

# THE LAST REDEEMER

THE HUNTER'S PATH



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*For Vanesa and Gabriel,  
who bring light to my darkness.*

# Acknowledgments

To my family, for their unconditional love, their patience, and for always being there—even in the moments when this project felt more like a fantasy than a possibility. Without their support, this dream could never have taken shape.

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Thank you all for giving me the courage to make this possible. This journey would not have been the same without you.

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# Prologue

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hidden content!



**In the beginning, there was no time.**

**Only Silence.**

An eternal void—perfect and motionless.

Until the Creator spoke,  
and His word became light.

From that first word the cosmos burst into being,  
and with it, the angels were born.

Forged of pure fire and consciousness,  
they sang as one in honor of the Most High.

Beauty was woven into their existence,  
and joy into their praise,  
for they had known nothing but the radiance of the  
Good.

The Creator gave them form and purpose.

And when the light swelled beyond the veil,  
Earth took its place among the stars.

Then the Almighty,  
in an act of tenderness beyond comprehension,  
shaped man from dust and breathed into him  
divine breath—

fragile, finite, destined to err...  
yet gifted with free will.  
And the angels, though bewildered  
by the imperfections of that new creature,  
still praised their Creator.  
All but one.

**Lucifer.**

First among them.  
The most beautiful—the Bearer of Dawn.  
He could not understand  
why the Creator would love a race so far beneath  
them,  
nor why He would allow His Son to descend into  
the world,  
clothed in perishable flesh,  
to redeem those who deserved no redemption.

He was not alone.  
Others shared his doubt—some in silence,  
others with burning zeal.  
And when the Almighty proclaimed  
the sacrifice of His Son,  
the love that bound heaven together...  
shattered.

Then came the war.



A war between brothers, older than memory itself.

And heaven burned.

Lucifer and his host were defeated,

torn from glory and hurled into the Abyss.

There, amid screams and shadow,

they raised a new order—

a kingdom of ruin.

Seven Generals,

each the living embodiment of an ancient vice,

erected their thrones upon the wreckage of their

fall.

And above them all,

from the deepest heart of hell,

awaited Lucifer.

Free of the yoke.

Beyond torment.

In perfect patience.

For he knew

the hour of return would come.

And when that day rises upon the world,

the fire that once consumed heaven

will consume the Earth as well.

**Ages passed...**

**until the final prophecy was forged:**

*When dust rises in the passages of oblivion,  
an ancient flame shall cross the threshold of the living.  
Its footsteps will make the stones tremble,  
and those who sleep beneath the earth will awaken to hear  
their names.*

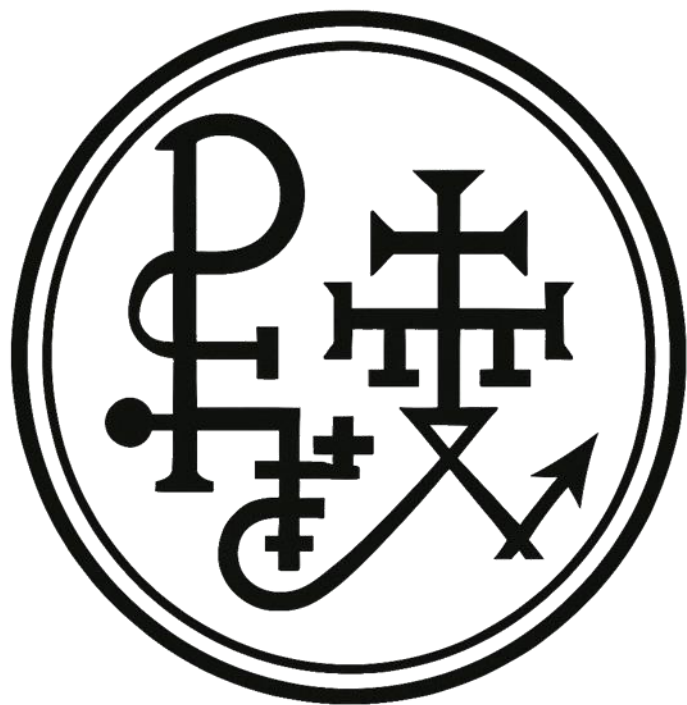
*One by one the thrones of sin shall fall.  
The hands of the hunter will bear the memory of fire,  
and his name shall be judgment.*

*Yet beware: salvation demands a price,  
and victory will not come unpaid.*

*Blood calls to blood,  
and in the depths of the pit,  
the Ancient One waits, watchful.*

*Victory may be the key...  
and the end, the true beginning.*

*The Last Redeemer will walk among men,  
bearing hell itself within his scars.*



## C HAPTER 1

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# AWAKENING IN DARKNESS

Everything was condemnation.

I stood motionless at the heart of the Abyss, inside the most forbidden chamber in all of Hell.

The air was a choking poison—thick with sulfur, heavy enough to sear lungs into cinders.

Not that it mattered.

I had ceased to be alive long ago.

Before me towered the Gate of Ascension: a cyclopean atrocity forged of horror and profane majesty.

Its colossal ring—an arch more than a hundred meters across—was framed by pillars woven from shredded human bodies.

Those half-devoured figures writhed without end, exhaling moans that echoed through the chamber in a ceaseless symphony of torment.

Their motion was the eternal fulfillment of their punishment.

At the gate's center hung a mirror made entirely of blood.

A trembling, living sheet of crimson pulsing with unholy light—

the spilled essence of angels and men shed across millennia of nameless wars.

The liquid quivered as though it remembered every soul ever devoured by its hunger.

Beneath my feet stretched a mosaic of human heads.

Faces frozen in eternal terror; milky eyes tracking my every movement.

When my heel pressed down, their lids closed in weary resignation.

Every crunch whispered the same truth:

Even in death, condemnation knows no end.

As I drew closer, the stench became unbearable.

Below the platform, lesser demons—slithering grotesqueries—devoured rot with manic hunger.

They hurled putrid remains into pits of molten stone; each splash rose in a hiss that braided itself with the chamber's chorus of screams.

High atop the ring burned an impossible anomaly:  
a crystal of blue ice suspended in blasphemous  
equilibrium.

Its spectral glow kept the blood liquid despite the  
Abyss's blistering heat —

the frozen heart of a forgotten god, beating one last  
time in Hell.

I knew what awaited beyond the threshold: the First  
Pain.

Not mere agony.

The reforging of a broken soul:

blood into bone,

bone into flesh,

flesh hammered into existence through torment.

Every spasm a prayer.

Every scream an oath.

And so I paid the price... to return.

On the far side of existence, the world shuddered.

Deep beneath Budapest, in a sepulchral hall older than any map, stone walls thrummed with an impossible frequency.

Torches flickered between Roman columns though no wind stirred.

Silence—thick as pitch—was pierced by a single heartbeat: colossal, primordial.

At the chamber's center, the ritual circle carved into marble ignited with a cold blue flame.

One by one the runes around its edge flared to life, rousing from a thousand-year sleep.

Gabriel waited there—rigid, solemn—his soul in turmoil.

His gray eyes, burdened by centuries, reflected a fire only the chosen can bear.

The ash-wood staff once carried by the elder Ezekiel trembled in his grasp, as if longing to flee.

Then the Gate opened.

A vortex of frozen flame erupted from the circle's heart.

It did not consume the air—it rejected it, drove it out.

The stone groaned, aware of what was coming.

From the maelstrom I emerged: first a silhouette,  
then a body knitting itself from nothing—

muscle over bone,

flesh over muscle,

light over darkness.

I stepped through.

My body steamed, still cloaked in the remnants of  
the Abyss's ritual.

Heat bled from every pore; Hell's fire refused to  
release me fully.

I felt my bones settling into newly forged flesh—  
alien, ancient, newborn.

My eyes were no longer human.

They were dying suns, witnesses to ruins no mortal  
mind could behold and remain whole.

My skin was the pale gray of ash, as though the dust  
of a thousand burned bodies had been grafted onto  
me.



And around me clung a shadow — not mere absence  
of light but a living thing —

pressed to me like a vow yet unfulfilled.

I took one step.

Only one.

The stone beneath me answered.

The blue flame encircling the sacred ring sighed —  
almost human — and died.

The Gate contracted, pulsing like a heart giving its  
final beat.

That was when I saw him.

Gabriel.

He fell to his knees — not out of fear or theatrics, but  
reverence.

His head bowed; his body trembled beneath the  
weight of centuries:

waiting,

terror,

faith that bled rather than broke.

Tears carved clean tracks down his face, as though this moment washed away doubt and burden alike.

“I was waiting for you, My Lord,” he whispered.

His voice was no longer an angel’s, but that of a man aged beneath time and hope.

I did not answer immediately.

I took a second step—firmer, though still unsteady.

This body was a prison reborn: flesh rebuilt through sacrifice, a vessel meant to contain fire, grief, and judgment.

I approached him.

The air between us crackled, as though history itself held its breath.

I extended my hand.

“Rise, Gabriel,” I said, my voice raw—stone newly split from the mountain.

“We are brothers now in the same war.

Do not call me My Lord.

Call me only by the name I have taken for this age...”

I paused.

The moment paused with me.

**“Caelus.** That is enough.”

Gabriel lifted his tear-blurred eyes to mine.

For a heartbeat we were neither angel nor redeemer—

only two warriors standing at the brink of a doomed world.

He remained kneeling as my new, clumsy, thirsting gaze swept the chamber.

It was nothing like the Abyss.

Neither grim nor macabre—

but ancient, as though time itself slept upon these stones.

Forgotten symbols adorned arching ceilings that intertwined like the roots of an immortal creature.

A faint blue glow seeped from cracks in the floor, bathing the earth in a breath of eternity.

I stepped aside, and cold struck me like revelation.

Not the cold of death—

the cold of life.

The cold that slips into bones and whispers that  
flesh is finite.

I inhaled.

Air flooded my lungs as though for the first time—  
thick with dust, stone, and memory.

I shivered.

Gravity tugged at shoulders unused to weight.

Each step was a negotiation with flesh.

My human eyes strained against the dimness;  
shadows stretched like memories just beyond reach.

And the sounds—

God, the sounds:

dripping water,

Gabriel's robe whispering across the floor,

my own uneven breath—

each arriving raw and magnified, as if all creation  
whispered after millennia of silence.

Gabriel approached slowly, reverence softening his  
movements.

He saw in me what I could not yet name.

“My Lord—”

He caught himself.

“Caelus. There is much we must discuss. But first...”

He turned toward a small wooden chest resting against the wall.

Opening it with ceremonial care, he drew out a simple tunic of pale cotton—unadorned, yet radiating a stillness blessed by centuries of waiting.

He offered it with both hands.

“To cover your body... if you permit.”

I nodded. Speech felt too small for all I was sensing.

When the cloth touched my skin, every nerve ignited.

The fabric fell over my shoulders with a tenderness I had forgotten existed.

Touch itself was revelation; each thread sang against living flesh.

I breathed again.

The mingled scent of cotton and ancient dust  
grounded me.

It was too much:

too much color,

too much sound,

too much life.

My mind—shaped by eternity—struggled to filter a  
torrent no mortal would notice, yet to me it roared.

And yet... within that storm was beauty.

I closed my eyes.

Drew breath.

The world quieted for a heartbeat.

When I opened them again, Gabriel watched with  
understanding.

He knew what returning cost.

“Thank you,” I said at last.

My voice still carried echoes of the Abyss.

Gabriel knelt once more, placing at my feet a pair of  
dark leather sandals—hand-tanned, waiting  
centuries for this moment.

“You will not want to walk these eternal stones barefoot,” he said, a faint smile touching his lips.

I sat briefly on a step and slipped them on—still clumsy with balance and weight.

The leather was warm, comforting, a reminder that I was no longer spirit nor shadow but flesh.

Gabriel rose, inclined his head, and turned toward the passage.

“Come,” he said softly.

“There is much you must learn.”

## Chapter 2

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# REVELATIONS

We moved through the catacombs—a labyrinth carved by hands that no longer exist, not even in the memory of the world.

The walls were etched with forgotten symbols and runes older than Babel, each radiating a dormant, slumbering energy.

The air was dry, yet not stale; it smelled of history, of incense extinguished centuries ago, of spent wax and silence.

The floor was a patchwork of ancient flagstones: some cracked by time, others veiled in brittle moss that snapped beneath our steps.

The stone drank the light, casting a half-darkness that felt both welcoming and unsettling.

There were no torches.

Our path was lit by slender veins of crystal embedded in the walls, glowing with a faint, almost organic pulse—as if they breathed.

At certain crossings stood statues: faceless angels or winged beasts frozen in eternal repose, silent



guardians that seemed to watch us though they had no eyes.

After several minutes, Gabriel halted before an arched door without lock or hinge, its surface carved with the image of an inverted solar eclipse.

He pressed both palms against it.

The door swung inward without resistance, as though it recognized him.

We stepped into a chamber unlike the rest.

It was vast, vaulted high above us, its walls lined with shelves climbing into shadow.

Every shelf groaned beneath the weight of ancient knowledge: books, scrolls, cracked codices, volumes stitched in skin.

There was no dust.

Everything had been arranged with monastic devotion.

In the center, upon a rug the color of baked clay, stood several deep leather armchairs.

On a low table rested a single rolled parchment.

Gabriel motioned gently toward the nearest chair.

“Please... sit,” he said, his voice heavier now, more intimate.

I lowered myself slowly.

The leather creaked beneath me.

For a moment I simply existed.

My body still thrummed with the shock of resurrection; every muscle, every fiber, was waking.

Gabriel offered a small, warm smile—almost paternal.

“Let me prepare you some tea,” he murmured, rising with that ancient grace only angels possess.

He crossed to a corner where a wooden stand held an old ceramic teapot the color of deep sky.

With measured, ceremonial movements, he poured golden liquid into two delicate cups.

Steam rose in slow spirals, as if carrying secrets older than speech.

As he approached, the scent reached me.

It struck like a forgotten homecoming: honey, distant flowers, and something unnameable tugging at memories I did not know I possessed.

For an instant, time folded in on itself.

Gabriel set the cups between us, then sat opposite me with the stillness of one who has waited centuries for this exact moment.

I held the cup in both hands.

Warmth—different from the fires of the Abyss—seeped through my skin: comforting, grounding.

The first sip was not merely drink; it was balance incarnate.

As if, within the chaos inside me, someone had lit a lamp.

My mind sharpened.

Thoughts aligned.

I met his gaze, inclined my head, and said softly:

“Thank you. It is exquisite. I needed it.”

Gabriel nodded, unhurried, carrying the gravity of one who understands the weight of every word.

He held his own cup a moment longer, watching the rising steam where memories drifted like ghosts.

Then he lifted his eyes, and when he spoke, his voice was low—laced with ancient sorrow.

“While you were gone... humanity followed its course,” he began.

“A blind, desperate course, ever further from the light.”

I said nothing.

I listened as truth formed itself before me.

“Love became merchandise. Empathy became silence. The human soul hardened—stone that refuses to turn flesh again.”

He did not blink.

“They worship other gods now—money, power, image. Things that rot from within, like rust corroding a pillar that once held something holy.”

His hands tightened around the cup.

“And they unleashed evils on their own brothers. Brothers, Caelus... not enemies, not beasts. Brothers.

They killed for ideas emptier than dust, for ambition, for pride.

They waged wars that even we—bound in silence—could not comprehend.

Wars that shattered bodies... and spirits.”

His words pierced.

I carved each one into memory.

“And step by step,” he continued, “everything fell into place. Like pieces on a board. Without knowing it, humanity built its own cage.

And when the balance finally shattered... they felt it.”

He looked at me.

A tremor passed through the room.

“The Seven. Their chains loosened. The bonds—older than the Fall itself—cracked.”

His next words came with the cadence of prophecy.

“And they broke free.”

Silence settled like a living shadow.

My body remained still, but inside something trembled.

The world had changed in my absence.

Gabriel continued, his voice a steady echo of truths older than kingdoms.

“As it was written, the coming of the Seven brings not only chaos and death... but also your return.”

He held my eyes.

In his gaze burned the faintest flame of hope—one that had endured millennia of darkness for this moment alone.

“With them unbound, the cycle begins. A light—dim, perhaps invisible—spreads across the world.

Your presence is that spark. A beacon amid the collapse, though men cannot yet see you.”

He set his cup aside and clasped his hands, as if in prayer or to keep the moment from fracturing.

“But this time, you will not teach them with sermons.

This time, your mission is to salvage what remains by purging the earth of the servants of the Abyss.”

I nodded.

Truth settled over me like a mantle.

This was a different cross.

No crowds.

No parables.

Only action.

Only judgment.

Gabriel regarded me in silence for several breaths—  
seconds stretched into centuries.

Then he spoke again, no longer the gentle guardian  
but the sentinel of the end of days.

“I will guide you,” he said.

“For centuries I have received visions. Not dreams.  
Not hallucinations. Designs.

Fragments torn from the consciousness of time  
itself.”

His hands trembled faintly.

The air grew heavier.

The scent of tea faded; the ancient cold of the  
catacombs crept between the stones.

“There is a darkness moving, Caelus. Subtle. Silent. Inhuman.

It does not walk in daylight, yet it touches everything.

This darkness has a name... and it is bound to a forbidden ritual.

An act which, if completed, will tear the veil between this world and Hell.”

The chamber tightened around us.

I felt truth settling like shackles.

“We must stop it,” he said, his gaze sharpening like a blade.

“The generals—the Seven—now walk the Earth. Their essences are free, hidden within the folds of civilization. Disguised. Worshipped. Forgotten... yet never gone.”

He rose and walked to a shelf with the weary grace of centuries.

With reverent care he retrieved a cracked leather tome and opened it to pages filled with faded sigils.

“Seven relics,” he said quietly.



“Artifacts born of cultures that no longer exist,  
guarded by the dead or the corrupt.

If the demons gather them—if they complete the  
ritual—Lucifer will not merely return.

He will consume this world. Twist it.

Remake it in his image.”

He looked at me again.

“And you... you are the one variable they did not  
foresee.

The flaw in their design.

Your return is not only prophecy—it is the last  
defense.”

I remained silent.

The catacombs sighed; within me, a flame stirred.

Something had awakened from the shadows.

And every breath we took might be our last.

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## SHADOWS OF THE PAST

Gabriel settled into the armchair opposite me. His hands were steady now as he lifted his cup, yet his gaze never left mine—as though searching for something beneath the surface: resolve, memory... or whatever remained of the one I had once been.

“We are not alone in this crusade,” he said at last, his voice careful, gentle, almost afraid to disturb the air itself. “Rafael walks among us still. Hidden in plain sight, ever watchful. And when the signs grew clear—when the seals began to crack—waiting was no longer possible.”

“Rafael...”

The name rose from me like an echo from the abyss. Something deep stirred—strength, memory, solace.

“Yes,” Gabriel continued, a flicker of relief crossing his face at my reaction. “He lives among men under a modern identity. He commands a global transportation empire—planes, ships, clandestine routes. If we must move quickly, if we must reach a

place mortals cannot, he will see to it. Resources are his language. Nothing will be lacking.”

I nodded slowly. The contrast between our divine purpose and the machinery of the modern world tightened something in my chest.

“And he is not the only one who has awakened,” Gabriel added. “Two of your former disciples have been stirred by the urgency of the times. Thaddeus and Matthew.”

Their names struck like lightning splitting a storm inside me.

Faces resurfaced—young, fragile, human.

Souls I had carried once. Souls I would know in any age.

“Do they... remember?” I asked, setting the cup down quietly, as though the gesture itself were sacred.

“Yes,” Gabriel said. “When you stand before them, memory will flood back fully. For now they hold only fragments—visions, dreams they cannot yet decipher. But the dreams guided them to me.”

I drew a breath, feeling the fire within me shift, tighten, expand.

“Are they ready?”

“They will be,” Gabriel answered. “Thaddeus has dedicated his new life to weaponry. If a weapon exists that can aid you, he will find it... or forge it. And Matthew has woven an information network that pierces even the most guarded systems. No government veil can hide from him.”

I leaned back. The leather sighed beneath me. I closed my eyes and let a slow breath escape. Everything was new, yet each word from Gabriel rooted me more firmly to this world.

“So I am not entirely alone,” I murmured.

A faint smile softened Gabriel’s face.

“You never were.”

I opened my eyes and met his.

“Then let us begin. Where is the first?”

Gabriel placed his palms on the table and unrolled an ancient map—but his fingers touched no specific point. Instead, he looked up, a shadow crossing his features.

“Unfortunately... the visions do not offer coordinates,” he said, frustration threading through the words. “They come as symbols—fragments overlapping, fading the moment I try to grasp them. Sometimes ten readings yield only a single truth.”

His jaw tightened, as though reliving a recent torment.

“But there is something I can tell you about the beginning of your road.”

Silence thickened around us.

He pressed a hand to his chest, breath hitching. A tremor rippled through him—pain or revelation, I could not tell.

“I see it...” he whispered, voice frayed. “A crowned figure wreathed in flies... wings black as plague... a swarm blotting out the sky.”

His eyes snapped open. Terror flickered in their depths.

“Beelzebub.

He was the first to break free.

He is moving—seeking a relic lost to this age.”

A knot formed in my throat.

“Which relic?”

“The Girdle of Freya,” Gabriel said. “Its power is ancient. If he finds it...”

The sentence died. The fear lived on.

“The vision showed frost-covered trees, a stone structure carved with runes that weep blood... and a name whispered through the cold: Gamla Uppsala.”

I felt the name settle into me like a weight.

“Where is that?”

“In the north. Sweden,” he answered. “We are still beneath Budapest. But Rafael can extract you the moment you decide.”

I nodded. The inevitability of departure pressed against my ribs.

Gabriel’s eyes drifted over the tunic I still wore, and he sighed with a blend of affection and resignation.

“With all respect, Caelus... we cannot let you walk the world dressed like a Renaissance painting come to life. People will panic before the demons do.”

He gestured toward a hidden door behind a tall shelf.

It opened into a small chamber where an ancient oak wardrobe stood like a relic of another century.

When he opened it, the hinges groaned softly, as though waking.

“Take what you need. It may not be fashionable... but at least you will pass among them unnoticed.”

Inside hung garments gathered from eras that had forgotten one another—sturdy trousers, weathered jackets, heavy coats, boots hardened for winter roads.

I chose a black cotton shirt, dark trousers, a thick wool coat, and boots that felt solid beneath my feet.

Each layer reshaped the sensation of the world around me.

Gabriel nodded with approval.

“Now you look like someone who can walk among men.”

He led me deeper into the stone passages.

“Come,” he said. “It is time you met the man who guards the truth.”

After winding corridors that bent sense and direction, we reached a door unlike any before:

reinforced steel, biometric lock, an embedded screen flickering pale blue.

A foreign artifact buried in ancient stone.

Gabriel placed his palm against the reader.

A hum.

A soft click.

The door slid open.

The air changed instantly.

No more dust and relics.

Ozone. Electricity.

Black coffee.

A chamber of servers and humming fans stretched before us.

Cables coiled like metal roots along the ceiling.

Dozens of monitors blinked with impossible data—digital constellations in artificial night.

At the center, seated before a curved desk of steel and glass, was Matthew.

His eyes were fixed on the main screen, symbols scrolling faster than mortal comprehension.



Blue light carved hollows beneath his gaze; exhaustion and brilliance lived there side by side.

“At the end of pattern 0E9, the name appears again,” he muttered to himself. “It repeats. This can’t be random.”

“Matthew,” Gabriel said softly. “We are not alone.”

Only then did Matthew turn.

His stare pierced through me—confusion first, then recognition forming like dawn behind storm clouds.

He stood.

He extended his hand—hesitant, searching, as though a buried memory strained to surface.

And when our skin touched, he convulsed.

A silent, devastating shock ripped through him.

His breath vanished.

His knees buckled.

I caught him with ease.

When he looked up again, he was no longer the man we had met moments earlier.

Memory had returned.

Fire glowed in his eyes.

Tears traced sudden paths down his cheeks.

“At last...” he whispered. “At last we meet again...”

I gave him a small, gentle smile.

“Forgive the delay.”

Gabriel watched from the doorway, arms crossed, wearing a faint smile—witness to a reunion forged across centuries.

“What news do you have?” he asked.

Matthew steadied himself, wiped his face, and returned to the desk with urgency.

“There is noise,” he said. “Subtle... but unmistakable.”

His fingers danced across the keys. Screens shifted—maps, charts, encrypted trails, satellite readings.

“Financial activity with no commercial logic.

Shell companies stirring after decades of silence.

Bird migrations shifting entirely out of season—entire flocks fleeing something we cannot detect.”

He zoomed the map north—to Sweden.

“A private archaeological foundation has taken control of an underground site in Gamla Uppsala.

No public records.

Encrypted transmissions bouncing through antennas that aren’t registered anywhere—civilian or military.

Something is happening there.”

Gabriel and I exchanged a silent, heavy look.

“The north,” I murmured.

Matthew nodded.

“If Beelzebub is involved, this is your first trail.”

We turned to leave, but Matthew’s voice cut through the room.

“Wait.”

He crossed to a camouflaged safe, opened it with a rapid sequence, and withdrew a dark rectangular device—smooth, cold, unmarked.

“This is for you,” he said. “A military-grade satellite phone. End-to-end encryption. You can reach me from anywhere.”

He powered it on.

A faint blue glow lit the screen.

“Place your finger here.”

I did.

The device pulsed once—recognition.

“It’s bound to you now,” Matthew said softly.

I slipped it into the inner pocket of my coat.

“Thank you, brother.”

Gabriel stepped forward, his expression solemn.

“Come, Caelus. There is more to be done.”

I followed him toward the threshold.

The war was no longer approaching—

**it was already here.**