

**Millennium Chronicles Book 1**

Expanded Edition  
Contains a New Ending



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Publishing

ISBN 1452839271

EAN 13 - 9781452839271

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Printed in the United States of America

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE BEGINNING

She looked at her little baby shivering in the thin hospital garment. Rising from her chair she moved to sit next to him on the examination table. Her hands drew his small body close to her to keep him warm.

“Mommy?”

“Yes honey?” She responded softly.

“What are they going to do with me if I am the one?”

“Not a thing baby. They’re not going to do anything to you at all.”

To comfort him she repeated what she told him a dozen times. “Remember I told you that if you’re the one, then they will use your special code to help other babies.”

“How will they do that?”

She thought for a moment how she could describe First Trimester Genetic Patching to an eight year old. “Well, if a woman finds out she is going to be a mommy, then she will have a special procedure.

They will give her baby your special code, so when the baby is born the sun won’t hurt them. The baby will be just like you!”

“Does that mean other kids will be able to go outside and play in the daytime like me?”

She laughed. “Yes sweetie! People will be able to play, live and work in the daytime and it won’t make them sick. Just like you.”

The door to the room opened and the team of physicians and genetic researchers entered.

Dr. Natas had a smile on his face. “We have good news Miss Reese!” He said excitedly. “Contained in the D.N.A. strand of our little Joshua is one of the keys to humanities

salvation. We've determined that young Joshua is the perfect candidate."

The other physicians and researchers that accompanied the doctor into the room clapped their hands in approval and celebration of the announcement.

The young Doctor reached out and patted the little boy on the head. "Josh," bending over he looked into the young child's eyes, "you're going to be famous! People are going to remember you for a long, long time."

Looking at her son she asked, "So what now Doctor?"

The Doctor looked up at Miss Reese, then back to the child. "Now little Joshua will have the best of everything. You both will have the best of everything. I will see to that. All of us here are well prepared to protect our little investment."

\*\*\*\*\*

*Today*

The events of that day played in his mind, as if they just happened yesterday.

If only his mother could have seen into the future, then she would never have let them examine him. She would never have let them use his DNA. She would never have let Doctor Natas take control of their lives.

Then again, he knew how hard his mother struggled to provide for her little family. She needed the money to endure the economic chaos of the times like everyone else. All she ever wanted was to give him the best of everything.

People will go to great lengths to survive. His mother was no exception. Could he really blame her?

He didn't blame her. She was a young single woman struggling to feed her family. She was in survival mode and Dr. Natas provided a way to alleviate all her worries and fears.

Doctor Natas, on the other hand, was a different story. The Doc knew what he had found in his DNA. It was the door to all of his selfish dreams of power and greed. He knew exactly what he was doing and he did blame him.

Josh was startled from his thoughts when a knock on the inside of his closed bathroom door caught his attention.

It was a signal that meant the children were ready for their lesson.

He knocked on his kitchen table twice in response. It let Rasha know he heard the signal and was coming.

Standing up from the table he walked over to the window near the sink to look out.

What he saw was nothing compared to the lush farmlands and wooded hillsides of his early childhood. It had become a sprawling barren landscape in comparison.

The climate changes, gamma rays, and solar flares had changed it so drastically over the years that it was beyond recognition compared to his earlier memories.

In the far distance the towering buildings of the world Capitol Megapolis Alpha loomed as it housed its placated masses.

Strewn between his old farm and the city were thousands of hydroponic green houses that fed the people of the large metropolis.

The sun reflecting off their glass made the wasteland before him look like a dead Christmas tree with strands of white lights. Megapolis Alpha was its star.

He couldn't count how many of the green houses he had destroyed over the years. Each one he smashed to the ground in retaliation for the injustices against his people.

Years ago he set the standard. If one Underworlder was killed, then two greenhouses were emptied and destroyed.

One Underworlder life taken would cost the Upperworlders of Megapolis Alpha the food supply for twenty of its people.

It really wasn't a fair trade. You can rebuild a green house and re-grow food, but you can't bring a human being back to life.

He didn't know if his policy ever prevented an Underworlder's death, but it let Doc and his UWH goons know they weren't getting away with the murder of innocent people without any consequences.

He walked from the kitchen window to the closed bathroom door from where the signal knock had originated.

Before he entered he gave one last look at the contents of the little farm house.

The day's electronic newspaper was displayed brightly on his reader. Dirty dishes filled the sink. His socks from the previous night lay on the floor. The sound of the steam washing machine hissed from the pantry. "Yes," he answered himself, "it has a lived in look."

It was all a charade of course. It was meant to fool the Upper World Headquarters in case they ever came to search the little farmhouse.

The ability for the old family homestead to fool any visitors was the least of his problems today. He was more concerned with how much longer they could continue to outwit the Upperworlder's advancing technologies.

He shuddered at the thought of the people in the Capitol waking up at this very hour to go to work on projects dedicated to locating and killing Underworlders.

He reminded himself of the few advantages he had in the situation.

The main one being he was the director of the whole UWH operation.



He had the final say over any technology to be designed and used.

His position also gave him many opportunities to personally sabotage their efforts before they even got off the ground.

But suspicions were growing. Many of them had been raised by his new personal assistant Dalton Graham.

Doc had placed him as his official aid in order to take some of the burden of his position off his shoulders. He had to find a way to get rid of him.

He opened the door and stepped into the windowless bathroom closing it behind him. He slid the door's lock into place and turned towards the bath tub.

Running his fingers along the edge of the tub closest to the wall he located the latch. With a pull the fastener released and the swish of the air pistons sounded. The huge claw foot tub lifted to rest on its side.

He stepped down into the large opening the bathtub had covered and onto the descending stairway below.

He laughed. This is what Dr. Natas and the UWH had been searching to find for sixty years; the entrance to the headquarters of the Underworlders.

It was right under their nose and they didn't have a clue that it was in the bathroom of the UWH's second in command.

This is where his people lived and breathed, worked and played. This is where his people who lived in the dark plotted and prayed they would never be found.

He stepped down far enough to close the tub without hitting his head. He pulled down hard on the strap welded to the tub's bottom until he heard the sound of the latch locking.

He had counted the number of steps in the carved out stairwell hundreds of times. It was one of the daily diversions that kept his mind occupied on other things besides his burdens and worries.

With one step he began the long descent. Each time the metal plated tip of his boots contacted a stone landing a hollow clank echoed through the stairwell.

There was just under a thousand winding steps of varying depths. There were 987 to be exact, and they led to large caverns over four hundred feet below the earth's surface.

When he reached the bottom Rasha was waiting.

She smiled at him. "That didn't take you long. I heard you enter the staircase after me. You caught up pretty quick."

"It's because I have longer legs than you do Rasha."

She chuckled and smiled. "You're working with the youth in classroom 2 today."

Joshua smiled in return and began to walk with her towards the class room. "Then we shouldn't keep them waiting."

Teaching in classroom 2 meant he would be in Brent's room.

His eyes had already adjusted to the dimly lit cavern. They kept the entire area dim for a reason. They had to keep energy and heat signatures low to avoid detection.

If they didn't, then satellite scanners or thermal earth thumpers could spot them quickly. It would mean the end of them all.

For obvious reasons there was only one room where a high amount of energy and heat was allowed. This was the greenhouse.

To keep scanners and thumpers from detecting the heat of the nursery they built it near a natural underground river. This was the standard building plan for all the Underworlder cities around the world

A special cooling canopy for the nursery routed the underground river's cold flowing water. It spread the cool liquid equally over its entire surface.

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