility of infection or disease or by chance, their bodies outright rejecting the changes we've made. One year of observation and testing is the minimum we can assume at this time."

Cuinn was waiting for that bad news once he heard the good news. He spoke dutifully, "We won't have that much time. I already know this for a fact. I am leaving for a meeting in about six weeks and I will find out then but I am telling you now, we will not have the luxury of that much time."

The doctor seemed doubtful, "Well, let us know as soon as possible and we will do our best. More risk means greater possibility of failure."

Cuinn looked on him squarely, "No, more risks mean greater reward, for all involved actually. If I'm willing to take that chance, so should you."

The doctor complied, "Sir, of course. Your risks are quite substantial. We will stand behind you, one hundred percent, even given the possibility we are instructed to begin sooner rather than later."

He is convinced, "Begin informing the others. Only those who will have direct responsibilities inside the observation room. Unfortunately, sooner is the reality we're dealing with. But instruct everyone to wipe all scientific doubts off their faces. I don't want to read any fear on them. Is that understood? Make sure that becomes their new reality or I assure you, I will not be pleased."

Dr. Wade got on board, "Yes sir. Absolutely sir. I understand you completely. I will have an independent meeting with all involved, directly involved that is. I will make it extremely clear to them what you have made clear to me. It will be done sir, don't think on it. If we are not permitted any more time everyone will be ready once you return."

Cuinn seemed pleased, "Yes. These are the realities we are dealing with here. Now, I need to get

back to my office immediately. I want another update tomorrow night regarding both phase two and three. Understood?"

Dr. Wade answers him with duty beaming behind his eyes, "I fully understand sir. You will have your update tomorrow night."

Dr Hutchinson took some time off over the long weekend. It was Monday afternoon and he was barely going. Neaven was in the media room catching up on American football on the big screen. Judy has fallen in love with the scenery at The Compound. She has dedicated herself to walking around it at least twice a day. She even walked the running trail Sally had utilized many times before her injuries.

Sally was currently outside, finishing up with her physical therapy. Her ankle was almost fully healed but it offered her pain wherever she had to manipulate it for exercise purposes. But the ligaments were healing well and she was slowly returning to her previous flexibility.

The side of her stomach was completely scarred over thanks to some miracle ointment she put on twice a day, but she still needed to perform some therapy for the muscles that were damaged internally. Regarding her arm, if the x-ray looked good, she was told the cast might be off by next week.

Dr. Hutchinson walked onto his courtyard and toward the back, with coffee in hand. On some pavement near the lawn Sally was attempting to stabilize herself, with the help of her trainer, on a BOSU ball.

"I am so out of shape." Sally quipped, "My knees can barely hold my bodyweight when I bend them."

The trainer reassured her, "I know. I will not let you go. You need to gain flexibility and strength back on this side. Plus, this exercise will stretch out the other side of your body where you're injured internally."

Dr. Hutchinson watched as Sally struggled on the half ball shaped piece of exercise equipment. Sally was a fit girl, he knew as much, a runner. But these injuries had reduced her back down the fitness ladder. She would need to start from scratch.

The trainer counts backward from ten, "10,9,8...4,3,2 and 1. You're done. Grab my hand." The trainer used

his strength to balance Sally as she walked off the BOSU ball. Sally took a deep breath. She seemed physically drained.

Her trainer tried to reassure her, "You're doing great! This is just your first week."

Sally was still breathing heavily, "It's difficult but I welcome it. I need to do some exercise to put my mind at ease. Plus, I want to get back into shape."

The trainer looked at her and smiled, whose own body looked like he could compete in the Olympics, "Sally your body is young and you were in great shape before the injuries, so just work the therapy and you'll be back in no time. Trust me."

Sally thanked him as she noticed Dr. H watching from the courtyard.

She waved, "Hey Dr. H."

He held up his coffee mug, "Looking good. Can I get you guys anything?"

Sally answered and then the trainer, "No thanks, I'm coming in now."

"Thank you, but I have another client in ten minutes so I must rush." He turned to Sally, "I'll see you in two days. Do those stretching exercises I showed you and don't forget to ice, ice, ice. Okay?"

Sally nodded, "I'll remember. Thank you again."

The trainer broke away and Sally walked slowly to meet Dr. H on the courtyard.

She looked on him, "Actually Dr. H, can you get me my sports drink out of the fridge. I would like to sit outside for a moment before I take a shower."

"Sure," He turns around, "I'll join you." He goes back inside and returns with her drink. "Here you go, sport."

She laughs, "Thanks." She then takes a healthy drink. It felt good because it coated her parched throat. She missed being tired and then rewarding herself with a beverage. The two sat there and didn't talk for a few moments until Sally said something. "It's so peaceful here Dr. H. But I really miss my running. I enjoy getting a runners high and just feeling free on this beautiful property."

He nodded, he knew Sally loved to run. "The preciousness of youth. You do return its favor well."

She glowed, "Oh that's so sweet Dr. H. How is everything with you. How was your meeting on Friday?"

He set his mug down, "Great. Dante is heading everything up and he's doing a thorough job. He's has taken the bull by the horns, professionally, so to speak, ever since Dr. Thiery took his short leave of absence."

Sally looked down peering at the table, "That's good. I'm glad Dr. Thiery can rely so heavily on him. I am sure Dante's usefulness takes the weight off his shoulders, even if it's just a bit."

Dr. Hutchinson nods but promptly changes the subject. "Sally, how decided are you when it comes to leaving France and returning to Vermont?"

This was the hardest question, so Sally vents a little but keeps her voice down so Neaven doesn't hear, "Dr. H it's a very delicate topic at the moment so it's frustrating. I think Neaven has noticed I'm not as excited as him at the prospect of all of us returning. I mean, you know exactly what it took to get me here. Nevertheless, because of what happened, a monkey wrench has been thrown into everything. Now, nothing makes sense."

Dr. Hutchinson probes, "Whose decision is it?"

Sally exhales in frustration, "That's the thing Dr. H, it is my decision, but because of what happened, if I don't consider my mom and Neaven, then I don't feel comfortable. Because of the intensity of what happened, it is now realistically all of our decision, not just my own."

Dr. Hutchinson nods, "I agree, but what are you going to do?"

Sally puts her able arm up and motions with her injured arm, "I don't know Dr. H? Any advice, glad you're here!" She said the last part free spiritedly.

He smiled at her wit and sense of humor, "I think it's your choice but you absolutely need to consider them, but also what's at stake. So ultimately, I agree with you. But I think you should stay here in France."

Sally shakes her head and takes a sip of her drink, "I knew you were going to say that. You're knowledgeable but predictable Dr. H."

"Sally," He gets more serious, "You know you belong here. And what happened is the worse thing that could have happened but realistically, it doesn't change the fact it still feels right for you. I can see it behind your eyes. I humbly believe Cuinn's actions were a last ditch effort by the evil powers that be to shake your

resolve. His last effort and attempt to thwart God's purposes in your life. You need to consider that."

Sally adds, matter of factly, "I have thought about it, and I agree with you. It's just so muddled and unclear. It's difficult for me to face Neaven with all of this. All he talks about is returning to Vermont. I think he makes the extra effort just to allow us to understand where he's at. So it's not easy right now, even if it still feels right."

Dr. Hutchinson understood because he heard Neaven talk about it a lot. He would need to break it down for her even more, "I believe the first thing you need to do is talk with your mom and Neaven by yourself. Once you talk with them privately, all four of us can talk and I promise you I will do my best to reason with and comfort Neaven."

Sally considers his words as he takes a quick drink of his coffee.

He then adds, "I think when the three of you talk, you'll have enough clarity in order to come talk to me."

Sally acquiesces, "I'll talk with them but it's going to be difficult. I feel like I am setting myself up to appear very, very selfish. And if you understand what I'm feeling inside, that's the last thing I want to do. I don't want to portray myself in that manner."

Dr. Hutchinson looks upon her with boldness, "What other choice you got? You have to flesh this out. Just going back to Vermont without first talking about it would be the biggest mistake. Forge ahead and God will honor you. He knows you have no desire to appear selfish; so your conscience will be clean and you'll have good faith, the resolve will be there. You'll do fine." He pointed to her cast, "It's hard to take you out."

His humor wasn't called for but she smirked anyway, "Yeah whatever. I think I was lucky actually."

He interrupted her with faith resounding, "Luck?"

She dropped her head and tapped her fingers on the table, contemplating. She then looked at him square in the eyes, "Fine. I'll talk with them. But all that faith I see behind your eyes, you'd better be ready to back it up. This one could get real ugly real quick." She continued staring at him long after she finished speaking.

He swallowed his coffee and placed the mug down. He then smiled. This girl's wit was unrivaled, perhaps

surpassing even his own. She had a knack for putting it right back in his face. She was making it very clear. He'd better be ready for the onslaught surely to follow. And his tricks and modus operandi of personalities wouldn't work this time, no way. Too much had surfaced over the last two months. Surely, the oracles of God would need to pour forth from his mouth in order for all three to somehow stay sufficed.

"I read you Sally, loud and clear. And trust me, I'm not looking forward to this either." He took another sip of his coffee and smiled wryly.

His forthrightness calmed her down a bit. He had a powerful way about him, no doubt. When at full stride, his demeanor was hard to resist. She relented, "Very well. I will talk with them, when the time is right."

He stood up and looked over the hills. He seemed to breathe in the scenery as the noise of the birds feeding lingered in the background.

"Good." He turned and walked away, leaving Sally all alone. He headed back inside his accommodation. Sally just watched him, strolling peacefully, and she broke her attention away by taking a large swig of her drink and placing the bottle firmly on the table.

Chapter 15

It was a chalky Saturday afternoon as Cuinn and his personal entourage headed west toward Paris Ouest. He had a very important appointment, a meeting to decide his direction in the forthcoming months. Most of the time people acquiesced to his intense schedule but now he was at the mercy of others. These ten leaders were his sponsors. They were his financial, political and military backers. When they called, he came, and he came quickly.

He arrived at a beautiful manor on the western front of Paris. It was stunning, a substantial home that Cuinn had frequented many times. Servants were waiting in tow, to carry his belongings to his private estate located on the premises. Once inside, a servant would lead him into the study where the ten men were waiting.

The room he entered was enormous and must have boasted thirty-foot tall ceilings. Its walls held some twenty-five thousand rare books, including some of the most prestigious volumes ever penned. Servants aligned with their masters as Cuinn found his empty seat. As he sat, he was handed a glass of rare cognac. He could see clearly all ten men. They were eloquently seated in the shape of a crescent moon, with him at their center. Each had two servants standing directly behind attending to their every need. Cuinn also had two servants standing directly behind him. This was a meeting he had anticipated for quite some time. Some of these men traveled clear across the globe in order to be here. Pleasantries? No. Those were reserved for afterward. The important measures came first.

One of the gentleman spoke, "Give us your update before we tell you of our news."

Cuinn took a small sip of his cognac but was quick to put it down, "Sirs. We have advanced faster than we ever thought possible." He then offers a dignified nod making eye contact with as many as possible, "Phase two at this time can absolutely be considered a success."

Another interrupts in a shrewd tone, "What about phase three?"

Cuinn turns in his direction, "A mishap. As it turns out, phase three was a step backward. We simply over thought our first synopsis. This was confirmed by

the fact phase two, within our construct of phase three, appeared to have been even more successful."

They thought among themselves. Another voiced, "Tell us about your success with phase two."

"Yes. We initially began with 1183 non human primates, monkeys and baboons to be exact. Of these, 1010 survived the process and surgeries. To get our perfect 1000 test subjects we then euthanized the ten we didn't need. As of this morning, none of the 1000 subjects have died. They are thriving according to our scientific guidelines and calculations. Please also take note we have thousands of scientists and doctors assigned to them who detail, record and evaluate their every bodily function using our unique technology. Nothing goes undetected."

One interrupts, "How many doctors and scientists per animal?"

Cuinn turns to meet the man's eyes, "Three. One doctor, one genetic scientist and another scientist who acts as a nurse. That scientist is directly responsible for observing, feeding and the general upkeep of each animal."

The gentleman puts his hand to his lip and nods, "Hmmm interesting."

Cuinn continues, "And this number does not take into account the many nurses and veterinary specialists we have on staff. If it did, it would be more akin to 4.6 persons per animal. So, considering this, you can espy we have not shirked away from our duties with regard to observing these test subjects once they have survived the initial surgery. According to our general observations all 1000 primates are doing quite well, and it's been 46 days."

One asks, "Are they improving?"

Cuinn turns in his direction, "Scientifically we cannot be certain but per our observation, yes, they seem to be much more alert and rudimentary. They have also become less emotional and are not given to the same primal instincts which once constricted them."

Someone wants more, "Example."

Cuinn lights on the gentleman, "Yes. We have allowed them to interact among themselves and there is no petting or animalistic camaraderie you would normally see from these primates. They are now, after the surgeries, more individual. They do not demonstrate the need to

specialize or dictate one amongst the other. The pecking order, it seems on every level, has disappeared. Since they now view themselves as individuals they do not seek to mingle. They each give the other a general level of mutual respect which they themselves expect. As we have deducted scientifically, they no longer feel the need to make their presence known, beating on their chests so to speak."

Someone asks, "So they've lost their bestial instincts. Probably no longer desire sexual relations?"

Cuinn looks straight ahead, "Precisely sir. According to our observations, none of the subjects have had any impulses toward sexual relations. Their innate instinct and nature to procreate seems to have been eradicated. There have been no sexual relations from any of the 1000 primates, and they've had their chances over the last 46 days. Normally, before the surgeries and even within the confines of the dormitories, they'd be fighting and copulating. All of this we've continually observed and recorded over the years with regard to these primates before the surgeries. But after, we are seeing none of that. Which is not only extreme, but not even animalistically probable separate from the procedure."

Cuinn continues, "They're not acting like animals anymore. They're now bags of flesh contingent on thought. They have renewed cognitive skills so their impulses are no longer geared toward the emotional or instinctual but rather toward the magnetic, machine like in their origin. They are one note, monotone in a way with regard to their thoughts and actions. Communications are not monotone but their actions surely are."

One asks, "What about their communications?"

Cuinn brings to mind, "It's different. Like I mentioned before, they do not interact on the same levels. Not even close. Gestures and such are no longer apparent. They make plenty of noises now but almost as though they are mumbling to themselves. It's clearly not so much language or communication as it is bleeps and blurbs. It seems, according to our observations, on some cognitive level they no longer desire much communication."

The gentleman near the center voices his opinion, "Yes. They have become thinkers rather than doers. And our technology has allowed their primitive primal

instincts to quickly evolve nearer to our human (*Homo sapiens*) species. Ultimately, that is what separates us. We as humans have adapted to think logically. They think primitively. Yes, these primates are likely using their brains for the first time. They are enamored with the thought, so everything else, communication and copulation, has become secondary and commonplace."

He stands up and looks straight ahead at Cuinn, "You are to return to your facility in two days time and by no later than Friday you are to commence with Operation Edicius."

Cuinn felt shivers down his spine. They were amongst the greatest tingles he had ever felt.

He continued, "Matters involving China, Africa and the United States of America are advancing more quickly than we had anticipated."

He grabbed his glass and made a toast.

"Hear, hear. We have taken our journey, forthright as we must, into the realm of the unknown. And it is here, Gentlemen, we will truly experience our finest hour. To the god whom we serve and to the technology he has granted unto us... Hear, hear. *To the Day of days...*

They all stand to their feet and repeat in unison, "*To the Day of days.*"

He continues, "Yes my friends, this shall surely be a *Day of days*. In honor and praise of him who shall live forever and forever."

Their voices thunder as they repeat the words, "In honor and praise of him who shall live forever and forever!"

Cuinn sat watching. He was not privy to their special camaraderie. His purpose was different. It would commence by this time next Friday.

The three just tasted a fine meal. Because of Sally's injuries and because Neaven and her mom were now in town, Sally opted to stay at Dr. Hutchinson's residence where they could all be together. It was much bigger than her apartment so it allowed each person to have their own private room. Sally also could not be bothered to call in and order food three or four times a day so the service decided to bring them breakfast and upon their

request, would take their lunch and dinner orders at that time.

Judy began clearing the plates by taking them into the kitchen and placing them neatly into the dishwasher. Sally and Neaven just held hands and talked. She decided the time was best for their conversation so she waited for her mother to return.

Sally hesitated but then began, "We all need to talk. This is going to be difficult for me so please let me say what I need to say and then we can discuss everything after, okay?"

Neaven looked at Judy as she put her hand on top of her daughter's hand. Sally continued, "We need to discuss whether or not I am going to stay here in France."

Neaven slammed his hand on the table and stood up quickly, knocking his chair back. He then turned around and put his hand to his mouth and said nothing. Judy was startled by Neaven's outburst but then lovingly looked into her daughter's saddened eyes.

She encouraged her daughter, "What do you need to tell us honey?"

She looked at her mother and then stared at Neaven's back, "Dr... No. I feel as though I am here for a reason and leaving would solve very little."

Neaven turns around but doesn't even look at Sally. He has anger building behind his eyes. He came close to saying something he would have regretted.

Judy tries to defuse him, "Neaven, we have all been so proud of you. You have handled yourself so beautifully, even before Sally left for France. Try and remember all that and please calm yourself down."

He put his hands to his side and lifted up the chair. He brought it back to the table and sat down, but with a clenched fist clearly visible. He wasn't in the mood right now and he wanted both of them to know it.

He spoke slowly with repressed anger, "You almost died Sally. Do you have any idea how unbelievably hard it was for all of us to not know? To not know if we would ever see you again. Not to mention the fact we were powerless to help you. You might have been enduring pain and anguish but we were helpless. We all felt like we were being emotionally tortured right along side of you. If there is anything I can do to make sure that never happens again then that is the safe bet for me."

All of us going home makes me feel comfortable. It may not be the right answer, but it's the answer that sets my mind at peace. To be honest, when I think of you staying here all by yourself I can't even bear the thought."

Sally didn't say a word. She knew Neaven was telling her the truth. She too had some peace when she thought of going back home, but she had more peace when she thought about staying here.

Judy spoke. "Sally. Am I correct to assume you and Dr. Hutchinson have already spoken regarding this?"

Sally looks at Neaven but then back to her mother, "Yes, we did talk."

Neaven shouts in anger, "Perfect!"

Judy continues, "And what did he say?"

Sally was plain in her explanation and looked at Neaven as she spoke, "Dr. H didn't tell me to stay. He said if I didn't talk to you about it before we went back, it would be a mistake."

Neaven vents, "We already talked about it. We decided to leave."

Sally just looks at him but her mother intervenes in her stead, "Wait Neaven. You and I made that decision while Sally was on her sick bed." Judy then looked upon her daughter, "Sally has never told me she wanted to return. She just didn't fight us when we told her that was our desire. There's a difference."

Neaven throws up his hands, "Unbelievable. It's the right choice and you know it."

Judy interrupts him by grabbing his clenched hand, "It might be the right choice but so far it's not her choice. That's the difference Neaven."

Neaven relents and looks directly at Sally, "Fine. Just get it out in the open, no matter how much it hurts me or your mother. Just say it Sally. What do you want to do?"

Sally shakes her head in frustration, "Because of what happened my priority is not here anymore but the two of you. If the two of you decide I must come home, then I will."

Judy asks, "We understand that Sally but what do you want?"

Sally shrugs her shoulders, "I want what we all decide together, but we need to talk about it."

Neaven speaks in a defeated tone, "Then talk. You already know where I stand and I am pretty sure you mom wants you home too."

Sally gets irritated, "I wish none of this ever happened. Everything was going so well."

Neaven can't hold back anymore, "You mean before you were kidnapped and almost killed. Yeah, things are different now!"

Sally shook her head but didn't look at him, "I know Neaven. But you need to understand before this happened I was comfortable here. And since the two of you came here I have been extremely comfortable. But a choice has to be made. And that is what this conversation is about, for all of us to make that choice together."

Judy takes a deep breath and exhales, "Here goes. Neaven, you know those long walks I've been taking over the last two or three weeks?"

Neaven was quick to respond, "Yes, you're sometimes gone half the day. I thought you did it so Sally and I could spend some time together."

She explains, "Well Neaven it started out that way. But those long walks led to something. I have been praying and meditating in my spirit for quite some time, at the Lord's direction. And He has led me to take those long walks more frequently, and as I have obeyed him, He has revealed things to me and instructed me. He has been dealing with me Neaven, regarding many things."

She stops and looks at the both of them, "I will back my daughter's decision one hundred percent, no matter what that decision is. If she decides to come home I will support her and if she decides to stay here in France I will support that too."

Neaven puts his hands over his face and rubs it for quite some time. Sally's eyes glimmer as she looks upon her mother. Her words were a ray of light so she grabbed her mother's hand.

Neaven's muddled voice spoke between his hands, "So you're Switzerland and I'm Adolf Hitler so I guess that makes Dr. H Sally's pimp."

Sally and her mother stare at each other. Neaven was extremely angry. He was taking everything extremely hard. It was difficult for Sally to watch because he had been so happy since he arrived. He removed his hands and

spoke freely, "What's your choice Sally, what's it going to be?"

Sally returns Neaven's gaze, "I'm jaded Neaven. I'm torn between you and what I believe to be God's absolute Will for my life."

Neaven asks, matter of factly, "So you still believe it's God's will you stay here? You still believe that do you? It couldn't possibly be God's Will that you do what is healthy for our relationship? I thought you were finally starting to see things from that perspective, given the circumstances?"

Sally questions, "Neaven, when I came back to France and you stayed in Vermont, didn't we agree at that time it was healthy for us to be apart?"

He yelled at her, "It's different now!"

She remained steadfast, "Is it?"

Neaven face held plenty of contempt, "All you see is black and white. I thought to myself, while you were broken and bruised on that bed that maybe, just maybe she'll see the gray area in all this? Because of what happened maybe she'll finally see that there is a gray area to consider. But no, it's still all black or all white. Well Sally, I'm not there with you. It's not all black or white to me. Not anymore. Because of what happened, a gray area has been completely infused into all of this."

Sally and Judy remain silent for a moment and then Sally speaks, "If you want me to return to Vermont with you then I will."

Neaven becomes sarcastic, "Even if it goes against God's Will? You'll disobey God? Just because I want you to?"

Sally reassures him, "If you want me to return to Vermont with you, I will. I will go against what I believe to be God's Will, and I'll do it for you Neaven. I don't know if you remember or not, but when you finally asked me out years ago, we hashed this out. I told you. I fear God but I will make the choices which I must. Considering all that happened I will willingly return to Vermont with you. I don't like disobeying God or my conscience but the circumstances have become too harsh for me."

Neaven looked at Judy and then back at Sally. He felt some shame rise in his heart.

Judy butts in, "I think we should all speak with Dr. Hutchinson. I have always felt comfortable talking with him. I promise you Neaven, if I believe Dr. Hutchinson is interfering I will take him to task myself. I just want you to know I understand your feelings, trust me that I do. Let's include Dr. Hutchinson and then we'll go from there, okay?"

After Judy spoke those words a beautiful countenance accompanied her smile. Sally and Neaven noticed how radiant she appeared.

Neaven looked to Sally after a sharply exhale, "Let's talk with Dr. H. I don't want to take you home and then have him call you in two months time telling you the coast is clear. I'm going to look him straight in his eyes and tell him exactly how I feel, and make sure he gets it. He'll know good and well how I feel about you being in this place."

Sally acquiesces, "Okay. I'll tell him tonight and we'll talk soon."

Neaven gets up and heads out the door. He obviously needs some alone time. Sally kind of picks at the front of her cast.

Judy is curious, "Will you really return to Vermont even though you know it's not God's Will for you?"

Sally nods yes. "If it is God's Will that I stay here then He'll either need to bring me back or I will outright forfeit His purposes. I know Neaven like the back of my hand and we won't make it if I stay here. He'll return to Vermont and we'll drift away. That'll be that. He's very stubborn. But mom, I love him so much and he doesn't deserve that, especially after all that has happened. Right now I cannot believe it's God's Will for Neaven to experience that type of disappointment, so I'm trusting God with all of this. But I will leave if I must."

Judy gets up and kisses her daughter on the cheek. She gives her a little hug to reassure her. "I love you sweetheart."

Sally continues to pick away at her cast, "I love you too mom."

It was raining outside when Cuinn returned to his facility. He and his team ushered themselves into the

main laboratory area. Once they entered into the deepest part he went one way and his entourage the other. They took his belongings back to his housing quarters. There was no time to spare and because of that, he had already contacted Dr. Bernard Wade on his way back from Paris. Dr. Wade and the team he assembled were waiting for Cuinn in his office. Cuinn entered and sat down.

He spoke to them all, "Thank you for being prompt. I know you are extremely busy and I won't keep you one moment longer than I must. I have news. Operation Edicius will commence this Friday. By this weekend, Operation Edicius should be up and running."

There was a long pause in the room, though none of them demonstrated any emotions or insecure looks. Cuinn continued noticing they weren't going to respond, "Is phase two is still a success?"

Dr. Bernard Wade smiled, "Sir, phase two is not only a success, but it's promising enough we should move forward. No fatalities, and they are exhibiting all the traits we assumed they would exhibit after three months time, and it's been less than two months. All in attendance here are prepared for Operation Edicius to begin. Immediately we will begin prepping the observation room and surrounding rooms. All of the necessary calls will be made. We will be ready long before Friday sir."

Cuinn looked on the faces of those scientists and doctors seated on Dr. Wade's right and left. They wore stern yet sure faces. He spoke to those faces, "As you know, it is not my choice to begin this early. That said, I knew this was a realistic possibility even before I made these arrangements. This type of science is precise and truth be told we have not had much time. Phase two is only 49 days old and counting but these are the constraints under which we find ourselves. It is very important we not only perform this work, but we are highly successful in the implementation of it. I was told many valuable things while in Paris. I will not mention them today but I assure you, you will have the pleasure of watching these things unfold. Now is the time to prepare. I want everyone's full corporation without prejudice, is that clear?"

They answered in one voice, "Yes."

He nodded, "Good. Go ahead and begin decommissioning the operations which were on schedule to

be decommissioned once Operation Edicius was set to begin."

He then became authoritarian and military like, "We are a 'go' people! No need to fiddle around anymore because we are moving forward with what we have now! We have all sacrificed and worked incredibly hard in preparation for this day's arrival. Remember all your efforts. Remember all your abstinences. Do not allow this day to be in vain."

He looked at them and noticed a diabolical smile rising to their faces. Their eyes were cunning, narrowing like the eyes of a serpentine. He enjoyed watching them stare at him. He soaked in their facial expressions and energy. He allowed it to go on for as long as they liked. It lasted awhile.

He asked them unashamedly, "Are there any questions?"

They said nothing. They just continued to smile and stare at him.

He understood, "Good. You are dismissed. Pass this information along. But only to those who have been preselected or have the proper clearances to be a special part of this wonderful occasion."

One by one they began to stand and exit the room. Most of the females remained seated. They filed out last, and a few of them had to force themselves out. Cuinn grabbed his mobile device and began making notes for the week. He first went to Friday and typed in Operation Edicius. He then worked backward. He set the device down and considered a few things.

He was told much while staying in Paris. His sponsors had done their part. Everything was prepared and he even met his new team after Operation Edicius was a go. He anticipated that day more than ever now. It gave him an intellectual boost knowing what his future would hold. Their final insights ignited his purpose and offered him the realization everything he worked for was about to come full circle.

He opened his drawer and grabbed some pictures. He thumbed through until he found the one he was looking for. He put it on his desk and returned the others. He smiled as he looked upon it. He then placed the picture on a special easel he had custom made for this occasion. This easel would permanently hold this picture. It would never be removed. He locked it into place. It was a

picture of the EU Parliament building located in Strasbourg, France. He crossed his arms and sat back in his chair. He then remembered everything that got him here, to this precise moment. He remembered all his convictions.

He stood up and mounted his camera in its place on the tripod. He made sure the camera was pointing in the precise direction he wanted, with the picture clearly in view. He grabbed the remote and sat back in his chair. The camera automatically refocused once he sat down and he could view his image on the remote via a small video screen. He pressed record and began speaking at the camera.

Dr. Hutchinson walked in his accommodation and placed his things away. It was late at night, about 9:30 pm but everyone was still up. He told Sally earlier they would talk as soon as he was able. He was extremely busy at the moment so he didn't know when that would happen. He knew Sally's cast wasn't set to come off for a few days so he still had time.

Upon entering the living room he greeted both Sally and Judy who were reading some magazines on the couch.

"Is Neaven around?" he asked in his usual direct tone.

Judy answered him, "He's in his room. You want me to get him?"

He sat down in his chair, "Yes, bring him out and we'll talk."

Judy pats Sally on her knee and walks to the back. Sally puts her magazine down and just stares at Dr. Hutchinson. Judy emerges with Neaven in tow and they both sit down.

Dr. Hutchinson begins, "Now, I've spoken with Sally one on one and since that time all of you have spoken. Just to clear the air, I told her that it would be a mistake going back to Vermont without having a solid discussion. I have never told her to remain here, but felt a discussion was necessary to bring everything to the surface."

Neaven didn't want to hear it. He already made up his mind. He spoke in a harsh tone, "I'm just waiting to leave, with or without Sally at this point."

Sally put her hand to her forehead and her mother offered her some support by placing her arm around her. Judy then met Neaven at his level. "Neaven, please listen to me. I have something I want to say to you."

Judy pulls away from Sally once she notices she has Neaven's attention, "I was just as upset as you. I wanted my daughter home. But I have seen the light Neaven, and this is coming from a woman who was mailed her husbands remains home to her in a box."

Dr. Hutchinson shifted his focus away from Judy to onto Neaven. Judy continued, "I am ready to support Sally whatever she decides. Since the Lord has dealt with me, I am at peace with her decision, whatever that decision might be."

Neaven becomes upset, "That's the thing Mrs. Travis. If anyone should not obey right now it should be you. Look at what your obedience cost you!"

Judy's eyes ring true, "And that is why I must obey Neaven. Because if God has taught me anything, it's that I cannot hold onto everything, no matter how much I might desire it. In loss Neaven, we are taught the integrity of letting go."

Dr. Hutchinson shifted in his seat when he heard those wise words. He spoke softly toward Neaven, "Neaven, we understand why you want Sally to return. It makes perfect sense. But what you need to ask yourself is if everything Sally has gone through, with regard to this place, will it all be in vain? If she leaves now with you Neaven, will it all have been for nothing?"

Neaven counters pointing his finger, "No. That's not true. She is the reason you're back here. That was her purpose, to convince them to give you a second chance. Don't make this something it's not. It was always about you Dr. Hutchinson. Everyone can see that now!"

He knew Neaven had a point. "So what will the two of you do back in Vermont?"

Neaven became passionate, "I have a job waiting for me. It's a good job and I want to go back and provide for Sally. She can regroup and figure out what she wants to do. I'll marry her and we'll try and have children. I will give her anything she wants, but she has to leave this place."

Dr. Hutchinson asked the question he didn't want to ask but knew he had to, "And if she stays in spite of your demands?"

Neaven was humble but remained steadfast, "She knows the answer to that question."

Dr. Hutchinson asked again, "What will you do Neaven?"

Neaven half smirked because he didn't think he needed to say it, "It'll be over. I'll go back to Vermont and probably head back to Nebraska. Sally was the only reason I remained in Vermont after I graduated."

Sally shook her head in anguish. She knew the answer but hearing him say it injected a deep remorse inside her heart. It caused a reverberation so she quickly looked up in surrender, "I'll return with you Neaven."

Dr. Hutchinson interrupted her by lifting his hand, "Wait just a second."

At that, Neaven exploded. He jumped to his feet and shouted in Dr. Hutchinson's direction, "Quit butting into our business! This is not your life. You just heard her say she wants to go back. You're always in the way!"

Dr. Hutchinson remained levelheaded. Neaven was a strong young man and that was reason enough to hold mercy. But he also understood Neaven's difficult circumstances and he liked him a lot. He offered him space to vent.

Neaven continued when he saw Dr. Hutchinson relent, "God. Why don't you worry about yourself and let other people figure things out. Do you think you're the only one capable, how arrogant?"

Judy shouted, "Neaven! *That's enough!!!*"

He calmly looked in her direction and shook his head no, "Not this time Mrs. Travis. This all ends tonight, one way or the other." Neaven then angrily looked back at Dr. Hutchinson.

Dr. Hutchinson put his hand in Judy's direction and motioned for her to acquiesce. She submitted and eased back onto the couch.

Dr. Hutchinson exhaled slowly as he spoke to Neaven. "Don't get more upset Neaven, but I don't see Sally choosing to return with you because she wants to, but because she knows she'll lose you."

Neaven nodded and answered him, "You better believe it. And I'm using that leverage for the right reasons. It is time for Sally to think about others. She is not a selfish person but sometimes we need to do what is right rather than what we want to do. She probably wants to stay. Guess what, I want her to leave. So no matter what, one of us is on the wrong side of this thing. This time it'll be her, because I already gave her the chance to come back here. I didn't fight her at all, but fully supported her. She knows that's the truth and *that's* why she'll return with me. She knows I gave her, as well as this place, a fair shot."

Dr. Hutchinson decides it's time for the heavy artillery, he forges ahead, "Neaven, I am going to ask you a question and I want your word you won't get upset."

Neaven looked to Judy and then back to Dr. Hutchinson. "I won't get any *more* upset."

Dr. Hutchinson was sufficed, "If you and Sally return to Vermont, will you allow her to come back here after you're married?"

He lied to him, "Of course, it's her call."

Dr. Hutchinson looked to Judy and then back to Neaven, he held his ground, "Neaven, it's a very important question. The entire reason I told Sally to talk with you and the entire reason I am speaking with all of you right now is because of that question. I don't believe you Neaven. If Sally returns with you, she will never come back. That's a fact."

Neaven's face changed and he finally looked in Sally's direction. "She's selfish. If I don't break her from it she won't be worth marrying."

Dr. Hutchinson met him there, "So it is your intention to take her back and marry her. And you don't care to see her come back to this place, do you?"

Neaven crosses his arms and then turns fully toward Dr. H, "I am a man and I need to take my stand. I supported Sally once. I was willing to allow her to remain here for two full years, which is a lot more than most men would allow. Now that she has been harmed, it's going to be my way or the highway. I'm not doing this to bully Sally, I'm doing it because I know my intentions toward her are pure. I want to protect her and offer her the best life possible. I can't do that if she's here and I'm there. To answer your question, no, if we leave it'll be my way which means she won't be returning."

Dr. Hutchinson was pleased with his admission. Sally needed to hear it straight from the horse's mouth. His discernment clearly told him Neaven's true intension was to take Sally home and not let her return.

Judy nudged her daughter, "Sally sweetie, please say something?"

Sally didn't remove her hand from her face and spoke dejectedly, "I can't."

Neaven spoke in her place and smiled as he did, "I have nothing else to say."

Dr. Hutchinson's face became firm, "I do."

Neaven got angry again and it showed clearly on his face. Judy knew she had to do something, "Neaven!" She jumped up and got in his face and pointed to the chair behind him, "Neaven, please sit down. You've made your point. I promise you, if Tom begins getting out of line I will be the first to call him on it, okay?"

Neaven took his gaze off Dr. Hutchinson and placed it on Judy. He then fell back in his chair and it made a huge creaking sound that startled Sally. Her upper body yanked back and she looked in his direction. He clearly saw fear in her eyes. When he saw that, all his anger abated. He simply couldn't bear to see Sally fearful, especially after what happened. He looked squarely at Dr. Hutchinson as Judy returned to her seat.

Dr. Hutchinson spoke, "Neaven. I want to first say that I've already placed myself in your shoes and to be honest with you, I would do the same thing you're attempting to do. I am not judging you. I am going to try and reason with you, as someone who has made plenty of mistakes and who wants to guide you and Sally away from those mistakes."

He pointed directly at Sally, "You see that little one hundred pound girl sitting over there?" Neaven just shook his head not wanting to participate.

Dr. Hutchinson continued, "She's a ball of fire Neaven. And that fire cannot be maintained or controlled. She is currently holding a tremendous burden from the Lord which is why she is saying nothing as of right now because she has nothing to say. She knows it's a mistake to return with you to Vermont but she'll make that mistake because she loves you."

"The two of you won't make it Neaven, because it is God's Will she remain here and be His salt and light in this place, and I assure you His Will is going to be done

one way or the other. You know that's the truth, deep in your heart Neaven, which is why you allowed her to come back here all by herself in the first place. You knew good and well it was always God's Will for Sally to return. If you drag Sally back to Vermont, where God no longer wants her, then the fire of God's purpose will ignite within your relationship and over time, it will consume it. She'll end up back here, just like me. All alone."

Judy heard his words and became awestruck. Could that really be their future if they returned? She did not see it that way. "Tom, but what if they returned and married? Couldn't a family suffice the burden and keep Sally at ease?"

He met her realistically, "Even if Sally's able to have children, I still believe she'll end up back here. I don't believe God's Will is going to change in her life much in the same way it never changed in mine. Sally has a certain type of purpose and calling and nothing in Vermont is going to suffice that. Look at my life. After all that happened. Dismissed from this place, children, then divorced; but years later here I am, back in this place..."

He looked at Neaven, "...Alone, and all by myself. If Sally voluntarily leaves this place, marries you, has children and then ends up separating; then if she were to come back here, her life would almost exactly mimic mine. It is very possible. Sally holds a heavy burden and in my opinion, it's not to raise children, it's to obey the Lord and do His Will here in France. And I actually believe all three of you know this."

Neaven gets sarcastic, "Can I use your crystal ball once you're done with it. It might come in handy since I'm basically starting from scratch once I leave this place."

Dr. Hutchinson is frank, "Make all the jokes you want Neaven. I know a burden from the Lord and His hand is powerfully upon her, more so than either myself or even her father before her. You want to drag her back to Vermont and ruin both of your lives, be my guest."

Dr. Hutchinson relents a bit as he looks around the room, "All of you ask yourself a question. If I believed God was giving Sally the choice to return to Vermont, marry and have children do you honestly think I would get in the way? I am accountable to God and I fear His Will."

I am cleaning my conscience by telling you this. Do you even think, even for one second, I'm telling you this from my own heart? Please, think rationally about it!"

Dr. Hutchinson communicated his last response sharply and it got everyone's attention. "Imagine if it was God's Will for the two of you decide, and He would honor your decision. He would honor the two of you returning to Vermont and having a family! You think, even for one second, I would tell you the opposite? God would cook my goose, probably right in front of you. I'm not telling you this because it's what I hope for the two of you. I'm telling you this because this is what my faith plainly sees, not to mention a clear indication from the Holy Spirit.

"I have levied many fleeces before the Lord regarding Sally coming to France, and I did it not only recently but also three years ago. The main reason I was so blameless to offer those fleeces, and why God had mercy on them, was because I am not Sally."

He points in her direction, "She is the weaker vessel which is why she cannot stand up to you now. For that reason, the Lord offered me a burden three years ago to stand in front of Sally. Now, He is requiring it from me. I'm in the middle of this thing whether you want me or not. But consider this, I feared God so much regarding this young woman I wouldn't even move in faith separate from God's divine intervention."

Judy interrupted in the affirmative, "That's right Tom. I remember and I agree with you."

She looked at Neaven, "He's right Neaven."
Neaven just bit his lip.

He acknowledged her, "Precisely. If you really want to know the whole truth, three years ago I didn't even want Sally to come here. I thought it was a bad idea, but trust me, God won. He convinced me it was clearly his Will so I relented and worked with Him rather than against Him. I am just following God here. The simple fact I am telling you to consider the unnatural thing, basically not to go back to Vermont, should compel you. It would be natural for the two of you to go back, marry and have a family. I'm asking you not to consider that right now, but instead do God's Will here. Then, perhaps after that, He'll grant the two of you the desires of your heart? So I'm cautioning the both of you not to work backwards right now. Don't force God's hand

and don't make rash, emotional choices. Consider all the evidence and understand the consequences. And above all else, fear God and not man."

Judy felt his words powerfully but she also felt hope rising in her heart so she pleaded for Sally to finally say something, "Sweetheart! Please say something!"

Sally slowly turned and looked at Neaven, "I'll return with you Neaven. I love you with all my heart and it tears me up inside knowing how much you've hurt over the last few months. I want to do anything I can to make you happy. But I have to say something and I want you to listen to me."

Tears began welling up in her eyes but she brushed them off, "When I woke up in the infirmary and I saw you standing there I was relieved. I hadn't seen you in such a long time. You were holding my hand and telling me over and over again that I'd be okay and we'd all be going home soon. Neaven, I was so happy to finally see you so all I could think about was the reality that making you happy was my first priority. I didn't care about anything except for what you wanted, that's what mattered."

She looked up in an effort to summon some strength. She looked back down upon him, "But Neaven, I cannot lie. I knew, I knew at that very same moment lying in that bed. Even though my body was broken and everything inside of me hurt, I knew Neaven, God did not want me to leave. So I can't lie against the truth or my conscience. I was ready to do whatever you asked but I knew God wanted me to remain here in France."

Neaven accepted her words. He had seen it in her spirit, over the last two months actually. The exact same detachment he sensed back in Vermont before she decided to come back to this place. It was a certain knowing within her that he noticed and couldn't ignore. Watching her aloofness and detachment over the last two months incited a bitterness to grow inside of him. He knew she was wrestling with the idea of remaining here, and it bothered him to no end. He knew there was a possibility he was going to lose her to this place, but he wouldn't go without a fight.

He spoke in Sally's direction, "Stay in this place. Obey God. Do His Will. If you return to the States and

I am still available," He shrugged his shoulders, "Maybe we can still be together?"

Upon hearing his words Sally's welling tears turned into a heavy sob. Her mother held her tight but Neaven didn't even budge. He was done. Dr. Hutchinson watched as Sally sobbed and something overcame him. It was the Lord, and He was allowing Dr. Hutchinson to feel the burden she was carrying. Dr. Hutchinson was completely humbled but was also now attentive to the Spirit. He knew God's anointing had fallen upon him because he had interceded for Sally in the past.

He spoke concerning God's Heart, "Neaven!" He said it with authority.

Neaven looked at him as he continued, "Please consider staying here, with Sally. She needs you, perhaps more than the two of you will ever know." His words did glide off his lips, remotely, without even a thought. They were prophetic and Dr. Hutchinson spoke them as such.

Neaven answered him, "It's not right. It wasn't right before and it's not right now."

The Holy Spirit within Dr. Hutchinson peered deep into Neaven's eyes, "You accuse Sally of being selfish but ever since you came here you've thought of nothing but your desires, for what you've always wanted actually. Prove your selfless love for Me by making the same sacrifice your asking of her. Stand firm by her side and obey My Will together. I promise, if you do, you will not regret it."

He said the last part with a stern, unusual look in his eyes. Neaven still had some faith of his own, "And if I don't?"

The Holy Spirit continued, "It's your choice, but I, The Lord, advise you to remain here. It is My Will. I answered your prayer and I allowed that job, for a time, because it worked perfectly into my plan. But now things have changed. I did not prompt this conversation to convince My Vessel of Honor not to return with you, but to convince you Neaven, my Son, to stay."

There was that look again. It was spooky and it made him uneasy. The best way to describe it, it was the same look his mother would give him right before he ended up doing something stupid, which he would later regret. The Holy Spirit behind Dr. Hutchinson's eyes was

cautioning him with the same look. It was as if his own mother was rebuking him through Dr. Hutchinson.

Sally was still sniveling. She heard the Word of the Lord but she wasn't looking up. Neaven pondered everything, looking over at Judy comforting her daughter.

Neaven finally spoke, "What am I going to do here? I just graduated from College and I need to stay busy. I can't be Sally's chaperone. I need a life for myself?"

The Lord relented and Dr. Hutchinson continued, "This Compound Neaven is huge, and there are plenty of positions available. You could even live here in my accommodation if you'd like. I don't think it'd be right for you and Sally to live together under one roof so you're welcome to stay. To be honest, my place is large and can use some extra life. I would be happy to allow you to stay here with me."

He asks Neaven a question, "You were working to be a manager back home, were you not?"

He answers begrudgingly, "Yes, but I don't want to be handed some position I didn't earn. I want something for myself. Something I've worked toward."

Dr. Hutchinson wears that look again, "You have earned it. But if you need convincing stay here and you'll have all the convincing you'll need."

Neaven looked at Sally, "Do you want me to stay?"

Sally's countenance immediately changed and she shouted, "Neaven! I've always wanted you here with me! When you told me you thought I should come alone I almost didn't. Even mom got angry with you for not coming here with me. The only reason I didn't ask over the last two months is because I knew you were dead set on going home. I was afraid. But yes Neaven, yes! Everyone in this room wants you here with me."

Tom and Judy both affirmed they clearly wanted Neaven here with Sally. She continued, "You're a part of this Neaven. You always were!"

Dr. Hutchinson crosses his arms firmly. He looks squarely upon Neaven as Sally continues, "We have all noticed a different Neaven in the last year or so. It's not a coincidence. You're sturdier and much more mature now. You're becoming a very stable, assertive yet compassionate man. Maybe I need your strength and grace next to me? Maybe I can't do without it?"

Dr. Hutchinson smiled. They were all finally getting it. Sally finished, "So yes Neaven. Separate

from everything Dr. Hutchinson and the Lord has said. Now, I am asking you. Please Neaven, consider staying here and helping me."

She said the last part pleading, with tears in her eyes. All the crying he had witnessed was bringing a certain amount of shame upon him. He put his hand on his lips and just looked upward with some tears of his own. Judy was still stroking Sally's back and Dr. Hutchinson was watching everything.

After awhile, he couldn't resist her, so he spoke with his head shaking, "I'll try."

He couldn't believe it. He, like all of them previously, had been completely defeated by God's Will. He mans up and repeats it again, "I'll try. I'll stay here with you. I promise I'll give it my best shot, but there are no guarantees."

Sally's countenance ignited and she threw herself onto Neaven's lap. She squeezed him tight and kissed him repeatedly. "Thank you. Thank you for understanding. It means the world to me!"

Neaven answered her calmly, "I know it does."

Judy had mixed emotions. She was happy for her daughter but this meant Sally would remain here. She would desperately miss Sally and Neaven back at home. But, at the end of the day, she was elated Sally and Neaven hadn't broken up. That would have been the worse outcome. The Lord speaking through Dr. Hutchinson confirmed that. She got up and walked over to him. He was watching the two lovebirds embrace and she kind of smiled and kissed him on the forehead. "Nice work."

He nodded and held her arm, reassuring her everything would be alright. She acquiesced. Judy disliked the fact God's Will was so difficult for her daughter but she thanked God for Dr. Hutchinson's intercession. Her husband was gone and he was absolutely the next best thing in Sally's life.

Dr. Hutchinson spoke as Judy made her way into the kitchen, "I'll get right on it Neaven. I'm going to make it a priority to make sure you're settled. We'll find you a position, one your okay with, and we'll make sure its right for you."

Sally and Neaven were both looking at him as Neaven spoke, "Okay. I don't mind starting at the bottom. I just want to be busy."

Dr. Hutchinson understood, "Sure thing. I have just the person who'll help you. I'll talk with her tomorrow and she and her team will interview you. They know this place inside and out so finding you a position will not be difficult. Many of the Candidates spouses choose to work here. Trust me, you'll fit right in."

Neaven meets him there, "I will try."

Dr. Hutchinson left the two of them alone. Sally looked at Neaven with a look so beautiful he couldn't imagine ever walking away from it. Her face held a peaceful look, one he hadn't noticed in months. His curiosity got the better of him, "What is it?"

She said nothing but just smirked and made a face at him. She then gave him an Eskimo kiss.

He asked again, "What?"

Grace accented her complexion, "It's you Neaven. It's always been you. You're what I wanted."

He spoke to that beauty, "You got me."

Chapter 16

Sally and Neaven chose to walk on this pleasant afternoon. She was thrilled to finally get the cast off this morning and they were strolling to Sora's accommodation in order to surprise her. They exited the elevator and walked to her door.

Sally knocked as she grabbed Neaven's hand. They could hear Sora squeal through the door with excitement as she peeped through. The door flew open and Sora immediately focused on Sally's arm.

"Oh my God you got it off!"

Sally smiled brightly, "Yeah, this morning."

Neaven added, "Check out the scar."

Sally turned to the side and bent her arm so Sora could view the scar. It was located on the back of her arm right above the elbow. Sora placed her hand to her lips in amazement, "Oh Sally. It's larger than I imagined."

Sally agreed, "Yeah. It was fractured in more than one place so they really had to get in there. I don't care about the scar. I think it's more important that it healed properly."

Sora questioned, "So it's one hundred percent again?"

Sally confirmed, "Yup. The doctors said the bones healed well and the plates would offer additional support. They said after careful rehab I should be good as new."

Sora stood to the side, "Come in and sit down. Let me get you something."

They entered and Sora walked into the kitchen. Sally and Neaven made themselves comfortable. Sora opened the fridge and got some things out. She spoke as she prepared the small meal, "So how are all the other injuries and your rehab?"

Neaven rubbed Sally's back as she answered, "The side sometimes gives me a dull pain but I am sleeping fine so that's all that matters. The ankle still needs more flexibility but the pain is totally gone. That is unless the trainer is sticking his fingers into my ligaments, then it hurts really bad."

Sora asks with laughter, "Why would he do that?"

Neaven answers for Sally, "He does it to loosen the scar tissue and help with the flexibility of the ligament. It's almost like a deep, deep massage but for the ligament instead of the muscle. I've actually had it done a few times back in high school and it hurts."

Sally added, "I just remember, while I feel all that pain, that I want my ankle more flexible for running. When I think about running again then the pain is easier to accept."

Sora asks a question as she brings the tray. It looked delicious. Fresh tea, cheese, crackers with two types of tapenade spread. "How much longer until you can run?"

Neaven takes his tea as soon as Sora sets the tray down, "Thanks Sora, it looks great."

Sally takes a sip of her tea, "I imagine I will be running again in a few weeks. The workouts I have with my trainer are slowly getting me back. Now that the cast is off I will begin with light swimming and more therapy. But the workouts are tough enough so I'm really not in that much of a rush. I've never hurt myself like this before so all the rehab is really, really important."

Sora begins assembling some crackers and hands them to Neaven on a plate, "Here you go sweetie. Tell me what you think of the spread?"

Neaven puts the entire cracker in his mouth chews and then swallows, "Man, that's good. The spread makes the cheese taste even better. Try one Sally."

Sally grabbed a bite and her eyes lit up, "Wow. It tastes so good. What is it?"

Sora answered with delight, "There are two tapenades. One is an olive/tomato combination and the other is nut/date. I order the latter from back home in Saudi Arabia and I have it shipped."

Neaven takes another serving, "It's so rich and smooth."

Sora adds, "Yes, its texture is important. I've tried a few other nut combinations which are more gritty and they don't pair as well with the cheeses. The olive/tomato is chunky but because the ingredients are softer they naturally add a good texture with the cheese."

Sally makes light, "And you say I over think things?"

Neaven laughs and Sora meets here there, "Oh Sally don't kid yourself, you're the worst!" Neaven laughs really hard and Sora continues, "You are my little flâneur."

Sally gestures with her face, "I'm not an artist so I don't know if that word applies to me?"

Sora interrupts, "Oh it applies all right, more than you know."

Neaven is curious, "What's a flâneur?"

Sora looks at him as she removes some spread off her fingers, "It means different things to different people but basically here in France it infers someone who strolls and just soaks up everything. I use it with regard to Sally because she never stops thinking! Ever! And because she's usually in motion while she thinks. She is definitely my running flâneur!"

Sally laughs, "Too funny Sora. Well, I guess that makes you my riding flâneur. Don't think I don't notice you doing some serious considering while on horseback."

Neaven smirks as if he's standing up for Sally. He's noticed Sora has a way of imposing herself over her, but it was mostly cute. Sora nodded, "Touché Sally love, touché. Your wit has never been in question. It's just, when I remember you running or strolling around the way you do." She uses her hands, "Thinking about God knows what!"

Sally laughs as Sora continues, "I am reminded that, I am so thankful to have you back safe and sound. You are like a light in this place. Just by your presence Sally you really make a lot of things here much more fun and accepting."

Sally knew Sora was speaking from her heart. They had a great relationship, especially since they've not known each other long. Sally met her complement and raised it up a notch, "You too. You add 'spice' to this place and you do keep me honest at times, I must admit."

Sora grabs some more food, "Well, I am your elder by a few years. And, don't take this the wrong way, but you Americans mature much slower than us Europeans."

Sally can't hold back and Neaven waves his hand in Sora's direction almost as if he's swatting a gnat that isn't there, "Explain please?!"

Sora shrugs her shoulders, "I just remember through the years meeting American's my age and they all seemed a few years behind, maturity level that is. It's not a bad

thing I've just noticed they bloom later in life. Late bloomers. I think that's what you call them?"

Sally makes light, "Were any of these American late bloomers prodigies such as yourself?"

Sora considers and then relents, "No, they weren't. Point taken Sally, that probably had something to do with it."

Neaven's face held a smug look, "Probably."

Sora changes the subject, "Neaven. Please tell me how your hunt is going. I have been curious ever since I heard you'd be staying with us."

Neaven gets a little excited and Sally places her hand on his leg for support. "I've already met with the people who are going to find me the position. They're searching currently but from what I could gather, they were very positive. It shouldn't be long before I have a few options."

She is inquisitive, "What do you prefer?"

Neaven knew, "I want to eventually manage people so I will probably get a low level position which will prep me to become a manager. I like working with people but also in a high energy environment. I basically want a job to reflect that."

Sally voiced, "I was there, at both the meetings, and those people were so thorough Sora. They asked him so many questions and completely broke down his personality profile."

Sally looked at Neaven with passion, "I really believe they're going to find him something great that suits him."

Neaven agreed, "Yeah. All the questions they were asking me were so specific. They got my profile locked down and because they know what I want, they'll probably find something better than I could even choose for myself."

Sora was happy for him, "That's great news Neaven. You know as a Candidate myself, when I first came here, I was wondering what would happen if one day I got hitched."

Sally laughed at the thought as Sora continued, "But then I met a lot of the Candidates spouses and they were so happy. This place is really a blessing for a lot of people. Being housed here can be a little weird at times but I think when you look at it from perspective, it's worth it."

Neaven was realistic, "Yeah. Well, to be honest with you this place is not my style at all."

Sally interjected, "It's not."

Neaven continued, "So that's why I said I'd give it a try and we'll see. It's like a farmer moving to the big city. It's really not a fit. I grew up on a farm in Nebraska so to come here and be locked down on this Compound is just crazy."

Sora offered support, "I think Neaven, once they find you the right position, you'll adapt. If you were here all by yourself you probably wouldn't manage but because you have Sally by your side, you'll do fine."

Neaven adds, "You might be right Sora. I'll need to settle into a job and then decide from there. But I promised Sally I'm going to give it the old college try."

Sally and Sora smile, "Plus, Dr. H's place is so cool and his entertainment room is off the hook."

Sora smiles, "Is that where you'll stay?"

Neaven made a gesture, "For sure. I'd be dumb to turn down that offer. I've always gotten along with Dr. H except for a few things. Plus, he's basically gone most of the time so it's almost like I have the place all to myself. You should see my room. It's bigger than Sally's bedroom and my views are just as nice."

Sally added, realistically, "We'll probably spend more time during the day there than at my place. Don't get me wrong. I love my apartment but Dr. H's place is extremely comfortable."

Sora was candid, "Neaven you're actually very lucky. Not only is Dr. H's place absolutely amazing but you'll make good money here. I know what some of the spouses make and you're going to do fine. Couple that next to the fact you have free room and board and that's a nice opportunity."

Neaven had already considered all those factors but hearing Sora say it the way she did was compelling.

Sora then turns to Sally, "When are you returning to your place love?"

Sally was decided, "Next week. As long as I am not dependant on anyone or anything I need to get back to my place."

She looked upon Neaven, "If we're going to try this thing it needs to be done right. I can't stay at Dr. H's. What gives me enormous joy is the fact I will get

to see Neaven everyday. Who cares if we're a couple minutes apart. It was like that back in Vermont anyway."

Sora was excited for them, "So, your settling back into your place?"

Sally nodded, "Yup. It seems that way. All the focus is on Neaven right now. But once he gets his position I will likely go back to Dr. Fedor's class. But I have permission to wait with him until he starts his new job."

Sora offers, "I bet that helps. If you went back now poor Neaven would be all alone with nothing to do."

Sally acknowledges, "Exactly. All Neaven has right now is me and Dr. H's big screen. Mom went home and will return with Neaven's stuff in a couple of weeks. Hopefully by then the two of us will be up and running."

Neaven adds realistically, "Let's hope."

Sora just looked upon them seated next to each other. Both Neaven and Sally noticed her direct and passionate gaze.

Sally offered humor, "Take a picture Sora, it'll last longer."

Sora shook her head and batted her eyes, "When I first met you Sally, you were just this cute little thing. It's just so refreshing finally seeing the two of you together."

Sally and Neaven look upon each other.

Sora asks a question, "Do you mind if I say something?"

Sally was curious, "What."

Sora spoke, "It took all this to get Neaven here but essentially, when you think about it, it's what you always wanted. For the two of you to finally be settled together, whether in Vermont or here."

Sally nodded and Neaven thought on it. Sora continued, "As it turns out, it was meant to be that the two of you would begin your life's journey here. And now that you're settled in France, what's to be expected regarding your futures?"

They both thought on it. What would the coming months and years hold for them? They hadn't thought that far ahead. Sally answered emotionally, "Well, whatever our future holds, we're holding it together!"

Sora nodded and smiled. She watched as Neaven grabbed Sally's hand gently and she comforted herself by placing the side of her head calmly upon his shoulder.

Cuinn was leaving The Guild room and there was so much activity in the observation and surrounding rooms that he was bumping into people. It was an amazing sight because ever since the construction of this specific area it had been cordoned off. Completely off limits to everyone except himself and the doctors, scientists and guards that he on occasion would permit. But now that Operation Edicius was operational, he would need to forfeit this space so the different teams could finish their work.

He exited, walking back around the main lab and into his office. He opened his computer and located the video file he recorded four days ago. He retrieved it from a folder which read 'testimony.' He then began writing a script which would automatically upload that file onto a preselected Municipal Police server in the town of Tours in France's Centre region. It was all part of his plan coinciding with Operation Edicius. As he pounded away on his keyboard he valued the significance of this moment. The hairs on his arms started to rise up as if they themselves were saluting him.

He felt as though he was, at this precise moment, the pure center of the universe. He could feel it throughout his being. All the power and the prestige was his. The insurmountable odds he was about to humble and demolish were bowing before him. This was all his God given destiny. He was a man, possessed. He tapped almost rhythmically the last remaining lines of code and then shut off his monitor.

He watched as scientists and other observers were ushered into the observation room. He could see them from a distance. His sponsors were not in attendance but the men who represented them were. He hadn't eaten in twenty-four hours so he ignored his stomach growling for attention.

He slowly stood up and began undressing. One of the scientists noticed so she walked into his office and immediately closed the blinds and shut the door behind her. It offered him complete privacy but he didn't even notice. He finally stripped down to his underwear and then removed those as well. He stood there completely naked.

He began performing breathing exercises before he sat down. He eventually found his mat on the floor and offered his petitions. He exhaled all his internal energy including any requests that lay deep inside his psyche. As he did he slowly bowed his head. He remained there, undisturbed, for longer than an hour.

He lifted his eyes but focused on nothing, thought on nothing. He was emptied and it was time to go.

He raised himself up and opened the door. No one was in sight as he walked through the main lab and into the observation room. Once he entered the room he came into contact with all the observers, doctors and scientists who were stationed all over the main room and its surrounding rooms. These rooms were illuminated with people working inside. He didn't focus on anything but could noticeably hear and see many around him.

The Guild room was completely empty except for the huge table in the center. All three hundred or so workers and observers could clearly see inside the room. It was built for total observation.

Cuinn continued walking with no one hindering his way. Everyone had been prepared, they were standing along side the walls or in the crevasses of the service rooms. It was clear rituals had taken place in many of the rooms.

As Cuinn inched closer to the glass room he looked upon the table. He rounded the first corner and neared the entrance. He stopped, completely flat footed, in front of the door. He peered straight ahead. He placed his hand on the handle and opened the glass door. He walked inside and calmly shut the door behind him.

He approached the head of the long table and sat down in his chair. Everybody was now watching him. They had all stopped what they were doing. He pulled the chair closer to his back so he was firmly seated in the seats pocket. He placed his hands on the table and sat motionless peering straight ahead.

He noticed men and women in the large room located in front of him. The lights were finally on and they were so bright they added light to the entire space. Those inside wore surgical masks and looked to be prepping for surgery. There must have been thirty doctors located in this room. They were all waiting, staring directly at Cuinn.

There was a small drawer located on his right. It was directly under the table and could be accessed quite easily. He had never even opened it until about two hours ago when he placed something inside. Now he needed it back.

Using his right hand he opened the drawer. He grabbed a firm object.

He brought it closer to his head and then pulled the trigger.

"Banggg!!!"

The End

(If you enjoyed Sally Captivity please pass it on)