

To my beloved children: Felipe and Gustavo.

# **Part I**

## **The Perfect Angel**

## CHAPTER I

### The light and the serpent

Before time, there was eternity. And at the end of it, it will be all that is left. For eternity is the time of the One God. His essence and His abode.

And in eternal emptiness and darkness, God knew good and evil in the purest and most powerful form that these two forces ever existed, waging war at the heart of the Lord to free themselves from each other.

The fate of the universe, yet to be created, was decided in this primordial battle, when good finally proved stronger and prevailed. Thus, God plucked evil from within Himself and imprisoned it firmly in His left hand so that it would never escape. An irrational shadow of hatred and despair, weakened by separation and humiliated by defeat, sneaking between God's fingers with a single desire. Revenge.

Free from evil, God grew in power and love. But there was nothing for Him to love. Then He raised His right hand, and from it came light. A flash so intense that the eyes of the Lord closed, it was the birth of time as we know it. For the light, which should be eternal, calmed down. And at its small point of origin, on the colossal palm of the Lord's right hand, there was now the most beautiful little creature. As perfect as the Creator Himself. A delicate baby, with black hair drains and wrapped in a soft light of his own. He was in the image and likeness of his Almighty Father, except for the pair of delicate wings he carried on his back, with feathers of a white so vivid that they seemed to shine.

The little being opened his eyes in a smile of pure love and saw God weep with joy. A joy He did not think was possible. Overcome by the newfound sentiment, the Lord uttered His first words, revealing His Holy Name to the beloved son.

With his heart flooded with God's grace, the baby beat his tiny wings for the first time and flew. He shot, whirled, climbed, and descended in a frantic dance of happiness. He repeated the Name of the Lord without stopping, in an undisputed praise of love. He desired to fly forever around his God.

And he flew and flew as time went by and he matured, coming the baby to turn into a boy. For God, it was like looking at Himself as a child.

Flying over the immensity of the Lord, suddenly the winged being experienced a different feeling than love, all he had known so far. A dark and oppressive shadow descended like a cloak upon him.

Looking up, he noticed, at an immeasurable distance, one of God's enormous hands holding a black spirit that writhed and vibrated in an unrelenting struggle to free himself.

The boy stood there, floating inertly in limbo, in a mixture of surprise and strange fascination with that obscene form.

"This is the Beast that dwelt within Me," God revealed. "Don't fear it, because I won't let it hurt you."

"How can such a ghastly being have existed within the Creator, who is only goodness, reason and beauty?"

"The nature of God is a mystery beyond your comprehension."

"Yes, my Lord," said the boy, bowing his head. "I asked only for the love and concern I have for the Almighty."

"Remember, My son. Along with My perfection, I gave you wisdom. Use it to recognize and stop evil if it ever insinuates itself into your heart or ventures from afar to achieve it. For greatest are the forces of love and knowledge. Against them, fury and savagery have no power."

The boy acknowledged the Lord's gifts. But in witnessing evil, he lost his innocence and felt ashamed for being naked. Realizing this, the Creator provided him with a black robe, made of a soft and sturdy fabric, to wear.

God then moved His left arm out of the boy's sight, who resumed his flight around the Lord as he grew up to become an adult at the apex of his power, intelligence, and beauty.

Satisfied with His creation, God presented him with a name.

"I shall call you Samael, the Most Beloved Son."

It was Samael's turn to weep tears of happiness. He felt proud and grateful to his Father.

"You are so glorious and stupendous, My sweet Samael, that I have decided to create others like you. They will be in your image, however, different. For you will always be My favorite and the only one to share with Me the gift of perfection. I will

call your race angels, the Eolel or Heralds of the Lord. And they will be blessed to share eternity with you by My side.”

“Holy be the Lord,” said Samael, with a greeting.

And God reached out His right hand and, with a single nod, brought forth a silver and luminous city, so gigantic that it filled the vacuum that existed beneath Himself.

“This will be the dwelling place of the angels. The First Heaven. All creation will exist under it. Above, there will be only the Lord.”

And Samael flew to the Silver City. Its walls radiated a soft and pleasant light. And Samael passed through the great main gate and came across vast corridors and towering enclosures of bare and luminous walls. There were no stairs, for winged beings had no use for them. The majesty of the building was expressed in numbers. There were twenty-five million rooms; six hundred and ninety-three thousand halls of different shapes and sizes; four hundred and twenty-one thousand storerooms; one hundred and thirty-seven thousand workshops; fourteen thousand squares; thirteen thousand public towers; five thousand and six forges; four thousand and five hundred herbal domes; one hundred and seventy-one conservatories; sixty-four galleries; twelve prefectures; and a central palace, from which the gigantic Tower of the Covenant sprang from, its top ornamented by seven large and mysterious seals of pure energy.

Samael prostrated himself on his knees, astonished by the Lord's work.

“Arise, My dear son. There is still much more to be seen.”

And Samael flew beyond the city limits and, stunned, glimpsed the existence of three other planes, or Heavens, below the first. One over the other, their dimensions were as vast as those of the city itself. The Second Heaven was a plain of beautiful green fields and lakes of clear and calm waters. The Third Heaven, a desert of soft white sands, with cool breezes and oases rich in fruit and water. The Fourth Heaven, a mosaic of countless ravines and mountains of impressive beauty and harmony, dense and closed forests, and low temperatures, but not so less pleasant.

Amazed, Samael returned to God, who awaited him hovering over the magnificent Silver City. And from the right hand of the Almighty came the second angel. And God named him Gabriel, the One of the Most Beautiful Voice.

Gabriel was a winged baby, devoid of Samael's natural luminescence, but almost as beautiful and perfect as he, only his hair presented itself as a golden soft and thin hair instead of black one of his brother's.

And Gabriel took flight, singing in the softest verses of praise to the Lord, which echoed through the four corners of creation. After Gabriel came Nathanael, Camael and Matraton. The last, a bald angel with red eyes like fire. All, variations of the original mold, the firstborn Samael. However, each new angel that arose moved a little further away from Samael's perfection. And not at all, they were no longer less splendid.

“Now a terrible responsibility rests on your shoulders, My Samael,” said God. “It is up to you to lead and instruct your brethren as angels of the Lord. Your teachings will be passed on by them to the next generation and so on.”

“How can I teach if I still have so much to learn, Father?”

“With the wisdom I gave you. It will guide you. The time has come to realize your full potential, My beloved son. I created you not solely to worship Me, but also for you to fly with your own wings.”

“I will not disappoint You, my Lord,” said Samael, proud of God's trust, even if the anxiety in his voice was undisguised.

“Take good care of your brothers.”

Samael set off with the four babies to the Silver City, while God went to the Heights, out of the reach of His sons.

Samael's first task was to find accommodation for his brothers. Being so small, Samael decided to keep them in the same room. And that was the first of his problems. For, unlike Samael, accustomed to resting on the Lord's body, the little angels would need another kind of sleep support, and the floor did not seem the best option to him. Unable to turn to God for help, Samael forced his mind behind a solution. His creative strength, never used before, took a while to function.

But suddenly an image came up to him.

“Wait here for me,” Samael told the babies. “I'll be right back.”

Samael took off towards the Fourth Heaven, that of the beautiful and cold forests. From the largest of them, he extracted, in one hand, a tree of thick trunk and deep roots. He threw it on the ground and started pulling out its branches with amazing agility. He carried the heavy bare trunk back into town.

Acting almost without thinking, as if driven by a mysterious inner force, Samael deposited the immense trunk on the floor of one of the workshops. He could dig the wood with his own fingers, but somehow it seemed counterproductive to him. Soon, he decided to pay another visit to the Fourth Heaven.

Samael scoured those lands with his angelic eyes, until they target one of the mountains. He dived rapidly, entering headlong through the southern wall of the mountain, crossing the various layers of solid rock, and exiting the north base of its peak. He flew into town, bringing in his hands a massive nugget of bronze, six times the size of his fist.

Samael went down to one of the forges. He, who carried within him the primordial flame of the universe, grew, for a moment, the luminescence of his body, emanating an intense flame from his left hand, which ignited one of the pyres. Using the heat and his own fists to hammer the metal, Samael forged the first blade, sharpening it with his nails.

He employed it to carve a wooden cord from the trunk, to the right extent to attach it to the blade. Samael had just created the first axe. With it, it became much more practical to shape another handle from the wood. And, back in the forge, he took advantage of what was left of the bronze to finish a hammer.

The new tools allowed him to manufacture the nails and wooden slats with which he built four small beds. The angels were amazed when they saw them. They slept gratefully and with pleasure. Samael then set up a bed for himself, to rest next to his little brothers and keep them in his sleep.

Samael had won his first real test in the eyes of God. The creature had proved that it was also capable of creating. With enthusiasm, he gave himself up to the task of educating those little beings, who, in turn, proved to be quick and dedicated apprentices.

Samael began in the Four Heavens. He introduced his brothers to the various facilities of the Silver City. He took them to bathe in the heavenly waters of the Second Heaven; taste the incomparable fruits of the Third; and explore the territories of the Fourth. In the latter, Samael sought to train their angelic eyes to examine inside the rocks for mineral veins that might be useful.

As the lessons continued, and his brothers grew, Samael was deeply surprised by the differences that emerged between them, which went far beyond physical variations. He never expected them to distinguish themselves at the personality level.

Gabriel proved to be the wisest and calmest of them. Nathanael, the most fun and hard-to-learn. Camael, the one of the difficult and insightful questions. And Matraton, though impeccably fulfilling his duties, always silent and distant.

Upon becoming boys, Samael summoned them to the only hall so far furnished, with no more than a study table and five chairs. They took seating for the lesson that would change everything.

“What is this, Master Lucifer?” asked Camael, pointing to the four pieces of fabric carefully folded on the table, and calling Samael by the name they had given him as a sign of respect, Lucifer, the Bearer of the Holy Light.

“These are clothes that I have weaved for you,” Samael told them.

The angels were surprised, for they saw nothing wrong in their nakedness, even though Samael was always clothed in his black robe, which they took as a mere distinction from God toward His firstborn.

“They are made from the silk of the "tree bugs" in the Fourth Heaven,” Samael explained. “You will need them for today.”

Even Matraton sketched a certain curiosity.

“I taught you the right way to praise the Lord,” Samael resounded. “How to seek rest in the Second Heaven, food in the Third, and resources in the Forth. I showed you how to make tools and, with them, solve your needs. You proved that by building the chairs we use and the table we sit at. I have nothing left to instruct you but evil.”

“Evil?” Gabriel repeated, feeling his heart sorrow at the mere pronouncing of the word.

“Put on your clothes and I will show you,” Samael said, standing up.

Though clumsy, at first, with the pieces, each angel wore his robe, all made of a white so pure that it touched the divined. Samael took off, accompanied by his brothers.

The young angels trembled with dread before the Beast in God's left hand. They were grateful to their master for providing them with clothes to hide their shames.

Samael, for his part, was stunned.

The Beast behaved differently than before; no longer irrational, it was now moving surreptitiously, as if lurking prey. This allowed Samael a clearer view of all his fascinating horror. The dark being had a ringed body and a frown of eyes without



orbits, ended with a shapeless mouth with long, sharp fangs. He turned to Samael and the little angels as if he wanted to devour them.

“The Beast has acquired self-consciousness since the last time we saw each other,” God explained, before the question stamped on the face of His Firstborn. “It now calls himself Mephistopheles.”

“What is it looking for?” questioned Camael.

“Destruction,” the Lord replied. “His goal is to exterminate all creation.”

“Damn be the Beast,” cried Nathanael, with the agreement of his brothers.

Mephistopheles laughed at them and displayed its jaws in a beastly cry of hatred and contempt that ran through the whole of creation and froze the blood even of Samael. But he refused to fear the Enemy. Especially in the presence of his Father.

“Look how harmless evil is to the power of God,” Samael told the youth. “Know how to recognize the filth and perfidy of darkness. And remember that we are angels.

Creatures of light and life. We exist to deny and fight malevolence.”

“Amen!” the brothers cried out in unison, driving away fear from within them.

“The time has come,” said God, retreating His left hand beyond their eyes, and bringing the right to them. He opened it and from his palm flew twenty-five baby angels. They surrounded Samael and his apprentices. “For each of you, there are five new angels that need to be taught. Act fast, for many others will come.”

“Yes, my Lord,” said Samael, leaning, before he turned to the others. “Let's go.”

The four apprentices nodded and left with Samael, escorting the newborns to the Silver City.

Samael saw his apprentices become adults, while the babies became boys. Although they were slightly slower to learn than the previous generation, Samael and his assistants delivered to God, within the time being, twenty-five new trained apprentices.

The Lord then entrusted them with one hundred and twenty-five new babies. And this generation was slower than the previous one, and thus successively, until, after the first thousand and five hundred angels, the levels of imperfection stabilized.

All the angels that arose from there held quite similar physical and intellectual abilities to each other. However, markedly inferior to those of the Seraphim, or Leaders, the caste organized by Samael to gather the first one thousand and five

hundred angels and command the Cherubim, or Vassals, the lower caste that agglutinated the others.

Out of this primitive hierarchy, Samael erected the primordial administrative structure of the Four Heavens, which would still evolve greatly with experience and the growing number of angels.

The angelic population was at six hundred and sixty thousand, when the first females began to appear, to general astonishment. At first, only a handful of them would soon become the majority in the new generations that were emerging.

In the face of this unusual event, Samael went to the Lord.

“My Father, what are these strange creatures You send us?” asked Samael.

“I have chosen them to be your companions,” God said. “Treat them with the same respect as any other angel.”

“But they seem so fragile --”

“You're wrong!” God was angry. “Do as I say! No questions asked!”

“Forgive me, my Lord. I sought to understand only to serve better.”

“Understanding is not required. Only obedience.”

Samael bowed his head.

“From this moment on, you will only come to My presence if and when you are summoned,” God said, dismaying His Firstborn. “There are many of you now and I have too much work before Me. Do you understand?”

“Yes, I'm sorry, my Lord,” Samuel lied, as he did not understand.

“Go now, My son. And continue to take care of creation in My name.”

Samael went to his throne in the Great Hall of the Silver City. Tears came down from his eyes. He felt bitter and hurt.

How could God no longer have time for him, when for an eternity there had only been them both, and no one else? Just the happiest days of his existence.

Samael had served and loved the Creator unconditionally. God was everything to him, but he clearly found that he was not enough for God. His heart was overcome with jealousy. Towards everything and everyone.

And that was the pathway to damnation.

## CHAPTER II

### Seraphim and Cherubim

From the top of one of the scarce hills of the Second Heaven, angels Michael and Ravel entertained themselves in an extremely popular game among their kind.

“Nice move,” said Michael, swapping his tired wing for the other to continue to protect himself from the rain that gently bathed the surrounding plains. “You're getting faster and faster. Soon, you're going to have to look for a more skilled opponent than I am.”

“The Silver City will lose its beauty before that happens, old friend,” laughed Ravel, also keeping one of the wings on his head. “You're a master at Gaborah. All I do is strive to keep up with you.”

The tragic friendship of Michael and Ravel, the source of numerous angelic songs and poems until the end of time, was particularly extraordinary for involving a Seraph and a Cherub in those early days. For then it was common for the members of the two castes not to get involved outside of work. The only obvious exception was between males and females since all of them had been born Cherubim and had been taken as companions by both the Seraphim and the male Cherubim. But not for everyone. Michael was one of those who had refused. Unlike his good friend Ravel, who had married Azazel, the most beautiful of all females, desired by Seraphim and coveted by the princes of the Silver City themselves, except Matraton, always alone and closed in on himself. But Azazel had the independent spirit, and she gave her free heart only to the one she desired. Ravel, wide-smiling and warm, who loved Azazel the moment he saw her and was taken by surprise to be matched by such a stunning creature. For Azazel had blue eyes like the crystal-clear waters of Tamberiam, the largest oasis of the Third Heaven. And her hair was of a golden superior even to the rich gold veins of the Gorthnens, the Deep Mines, a set of endless tunnels dug in the rocky and dusty Gorth valley, steep dividing between the Minarath and Krull mountains, the two black columns that rose at the southern end of the Fourth Heaven.

All the names, for all things and known places, had been given by Samael Morningstar, according to the angelic language and the designs of God. Prince Samael even baptized the angels, beginning with the third generation of Seraphim.

But his brothers tried to create some names for themselves. Like Gaborah, the Game of Mind, designed by Nathanael for the amusement of his subordinates in the intervals of the tasks, which soon spread through the celestial domains.

The pieces used in the Gaborah were actually one of the many small species of animals that had recently appeared in the three planes below the Silver City. Its appearance had provoked great surprise and commotion among the Heralds of the Lord. Samael had called them insects, Asharemn or Little Suspicious, always seeking refuge and safety in the shadows of vegetation or under the ground. Not that they had anything to fear from the angels, who loved them like God's other creations. But it was of the shy nature of the insects themselves, which were then beautiful and devoid of stingers, venom, or ability to fly. For evil, which would try all creatures seeking to subvert them, had not yet beaded upon them.

Therefore, in those times of seemingly eternal peace, angels still lovingly used insects as part of their games, with Gaborah being the most famous of them, for their simple but challenging rules.

Using the power of the mind, each player levitated from the ground a set of nine beetles of a respective color, usually black or grey. The one whose mind first forms, in the air, with their set, a three-dimensional figure obtained victory. The game combined mental discipline and creativity because one could never repeat a figure made by oneself or by the opponent. To this end, one counted not only the current match, but all those disputed by an angel. There was no risk of cheating because angels did not cheat. This problem would only arise later when others came to practice Gaborah.

Michael and Ravel were about to start another round, when a messenger arrived in a flapping of wings, a Cherub carrying the banner of Samael, a black background disappearing under countless rays of white light irradiating from its center.

“Michael, Seraph of the Twenty-Eighth Order, the Five of the Silver City summon you to appear before the Great Hall,” announced the messenger.

“I'm afraid we'll have to continue our game later, my brother,” Michael said, with a smile for Ravel. A smile that disguised his anxiety at the magnitude of that call.

Ravel nodded, saying goodbye to Michael, who left behind the messenger.

Worried about his friend, although there was nothing he could do, and leaving him six cycles until he needed to return to work in the forges of Tormel'ab, in the southern district of the First Heaven, Ravel took off to the eastern end of the Second

Heaven. There, the winding Iamujj River flowed into the vastness of Oerpeb, the Elliptical Lagoon, marked by the tiny and lonely island that Samael called Iarth Analel, Green Cradle, due to its bright and fragrant grass. But which had come to be known as Moen Atpeb, Altar of Water, after Ravel and Azazel chose it for the celebration of their marriage.

For the angels, marriage was a ceremony restricted to the bride and groom, who exchanged their oaths of eternal union before God as the sole witness. For this reason, Azazel loved that tiny island more than anywhere else, spending much of her time on it, usually reproducing on canvas the enchanting landscapes that unfolded around her. A work capable of extending into eternity, for countless were the hues of light that flickered through the insular grass, and endless, the combinations of colors that adorned the clear waters of Oerpeb. Each begging to be immortalized by the different pigments created by Azazel, carefully extracted from different types of flowers and tree trunks, as paint for her paintings.

Hence, Ravel's certainty that he would find his wife before her easel mounted on the Moen Atpeb, holding in her hands the palette and brush that he had carved himself for her. For Ravel was skilled at shaping wood as well as metal.

Azazel was absorbed in her art when her husband snatched her. They loved each other so much that words became unnecessary on such occasions. Their mouths preferred to be filled with burning kisses, leaving all the talk to the sensual ballet of bodies. Quickly disposing of their white robes, husband and wife rolled naked on the grass, in a tangle of arms, legs and wings, which became more intense as they came together passionately and deeply.

Azazel groaned and stowed at Ravel's cadence. Mad with pleasure, and at the same time, wishing to escape, Azazel sought to get rid of those mighty arms. However, Ravel knew his wife too well and held her tightly by her wrists.

All Azazel could do was turn her body over his, ending up sitting on that tireless lap. In her sweet agony, she would beat her wings, trying to launch herself into the firmament. Ravel, in turn, anticipated each of her movements. He held her tightly by the waist, holding together as if they were one. His wings began to keep pace with hers. They took flight in a dance of love that took place in the form of spins and whirls, so high that Moen Atpeb was reduced to a tiny green dot, lost in the blue water spoon, in which, far away, the Elliptical Lagoon had been transformed.

Finally, Azazel fell apart in unparalleled pleasure, her whole being contracted, from head to toe, from the tip of her nipples to the ends of her wings. Overcame and satiated, she broke down motionless in the arms of Ravel, who glided affectionately with her back to Moen Atpeb's soft grass. He threw her back on that green carpet and resumed her waist movements that honored Azazel's beauty. He reached an unforgettable apex within the most beautiful creature the universe has ever known. Then the folly of mutual desire gave way to the exchange of caresses and gentle kisses between the two naked angels who loved God over all things, but knew how to celebrate the gift of their Creator like no other couple, in that little particular novice in the Second Heaven.

The messenger stood in the Great Hall, announcing the presence of Seraph Michael to the four princes seated on their golden thrones ornamented with magnificent jewels. The fifth throne, larger and more imposing, central to the others, was empty. There was something about it that upset Michael. A certain pride that seemed to celebrate its owner instead of the glory of God.

Michael sought to ward off such a thought, for it was unworthy to imagine that any angel would feed pride to the detriment of the Lord. Especially in that blessed place. The Great Hall was erected by the Creator precisely to celebrate the covenant with His children.

Even the Five never ceased to be impressed by the majesty of the enclosure, unmatched by any known standards. Its black slate columns were the tallest and its white onyx floor, the most gleaming of the Silver City.

This was Michael's first visit beyond the immense white gates, carved from top to bottom with words of praise to the Almighty. It was not surprising, therefore, his stupor and admiration before such splendor.

“Welcome, Michael,” Nathanael said, with a smile as tender as it was characteristic.

Michael bowed to a respectful greeting.

“What do the First Ones desire from this humble servant of Almighty God?” asked Michael, anticipating, in his heart, the reason for that summons.

“Explanations,” spoke Camael, with severity. “Explanations of why a Seraph refuses to obey the Lord's plan.”

“And even more serious,” amended Gabriel. “Incite others to follow you in your mistake.”

“If you refer to the movement I have started, I assure you that I do not make any mistakes.”

Gabriel raised an eyebrow at odds. Camael had an expression of genuine curiosity. Nathanael exhibited his customary discomfort with what ran away from the routine. Matraton, as usual, was uninterested. His face, a cold and indifferent mask before the outside world. An insurmountable barrier to the thoughts he kept only for himself.

“Don't you make a mistake?” Gabriel got angry. “The Creator sent the females to make them our companions. Your ‘movement’ is a direct denial of this divine precept.”

“And it raises doubts and uncertainties,” Camael added. “By your actions, marriages that had been celebrated were not consummated or are in dissolution. The few angels left to take a partner now refuse to do so.”

“I understand your concerns, milords. But I would never, at any time, deny a divine precept. No angel would do that,” Michael defended himself. “Unlike the Five, created to reign in the name of the Father, the rest of us have been granted the grace to choose our work according to our abilities and our closest friends according to our affinities”

“For this, God gave each angel a personality,” Nathanael added, with the spontaneity that was peculiar to him.

“That's right, my prince,” said Michael. “Why then, I asked myself, would God not grant us the same grace as to the law of marriage?”

One could see the disagreement in the eyes of the princes. Except for Matraton's, empty and absent.

“Because it is not for an angel to interpret the words of God,” said Samael, rising from behind his throne. Michael bowed his head before the Firstborn. “His words are clear, just, and powerful. His love for us is infinite.”

“Yes, milord.”

“Our Father has sent us the females and the pleasures they offer precisely as proof of His love. What are you, Celibates, if you disdain for this divine gift?”

“We do not condemn the present nor those who accept it. We only consider marriage to be a distraction from our main task, which is to praise the Almighty.”

“This decision is not yours to be made.”

“I know that, milord. So, before I walked down this path, I asked God if I acted to His liking.”

Gabriel and Nathanael looked at each other, surprised. Camael leaned forward on his throne, with great interest. A spark of life sprang into Matraton's face. Samael, however, laughed, incredulous.

“Did God speak to you?”

Michael nodded.

“God has long not allowed anyone in His presence,” Samael said. “I would know if you had ascended beyond the towers of the Silver City to be with Him.”

“You don't have to go to the Creator to hear His word,” said Michael. “You can do it from anywhere. I got it from my quarters.”

Samael froze.

“How is that?” asked Camael.

“My doubts about celibacy were excruciating,” Michael said. “Distressed, I found myself asking the Father, during my prayers, for an answer that would cease my torment. In His immense mercy, He granted it. His voice whispered in my mind that I would follow the path of my heart.”

Samael was stunned. God had driven him away from His presence, and now Samael discovered that He spoke to others behind his back!

Grief grew in the First One's chest.

“God is everywhere and can speak to any of us. Just pray,” said Michael. “As you can see, my princes, the Celibates exist under the blessing of the Creator. He accepts married people, but also those who prefer to dedicate themselves solely to praise Him.”

Samael had ceased to hear Michael's last words. Conflicting thoughts struggled within him like a storm. Jealousy and envy. The most beautiful, proud, and perfect of angels, did not deserve to be treated like the others. Or less than any other. He was too good for that.

Being the Prince Regent of the Silver City was not enough for him. He wanted so much more. He desired God only for himself.

Battling such feelings and ideas, Samael withdrew from the Great Hall to the solitude of his private quarters, far from even the worried looks of his five wives. For if most males had taken for themselves a single female as a wife, it was up to the



Seraphim of a better position to possess two to four consorts. Being the Firstborn, Samael enjoyed the largest share, the five most beautiful females of creation, after Azazel. Their names were Prosperine, Rosier, Verrier, Astarte and Eisheth.

Locked in his private chambers, Samael knelt and prayed in the darkness for long cycles. He did so with all his will and faith, but the Lord did not answer him. For Samael did not ask for help or comfort. Just, by the selfish yearning to be God's favorite.

Overcome with despair, Samael destroyed, in fury, the luxurious furniture of his quarters. Bitter, he crawled to his favorite window. A deep, narrow, high span through which Samael liked to contemplate the darkness that existed beyond the dominions of the Four Heavens whenever he sought silence and meditation.

But this time, Samael Morningstar saw something entirely different.

Something that took him by surprise, and that was not there the last time, mere seven cycles ago, when he meditated in front of that same window.

Far away, in the void, a small white light flickered, stubbornly, as if struggling to escape the eternal darkness that seemed to want to engulf it.

Samael left his chambers, ignoring his wives, worried and still frightened by the sound of the destruction he had promoted, and proceeded directly to the palace roof. Fascinated, he admired, on the distant horizon, that tiny light provoking his curiosity. Without thinking, the Firstborn took off toward his destiny.

Endowed with his own natural brilliance, Samael seemed, by itself, a spark of white light, lost in the immensity of darkness that surrounded him.

And it was long and tiring Samael's journey to the strange bright spot. But as he approached it, Samael was rewarded with the stunning vision of its real dimensions and forms. Because it was huge under any parameter. Much bigger than all the Four Heavens put together. Besides, it was not a single light, but a set of lights. Millions of them. No, billions. In the most varied colors and designs. Elliptical, spiral, spherical, white, yellow, blue, red... Of a beauty only comparable to God's eyes themselves. To these lights, it would be given the name of galaxies.

And Samael was even more amazed to realize that these galaxies were made up of billions of even smaller lights, which would come to be known as stars.

Absorbed that Samael was before such work, too late he realized that he had glided into the Great Light.

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