Out Of This World

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By The Author Of

Reign: The Beginning
Reign: We See Him As He Is
Reign II: A Story Of The Seventh Millennium
Reign: The Millennium
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This is fictional speculation, a sort of “What if . . .” story based on one historic position that there will be a literal reign for a thousand years which still lies in our future.

The author does not pretend to actually describe in this book what the millennial reign will be like or to predict the time for the beginning of those 1,000 years.
Introduction

The Reign began at the return of the King from the heavenly realm. He was worshipped by millions as the unseen King for over two thousand years.

The old book says, “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,” and “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” and “They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” From this we understand that our Immortals can and do indeed rule the earth under the Glorious leadership of His Imperial Majesty in Jerusalem. He is the first born from the dead of the ancient mortals.

When the Emperor returned after his long absence in the other realm, he immediately subdued the entire earth by his glorious power. He established his capital at the ancient city of Jerusalem and appointed rulers over the earth. The earth was divided into two halves, the eastern and the western. Over each of these was appointed a Viceroy who reported directly to the Emperor Himself. The Viceroy of the Eastern half of the world is John the Beloved who rules from the Isle of Patmos where he was martyred in the 1st century of the Emperor’s absence. The island was not big enough for the Viceroy’s palace, so it has been entirely enlarged and rebuilt to hold his palace and his court. Both mortal and Immortal resources were used to accomplish this. Many mortal construction firms were employed and the finishing touches were put on by the Viceroy’s angelic legions. The Western half of the world is
under the rule of Viceroy Luis Cepata. He rules from his palace in Montevideo where he was martyred in the 21st century of the Emperor’s absence. Cepata is not as well known or remembered by the Immortals, but the Emperor’s judgment in making him Viceroy has never been questioned by them. It has been questioned by some of us mortals, but mortals question a lot of things. We have no real authority so it doesn’t make much difference. The Viceroys, like all other Immortals were resurrected at the Emperor’s Glorious Return. Under the Viceroys are Territorial Governors or Over-Lords who are over large portions of the world. Under these Over-Lords are Metropolitans who rule over large cities and their surrounding areas. Under the Metropolitans are various local governors. These rulers are all Immortals who won their places by faithful service and often martyrdom for the Emperor during their mortal lives when the Emperor was not seen in this world.

Each Immortal, regardless of rank, rules from a Dais, a raised platform or out-door terrace which is always large enough to hold the entire local court. There is always an empty chair just to the ruler’s left reserved for the Emperor who visits every Dais regularly. He arrives with a full angelic escort and everyone, Immortal and mortal alike, falls on their faces. The Emperor always bids the Immortals to rise immediately. One of the lesser Immortal Princes signals the mortals attached to the court when they may rise. The magnificence of each Dais depends on the greatness of the ruler, whether he or she be a Viceroy, An Over-Lord, A Metropolitan or a lesser Prince. The size and glory of the angelic canopy over the Dais also depends on
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the rank of the Prince. There are some Princes in Jerusalem with the Emperor, the primary ones being Peter, the Master of the Feast, and David, the Lord Chancellor of the Empire. The angels of the Emperor are numerous and many are now visible in the world. They have their own hierarchy and they serve the Emperor and his Governors throughout the earth.
The Story

02.19.639 C.R. My name is Joan. I am the daughter of Andrew, the eighth heir to Mother Anna. My father’s work has been monumental and he completed the timeline of the pre-reign era and filled in many unknown and dark sections. I am now 18 years of age and my dear father Andrew has died. He has prepared me since childhood to succeed him. Elaine has given me permission to continue the work and the angel Lucius is now constantly with me. My mother, Alicia, is still mourning as I am but she is very proud of my succession.

[N.D.] I am happy to include in my journal the following from my father’s.

My name is Andrew, son of Patricia and father of Joan. My wife Alicia and I have been very excited about the birth of our baby. We are old to be first time parents. I have always been busy as the successor to Mother Anna and I have specialized on the era just about two hundred years prior to the Glorious Return of the Emperor. It was a very interesting period especially since the Emperor’s people during that time did not really know how long it would be before the great event. Many different groups claimed to know the time of the return, but these times would come and pass and still no return. Many began to doubt that it would ever happen. So many records were destroyed during the wars prior to the present Reign that it is a slow and painful task to piece together history between the first and second appearances. Mother Anna had started with the religious era after the Emperor left this world. She
had taken things up to the era of the dark times. My predecessors in the line have each filled in some part of the history after that. Our people are reading these accounts so that they might have a better understanding of the current reign which has existed for five hundred and sixty-six years now. Our Joan is celebrating her 16th birthday today. We are so proud of her. She has been studying very hard to be worthy of being my successor. Elaine says that she is confident that Joan will be designated. When the time comes, I will feel confident leaving it all in her hands.

02.21.639 C.R. I, Joan, am the ninth in succession from Mother Anna. I was affirmed in my offices in the year 639 Christus Regnus, of the Glorious Reign of the Emperor who rules the whole earth from Jerusalem. I am the Keeper of the Ancient Books, the Primary Interpreter of the books of Anna, the Chronicler of Imperial truth, and the Spiritual Primate of the mortals on the earth. I live in the Keeper’s Residence which has been here for four generations now. Some call it a palace. Occasionally some pot stirrer will become very vocal about our style of life and authority. His complaints pass through the mortal courts to the high court where the decision is reviewed by Elaine or the Metropolitan himself. The high court has always refused to allow any charges against us to stand and the Immortals have always affirmed the decision of the mortal high court. I am, however, concerned that someday the mortal high court will rule against us in some way, my father warned me about this, and Elaine will have to reverse them. This might cause some to be punished for rebellion.
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I am greatly privileged to stand in the place of my ancestral grandmother, but the responsibility of the offices also weigh heavily upon me. I have asked Elaine to correct me firmly and often. She has assured me that she will not let me go astray in any way. I do love her so. I feel so young to begin these duties.

02.22.639 C.R. My opening report: There is no concept of rampant violence or hardship in our world. The Princes keep everything, every event, even the forces of nature, in perfect steadiness. For myself and all mortals life is smooth and beautiful. We all have a pleasant life and I have a great deal of prestige in my position. The continuation of the titles to me from my father was not automatic. Elaine decided that I was the heir. I love Elaine, but most especially I want to be able to go where she goes. After she returns to us, there is a wonderful aroma about her, it is very sweet and communicates peace to myself and all the mortals. There seems to be an aroma from her breath itself, as if she breathes a different air in that place. The very air must be strongly scented and permeates everything there is. I have followed after Elaine on many occasions as she prepares to leave and longed to go with her. She will look at me as if to say that she is sorry that I can not go. Like a child I want to go where she goes. She told me once that she would like to take me, but that my body, which is somewhat different than hers, could not survive when she goes to places which are not in this world. She had hinted that I will be given some knowledge of this place. I think of it as distant but she tells me that it is actually very near.
This morning the guard informed my secretary that the chief magistrate of the mortal appeals court begs an immediate audience. The civil magistrate rarely requests an audience with The Spiritual Primate outside the normal schedule so I granted it as soon as I felt myself presentable. The magistrate, Cyril LaBaise, is fully 40 years my senior in age and I always feel a little uncertain in his presence but I try to hide it. The magistrate swept himself into my presence and stretching one foot out in front of himself bowed dramatically. In doing this he made full use of his long black robes with its snow white under suit. I always had to secretly credit the magistrate for his impressive style; he was nothing if not dramatic and very swank.

“Your Excellency,” he said loudly and very clearly. He glanced briefly at Lucius just behind me to my left.

“Justice LaBaise,” I used his honorary title which always pleased him.

Cyril LaBaise actually smiled. What a morning.

“I have, ah, one . . . small, small but vital matter to seek your counsel on today, Excellency.” He came toward me so fast that I almost backed away but I held my ground all the time telling myself that I was the Primate.

It seems that my sister’s son has presumed to infringe on your authority. I approached both the Governor Elaine and Metropolitan Sawyer on his behalf and they have referred me to you. For a moment he almost looked sheepish.

“I was not aware of this,” I answered.

“Yes, it seems that at a public reading of the ancient books, during a public time of sharing, he claimed to have
exclusive knowledge as to the meaning of a certain passage. It is from Anna 9 verses 13 through 21.”

I nodded, I knew the passage. He, nevertheless, produced his copy of the book and read the entire passage which dealt with a church high council of the Immortals when they were still themselves mortal and it pertained to the person of the Emperor Himself. In this council the Emperor, although absent at the time from the mortal realm, was declared to be “Very God of Very God.”

“This boy, young Cyril Benton, my namesake I am afraid,” the magistrate went on, “had the audacity to proclaim to all present, a crowd of about thirty-five or so, that he alone understands these words. That they refer to the Emperor’s deity and that he Himself, Praise His Glorious name, was never truly a mortal man. I have chided him severely. He seems genuinely repentant. What would you have us do with him, Excellency?”

For once the magistrate looked truly humble in my sight. I stood up very straight and glanced over my shoulder at Lucius. The magistrate showed slight signs of visible panic. Then I spoke very slowly and clearly.

“Send this young man to me,” I instructed. “He is merely lacking in proper instruction.”

The magistrate looked extremely relieved. He recovered his composure and backed away. I had never experienced such deference from him. I suddenly became more aware of my powers and responsibilities and I was honored that Elaine and the Metropolitan had referred the Justice directly to me. This was my very first case as Primate and I breathed a sigh of relief after he was gone. I was looking forward to meeting young Cyril. He was probably close to my age.
06.14.649 C.R. Young Cyril is a very interesting young man. He arrived the very afternoon after my meeting with his uncle. I told my doorman to make him comfortable in a room of his own in the residential annex and that I would have time to see him after luncheon. The doorman returned to say that Cyril did not bring a change of clothes and had returned home for his bags. After luncheon I sent for him to come to my study and he arrived immediately. He is a tall man with light hair. He is graceful and somewhat dramatic. He knocked.

“Come.”
He entered and stood there.
I looked up from my books. “Please be seated.”
He finally decided on a chair exactly opposite me and looked directly at me.

“Ma’am.”
That sounded a bit strange. If anything, I am younger than he is.

“Please call me Joan.”
“Uh, Excellency, that would not be, uh . . .”
“It’s quite alright, really.” I smiled. He smiled back. The ice was broken.

Cyril has a very bright and focused mind. We dealt with his heresy first and I soon convinced him from the complete versions of the Second Testament that the Emperor was and always had been both man and God. He became even more respectful of His Majesty. He expressed his desire to see the Emperor. I told him that I had not yet had the honor myself. We talked long and hard on many subjects and he was glad to have access to my library. Most of the works in the hands of the people had been summarized for them by my predecessors. We became very
involved. One evening while we were sitting in my garden
I allowed him to kiss me. He began to talk marriage. I knew
that I would have to consult Elaine about this but I put it
off. Cyril began to talk about his expectations. He wanted
several children and asked if I could handle a family along
with my responsibilities. I told him that I was sure that I
could. I began to experience considerable mood swings. I
could not sleep. I would lie awake for long periods of time
wondering if I was making the right decision. Finally, I
could get no peace until I decided that I must put
everything into my work. When I told Cyril, he was
devastated.

“My dear, I did not intend to upset you. It, it is not
because you are the Keeper that I fell in love with you. I
love Joan. Have I ever asked for any special favors of you
in your offices?”

“No, no Cyril. You are a dear. And if I could marry,
I would marry you. I am simply convinced that I must put
everything into my work. I am so sorry. You are still
welcome here and we can study together.”

That was not enough for him. The next day we had
a tearful parting. I would miss him always.

Elaine came to see me the next day.

“My dear Elaine.” I ran into her arms and
discovered that I was crying.

“There, dear Joan.” She held me tenderly. “What is
it?”

I told her my story. She was very sympathetic and
kind.

“We are a lot alike, Joanie.”
She had never called me that before. “Alike? I am a mortal.”
“I gave my all for the Emperor’s labors as well. I died a virgin. You will not regret it. You may be lonely, but in the end it will be worth it. You will have me for a friend,” she said holding my face in her hands and smiling sweetly. I have often been very glad for her friendship. She is my best friend.

[N.D.] I read in my grandmother Anna’s journal that things were not as peaceful when our Immortals were mortal. There was war and starvation and sickness and violence and great fear. The Emperor was in that other place with his Father. Whole nations would war against each other and people were not permitted to die in peace. The rulers were mortal themselves. There were some mortals who were committed to the Emperor and awaiting his return. But his power was not recognized by all. So they were a secret army alone in a strange land. There was also an evil prince who could not be seen by the mortals who inspired the hate and violence and misery. At the present time this evil prince is in prison elsewhere held by the Emperor’s power. I am glad of that. We live in peace. The Immortals rule righteously and there is no hunger or sickness under the emperor’s reign.

[N.D.] By the time that I was invested with the title of Prime Interpreter of the Sacred Writings and my other titles I had all but memorized the writings. These writings include the ancient First Testament which was given to my Great grandmother Anna by the Immortal Elaine herself. In
this testament the origins of the earth are described as well as the Law of Moses, the history of the ancient kingdom and its downfall and restoration. Also, given to Anna and now in my possession is the ancient Second Testament of the Emperor when he came in among us in great humility and the activities of those who were called out to Him. Finally, there is the Third Testament of Anna which chronicles the history of the Emperor’s hidden army for two millennia until the Glorious Return. The people have been given the First and Second Testaments in summary form by Anna and the Third Testament, sometimes called the Testament of the Presence, is entirely the work of Anna herself under the guidance of Elaine. Elaine leaves the interpretation of these works almost entirely to me. It seems that it is not a job for the Immortals. As the Prime Interpreter I speak in many great theaters around the world. Lucius always transports me to these events. I never remember anything about the transport. It is, no doubt, instantaneous for Lucius and for me. When a mortal is transported the opening of a portal is necessary; the Immortals and angels do not require a portal; they are simply found to be in another place.

04.12.652 C.R. I recently read Anna’s account of her visit to the Viceroy’s court at Patmos Island. I have been there several times and it is always as beautiful as she described it and John, the Viceroy, is wonderful. I asked Elaine about two other close friends of the Emperor, Peter and James. Neither of them has a court or a dominion on this earth.
“Well, I can’t tell you too many specifics,” Elaine answered me. “But, of course, there are positions to be filled at the Imperial Palace.”

“Around the Emperor in Jerusalem?”

“Yes. There and at the much larger palace off world. Regents and such,” she said. “And then there are other places,” she added softly.

“Other places?” I asked. “Where besides at the Imperial court?”

“Other places. Other worlds.”

“Like this one?”

“Yes.”

“Oh. Perhaps I had better keep that in my private journal,” I said.

“Yes, perhaps you should.”

[N.D.] The Immortals seem to have experiences when they transport. When they are among us, we are happy. They do not all leave us at the same time. Some of them are always with us. Many believe that when they are gone, they are at the Imperial Court in Jerusalem. Elaine tells me that this is not always true. That not only can the Immortals travel anywhere in this world, but they can also go to another place where the Emperor is sometime in residence. This place, this next-door-place, is not far away but we can not enter it. I have asked Elaine many questions about this place, but she does not give very long answers to my questions. I long to go there. Sometimes I don’t think I can stand it if I do not. I am trying . . .

“Excellency!”

“Yes, Gerald, I was trying to write.”
“A thousand pardons, Excellency. I deemed this of significant importance.”

Of course, Gerald is an excellent secretary. He would not interrupt my work needlessly.

“The angel, your angel Lucius, has brought someone that you will want to see.”

I went to the outer chamber to find Lucius holding the arm of a young male mortal.

“The Metropolitan and Elaine send this man to you,” Lucius said.

“What is you name?” I asked.

“William, Ma’am. I am sent to the Lord Metropolitan by her highness Janice to be with you.”

“To be with me?”

“Yes, Ma’am.”

What are the Immortals up to? Surely not a mate for me. Elaine and I have settled that. What is there about the boy that they want me to observe?

“How old are you?” I asked.

“Nineteen, Ma’am.”

“What do you do?”

“I have dreams, Excellency.”

“Dreams?”

“Yes, Excellency.”

He paused.
“They seem to be unusual, Ma’am.”
“Tell me about them.”
“Well, at first I would know I was dreaming, but I couldn’t remember them.”
“Continue.”
“Gradually, I became aware of what I was experiencing in my dreams.”
“Let us sit and talk,” I said.
“Yes, Ma’am. As I was saying, I became aware that I was traveling in my dreams.”
“With an angel?” I was curious now as I have traveled with Lucius many times but I never remember anything about the journey.
“Sort of. I mean, I sense that there are angels nearby, although I do not always see them. But I do not believe that my body actually travels.”
“Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell,” I muttered.
“Yes, Ma’am. It’s, it’s hard to be sure.”
“That is a phrase of a Second Testament leader, “whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell.” I told him.
“Yes, I understand.”
He is a very amiable boy.
“At first I saw visions of the capitol.”
“Jerusalem?”
“Yes, Ma’am. I even glimpsed the Emperor from a distance. But, then I began to see other places. At first I was not sure where these places were. Perhaps on the earth, sub-capitals or provinces of the Emperor. But I also glimpsed the Emperor in these places. I saw many

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Immortals but never a mortal. So I began to believe that these were the ‘next-door-places’ that we know are open to the Immortals.”

“Go on,” I said almost anxiously. Elaine knew that this was my passion.

“At first I had believed that I was seeing the Immortals inside some sort of rooms, but the walls were not distinct. I thought, at first, that they were merely individual palaces. The walls are covered with some sort of hangings, gossamer like. But just as there were no mortals present, there was also no outdoors as we know them. You know, fields with trees and grass and flowers.”

“I see.”

“I have been to this place many times in my dreams and I began to understand what it is. Excellency, it is a gigantic palace.”

“A Palace?”

“Yes, a gigantic palace.”

“How gigantic?”

“I can not tell. Perhaps larger than the whole earth.”

Now that is large, I thought to myself.

“Yes, I believe that it is the real Emperor’s palace. That the one in Jerusalem which is quite magnificent is only a tiny copy of this one in this ‘next-door-place.’ It is where the Immortals go to be with the Emperor without us. Only there, he is not exactly the Emperor. There they are, they are . . . family. They fellowship with him as brothers and sisters. There is no formality there like there is at court here. And I think, I think, . . . I’m not too clear on this Excellency. . . I think that the Emperor’s Father is also nearby when they are together in this palace.”
He stopped speaking and we both sat in silence for several moments. I was enthralled. I could not understand why this young man was allowed to see such things and I, the Spiritual Primate, was not. But I was thankful that Elaine had this young man sent to me. He looked at me with some anxiety and a question in his eyes and I realized that he was waiting to see if I actually believed him. I had been so absorbed in my own reaction that I had neglected to reassure him, not an acceptable attitude for someone in my position. I hurried to reassure him. I groped in my mind for his name.

“Wil... William.” His eyes brightened. “I am sure that this is a great gift that you have been given and I want to chronicle it as completely as possible and add these accounts of what you have seen, and possibly will yet see, to the sacred texts.”

He looked relieved and surprised at the same time, relieved because I believed him and surprised that I wanted to put his dreams in the texts. I continued. “You must tell me more, everything. We will schedule sessions together. You will stay here at the residence.”

Over the next weeks and months I chronicled every thing that William told me about his dreams. We met each morning while his memory of his dreams was still fresh. He did not have any waking visions. Everything came as he slept. In the day time, after our sessions, he seem quite normal. He loved to swim in my pool and play on my sporting courts. He read in my library and he even sang a few songs. He was always very respectful, even formal, to me even though we were close to the same age.
William explored extensively the magnificence of this “next-door-place” palace. It became obvious that a mortal lifetime would not be long enough to see it all. There were millions of rooms. These rooms were all gigantic and self lit, the walls actually glowed. The rooms could be used for any purpose and the Immortals had the ability to change them according to their wishes. Since William’s visions or visits were limited in time he could never actually plumb the depths of the palace or even the rooms. Everywhere there was love among the Immortals. They all appeared to be pretty much the same age. Some of them had marks on their bodies which appeared to William as fine jewelry only a part of their flesh such as it is. We decided after a while that the markings were a reflection of wounds sustained for the Emperor in the past. Now they were beautiful jewelry. This jewelry does not appear on the Immortals we see here. Here they have only their symbols of office, coronets and scepters. Except for what Anna saw in the Emperor’s hands and these marks were not jewelry, they were wounds, not even scars but the wounds themselves. Since Anna did not tell us any more, we can not say that they are exactly open wounds. Some of the rooms in this palace were assembly rooms and some were private rooms.

There were also hallways leading to rooms. There were angels in the hallways. These angels looked much like the ones we see here on earth, but they seemed to glow much brighter in this palace. The farther up in the palace you went the larger and brighter the rooms, not that the very lowest ones were in any way dull or small. The scale was simply greater that anything we can imagine. Sometimes there were bright colored lights in the walls.
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Sometimes these lights “danced.” Some of the largest rooms were dining halls where the Immortals ate fine feasts with the Emperor. One time, while seeing a very high and magnificent and bright room, one wall seemed almost transparent and there was a great and mighty presence on the other side of this strange wall. William thought that it was the actual presence of the Emperor’s Father. Near this wall the Emperor seemed to be teaching masses of Immortals. We wondered what the Immortals could be in need of learning. William could not hear what was being said. Lucius, in one of his rare talking periods, hinted that the Emperor was teaching the Immortals about His Father, their Father, and that this teaching would never end. A teaching that would never end? I wondered about this. How could we, or the Immortals, ever be complete if there was a teaching that would never end? But, I am convinced that Lucius is not capable of lying. William said that at one point he thought he remembered seeing the Emperor take a large group of Immortals through this wall into the presence of His Father.

My time with William was the high point of my days. Most of the time it was just me and William and Lucius. Lucius was quiet. William was duly respectful to Lucius as all mortals are to the angels in spite of the revelations that he has seen in his dreams. Mortals have all seen angels either at the Dais of some ruler or in their duties observing mortals or transporting them to trial. But since I am the only mortal with an angel of my own, most mortals are very cautious around them. Gradually William became more comfortable around Lucius.
09.12.657 C.R.  Today I have my meeting that I have each year with the Governor of the East coast of North America, Over-Lord Janice Holland. I dress formally for the occasion at the Residence and Lucius takes me to the Dais of the Governor. My little niece and probable heir Mandie asked me about my robe. It is light blue with white borders and a bronze crest which is placed over the heart of the wearer. My ancestor May added the crest. The robe was given to my ancestor Mark on the occasion of his wedding. The crest is a simple bronze shield about five inches in height with a white open book in the center and the word “truth” under the book. It has been the official crest of my offices since May’s time. I have added, with Elaine’s permission, a thin red border around the crest to match the red belt that is tied around my waist when I wear the robe which highlights my office as the Spiritual Primate of the mortals on the earth.

Upon arrival at her Dais Lucius precedes me through the portal although I am not aware of this action. After I step out, I await a nod from the Governor in case she is in the midst of another matter. This day she was free at the moment of my arrival. The Dais was full of Immortals and the surrounding area was packed with mortals with the officials in the front of the crowd. I walk to the Dais and bow deeply to the Governor. She nods slightly. No amount of rank as a mortal ever puts us on an even keel with an Immortal. The Governor then thanks me for the past years’ work. I thank her for the compliment and report briefly on the meetings that I have had during the year and offer my opinion as to the faithfulness of the reading of the ancient books and the writings of Anna and
her successors by mortals. She then asks me to take a short stool next to her on the Dais and we all share some wine and cakes made especially for the occasion. This was my tenth appearance before the Over-Lord in this regard. The Metropolitan of Atlanta was there as usual smiling proudly. Elaine was with him. During the polite talk over refreshments the Over-Lord mentioned something that I had never heard before.

“Elaine, I know that you are particularly proud of Joan.”

“Yes, Janice, she is very competent in her duties, very competent.”

“As the Emperor’s Legate in this matter and the one who appoints the successor you too are to be complimented.”

“Me, Janice, why?”

Elaine did not seem at all surprised by this apparent slip of the tongue. I did notice that I was the only mortal close enough to hear it.

“Why? Because, sister, you have chosen and trained Anna herself and each of her successors for nine generations of mortals now. It is working out very well. I know that the Emperor is pleased. You might ask Him about it the next time you see him,” Janice continued.

“Thank you, Janice. Indeed I will. We do live to please Him.”

“Yes, indeed we all do. And is it not wonderful?”

All at the Dais agreed. I longed to meet the Emperor. Only Anna herself and May have had that privilege in our succession. William has not even seen him closely in his dreams. I have thought of telling Lucius to
take me to the Imperial Court, but it is a legend among us that you only go there when invited and I have not been asked to go there. Anna met Him at the Dais of our Metropolitan but the Emperor has not visited the Metropolitan so far during my lifetime.

I have not mentioned Elaine’s status to any mortals. My successor may reveal this from my private journals should she or he see fit. She is the Imperial Legate from the Emperor in charge of the Annatic line and also under Governor to the court of the Metropolitan Henry Sawyer. I do not believe that any of my predecessors have ever dreamed of the importance of our work, except maybe May. She is an ongoing wonder and a mystery, dear little May.

I have read May’s account of her visit to Jerusalem over and over. Her description of the Throne area is a key. She said, “A wide permanent sort of portal is always open behind the throne. You can not see very far in because of a sort of mist or veil. But if you stand to the side of the audience chamber, you can tell that there is another throne back to back to the one here, or perhaps they have a common back, one throne with a seat on each side.”

[N.D.] One morning William arrived at my study very excited.

“Excellency, I have had the most wonderful dream so far.”

I motioned for him to sit and handed him a drink.

“It started again in one of the great hallways in the gigantic palace.” He was so excited that he started talking
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before he found his seat and almost dropped his drink. I helped him and he continued to talk without stopping.

William continued, “I walked for what seemed to be miles. I passed a few people, Immortals, but as usual they did not acknowledge me; I don’t think they see me. I took several turns; I don’t know why I made the decisions that I did. Then at the end of the hall I saw two great doors. I walked up to them. The handles were low, at the normal height. I pressed down on the right one and pushed hard on the door. It glided open easily and gracefully and I went in. It was an enormous throne room. There were many beautiful large angels at various vertical levels in the room. The room was self-lighted and filled with a light mist. The smell was sweet and delightful. As I walked through the room unnoticed, I neared the throne itself. It was on a golden marble Dais. There were twelve steps up to the throne. The Emperor sat on the throne in his white robe. He was smiling a beautiful smile and everyone was delighting in His smile. As I approached from the side, I noticed a large open portal behind the throne. The throne on this side of the portal shared its back with another one on the other side. I could not see very far into the portal. There is a sort of a mist which functions as a veil, so I do not know where it led. There were no mortals on the side I was on in my dream, only the Emperor, Immortals and angels. The angels around the throne were different than any I have ever seen on earth. They hovered always and each had six wings. The wings are just a blur, but I could still count three pairs on the back of each angel.”

I did not respond at first to William. I had to decide just what he was allowed to know. Obviously, the other
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side of William’s throne is in the temple in Jerusalem. At that one place the seen and unseen worlds come together at the veil and the throne of the Emperor in both of His realms. What a beautiful creation. But how much of this can I tell to the world? This has always been a problem for the Keeper. We have always felt that some things were better left in the family journals, but, on the other hand, we have a duty to tell all that we can. I must ask Elaine. I sent William to rest while I considered it all.

I told Lucius to ask Elaine if I could see her. In about 30 minutes Elaine appeared.

“You did not have to come to me,” I said. She sat next to me. I love her so.

“How often do you call? I am glad to come. What is it?” Elaine asked.

I showed her May’s entry. I do not know if she had ever seen it before. When she finished, I told her about William’s dream. She sat for a minute.

“I have been to that portal, the Throne Portal,” Elaine said softly. “It is the only portal that we have to use. There is nothing in May’s writing or William’s dream that is not true. You do not know how much to publish.”

I nodded.

“That has always been left to your line.”

“I know. This time I am stumped.”

“You meditate on it for a while,” she touched my hand. “And I will ask the Emperor, if necessary.” Before long she left.

I have often wished that we had the Helper, the Presence, that the Immortals had when they were mortal. We have the Emperor Himself, so I feel guilty when I think
such thoughts. My line also has Elaine to help guide us and she is the Imperial Legate. I thought about this until bed time and slept soundly.

[N.D.] I fear that I have contributed to William’s drive to learn more and more about what he was seeing in his dreams. I did now know that he had taken to strenuous exercise that would help him to sleep more often and for longer periods of time. It was during one of his reports that I realized how intense he had become. He was telling me about his wanderings in the halls of the palace behind the veil in his dreams. He had taken to reclining for his report and since he appeared to be more comfortable, I did not object.

“I know I have been down the same hallway many times. Don’t ask me how I know because these halls all look so much alike, but I just know. I have been past the throne room as seen from the door off this hall several times and the large banquet room which has the strange bright wall which seems to lead to the presence of the Emperor’s Father. No one, even the Immortals, can go in there except when they are with the Emperor. But last time I discovered something that I had not seen before. I say discovered but I realize that I have no control over where I go when I am on these sojourns, even though I sometime think that I choose which way to turn. For the first time I actually got to the end of this main hallway that I have been telling you about. don’t know if I really went further or whether things changed. The entire palace there is so very immense, bigger than the whole world I am sure. I went through a door near the end and then the door at the end of
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this hall. The door near the end opened into the most enormous room I have ever seen. It was very bright and inhabited by myriads of angels. They were impossible to count. They hovered at many levels to near the top of the room but it was so high that I could not actually see to the top and they were in so deep that I could not see that wall either. They seemed content and quiet, but there was also a feeling that they wished they could have something to do. I believe it is the Emperor’s Reserve of angels. It proves that there is no situation which would be too difficult for angels to deal with.

There is a simple door at the end of the hall. It looks like all the other doors in the palace, grand and solid. The door lever is ornate and golden like all the others. The door is not particularly wide and, like all the other doors, there is no lock. I put out my hand to open it and suddenly, in my dream, I became very hesitant. Somehow I knew that this door led to somewhere quite overwhelming. Slowly I worked up the courage. I touched the door lever. I push down gently almost hoping that it would not open. But the lever pushed easily and went completely down. I leaned against the door slightly. Like all the doors here it opened easily. I stepped out onto a balcony with a railing. There was nothing before me but worlds. Stars and worlds and lights by the millions. I moved to one side of the porch. It was attached to the side of the palace. I turned around to look at the palace itself and it was so far to the top or bottom or sides that I could not see the end of it. The porch was probably miles and miles high on the side of the palace. I was convinced of its enormity. I noticed a gate in the center of the railing around the porch. ‘A gate to
where,’ I asked myself. There was nothing but space beyond. An Immortal came through the door. As usual no one sees me when I am there in my dreams. Maybe I am not really there, who knows? This Immortal moved directly to the gate and opened it and stepped out. Immediately he was gone and I knew that he was on one of those worlds that I could see in the distance. This must be how they leave the palace and travel to other worlds. Perhaps they rule there as well.”

William seemed exhausted but he insisted that there was one more dream that was even more important. “I don’t know why but I was beginning to think that I could have a limited amount of control on these trips,” he continued. “The next time I found myself in this central hall I determined to wait outside the banquet room with the strange wall that led to the presence of the Emperor’s Father. I found myself there in my next dream and I was able to stop and wait by the open door of this room. There was a banquet in progress. I could see the Emperor’s table over near that wall and the thousands upon thousands of banqueters. Angels were bringing food in on great trays. A young Immortal woman came through the door and I begged her to take me to the Emperor’s table. She was strangely able to hear and see me and she agreed. She took me right up to the Emperor’s place and sat me beside Him. He did not turn or speak but in a few minutes he motioned for those right around Him to follow Him through the wall. I went along. I shouldn’t have. I may never recover.”

“William, William, you don’t have to continue,” I urged.

“Yes, just a little more.”
“The Emperor’s Father exceeds Him in Glory,” William said. Then he started to cry. “You know the accounts of the Emperor here on earth, like when mother Anna saw him at the Dais.”

“Yes.”

“His Father radiates a light and a benign heaviness that is unbearable to mortals.”

“Does He have a shape, a body?” I asked.

“Not exactly, but you can tell where He is concentrated. But it is all just too much!”

“What about the Immortals? When they are in the Presence?”

“They too seem overwhelmed, but it does them no harm. The Emperor is always teaching them something about His Father. But even they do not stay there for very long. Only the Emperor can bear constant exposure. But for us, for us, Keeper, it is just too much.”

William broke into uncontrollable sobs and I could not get him to stop. These escalated into a seizure and then he passed out. I was very frightened and sent Lucius to ask Elaine to come. I had never thought that there could be too much goodness in our lives.

Elaine arrived before William woke up, I think it was only about 6 or 7 minutes. I explained what had led up to this.

“I am afraid that he has gotten over zealous,” Elaine said. She laid her hand over his heart.

I agreed. “What should we do?” I asked.

He began to come around. We both comforted him. He began to recognize us both.
“Keeper. Excellency, I . . . what?”

“Just relax,” I said.

After a few minutes he was ready for some water.

“You must stop pushing yourself,” I told him. Surprisingly he offered no argument.

“I have strengthened your body,” Elaine said. “But you must do as the Keeper says. Do not expect any more dreams until I permit it.”

William agreed. Evidently this last dream had totally drained him. Elaine signaled me to walk her to the door. “He will not dream for some time now. But he will rest easily. He will not be allowed near the Emperor’s Father again. He can not endure the fullness of it. Even we must be careful. Keep me informed on how he is doing?”

“Of course.” Then she was gone.

10.17.660 C.R. William stayed at the residence and continued in some of the activities that he had enjoyed at first, such as playing on my courts and swimming in my pool. He even got back to the library and did some research on his own. We visited and shared together every few days, sometimes once a week, sometimes twice. He seemed contented enough and I saw no reasons to be concerned for him. Then he began to spend more time out. This did not concern me as he was a grown man and I had offered him my hospitality freely. Before long he did not come back to the residence every night. Then he would only be there one or two nights a week. I thought of telling Lucius to go invisible and follow him, but this seemed out of character for him and I had never done this before with anybody. I was, however, growing quite concerned so I decided to ask
Lucius what he knew without first instructing him to follow William outside the residence.

“He is not doing well, Keeper,” was Lucius’ response.

“Go on.”

“He is meeting with a group that induces dreams and visions with the use of certain herbs and chemicals.”

I was shocked. Why should such a naturally gifted person resort to such things? “How much exactly have you seen,” I asked.

“I have accompanied him several times while you were sleeping, Keeper. He could not see me and I have observed all these things myself.”

“Observed them yourself as compared to . . . .?” I asked.

“As compared to accessing a report from the Legions’ vault.”

“The Legions’ vault?”

“Yes, Keeper.”

Angels can have a frustrating habit of never saying more than was necessary to us mortals. Generally, Lucius had been trained by my predecessors to do better than this, but he could still be frustrating.

“Why Lucius, why . . . the Legions’ vault? I, I am . . .” I was almost at a loss for words I was so frustrated and bordering on being angry which I am well aware has absolutely no effect on angels. I started again, “I am the Keeper, the ninth in succession since Mother Anna, and I have never been informed of the Legions’ vault of records. Why?” I knew the answer before he responded and began to shake my head in agreement before he was finished.

“You did not ask, Keeper.”

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It seems that all I have ever learned, or that any human would learn for that matter, would always be a game of 20 questions, or 100 questions or thousands. But I persevered none the less.

“What is the vault, er . . . like?”

“The term ‘vault’ is just a term, Keeper. There is no actual vault in the human sense.”

“That I am fully prepared to believe. Go on, tell me more. Do not stop until I bid you to.”

“Yes, Keeper, I will tell you all that I can on this matter. There are certain angels in each Legion who have the duty to store any information that might prove useful to us. This is based primarily on experience. We go to them when we need information. Much of this information is gleaned from our routine patrols over the centuries. There are connecting vaults between each legion of angels to facilitate sharing of information. I simply inquired about William’s activities. Then I followed him myself. I would think it wise for you to intervene, Keeper, before he does himself harm.”

I considered this a valuable and succinct report and I could not be bothered with anymore discussion about these angelic vaults. I had to find William and intervene, with Elaine if necessary.

“He is sleeping in his room here at the residence, Keeper. He was out very late last night.” Now he was anticipating my questions. It seemed that it was either one extreme or another. I went to William’s door and knocked firmly.

“Uh, . . . who?” was the response.

“It is Joan. I must talk to you.”
“Just, . . . just a moment, Excellency. I must make myself decent.”

There was considerable bumping around in his room and a wait of several minutes. I leaned against the wall to wait.

“I am so sorry, please come in,” a hastily prepared William said as he opened the door. He offered me the only chair that did not have clothing or something on it.”

“William, you might as well know that I am aware that you have been inducing dreams and visions with herbs and chemicals,” I proclaimed. I tried very hard to keep my voice calm.

There was a short pause. He looked directly at me. His brown eyes were very bloodshot and blurry. “Excellency, I, . . . I am sorry to have disappointed you. It was just that after all those wonderful dreams I became desperate when they stopped. I had to try something and I found out from some acquaintances that there were places where mortals did this. I sought them out.” He paused. “How did, how did you. . .?” He looked at Lucius who had come with me. I had not noticed. “Of course, the angel,” he said accusingly.

“Now, William, Lucius does what he thinks is best for me and my house.”

“Yes, Excellency.” He was retreating into formalism, so I changed my tone.

“It is just that I value you and care for you, William,” I said in a positively motherly tone.

“Yes, Joan, I know that you do. It is hard when a person has been blessed with such dreams to do without them. It’s like a addiction.”
“Tell me truthfully, William, do the herbs and chemicals help?”

“They are mostly herbs, and they do help some. But mostly they are a disappointment.”

“Because the dreams aren’t so good?”

“Yes, with them I do not seem to actually leave my own mind. It is just a rehash of what I have already seen.”

“What did they ever do? There are reports of these in the ancient records right here in my own library. It seems like they were always a disappointment.”

“Yes, yes, that is actually where I got into this. From the ancient records here. But in ancient times there were others, a sort of angels, probably not good ones, who, er, . . . helped.”

“Helped?”

“Yes, once the mind is loosened from the soul by the herbs, these sort of angels would meet it and help it to see beyond itself. Now it is only what is inside repeated over and over and changed around.”

“I see. Why do you suppose this is?”

He thought a while. “I suppose this is so because these connecting spirits are no longer available. They are bound away with the others.”

“Then this is not a good thing, is it?”

“No, but I need released from this longing, Joan.”

“Lucius, get Elaine. We will be in my parlor.”

I had William cleaned up and in decent clothes when Elaine arrived. She knew it was urgent when I sent for her instead of letting her set the meeting place. Lucius had briefed her.
“Now, William,” she said after we had gone over it all again, “I will release you from this longing.” She put her hand on his chest, He exhaled deeply and seemed to be at peace. In a few seconds his eyes appeared clearer. “You will have to occupy yourself with other things for quite a while now. I do not know if you will ever dream again. I had you brought to Elaine from your village when you first started dreaming because it was a gift and she wanted to know much of what you were seeing and hearing in your dreams. But you obviously cannot contain it, at least not at this time. I am going to send you to a sort of school that the Over-Lord Janice has. There are other seekers like yourself there and they all receive a lot of positive direction. Now, I make no promises, but if you are to dream again, you must first learn maturity and discipline. It is your choice, this school or your own village.”

“I choose the school, Excellency,” William answered.

Elaine turned to me. “I will give you this day and tomorrow to say your good-byes, dear. Morning after next Lucius will take him. He will be fine there and you may visit him at your discretion.”

I nodded and hugged her.

“I have missed you much lately, Joan. I want to have tea with you more often.”

“That would be very nice. Please, don’t let it be long.”

“I won’t, dear.” Then she was gone.

William and I had a very pleasant evening and next day. He was very relaxed and, I think, relieved. Late in the second day when we were saying our good-byes Lucius approached us. I knew what he wanted so I stepped back.
Lucius opened a portal and they departed on schedule. I instructed Lucius to remind me to have him take me to visit William in two weeks and every month thereafter.

02.01.671 C.R. My fiftieth birthday.
I have finally found an old notebook telling me about Elaine’s mortal life. She has never volunteered this information to any of my line. However, all of the materials found in my now extensive library have been given in good faith and I have full authority to read all of it and enter the information in records public or private. This little notebook is extremely soiled. It looks to be in her own hand. She probably did not have access to a better book to use for a dairy. It is held together by a coiled wire and is about six inches high and four inches wide. Elaine was the second daughter of a farmer in the mid-nineteenth century in Georgia. She had always loved the Emperor and volunteered at an early age to be a missionary to Africa. She went out with the full expectation that she would die in Africa. While there, she made many converts and caught a plague disease which was prominent in that era. She ran a very high fever for some time and final prayers were said over her. She was expected to die. Some of her converts prayed for her. The other missionaries thanked them politely and started digging her grave. The next morning she was much better. She was breathing easily and her fever was gone. She recovered and went back to her work making converts to the Emperor and taking care of and teaching the children in the area. She was captured by a rival tribe and treated terribly. They violated her and beat her. She was almost dead again when the missionaries found enough soldiers to rescue her. Again her converts
prayed for her and she was restored. They took her to a doctor in a large city and he said that Elaine was healthy and still a virgin. This was a miracle. Elaine said that the Emperor had restored her entirely, emotionally and physically. The government of the country that she was in was overthrown by rebel powers and she was forced to return to Georgia. At this time her home country was very near to civil war. Because of Elaine’s love for Africans she was distressed by the slavery which she saw around her. She became very active in the system that transported slaves out of the area and placed them farther North. She helped many of them to escape until she was discovered by those who were against her work and they beat her to death on a deserted road in Buckhead. It is the Emperor’s way to appoint Immortals to govern where they have been Martyred. The postscript to Elaine’s dairy was probably written by a friend who worked with her in smuggling slaves North. This person says that Elaine would have preferred to die in Africa, but this was not the Lord’s will. This is the way pre-Reign people referred to the Emperor who was invisible then. It is possible that Elaine would then have preferred to govern somewhere in Africa now, but she has been appointed Governor of Buckhead under the Metropolitan Henry Sawyer under the Over-Lord Janice Holland of the East Coast under the Hemispheric Viceroy Luis Cepata under the Emperor who reigns from Jerusalem. This is our beloved Elaine. She died at the age of 31. She was raised at the Glorious Return of the Emperor. We love her dearly.
[personal note: I will not release this in my public journal, however, I believe that Elaine’s position as Imperial Legate with the oversight of my offices is an additional honor due to her work in Africa.]

08.11.675 C.R. In my efforts to develop as much material as I can in my own lifetime I have been reviewing the private journals of my father and his predecessors as far back as Anna herself. Anna once questioned why the Empire existed. At first this may sound like a stupid question. But when we know that the Immortals would all rather be with the Emperor in the “away” or the “next-door-place,” the question can start to look rational. Anna was sure that it was not because the Emperor wants to lord it over us. Even His Princes do not seem to need the job. It is good for us, however, as Anna has pointed out. We benefit from the peace and power of the Emperor’s kingdom. Life is good for mortals. You realize this when you study the history of pre-Reign earth as I have. Even though this may be true, it does not seem like enough of a reason. I believe that in my studies I have cobbled together a reason that would be important to the Emperor and to His Father and to all the Immortals. It was owed to the Emperor as a man. He came as a man and was treated despicably by the mortals of his time even though He has always been good and shares the very life of His Father intimately. These mortals that treated him so still lie in their graves. Our Immortals were loyal to him while he was here as a man and all the time that He was gone back to His Father. They were transformed, both the dead and the living, at his Glorious
Return almost 700 years ago now. I believe that in the heart and mind of the Emperor’s Father the Reign is owed to the Emperor as a man. As God he can take what he wants and needs no satisfaction. As a man it is owed to Him. This is my conviction formed after many years in my office and much intense research. I hope that my successors will receive it and pass it on.

[N.D.] I am feeling very old and lonely today. I have just finished my quarterly address to the people which I began doing three years ago. I speak to them from the amphitheater near the Over-Lord’s Dais in New York and it is published and disseminated around the world by the mortals in my publications department. We have never been allowed the electronic means that existed before the Reign. It seemed to do more harm than good. Also, that kind of communication is taken care of by the angels and the Immortals when it is necessary. The residence has been greatly enlarged to accommodate all of my staff and I seem to have many more servants than I can use. I find it necessary as every influential mortal house wants the honor of having someone in my residence in any position that is available. So I have created positions that I do not need. When Lucius returned me to the residence after my speech, the main hall was full of staff and servants. As usual they welcomed me back with cheers and applause.

“Friends and fellow servants,” my major domo announced, “once again our mistress, the Keeper of the Ancient Books, the Primary Interpreter of the books of
Anna, the Chronicler of Imperial truth, and the Spiritual Primate of the mortals on the earth has brought great enlightenment to our people. May she live long and continue to instruct us well.”

I made it through the formalities and said that I needed to retire to my room and rest. Where did I find that windbag? How had it all grown so large? If I had done something wrong, surely Elaine would have corrected me.

[N.D.] “They find it necessary,” Elaine said. I had asked to see her. Lucius took me to her house near the Dais. “Joan, we do not want to suppress the mortals. They need to be free to establish certain institutions so long as they respect the Emperor and us properly. You can cut back on your house if you wish. It is all under your authority.”

Elaine makes me feel young. She never ages, she never changes. Right now she appears nearly 40 years my junior. I find this refreshing.

“Yes, Elaine. Thank you. I may make some changes. Or I may leave them to my successor. Will that be Mandie?”

“Yes. You have trained your niece well and she is of good character. You could share some duties with her to intensify her training.”

She looked at me very kindly. My days are nearing an end. I am relieved.

[N.D.] During my regular weekly conference with Elaine a few days later I asked if we could talk on personal matters after the work was finished. We were at her house near the Dais and she instructed her staff that we were not to be disturbed.
I took Elaine’s hand; she always allowed this but I seldom reached out to her in that manner. “You and I both know, Elaine, that my days are nearing an end and I would like to know what it is like to die,” I asked.

“Dear Joan, no sooner do I get well acquainted with a Keeper than you have to leave. I wish I could give you an account of dying in peace, but I can not. As you know, I died in the midst of pain and violence, and death was a welcome release. Since it was for my testimony to the Emperor, I have no regrets. But you will go in the midst of the peace of the Reign. Would you talk to a friend of mine who died in peace about this?”

“Yes, if this person is your friend, I would like that.”

“She is; she is my dear friend and we knew each other as mortals for a short time. We are closer now than we were then. I don’t mean in the way that we are all closer now, but that we spend time together now and have grown to be great friends.”

“You do that? I mean Immortals?”

“Yes, we do. In most ways we are still human.”

“I don’t know why I never realized that,” I responded.

Elaine’s friend was sent for as we talked and soon two Immortals arrived.

“Joan, this is my friend Mona and another friend Jacob,” Elaine said. I had not expected two of them. They were both Immortals but not rulers or princes. We all nodded to each other.

“Joan, please forgive me for surprising you,” Jacob said quickly. “You see I came also because I was
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transformed at the Glorious Return. Mona here was raised at that time and we thought that both of our stories might be of interest to you as the Keeper.”

“Oh, but Joan’s question was not as the Keeper, Jacob,” Elaine added.

“I am so sorry,” Jacob said and began to rise.

“No, please stay,” I said. “I would very much like to hear about both of your experiences.” Jacob sat back down and Mona began.

“I lived in Elaine’s time. We met at a few believer’s meetings and were on several prayer teams together. That, well, that was the way we talked to the Emperor in those times.”

“I am familiar with that,” I said.

“Of course, you are,” Mona said. “You are the Keeper, aren’t you?”

“Well, things were not easy then, but I was never given a particularly difficult time. Elaine was taken at a much younger age than I was. I lived to be an old woman. My mortal children always took very good care of me,” Mona continued. “I simply died in my sleep as you are most likely to do. I went to bed one night feeling fine. I said my prayers and went to sleep soon thinking about Je, er, the Emperor. Then I thought I was waking up when I became aware of a bright light. And, there was my mother. She had been gone for some years. She hugged me and welcomed me and said that she would take me to see Him. All my aches and pains were gone. I had had arthritis, a pain in the joints, for years. I realized that I could see very clearly out of both eyes; this was also new. I was aware of myself like when you used to roll your eyes as a child to be aware that you are looking out of a body; but there was
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actually nobody there. I recognized my mother when I looked at her but she said that she was just as unaware of a body as I was. But we were there. We were conscious. The Emperor had a body that was solid, but he was the only one then. All I remember was being happy and contented and time did not seem to pass or matter. Then when the trumpet blew I found myself back inside a body very much like the one I had had before except that this one was very light and durable. I was then Immortal as I am now. Does that help at all?”

“Yes, it does, but how do I know if it will be that way for me? I mean the trumpet has already blown. What is to become of us, we mortals now?”

Elaine took over the conversation, “Joan, I will tell you all that I can. In the first place, no mortals who have died have been added to our numbers as corporal Immortals since the trumpet sounded. But there is a place on, on the “away” side, where we are not permitted to go or to see into. The Emperor does go there. I believe . . . I believe, and I want to be so very careful here, that those mortals who are faithful to him here are in that place after they die just as Mona was in such a place after she died. I have no other insights for you except that I have heard his Excellency Gabriel speaking to the Emperor when we are “away” about another sounding of the trumpet. You do not live in the age of faith as we did. The Emperor is physically present here as we are. But He is the same man; he is the same God. And He will do what is right. Does this give you any comfort, my dear Joan?”

“Yes, Elaine it does."

“I am so very glad.” We embraced again. I embraced Mona as well.
There was a period of silence before Jacob spoke. “I, Joan, was transformed at the sound of the trumpet.”

“Yes, tell me please,” I said.

“Well, I was going about my daily routine. Things had been very difficult and some of us were hiding in some caves near our city. There was no other place to live but we had managed by His grace to scratch out a living in the hills. We hoped and prayed every day for the return of the Emperor. Then early one morning the trumpet was heard all over the world. Gabriel shouted the greatest shout ever uttered and we began to rise. As we rose, there was a tingling feeling all over my body that lasted only for a part of a second, “a twinkling of an eye,” and I realized that my body had changed. We were so glad to see the Emperor that we just rejoiced in his presence for a while. Time became unimportant.”

“Anna experienced that temporarily,” I jumped in.

“Yes, yes she did,” Jacob said. “I read that.”

I was surprised again. The Immortals read the Annatic journals.

Jacob continued, “Then soon we were all being given our tasks for the Reign. Many of us have tasks even though we do not all rule.”

I nodded and thanked them all. Soon Jacob and Mona opened a portal and departed. I sat in silence with my friend Elaine for quite a while.

[N.D.] My sister Marie’s daughter Mandie is a good girl. She has attained womanhood now and she is very interested in the work. She is a tall girl with fair skin and hair; very graceful. I am short and dark and have always
struggled with my weight. She will probably deal with the ceremonial portions of the office much more gracefully than I. She is also a capable researcher and scholar. She says that she will remain unmarried just as I have, but that will remain to be seen. If too many of us remain unmarried, the succession will get complicated although I am sure that the ageless Elaine who watches over our work will be able to deal with it all quite well.

[N.D.] Several days later I was awakened by someone opening the curtains in my room which allowed a brilliant flow of sunlight. In my awakening stupor the first thought that crossed my mind was that I had died in my sleep but it soon became obvious that this was not so. My arm ached where I had been sleeping on it. My next emotion was of anger. Who dare’s awaken me before I am done sleeping? Then I looked at the figure with the bright sunlight behind it standing in my window. It looked like the shape of Elaine. It was Elaine.

“I must ask you to arise, Joanie,” she said.

Have we gone back in time, I thought. Joanie?

“Come on, up, up, you have a lot to do.”

I squinted up at her to make sure that this was Elaine as any of my servants would be in for a severe tongue lashing. But, sure enough, it was Elaine. I struggled to arise but my arm gave way. I thought that maybe now she would realize how old I was and take pity on me. After all I was not a forever young and strong Immortal.

“Joan, are you in pain?” she asked as she hurried to my bed.
“Yes, somewhat, I have had some aching in my joints of late.”

I was still perplexed as to why she was here and what she wanted at this early hour.

“It is almost the third hour of the day,” she said as she took my arm with both hands. “This aching must stop,” she said. She rubbed my arm and touched me with her hands gently and tastefully from head to toe. I felt very warm for a few seconds. Then she arose and pulled me up by both hands.

“Now stretch,” she commanded.

I obeyed. I felt strong. I felt twenty years younger.

“Good,” Elaine said. She put her hands on my shoulders.

“Dear Joan. I am sorry, but I can not allow you to be old just yet,” she said. She was smiling. “You are not yet replaceable.”

“But Mandie, Mistress?” I asked. Having been treated like a child I began talking like one.

“It’s still Elaine, dear. Mandie can accompany you constantly from now, but you are still the Keeper. She can learn on the job, but she must remain silent most of the time. There are some things to be done and I can not wait for her to get the necessary experience in order to begin. Now take your morning bath and dress and meet me in your breakfast room.”

“I thought you were resigned to my death. Mona and Jacob, and . . .”

“I was, but I have been corrected. The Emperor wants you to serve a while longer.”

“Yes, fine,” I responded.

She walked out.
I could have been dreaming except that the curtains were still fully opened and I felt so wonderful. Again I obeyed. During my bath I remarked to myself that I had simply gotten too important in my own eyes. I was still a mortal under Elaine’s supervision. I would be ready for anything that she or the Emperor wanted me to do.

When I got to the breakfast room, Elaine was drinking some grape juice; she loved grape juice. My breakfast was ready but it was not my usual dry toast and tea. My cook, Yvonne, had a slightly perplexed look on her face.

“I had her prepare you something with more energy in it.” Elaine said.

I thought it looked to be enough for two or three people.

“Help me,” I said motioning towards my plate. There was meat and grains and fruit. More than I could possibly eat.

Elaine ate some of it, but as soon as I started I found that I was very hungry and soon devoured it all. Mandie showed up in the middle of it. She looked at my plate in surprise.

“Aunt Joan. Good morning. Mistress Elaine. So good to see you.” She was a singularly beautiful and intelligent girl. We both embraced her as I continued eating. She glanced at my plate more than once. She asked Yvonne for some fruit and pealed it perfectly and ate.

“Elaine has given me a major healing.” I said as I pulled my napkin out of its ring and wiped my face. “Something’s up.” She made one of those “what in the world” faces that she is so good at. What a girl!
“Aunt Joan, that’s wonderful. You must feel fantastic.”

“Yes, indeed. I do. All the aches and pains are gone. I feel twenty years younger. I think I am twenty years younger. I guess I don’t get to leave yet. Sorry to delay your appointment. But she tells me that we are to be together constantly now.”

“Great! Aunt Joan, I am in no hurry to succeed you. Believe me, it scares the daylights out of me. Mistress Elaine, “ she glanced in her direction, “this angel has told me that we have a lot to do.” I recognized one of Elaine’s messenger angels who had arrived with Mandie.

I sat and watched Elaine. It was her turn to tell us what was happening.

“There is another budding rebellion,” Elaine began. “It is on the Eastern coast of the far Eastern continent. It is very well shielded and quite large and it is still growing . . . Yes, Joan . . .”

I had motioned to interrupt. “Elaine, when you say it is well shielded, does that mean that you, the Immortals have not known about it from the beginning?” I was somewhat perplexed and it undoubtedly showed on my face.

“By shielded I mean that loyal mortals do not seem to be aware of it until they are about ready to join it. I must confess, I have been here now almost 700 years and I can never understand why the mortals would want to rebel. They have everything. There is perfect peace and abundance and justice in the kingdom. But still almost every generation another rebellion is discovered. The great evil Cherub and his followers are bound away, far away,
we cannot even go or see where they are. Yet in the heart of some mortals there is the urge to rebel. But I do want to be clear in answering your question, Joan. The Emperor always knows everything.”

“The angels tell Him,” I interrupted.

“Sometimes, but mostly His . . . His Brother tells Him. His Brother is all over the world and knows everything while the Emperor remains in Jerusalem or beyond the veil with us.”

“Elaine, I am the Keeper and I am old for a mortal and I do not know about the Emperor’s Brother, who . . . “

She raised her hand and I closed my mouth.

“Joan, you know about the Helper, before the return? Sometimes called the ‘Presence’?”

“Yes. He is like the Emperor. He lived within you and the other Immortals when you were mortal.”

“He still does. But he is also everywhere. He has no form.”

“Like the Emperor’s Father.”

“Yes, but the Father is always beyond the veil and the Emperor is usually in Jerusalem or beyond the veil with us. The Emperor’s Brother is everywhere and knows everything that is going on. As a result then, the Emperor and the Father also know as they are never separated. Often they inform the angels instead of the other way around.”

I felt like the youngest of mortals. I glanced at Mandie. She was smiling but seemed to be taking it all in quite gracefully.

“Now, Joan, Mandie, to continue,” Elaine sat up very straight and it was obvious that she would not be interrupted again. “We can, of course, just go in there and stop all of it. We can judge and then execute the leaders.

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We can even send the Prince Michael or an archangel in with some legions and quash the entire thing. They are not aware that we know anything about it. But the Emperor does not want to handle it that way. He wants to separate those who have been deceived from the true rebellious leadership. He wants you to go, take Mandie, and find your way into this group and try to disarm it and lead the deceived out before the true leaders are dealt with.”

I kept a straight face. She had never asked me to do anything like this before.

“I know I have never asked you to do anything like this before, Joan, but each rebellion since the return has been dealt with differently. The results have also varied. This is important to the Emperor. Somehow, he is judging the hearts of mortals during His reign. So we do not ask why he wants it handled this way.”

“Until you are beyond the veil with Him, and then you no longer care,” I inserted with a smile. Elaine smiled back, this had become sort of a private joke between us. I did not fully understand it with my mind, but I did in my heart because I knew Elaine. Mandie just kept smiling.

“Yes, yes, and this time seems a bit unusual to us as well. But He always knows best. Now, He wants you . . .”

“The Emperor asked for me? . . . Sorry, I interrupted again,” I said.

“He did, Joan. You and Mandie. My instructions for you are directly from Him.”

I was smiling as broadly as Mandie by now except that at that last remark by Elaine, Mandie was now showing some tears as well around those gorgeous luminous blue eyes of hers.
“The Over-Lord in the area is Li Chen and the Metropolitan is Su Ming of Nanking.”

I chuckled at “Su Ming of Nanking”. “Sorry,” I said.

Elaine continued patiently, “You will find a reason to visit them. Lucius will go with you as usual, but he will make himself invisible when you think it is best if he suspects something. You can command him to appear at anytime and he will appear brightly if it is appropriate. Of course, this will put a completely different complexion on things if you are trying to infiltrate their organization, so be careful when you tell him to appear. You may indicate some sympathy with their causes in order to gain entrance to their meetings, anything short of outright rebellion. You should be able to get in and using your credentials convince many of them to do the right thing. The Over-Lord and the Metropolitan will both be aware of what is going on and you may actually be contacted by the Emperor’s Brother while you are there. Mandie should be included in everything that you do because this is a rare training event and should not be passed over for her. There is a minimum of danger as Lucius will always be nearby and the Presence is always near.”

“Are you all right with this so far?” Elaine asked.

“Yes, yes, I’m fine. Mandie?” I glanced at my niece.

“Yes, Aunt Joan, I’m fine. It is so exciting. I am fine, Mistress Elaine,” she answered beaming.

“You might as well call me Elaine. We will be seeing a lot of each other from now on.”

“I will try, . . . Elaine.” They smiled at each other.
and I was very happy for Mandie. Now she would have Elaine as her friend always.

“Now,” Elaine began again. “Just so you will know what it is like to be aware that the Emperor’s Brother is near, I have been permitted to take you into the Presence.”

Mandie and I rose to go expecting Elaine to open a portal and take us somewhere. But she did not rise. We sat down again. Elaine closed her eyes and laid her hands on her lap palms up.

“Almighty One,” she began. “Please show these dear mortals what it is like to be in the Presence, your Presence.”

No sooner had Elaine said these words than I felt like all the breath had left my body. I heard Mandie gasp and looked her way. She was smiling and glowing and I suppose that I was as well. There was a sweet honey-like presence in and around us and it was very still. I began to laugh way down deep inside. When it became audible, I opened my eyes, I had not noticed that I had closed them, and looked toward Elaine for fear that I was being somehow disrespectful. Elaine nodded back and smiled and I knew that it was all right. I looked at Mandie, her eyes were still closed. Then Elaine spoke softly. “This little sisters, is the joy of the Presence.” I had never heard her call any mortal a sister. “There are other forms of the Presence which are meant to guide you.”

“This means ‘proceed’.”

The Presence changed to an urging feeling and then increased to a stronger urging, a compelling. I almost felt pushed off my chair, but I was not afraid.

“This means ‘stop’.”
The Presence was strong, like a hand in front of my face. Unmistakable. Yet it was peaceful.

“This means ‘not now’.”

It was a strange combination of “stop” and “proceed.” The “stop” sensation was first. Then I was overcome with the “proceed” sensation. Then they both lingered.

“Either of these can apply to whatever you are doing at the time. If you are speaking, it will apply to speaking. If you are walking, it will apply to walking. And so forth.”

“This means ‘not to fear’.”

The peace of the Presence was so magnified and distinct that no explanation of what it meant was really necessary.

“This means ‘danger’.”

I shivered. I felt assurance but I also felt slightly afraid and almost guilty. It was if the greatest danger was not from rebels but from disrespecting the Emperor or His Father or His Brother.

“We don’t think that many of the rebels speak the universal language, so the Presence will interpret for you and put the words that you need in your mouths.” Elaine said. “Don’t worry, it will be easy. It will seem natural. It is a joy working with the Presence. As you know, in our mortality we called Him, the Helper, and very, very few mortals are allowed to experience Him these days. “There are other guidance impulses, but they will be easy to understand when the time comes. With Lucius invisible you will need instruction from “the Presence.” Elaine
paused. “But remember, He is Divine. He is not your servant like Lucius.”

We looked back at her and nodded. It was a lot to take in at once.

“Elaine, is this how you were guided as a mortal?” I asked.

“Yes, the Presence was always with us and we learned that we had to follow Him very closely if we wanted to survive. You and Mandie will be in no real danger, but He will guide you throughout this mission.”

“I read in May’s private journal that she experienced the Presence,” I said.

“Yes, she did,” Elaine answered.

“However, she was very special, spiritual,” I added.

“She was, but she is not the only spiritual mortal that ever lived during the Reign,” Elaine answered with a smile.

“When shall we leave?” I asked.

“First of all, Mandie needs to move into the residence with you on a permanent basis. I have already spoken with her mother and it is all arranged.”

There was a sudden clamor at the front entrance as the porters arrived with Mandie’s things. She had a lot of personal things for a twenty year old woman. The servants showed them through and the porters glanced into my sitting room as they passed. When they saw Lucius and Elaine, they moved right along. I was again amazed at the speed at which things moved when Elaine was of a mind to do something.

“You will need to be briefed on many details before you go,” Elaine said and she glanced at Lucius.
Out Of This World

We moved into my private office as I thought I would have to write many things down. Before long Lucius returned with two well groomed Oriental mortals. They bowed respectfully.

“Keeper, we are at your service,” they said.

They nodded to Mandie, “Keeper Heiress,” they said.

That was a new term. It was fine with me. I sent for drinks and Elaine waved good bye for now. She was gone. I motioned for them to sit down. They waited for me to pick up my pen and pad.

09.01.688 C.R. Metropolitan Su Ming of Nanking is adorable. I did not remember ever meeting her before. She is so tiny and gentle and pretty. However, her firmness is legend as a ruler. The Over-Lord is a large man and almost frightening to look at, but he has a truly gentle heart. At first I had to remind myself that any Over-Lord would have suffered a lot for the Emperor as a mortal. We arrived at the Metropolitan’s Dais and the Over-Lord was waiting for us there. As this was the official part of the visit Lucius was visible.

“Metropolitan Su, we are honored to be at your court,” I said. “Metropolitan Sawyer sends his love.”

I turned to the Over-Lord, “Prince Li, I am honored,” I said and I bowed slightly.

“You are most welcome, Keeper,” the Metropolitan said. She motioned me to sit on a seat beside her. The Over-Lord was on her other side. Mandie sat on the floor beside my feet. This was another new honor for me. It was usually me on a stool beside Elaine.
In private the Metropolitan told us that one of the mortals at her own court was known by the Immortals to be heavily involved with the rebels. His name was Lin Pao. Pao was a young man and he worked at the court as a supply supervisor. It was his job to procure food and clothing articles for the mortal members of the court. The Immortals in most courts like to live close to the people and so they share some of the things that were supplied for the mortals. Pao had to travel in connection with this job, so he was away for a day or two at a time quite often. No one was concerned that he procured food since the Immortals could not be poisoned and they would heal any mortals at court that started showing symptoms of poisoning. Generally rebel groups disliked Court mortals as they considered them to be traitors against their own kind. Mandie made it her mission to get to know Pao. It did not take her long to succeed. Although she was considerably taller than Pao, that did not seem to bother him. He thought of himself as a big man if not a tall one. Mandie walked the line between sympathy and rebellion and was soon invited to a meeting. At this meeting she met several dozen young rebels and was invited to attend again.

“I don’t understand it, Aunt Joan,” she told me back at our rooms at the Metropolitan’s residence. “Their complaints seem so silly, things like ‘we have the right to run our own country’ and ‘it isn’t fair that we should be mortals and they are Immortal.’ I mean, what can they do to change their mortality? What can any of us do? Anyway, why shouldn’t the Immortals be in control. We have a hard time even providing generational continuity. You have been a good Keeper. When you die, it will take me decades
to get back to where you are right now in capability and wisdom and, and... everything.”

“These are things that lie in the human heart, Mandie. They don’t ever seem to change.” I leaned back in my chair.

“Why do you suppose, Aunt Joan, that the Emperor is dealing with this growing rebellion in this way? We know that He could shut it down in a matter of seconds.”

“I’m not sure, Mandie. I believe it has something to do with revealing the thoughts of the human heart like Elaine said. In the years that I have lived I have learned that each generation has to fight the same battles over and over again. You remember Mark’s testimony. He tried to run from his calling and he was Anna’s own son. The Emperor may think that most of these young people aren’t really that bad. But if His angels or Immortals simply shut it down, nothing is salvaged out of it. You know that before the Return He was called the Redeemer. It does put a great deal of pressure on my office to bring about the desired results though.”

“I believe we can do it, Aunt Joan. The Presence is with us.”

“That’s my girl.” We put our hands in our laps palms up hoping to enjoy the Presence, and sure enough, we felt Him strongly with us; peace prevailed, and what a peace.

“I am serious, Aunt Joan. I can feel the encouragement of the Presence right now, can’t you?”

“Yes, yes I can. Since you just spoke, it’s now kind of a ‘can do’ light-hearted feeling that is serious at the same time.”
“Yes, that’s it. We’ll do it, with His help.”
“It’s amazing how He enables us to hear and speak their language.”
“It is. I have been practicing with one of the under Governors. She knows our mission and is glad to help me,” I said.
“Is it her native language?”
“Yes. She speaks the universal language, but she spent her mortality speaking this language. You have had more opportunity to use the gift though with these young people. You never falter?”
“Not really. They are a little surprised that I can speak it. I guess they just presume that as the Keeper Heiress that I speak a lot of languages.”
Mandie went to enough meetings with Pao that they began to trust her. She started to mention that I was someone who could “understand” their feelings. She kept mentioning this until she got a chance to address the entire meeting one night. She recited it all to me. I knew that she had a good memory, but I did not know it was this good.
- “The Keeper come here?” one young man exclaimed. “She’ll come with that angel of hers, what’s his name, Lucius, and we’ll all end up executed. No, no, that is out of the question.”
“But what if she is really sympathetic?” a young woman asked. Some of us still think that we could get some considerations if we went to the Metropolitan or the Over-Lord about these things.”
“No, no, the same young man answered again. We’re in this to the end. If we’re caught, we know what it will mean. It’s all or nothing.”
“What does that mean?” another young man asked.
“All or nothing. We are no match for them. I’m really not sure why I joined.”
“Frustration,” another said.
“Yes, we want something, but some of us don’t really know what it is,” said another.
“Mandie, do you think we can really trust her?” the first young woman asked.
“I am positive. Aunt Joan is so loving and understanding. If, for no other reason, she would do it for me. She does not want her heir to get into trouble.”
They all thought long and hard.
“Will she bring the angel?” one asked.
“Can she leave him behind? I mean, is she able?” another added.
“She will not bring Lucius,” Mandie answered. “He does her bidding. He has always served the Keeper.”
“Served the Keeper? We thought that the Keeper served the angel,” another chimed in.
“No, not so. He serves her and she can leave him.”
It was quiet again. They finally said that they would have to contact other cells as only a very few in each cell knew anyone in the cell on either side of them. Their secrecy seemed elaborate.
“She will not bring Lucius,” Mandie answered. “He does her bidding. He has always served the Keeper.”
“Served the Keeper? We thought that the Keeper served the angel,” another chimed in.
“No, not so. He serves her and she can leave him.”
It was quiet again. They finally said that they would have to contact other cells as only a very few in each cell knew anyone in the cell on either side of them. Their secrecy seemed elaborate.
“Honey, your memory is excellent,” I complimented her.
“It’s not really that good, Aunt Joan. I think the Presence enhances it.”
She seemed very much in tune with the Presence. How let down she would be after this mission was over and He left her side.”
After some time Mandie was told that six cells had agreed to hear me. Mandie thought that this was probably almost half their numbers. How wrong she was. I was more frightened than I had ever been in my life. What was I to say to these children? Deep down inside I was even angry at the Emperor and Elaine. Surely they knew that this was beyond my abilities. I was almost frantic.

“Ask the Presence for help, Aunt Joan,” Mandie begged me.

“I have, nothing happens,” I answered.

“It will though, Aunt Joan, I promise. I know you remember in the ancient writings where it is said of him ‘open you mouth wide and I will fill it.’ The words, and the courage, come exactly when you need them. It is a simultaneous transfer from Him to you. I promise. You will be spectacular.” The meeting was upon us.

Over 500 aspiring rebels came to the meeting using an elaborate plan of approach believing that they would not be detected if they followed their plan. I spoke as I have never spoken before. I assured them that the Emperor was totally benevolent; he wants only good for them; even the most unimportant mortal is of interest to the Emperor and the Immortals; the angels are not there to hurt them unless they hurt someone else; I will represent them to the Immortals, my Governess Elaine, their Metropolitan, the Viceroy, the Emperor; I pledged my honor and my very position to them. One by one, group by group I could see that I was winning most of them over. At one point I was suddenly inspired. I knew by “the Presence” to tell those
who did not trust me that they were free to leave without consequence. Those who still had a hostile look began to look around and realized that they were seriously in the minority. Slowly they rose and began to leave, still looking suspicious. I whispered to Lucius whom I knew was nearby and listening to be sure that none of them were apprehended this night. After I was sure that they were gone and had enough time to clear the area, I spoke again.

"Now, my friends, in a few moments I want you to look around. But first I want you to know that the only angel that I brought with me is my personal aide Lucius and he is totally harmless. When I give him leave to become visible, look around, look up. Remember, I brought only Lucius. Now look!"

As they looked around them and upwards, thousands of angels became visible. Some of them gasped and started to panic. I reassured them.

"Remember my promises," I called out. "Not one, not one of them will go unfilled. You are safe. You are pardoned. You never had a chance of hiding. You have always been much loved. Keep calm, children. Keep calm. There is no reason to be frightened or concerned.

"Keeper," one young woman near the front called out. They all fell silent.

"Yes, Me Lu, what is it?"

"You know my name?"

"Yes, and so do the Immortals," I answered confidently. I was not sure how I knew her name. It couldn’t have been a lucky guess. It had to be “the Presence;” He had told me. He spoke it to my heart and before I could think and stop myself I spoke it out. It had a
wondrous effect. As a result Me Lu trusted me and many others knew it.

“Keeper, many of us are sick in some way or another. Does the Emperor care about this?”

“Yes,” another one said. “And we do not have adequate means.”

“Why, Kwan Jo, why do you lack adequate means?”

By now many more realized that I had called Kwan Jo by name. The trust level was rising.

“I do not know, Keeper,” he responded.

“Because you have not asked for means, for more houses, clothing, or for healing from your Immortals.”

“That is all? All we need do is ask?”

“Yes. The Immortals have a charge from the Emperor to help you, but you have not asked. They have been like you are. They can identify with you. They are kind. If they were not, they would not be here. They would still be in their graves. You want to be self sufficient, but you do not need to be. Will you ask now?”

Many nodded. Some cried out, “Yes.”

Suddenly Elaine appeared beside me with about 50 other Immortals most of them local and therefore oriental like these mortals.

“My Immortal friends with my Governess Elaine will now pass among you. If you are sick in any way, please tell them and they will fix it. Tell them of your other needs as well,” I said.

As the Immortals passed among them wonderful things happened and they began to love each other. There were hugs and even kisses from both mortals and
Immortals. Many of them left together. For the following several weeks there were vast crowds at the Dais of the Metropolitan. Groups of mortals and Immortals came and went and the entire area was transformed into a caring community.

Metropolitan Su told me, “Your mission here is a total success, Keeper. And word of it is spreading throughout the entire Principality. We knew that we could not help unless we were asked. Now you have enabled the people to ask.”

“Thank you, Metropolitan. I must now go back to the Western side of the world and spread the news.”

“Yes. Wonderful. You are truly the Primate.” I felt that I was fulfilling what had been an empty title into a blessed reality.

I should add, however, that the rebels that I dismissed were all arrested two days afterwards. They were judged and disciplined by the Metropolitan and others. Those who resisted capture were executed. Both sides of the message were now widely known. The rule is benevolent, but it is a rule, and an absolute one. I felt that most people would choose the benevolence, at least for some time to come.

Before we went home to Henry Sawyer’s court we stopped at Patmos to see the Viceroy. Mandie had never met him and I wanted her to have the experience. Patmos was still beautiful and the Viceroy was still the personification of love second only to the Emperor. He took a real interest in Mandie.

“The young Keeper Heiress,” John said and he put his arm around her shoulders. Mandie was glowing.
“Yes, Excellency. It is so wonderful to meet you.”

“And to meet you, child. Welcome to my Dais. Here, sit next to me, let’s talk. You have quite a job ahead of you, young lady.” They talked for over three hours that day and met every day for over two weeks. I busied myself by speaking around the Mediterranean. If I were younger, I might be jealous. But by now I was glad for every minute she got with him.

Mandie and I spent the next four years spreading the news of love on both sides of the world.

11.15.699 C.R. My name is Mandie. I am the new Keeper and Primate. My beloved aunt Joan died last night in her sleep. She labored until the last spreading the news of love. There was not a single day that she did not feel the Presence since she started this work. I long to be her faithful successor.

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