

Sons of God, Daughters of Men

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CONTENTS

PROLOUGE

CHAPTER 1 – TRAINING

CHAPTER 2 – REUNION

CHAPTER 3 – CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

CHAPTER 4 – NABAL

CHAPTER 5 – CHOICES

CHAPTER 6 – NOW OR NEVER

CHAPTER 7 – THE DESCENT

CHAPTER 8 – GODS AND MEN

CHAPTER 9 – CITY OF THE WATCHERS

CHAPTER 10 – ADVERSARIES

CHAPTER 11 – THE CRIES OF WAR

CHAPTER 12 – THE DESTROYER

CHAPTER 13 – POSSESSED

CHAPTER 14 – HEROES

CHAPTER 15 – ASSASSINS

CHAPTER 16 – WAR IS COMING

CHAPTER 17 – EXODUS

CHAPTER 18 – VENGEANCE

CHAPTER 19 – WAR

CHAPTER 20 – NOAH

CHAPTER 21 – CAELAN'S SONG

PROLOUGE

“And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.” Genesis 6:1-4 (KJV)

“Grandfather.”

Ham looked up at the boy and his friends. He grinned and continued stoking the fire.

“Grandfather, tell us the story about gods and men,” the boy asked.

Ham stirred the logs in the fire, occasionally watching the ashes float into the night. The resolute boy stepped closer and hugged Ham from behind. “Please, please tell us grandfather,” the child begged.

Ham took hold of his grandson's arm and laughed. Another boy and two girls sprang from behind the trees, shoving and nudging their way closer to the old man. The children sat wide-eyed, hanging on Ham's every movement and eagerly awaiting the latest rendition of their favorite story. Ham took a sip from his wineskin, wiped his face and thick, gray beard, and looked into each of the children's eyes.

“Tell us grandfa—“

“All right boy,” Ham interrupted. “Long ago, in these lands, a great king ruled. He was the greatest king to rule the world. Those were the days of the heathen gods . . . they who came from heaven above . . . and hell beneath.” Ham pointed to a mountain in the distance. There, on Mount Carmel, the first of them came.”

The children looked at the mountain briefly before turning back.

“Before they came here, they were called the Watchers, but in our world, they became tyrants. Giants they were. Men as tall as trees . . . eyes as blue as the sky and hearts as black as night.” Ham looked at the girl next to him, “Eaters of flesh they were . . . of little boys and little girls!” he shouted and then gritted his teeth.

The girl let out a scream and then jumped before giggling. Ham laughed.

“They came from heaven, grandfather?” the boy asked.

“Yes Nimrod. They were sons of God.

“The sons of God who loved the daughters of men,” a voice said from behind.

Ham sighed. He put his staff in the fire and pushed several logs. “Let the children enjoy their story Cush,” Ham said to his son without looking.

“Go to bed now children. I have to talk with father,” Cush said as he waved the children away.

The children moaned and complained as they rose and walked away. Nimrod leaned over and kissed Ham on the cheek. “Grandfather, one day I am going to build a tower to heaven, so I can see the sons of God.”

Ham rubbed the child’s head and smiled. “Of course you will boy.”

“Run along,” Cush yelled as he sat in the sand next to Ham. “Father, I was in town today and...do you really believe the stories about the heathen gods?”

Ham swallowed. “What did you see son?”

“A man, if ever I saw one. Fearsome, and twice as tall as any I have ever seen.”

“So they have returned,” Ham replied. He took a deep breath and then shook his head. “I knew it would not be long,” he said, his hands suddenly shaking and lips quivering.

Cush looked on, having never seen fear in his father before. “Where would such a man come from?”

Ham grasped Cush's shoulders and looked into his eyes. “Listen to me son and heed my words. Those who destroyed our world have returned. What I tell you tonight, speak to your children, and to their children. For all should know of the sons of God and the daughters of men. They ruined the old world and will try to ruin this as well.”

1

TRAINING

2500 B.C.

Caelan stared into the morning sky. *Does humanity still need us or do we still need humanity?* he wondered. This question had been on Caelan's mind for a long time. The future seemed uncertain. The role of angels as the protectors of humanity was slowly diminishing. As humanity grew in numbers, they called upon God and angels far less than they used to. Humanity had become a proud species; brash and unruly. *Have we a future together?* Caelan thought.

The morning was perfect, with bright sunshine and only a few clouds, just as Caelan liked it. Days like this made his Guardian duty on Earth bearable. He stared where the portal between Heaven and Earth was to open, dreading the arrival of his new trainee, Lucius, to arrive. He would have preferred Lucius to be paired with someone else for the next thirty days, but he understood why his superiors chose him. His proven record of accomplishment in training skilled and competent guardian angels was impeccable. Many of his former trainees had received glowing assessments for protecting human beings assigned to them from harm and demonic spirits. Nevertheless, Caelan preferred being able to come and go as he pleased. Being responsible for another young trainee was going to cut into his leisure time.

A bright flash from behind signaled the arrival of his new protégé. A ten-foot oval portal surrounded by speckles of blue and white light opened in front of him. Lucius, a handsome young angel with sandy brown hair, brown eyes and a large smile walked through. He turned around, admiring the beauty of the portal as it slowly began to dissipate. He all but ignored Caelan as he stood still watching the portal.

“Young angel!” Caelan called from twenty feet away.

Lucius turned quickly, causing his long white robe and broadsword on his belt to spin with him. “Sorry sir,” he replied.

“Your first time through?”

“Yes sir. It—”

“Save it,” Caelan interrupted. “You need to realize where you are now or your first time on Earth might be your last time.”

“Uh, Y-Yes sir,” Lucius replied embarrassedly. Caelan's harsh tone unnerved him. The angels he knew in heaven never spoke so gratingly to others.

“If there had been demons waiting here, we would not be having this conversation,” Caelan said. “Remember, you are no longer in heaven. Here, you must be alert at every moment. Understood?”

“Yes sir,” Lucius replied. He noted that Caelan's speech was closer to that of a human than an angel.

Caelan stopped and turned to Lucius. “If it seems as if I am being hard on you, realize that my job is to keep you safe and make sure you are trained the right way.”

“I understand,” Lucius answered.

Caelan raised his eyebrow.

“I mean yes sir.”

Caelan turned and walked away, followed by Lucius.

“Why did you choose the Guardians as your first assignment?” Caelan asked.

“I wanted to make a difference in the Earth,” Lucius answered.

Caelan shot him a sarcastic glance. “So, my captain said that you are an orphan.”

“Yes. I died in childbirth,” Lucius said. “My mother is alive, but my father died a few years ago. He was a soldier. I suppose that he, that he did not—”

“Try not to worry about it. Many people never make it to heaven. Cheer up. At least your mother still has a chance.”

“I hope so sir,” Lucius said.

“You joined the Guardians hoping to meet her . . . am I right?” Caelan asked.

Lucius lowered his head, and then nodded.

Caelan grinned. “Cheer up. I am not going to send you back. If management approved your request and sent you here, they must have a plan.”

Lucius looked up and smiled. “Thank you sir. My intention to deceive anyone, I just—”

“Don't worry,” Caelan interrupted. “Every volunteer has a different reason for joining. I like to ask because unlike you, most of us were assigned this role.” Caelan looked Lucius up and down. “You are . . . young for the Guardians.”

Lucius stared blankly, not knowing how to respond.

“Well, if management approved, someone up there must like you,” Caelan said. “Listen, follow directions and everything should be fine.”

“I will not let you down,” Lucius said eagerly.

“Let’s hope not,” Caelan said. “We are going to the market at Nirim today. We have to replace the temporary Guardian watching over my human.”

“We are on a thirty-day assignment right?” Lucius asked.

“Is that a problem?” Caelan said with a hint of sarcasm.

“Uh, no sir. Thirty days is fine,” Lucius replied.

“Good. Try to keep up,” Caelan said. He looked skyward and launched into the air.

Lucius tracked Caelan as he disappeared in the clouds. He lowered his arms and spiraled into the sky. Several large birds blew past as he skimmed the clouds and searched for Caelan. He decided to head in the general direction of Nirim, assuming Caelan would be somewhere close to the city. A childlike delight shone on his face as he streaked across the sky. He stretched his arms, occasionally spinning in circles and taking in the beauty of the horizon. He had been enamored with stories of Earth for many years and wanted to visit for some time. Now his dream had come true.

The bright sunlight made it difficult for Lucius to see far into the distance. A speck hovering above the clouds several miles away caught his attention. The figure quickly became larger as he sped forward. After recognizing Caelan hovering above a cloud with his hand extended, Lucius quickly managed to force himself to a nimble halt barely several feet from Caelan.

“Work on controlling your speed,” Caelan barked. “It is very hard to stop when fly everywhere at full speed.”

Lucius nodded, trying hard to hide his growing irritation of Caelan’s chastening.

“Follow me to the city and stay close,” Caelan said. He then dropped through an opening in the cloud.

Lucius sped down through the clouds and slowed into a glide over Nirim's marketplace. After spotting Caelan on the outer edge of the marketplace, Lucius flew over and landed softly next to him.

Caelan was staring ahead, fixated on something in the distance.

Lucius looked around the marketplace trying to identify the object of Caelan's fascination.

“Remember when I told you earlier that everything has a plan?” Caelan asked.

“Yes,” Lucius replied, with a puzzled look.

“Your being assigned to train with me today was not a coincidence. Look over there,” Caelan

said, pointing to a young woman walking toward them.

Lucius took several steps forward and looked at the young woman curiously. She stopped ten feet away at a vendor's stand and picked up several figs. The woman was short and thin, with long frazzled black hair just past her waist. Her sad behavior and bedraggled clothes suggested that she was of low status. Lucius turned to Caelan, wondering what was so important about this woman. Then, something about her made him take a second look.

“How old are you?” Caelan called out.

“Twenty five,” Lucius answered, still looking at the young woman, wondering about the strange feeling he had.

“How old do you think this woman is Lucius?”

“Forty, maybe forty-five. What does that matt—”

Lucius' stopped speaking and his eyes widened.

Caelan came and stood next to Lucius. “She is your mother.”

2

REUNION

Lucius was overcome with emotion. Caelan could see the emotions Lucius felt were far more intense than anything he experienced in Heaven. Guardians often felt this way after their first encounter with human beings. Even so, Lucius' response intrigued Caelan. Lucius drew to within inches of his mother, examining every detail of her worn face. He felt strange being so close to her. Sensing an unknown presence, the woman looked up, then around the market, rubbing the back of her neck several times before turning her attention back to the figs.

"She can feel me," Lucius said.

"She knows that someone is near her," Caelan said and then smiled. "Her name is Dinah. She was fifteen when you were born."

Dinah took a few coins from her pocket and counted them. She closed her eyes and sighed. Caelan moved closer to Lucius.

"Life was not easy after she lost you and your father. She does what she can to survive...cleaning homes, making clothes...she has a hard life Lucius. Few people want to marry an older widow. At times, I pity humanity. Their struggles seem unending and harsh. All we can do is watch and protect, doing what we can to ease their suffering."

Lucius looked around the marketplace. "Where is her guardian?"

Caelan pointed to an angel standing amongst a crowd one-hundred feet away with his arms folded. "You missed him, among other things."

Lucius turned and then suddenly jumped back.

A small demon sprang from behind the tent next to the fig seller. The creature leapt on top of the table, crouched, and hissed at Lucius. The three-foot demon resembled a large toad with its bubbly skin, brown, large black eyes, wide lips and two small slits for a nose. The demon turned his attention to Dinah.

"Stay away from her foul creature," Lucius scowled. He then drew his broadsword and prepared to strike.

Caelan grabbed Lucius by the arm. "Easy," he whispered.

Lucius glared as the demon taunted him. Caelan knew that Lucius had learned about demons during his Guardian training in Heaven, but this was his first time encountering with one. Both angels winced after smelling the demon's pungent odor.

“You know the rules. Since he is only a deceiving spirit and has not threatened violence, you cannot harm him without cause,” Caelan reminded Lucius.

The demon smirked, slowly drawing closer to Dinah and keeping a wary eye on Lucius.

“Why is he here and what does he want?” Lucius asked.

“To sow misery and hopelessness among humanity,” Caelan replied with disgust. “The more of humanity they can harm or destroy, the more it pleases their masters. Spirits such as these are drawn to deep heartache and despair.”

The demon turned to Dinah and tilted his head. “You poor, dirty widow. What can you do with no husband, no children, and no money,” he said and then cackled.

Lucius lunged forward, but Caelan caught and pulled him back. Lucius turned toward Caelan, full of rage.

“Calm yourself!” Caelan shouted. “You cannot harm him Lucius. He may tempt her. If she needs our help, then she must pray. Otherwise, we cannot intervene. She has a Guardian who has instructions about her. You know this.”

Dinah's Guardian angel appeared several feet away from her. He grasped his sword and readied himself, as if awaiting instructions.

The demon cackled again. “Poor widow. If I were you, I would kill myself rather than live such a wretched life”

Dinah wiped a tear from her face, then brushed her hair.

“Go home you poor wretch,” the demon said. “This market is not for the poor and you will never have enough money. Go home and die!” he shouted in a dark, sinister tone.

Tears began to stream down Dinah's face.

“Buy something or leave,” the old fig seller yelled. “Why are you here if you will not buy anything?”

The demon laughed at the trouble he had caused.

“Do you want to help her?” Caelan asked.

“Of course, but what can I do?” Lucius replied.

“Think of encouraging words or songs of praise and then whisper them to her.”

“We can do that?” Lucius asked.

“Indeed. If they discourage, we can encourage. Why do you think your teachers had you memorize so many of our songs?”

Filled with excitement, Lucius turned to Dinah and thought of an uplifting song. “Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life. I will sing praise to my God while I live,” Lucius said to Dinah.

He waited for a response, but the words had no effect. The demon laughed sarcastically. Lucius turned to Caelan. “What did I do wrong?”

“You have to do more than speak the words. Believe what you are saying. Open yourself to her mind so you can feel the pain and trauma. Only then, can her emotions flood into your mind. Once the connection is made and you have become one with her emotions, concentrate and speak to the pain...allowing the words to flow from your heart. Making a connection with your mother should be easy.”

Lucius closed his eyes and concentrated. He grabbed his head, his hands shaking as images from Dinah's mind entered his. He saw her in a room lying on a bed with blood spattered about her legs and stomach. She screamed, groaning and grasping the bed sheets as the elderly midwife pulled the baby from between her legs. Exhausted, breathing heavily, and sweating, Dinah looked into the somber eyes of the midwife. She stretched her arms out. “Bring me my baby,” Dinah whimpered.

The elderly woman shook her head. Slowly, she wrapped the dead infant in a small brown blanket. Lucius' eyes widened as Dinah's deafening cry rang throughout his mind. The overwhelming sorrow that his mother carried for more than twenty-five years filled his eyes with tears. Lucius looked at Dinah with compassion, training his mind on her sadness and then closing his eyes. He let the words flow from his heart, “Blessed is he whose help is God, whose hope is in the Lord, the maker of heaven and Earth, the Lord who remains faithful forever. He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sustains the fatherless and the widow but frustrates the ways of the wicked. The Lord reigns forever, for all generations. Praise the Lord.”

Dinah's eyes narrowed and she looked up. Her lips tightened and she looked at the old man in front of her, “The Lord sustains me,” she whispered before walking away with an air of confidence. The angry demon straightened and scowled at Lucius. “Safe today, but maybe dead tomorrow. Will you help her then Watcher?” He jumped from the table and then scampered away. Dinah's Guardian angel smiled at Lucius briefly and nodded before he followed her away.

“He is right. I cannot be there for her every day,” Lucius said, and hung his head. The burden of his mother having to wrestle alone against unseen and malicious forces troubled him. For

the first time, he felt the pain of human loss and suffering. Being born as an angel in heaven had shielded him from these cruel emotions. His first memories were of opening his eyes in a large room in Heaven staffed by angels helping souls who had died as infants. He and other new angels were welcomed to Heaven and educated daily about the Earth, the universe, and their purpose for existing. Before, he viewed human beings with a certain fascination, even envy. Now, he saw a different, grittier side to humanity that was far different from what he had imagined.

“You did well,” Caelan said. “My advice is that you do not spend too much time worrying about her. Pray that the Father watches over her life and that she finds her way in this world.”

With a heavy heart, Lucius nodded in agreement.

“We have to go,” Caelan said.

As they walked toward the center of the marketplace, Caelan could sense that Lucius was agitated and distracted. Every few paces, he turned and looked at certain people moving about the busy marketplace. Caelan decided to use the opportunity to teach the young angel another lesson.

“Lucius, are you paying attention to your surroundings?” Caelan asked.

“Yes.” Lucius responded as he continued to walk.

“Are you sure?” Caelan asked.

“Yes,” Lucius replied.

“So you are not looking at the young women in the market today?” Caelan asked.

“I’m...WHOA!” Lucius said loudly before looking up. He stopped just before his throat met the edge of Caelan's glistening sword.

Caelan gave him a stern look before sheathing his sword. “You need to pay better attention, especially in crowded areas with buildings and places demons can hide. That last demon surprised you before you could to react. You were fortunate that he was a weak, deceiving spirit. A warrior class demon might have struck you down.”

“I’m sorry sir, it will not happen again,” Lucius said.

“Make sure it doesn't,” Caelan responded. “Be aware of enemies and try to anticipate where they may be hiding. They can leap through walls or surprise you from around a corner instantly.”

“I understand,” Lucius replied.

“They are masters of deception,” Caelan said. “For example, I bet you did not notice the three small demons on our left and two on the right that have been following us since we left the fig stand did you?”

Lucius looked to his left, right, and caught glimpses of several small demons scurrying

among the buildings, hiding and them poking their heads out. "No, I did not see them. What do they want, and why are they following us?"

"They are watching us, wondering if we are here to watch a person of importance," Caelan said. "If they can report with important information to their superiors, they might be rewarded."

"I see" Lucius replied, still eying the small demons.

"Some smaller ones may seem insignificant at first glance," Caelan said. "I made the mistake of believing that when I first came here and was ambushed. They will try that if they think that they have the upper hand. That is why it is important to know where they are and what they are doing."

"I understand sir," Lucius said.

"Good to know. One more thing to keep in mind: it is sometimes hard, at first, to concentrate and focus your thoughts when you are around groups of human beings. Our sensitivity to their strong emotions can disorient us at times. You seem especially sensitive to them."

Lucius nodded. "I have not felt powerful emotions like these until I arrived on Earth. Why are they so strong, and why am I feeling them now?"

"Well, humanity is a troubled and strange species. Although we are similar, there are differences. While we are spiritual beings, they are bound to their flesh. They lack our strength of mind and discipline. Therefore, most of them wander aimlessly through life in search of meaningless things." Caelan shook his head. "They are creatures of emotion."

"Is that why you like them so much?" Lucius joked.

Caelan returned an icy glare and started walking.

After arriving close to the center of the market, Caelan looked around at the hundred or so people assembled at various vendors and walking in and out of shops.

"Human beings are slaves to their feelings," Caelan said with aversion. "Guard your thoughts while you are down here Lucius or your mind will be corrupted by their unholy ways."

"And what happens if I am corrupted?" Lucius asked.

"Reeducation. Retraining. A lot of things that you do not want to know about, I assure you," Caelan said.

"Still, there are those who are just, right?" Lucius asked. "Aren't there those who are genuinely interested in spirituality?"

Caelan furled his lips, indignant that the young angel had dared question him. "There are some, but generally—"

"I mean, isn't that the reason we are here?" Lucius interrupted. "Are we not here to ensure

that they follow the right path and get the aid and protection that they need?”

Caelan looked into Lucius' eyes and then past him. The young angel had unintentionally reminded him of something he had all but forgotten over time; love and compassion for humanity. He thought back to a time, hundreds of years ago; when he had arrived on Earth as a Guardian and when humanity began to grow and rapidly expand. Like Lucius, he was once full of hope and enthusiasm because of what he saw as humanity's potential for greatness. Where had his compassion and hope gone? Why was he now so cold and emotionless toward those he swore to protect?

Caelan thought about the oath he took upon completing his Guardian training, “We serve, we protect, we uplift.” He asked himself how much he had done recently to uplift humanity.

“Are you Okay, sir?” Lucius asked, interrupting his reflection.

“Of course, you are right Lucius. We are here to help.” Caelan suddenly became distracted and looked into the distance.

“What is it?” Lucius asked.

“Why are those angels over there?” Caelan said. “I was not aware of any special assignments today. Did you hear anything about this before you left?”

“You did not hear?” Lucius asked. He grinned, “On my way to the portal, I heard that more angels had been assigned to this man and his family because they were special. They have been assigned a protection detail. Each of them will have two permanent Guardian angels. Exciting, right?”

“Yes,” Caelan mumbled, still staring at the angels. “What is the man’s name?”

“Noah,” Lucius answered.