

Demons and Dreams

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DEMONS AND DREAMS

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By

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14 Chapter 1

15 Caleb

16 Very Early Friday Morning

17 My mind woke with a start and I struggled to open my eyes. *What?* My arm lay frozen at my
18 side when I tried to reach for my face. I tried the other arm, and it proved to be equally disabled.
19 *Don't panic Caleb.* Confused by my paralysis, I focused on the fingers of my right hand. The
20 knuckles cracked as I slowly moved them and my elbow snapped as I lifted my forearm. My
21 shoulder protested as I brought my hand to my face to rub the mucous from the lids.

22 A blood-curdling scream froze my movements. Deep chuckles echoed around me followed
23 by an eerie silence.

24 With greater urgency, I cleared the crust and pried open my eyes. Veins of light flickered like
25 candles and danced across the domed ceiling that arched high above me. My neck complained
26 when I looked left and again when I turned to the right. With every joint cracking, I sat up to
27 study my surroundings.

28 *Beds?* The dim light revealed row and upon row of beds with body-shaped lumps lying on
29 them. Humanoid shadows wove through the prone shapes while others floated above. *Floating?*
30 I closed my eyes, shook my head and looked again. It was hard to tell. The low light and distance
31 made it difficult to see detail. *Must be my imagination.*

32 I looked toward the bed on my right. A woman lay there. She was fully clothed with no
33 blanket to cover her. The bare mattress rested on a three foot high frame. She seemed to be
34 asleep. As I watched, she smiled, sighed and rolled over.

35 I turned to the other side. A man lay on his back, and his legs thrashed wildly. *What? . . .NO!*
36 I rolled backwards and fell on the floor. I crept to my knees and peered over the top of the

37 mattress. A creature perched on the man's chest and held on as the man bucked. One arm dug
38 into his head, and the other reached into his chest. *How can it do that?* The man's legs stopped,
39 and his back arched as silent screams erupted from his open mouth. Pain and anguish painted his
40 face. I gasped, and the creature turned its head in my direction. A toothy grin split the little
41 monster's face as flames of sadistic pleasure danced in its eyes. The scent of decay reached my
42 nose.

43 Eyes narrowed, it growled, "Go back to sleep, human."

44 I jumped up and fell on my face as my feet slipped on the smooth floor. Blood from my nose
45 left a trail on my shirt as I got up and ran down the aisle. Every bed had a sleeper. I dropped to
46 the floor and rolled under several beds. When I found myself in another aisle, I scrambled low
47 and tried to hide. This process was repeated a couple more times until I was out of breath. I
48 dropped between two beds and waited for my lungs to catch up. Slowly I lifted my head and
49 looked for pursuit. I discovered none and sat down on the floor.

50 *What was that thing?* It had bright red eyes, a human-like face and a mouth full of tiny sharp
51 teeth. Sprigs of coarse hair sprouted from its head which sat on a short neck. Burnt red blotches
52 mottled the crimson skin on its hairless body. Muscular arms and legs looked too long for its
53 size. The naked creature's gender remained a mystery.

54 Like a periscope, I lifted my head just high enough to look around. I crouched in the middle
55 of a sea of beds. Soft light rippled in fluctuating waves across the high domed ceiling, providing
56 dim illumination. A distant scream followed by baritone laughter echoed off the cavernous walls.
57 I studied the ceiling far above. *It must be 300 hundred feet high. Reminds me of a football*
58 *stadium, only bigger.* I could not see an end to this ocean of beds. To my left, in the middle of all
59 these cots, sat a squat, rectangular structure. Before me appeared what looked like a main aisle.

60 Crawling on my hands and knees, I crept to the center path. I looked up and down the aisle. *The*
61 *coast is clear.* Stooping low, I ran toward the building. When I finally reached it, my heaving
62 chest forced me to rest. My heart pounded. I leaned against the wall to catch my breath. *What's*
63 *going on?*

64 Jumbled thoughts and a myriad of questions flooded my mind. I closed my eyes. *You need to*
65 *calm down and think.* My breath slowed, I opened my eyes and surveyed the surroundings. The
66 twilight made it hard to see details. Shadows continued moving among and above the sleepers.
67 Occasionally, a scream pierced the gloom, always followed by a chorus of deep laughter. I didn't
68 know which disturbed me more; the screaming or the laughter.

69 I stepped back, turned and examined the structure. I faced the short side of the rectangular
70 building; perhaps thirty feet long, standing about ten feet tall. *A building in a cavern surrounded*
71 *by a sea of beds. I don't get it.* Damaged ceramic tiles peppered the wall's surface while many lay
72 broken on the floor. In the middle of the wall, an open doorway beckoned me. My foot kicked a
73 ceramic shard, and it skittered across the floor. *What is this place?* As I stepped through the
74 doorway, a shape materialized before me.

75 I fell backwards, hitting the ground hard, and scrambled away from the apparition. As I
76 retreated, the creature faded from sight. *What was that thing?* It had the same coloration as the
77 other creature. Its crimson eyes bore into mine. The blood red lips smacked as if I were a tasty
78 morsel and the thing stank of death. *Why didn't it attack?*

79 A seed germinated in my mind, and it grew into a frightening realization. *These creatures are*
80 *demons.* They only lacked the horns and forked tail.

81 *I'm in hell.*

82 *Dead. I must be dead.* I laid on the floor as spasms of grief racked my body. A pool of tears
83 collected beneath me.

84 *Wait a minute . . . if I'm in hell, shouldn't it be hotter?*

85 Perplexed, I sat up and drew my handkerchief from my pocket. I wiped my eyes and blew
86 my nose. Pulling the snotty cloth away from my face, I stared at it. *If I were dead, would I need*
87 *to wipe my nose?*

88 With renewed hope, I stood. While contemplating my next step, a compulsion to enter the
89 doorway grew within me. It felt like something grabbed the front of my clothing and dragged me
90 toward the doorway. I panicked and fought the pull.

91 A voice spoke in my mind. "Trust me."

92 My feet slid toward the doorway. Tiles scattered. *NO!* My hands caught both sides of the
93 doorway. Unable to resist the pull, I lost my grip and crossed the threshold. The demon
94 reappeared. Something grabbed my vocal cords, and shouted, "Jesus is my Savior! Jesus is my
95 Savior!" I covered my head, closed my eyes and waited for the monster to strike. When nothing
96 happened, one eye opened. The demon had retreated several steps and glared at me. I
97 straightened up.

98 Pulse racing, I peered at the beast then stole a glance around the room. My eyes flicked back
99 to the creature then I stole a second glance. To my left, about two feet away, stood a stainless
100 steel table piled with an assortment of parts and junk. On top of this heap rested a black plastic
101 tube about two feet long.

102 "Pick up the tube," commanded the voice in my head.

103 *What?* Looking at the tube, a glimmer of white light crawled along its surface. My arm, of its
104 own volition, reached for it. I resisted, but lost. My right hand grasped the thick end of the tube
105 and I heard myself say, “The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

106 The plastic tube became a silver sword that pulsed with a white aura. I stared at the blade. It's
107 glow shone brightly in this dim place. The sword was light in weight, but solid. A tingly
108 sensation poured into my arm.

109 Lifting the sword closer to my face, I ran my left hand along the flat part of the blade. It felt
110 warm and glass smooth. I ran my left thumb along the top edge. Sharper than a razor, the sword
111 cut it. I jerked my hand away and examined my thumb. Instead of blood dripping down my hand,
112 I found a severe, inch long burn.

113 A low growl reminded me: I was not alone. Turning toward the sound, the sword trembled as
114 I held it before me. The demon took a wrestlers position: knees bent, elbows up. Inch long claws
115 tipped each finger. I mirrored its stance; the sword in my right hand. It glared at me. I quaked
116 under its gaze. We circled each other. I wondered who would make the first move. The demon
117 neared the doorway. It turned and bolted, disappearing as it passed over the threshold. Stunned, I
118 lowered the sword. *Why didn't it fight?*

119 Relieved, I stood there and looked around. The same dingy, white tiles covered the walls.
120 *Now what?* I peered into the gloom and felt compelled to go deeper into the room. I didn't fight it
121 this time. The sword's aura provided illumination. A row of steel tables faded into the darkness.
122 The closest one held the vacuum cleaner parts and other junk, the others I could see were empty.
123 Beds lined the walls. The low light made it impossible to see what lay at the far end. I cautiously
124 moved down the aisle.

125 As I crept forward, a bed with a human-shaped lump took form. I jumped. A high-pitched
126 scream bounced off walls and the person on the bed convulsed. I inched closer; sword ready. A
127 small demon sat on a women's chest with both hands embedded in her skull. The creature
128 wailed, "Mmmooommmmyyy," sounding like a little girl, and then laughed. It hadn't noticed me. I
129 looked at the sword and then the little monster. I stepped forward and kicked a tile across the
130 floor. The demon turned its head in my direction. I swung. As the sword struck, the demon
131 "popped." Surprise crossed its face just before it became a vapor and dissipated.

132 A low moan rose from the bed. The woman no longer thrashed. For better light, I held the
133 sword near her face. Eyes closed, tears ran down her temple and dripped onto her pillow. A sob
134 escaped her throat, and the damp area on the pillow widened. I bent down and whispered in her
135 ear, "Wake up, the demon is gone." She didn't stir.

136 I put a hand on her shoulder and shook gently as I whispered, "In the name of Jesus, awake."

137 Her eyes popped open, wide with panic. They darted about until our eyes met. Even in the
138 dim light, the hazel in her eyes sparkled. She struggled to sit up. Her joints cracked. Her face
139 winced in pain. I tried to help, but she twisted away. I stepped back to give her room to stand.
140 She placed her feet on the floor and her knees buckled. She caught the edge of the bed and tried
141 again. With more confidence, she let go of the bed and faced me.

142 "Go," I pointed to the door I came in. "See if you can find a way out. Remember, Jesus will
143 save and protect you." *Why did I say that?*

144 Wordless, she scanned my body from toe to head. Her eyes bore into mine as if she examined
145 my soul. I pointed to the door again. She turned and left the way I came. I continued down the
146 row of beds till I came to the end of the room.

147 I found no more people or demons, but discovered a new doorway. I stepped through it and
148 found myself in the original cavern. I sighed. *Now what do I do?*

149 Another bed sat by the door with a man lying on it. He looked the same as the other sleeper.
150 No, not quite the same. The other sleepers had a very soft glow about them; hard to notice until it
151 was absent. He still took breath, but there was no spark. No spirit. Dead, but not dead. How odd.
152 How sad.

153 I turned to continue my exploration and banged into a muscular wall of blood red flesh. My
154 eyes traveled upward. A demon towered over me, its foul breath and saliva rained down. I
155 jumped back in terror, the sword forgotten. Its clawed hand reached for me; evil red eyes filled
156 my vision.

157 “Jesus save me!”

158 Chapter 2

159 Caleb

160 Early Friday Morning

161 “Jesus save me!” I screamed, rolled off my couch and hit the floor. Bewildered, I found
162 myself looking at my dingy linoleum floor.

163 Relief flooded my mind. I rolled over onto my back. *It's a dream!* A choked laugh escaped
164 my throat.

165 What a nightmare: sight, sound, touch, smell and fear. Never had a dream taken over all my
166 senses. I trembled on the floor.

167 *Get a grip Caleb. You're thirty years old, not five. You had a nightmare, nothing more.*

168 I inhaled a deep breath and waited for the shaking to stop. I laughed with relief. *A dream,*
169 *nothing but a dream.* A second wave of relief washed over me. *I can't wait to tell . . .* Then the
170 loneliness returned. *There is no one to tell.*

171 I had no close friends or relatives, just a few acquaintances. A social cripple, that's what I
172 was. I never knew what to say or how to behave when I met new people. As a teenager, I
173 stuttered and looked at their feet, rarely lifting my head to look into their eyes. Though I no
174 longer stutter, I still have a hard time meeting people. Until I get to know them, I am
175 uncomfortable.

176 I knew why I was like this.

177 My father defined cruelty.

178 He told me he never wanted kids; a dog is what he truly wanted.

179 My father named me Caleb. He said it meant “dog” in Hebrew.

180 Father whistled and patted his thigh whenever he wanted me to come to him. Most of the
181 time, he enjoyed mentally torturing me. When home, he watched TV and drank. I tried to hide in
182 my room, but he usually wanted me nearby to fetch his beer. He subjected me to an endless
183 stream of belittling insults. My only relief came when he passed out in his chair.

184 Sometimes his abuse became physical. Occasionally, I would do something that made him
185 mad, and he would slap or punch me hard, yelling at me as he swung. If I made him really angry,
186 he made me cut a switch off the pussy willow out back. I had to strip it of leaves and buds then
187 present it to him on bended knee like a knight would present the king with his sword.

188 Fortunately, he only resorted to physical violence maybe once a month. But this left me nervous
189 the rest of the time because I never knew what might set him off. He'd accuse me of looking at
190 him funny or mocking him then my backside suffered his wrath.

191 The only way to survive the onslaught of abuse was not to care . . . about anything. I became
192 a self-induced failure because I didn't care. My apathy doomed all of my efforts. College,
193 women and career failed due to neglect. For the last twelve years, I've drifted through life.

194 I stood up and looked around my apartment. *What a dream! So vivid! Jesus my Savior. Where*
195 *did that come from?* I haven't been to church in over a decade and haven't given Jesus much
196 thought at all. Well, He got more thought during the desperate times. My only recent exposure to
197 Jesus had been the late night television evangelists.

198 I shook my head trying to clear the tangle of thoughts and emotions that ran through my
199 mind. *What day is it? Friday?* I pulled the curtain back and looked out the window. I glanced at
200 my watch and panicked. I had to move or be late for work, and I hadn't been late in three years.
201 Falling asleep in one's work clothes did have its advantages. It took a few moments to wash my
202 face, slap on some deodorant and drag a toothbrush across my teeth. Breakfast had to be coffee
203 and a doughnut on the way to work. Ready to depart, I looked at my watch again. *Three minutes,*
204 *not bad. I think that's a new record.*

205 I paused to survey my apartment one last time before heading out the door. *What's that?*
206 Something stuck out from under the edge of the couch. I walked over to it, reached down and
207 pulled. Out slid a two-foot long, rigid black plastic tube.

208 I dropped the tube. It clattered on the tile floor as I staggered backwards.
209 *Impossible! How'd it get here?*

210 There, on the floor, lay the tube from my nightmare. It looked like an old, straight vacuum
211 cleaner tube. It shared the same characteristics, such as color, length and weight, but I don't own
212 a vacuum cleaner. On the rare occasion when I felt motivated to clean, I borrowed one from

213 work. I looked silly walking it down the sidewalk, but I didn't care. Besides, things can't move
214 between dreams and reality. Still, it sure did look like the one I dreamt about last night.

215 I picked up the tube again and looked at it closer. OOWW! A sharp pain shot through my left
216 thumb. Holding it up to get a closer look, I saw a raw, inch-long burn.

217 The tube rattled as it hit the floor again. My mind reeled. I stumbled for the door. The door
218 slammed, I turned, stuck the key in the lock and gave it a twist. I ran down the hall and crashed
219 through the outside door. Breathing hard, I merged with the morning sidewalk crowd.

220 This October Friday had dawned bright and brisk. Normally I relished these sunny, crisp,
221 clean mornings, but today my thoughts and emotions churned as I hurried down the
222 thoroughfare. The mystery of the black tube and the burn on my thumb haunted me.

223 I didn't own much; no car, bike, or computer. I'd go to the library if I wanted to surf the Web.
224 I have an old TV, a prepaid cell phone and stacks of books. I read everything I could from the
225 library. While I never finished college and admit apathy was one of my companions, I'm not
226 stupid. For a long time, I just didn't care what happened to me or to those around me.

227 It was a twenty-minute walk from my dumpy studio apartment to Foe Financial Services. I
228 wove through the sidewalk traffic with my head down, collar up and deep in thought. The FFS
229 building towered above all other buildings in Stanton. A monument of steel and glass to Ichabod
230 Manheim Foe, founder and CEO of Foe Financial Services. I'm one of a dozen cleaners.

231 Life has been hard. To survive my father's abuse, I developed a mental shell and crawled
232 inside. I floated from job to job, not caring about the work or me. Three years ago, I lost my job,
233 again. To get by, I ate dinner at the City Mission Soup Kitchen for almost month. Listening to a
234 sermon was the only price of the meal. Different preachers spoke throughout the week. I loved
235 listening to the passionate black pastors full of fire and brimstone. Some rambled, and I tuned

236 them out. One day, I don't even remember the words, but the City Mission Pastor spoke. He said
237 something that made me realize I didn't have to live like this. With God I had the power to
238 change. I wanted to make a better life for myself. I resolved to do better. A week later, I got my
239 job at the FFS. I worked hard and forgot all about the "With God" part.

240 My last supervisor fired me because of chronic tardiness. I wasn't going to let that happen
241 again. I vowed to be on time, no matter what kind of weather I had to plow through or how I felt.
242 My floors met or exceeded my supervisor's cleaning expectations. The hard work paid off with
243 good reviews and regular raises. In addition, my anemic self-esteem grew.

244 Glancing up, I saw my destination in the distance. Most of the downtown buildings were five
245 to fifteen stories high, but not Foe Financial. It soared above all the rest with thirty-five floors.
246 Many people considered it an eyesore. Local news interviewed Ichabod Foe during the
247 groundbreaking ceremony. When asked why his building needed to be so tall, Mr. Foe said, "I'm
248 a big man, and I deserve a big building." I laughed when he said this. What a pompous jerk!
249 Some people had more nonsense than sense.

250 My stomach rumbled. *I need coffee and a doughnut.* I lifted my head and looked around.
251 *Great, I walked right past the coffee shop.* I stepped out of the main flow of pedestrian traffic and
252 looked at my watch. I had to decide if there was time to go back.

253 I froze.

254 A man walked toward me and on his left shoulder sat a dark red shape. As it drew near, I
255 could see the small body with gangly arms and legs. It was one of the demons from my dream. I
256 watched the man as he passed; the demon stuck its right hand into the back of the man's skull. I
257 stared at them. The imp's lips moved as it whispered into the man's ears. As the odd couple
258 moved out of sight, a woman walked toward me with another creature hitching a ride on her

259 shoulder. Then I saw another demon, and another, then more. Dozens of monsters of various
260 sizes floated above the crowd or caught a ride on someone's shoulder.

261 The world spun. My legs became rubbery, and I fell backward against the wall of the nearest
262 building. *Monsters from the dream! Am I still sleeping?* I pinched myself hard. Other than a
263 sharp pain and a red welt on my forearm, everything remained the same.

264 Leaning against the building wall, I studied the passing crowd as I tried to wrap my mind
265 around what I saw. The demons' sizes ranged from one to about six feet tall. Scattered amongst
266 the morning crowd, I noticed different groups. All the small creatures sat or stood on the
267 shoulders of their "steeds". The bigger monsters floated a couple of feet above the heads of the
268 tallest pedestrians.

269 A few people had bright white auras. Two floating demons split to go on either side of one of
270 them. More than half the people looked "normal," having neither riders nor aura.

271 So far, no one, demon or human, paid any attention to me. *The demons don't know I can see*
272 *them.*

273 Coffee and doughnut forgotten, I hurried to work. The entrance to my sanctuary came into
274 view. A few more strides and I'd be there.

275 An arm reached out, a hand grabbed my jacket and yanked me off the sidewalk into a
276 storefront doorway.

277 "Hey!"

278 Whipping around to face my assailant, I found myself looking up into the face of an oddly
279 beautiful person. Stunned, I just stared. My first impression was the person was male, but the
280 more I looked the less I was sure. He had beautiful blue eyes, Roman nose and full and red lips.

281 Light brown hair flowed out of the hood covering his head. No hair, blemish or wrinkle marred
282 the lightly tanned skin. A large Adams Apple bobbed on his throat.

283 “Hello, Caleb.” He sang the words with a clear deep voice.

284 “Who are you?”

285 The stranger furtively looked around. He stepped out from the doorway and looked up. Then
286 he ducked back into the doorway and with his musical voice said, “Listen closely Caleb, my time
287 is short and my message important. I can’t be seen here. I’m an angel and God has sent me. . .”

288 “An angel? Wha . . .,” fear bubbled up my throat.

289 “Silence, Caleb, and listen. God gave me this message for you. You received a great gift last
290 night. You can now see and interact with the physical and the spiritual worlds.”

291 “No-no-no-no-no.” I stammered as my legs gave way and my butt hit the cement.

292 “Hhhmm . . . a more direct approach is needed,” the angel muttered.

293 Louder, the deep voice stated, “You might find this unpleasant, but I don’t have time to mess
294 around, and this will speed the process up.”

295 With me sitting on the ground, the angel squatted down. His arm reached for my face. I
296 thought he was going to grab it. Instead, I could feel each hot finger as they passed through my
297 skin and into my skull.

298 “OOOWWW!” I cupped my head between my hands.

299 “Do not resist and the pain will lessen,” the deep calm voice resonated inside my head.

300 Images, thoughts, emotions, some mine and some the angel’s, spun inside my head.

301 “Focus on my voice, Caleb. Follow it. The pain should be lessening.”

302 I “stood” in the eye of a cerebral hurricane. The angel faced me. Our memories and emotions
303 whirled around us. I felt the angel’s spirit supporting me like a warm hug. My panic lessened, but
304 the fear did not. Internally, our conversation continued.

305 “Good. Now listen. You can see the spiritual condition of the people around you, and the
306 demons that torment them. Satan’s minions are on the move. The city is at the tipping point
307 where it will slide into depravity or be rescued. God has chosen you to be His instrument to save
308 the city. There is a challenge, a task you must face in the days to come. However, you must first
309 secure the Armor of God. With the Armor of God, you will be able to battle the demons that hold
310 this city hostage.”

311 My mind overloaded. Everything started swirling again.

312 “CALEB FOCUS!”

313 The mental shout startled me, and I pushed the panic back down.

314 “There’s more to God’s message. Last night He gave you the Sword of the Spirit. You must
315 gather the rest of the Armor of God before you can begin the task.”

316 “You’ve got to be kiddin’. Angel, look at me. I’m a loser.”

317 “Perhaps,” the angel replied. “Last night you saw just a small part of the dark side of the
318 spirit realm. You were in a bubble, a Dream World, inserted between the physical and spiritual
319 realms. There demons torment and tempt the citizens of Stanton while they sleep. Because it
320 intersects the physical and spiritual realms, laws of both apply. When people sleep, they exist in
321 both places. Did you hear the voice of God and did you receive the Sword of the Spirit?”

322 “Yes. . . I mean . . . no. I mean . . . I don't know. There was a voice in my head, but I didn't
323 know it was God. I only wanted out.”

324 “Do you remember accepting Jesus as your Savior when you were seventeen?” the angel
325 asked, his words musical notes.

326 “Yes.”

327 “Your prayer then was sincere and true. At that moment, the Holy Spirit took up residence in
328 your body. He has been speaking to you since then, but you chose not to listen and built walls
329 around your mind. Last night those walls crumbled. When the Spirit spoke, this time you heard.”

330 “Maybe God spoke to me last night, but I don’t know how to accomplish the task you’re
331 telling me about now.”

332 I felt the angel pulling away, the fingers slid out of my skull, and I watch them recede from
333 my face.

334 “Depend on God and listen, you will know what to do when the time comes,” the angel sang
335 and faded from sight. I stared at the spot where the angel had stood just a moment ago.

336 *Demons? Angels? God? This can’t be real! . . . can it? This is a nightmare. I must be crazy.* I
337 stood up, filled with fear and confusion. The tornado of thoughts and emotions whirling in my
338 brain finally slowed enough for me to realize I was late for work.

339 Stepping onto the sidewalk, I bumped into some guy in a suit, mumbled an apology and
340 stumbled the rest of the way to work. Bursting through the door, I clocked in fifteen minutes late.

341 I walked to my locker, checked the schedule and retrieved the cart with my cleaning supplies.
342 My body went through the motions of work, while my mind obsessed over the events of the
343 morning. *Is this real or am I still trapped in a nightmare? Did I really hear God? What am I*
344 *going to do?* I kept reliving the dream, the demons and the angel’s words.

345 The day passed in a blur. Four o’clock arrived; time to quit. I was no closer to knowing what
346 to do. I went to my supervisor to get my paycheck.

347 “Caleb, you okay?”

348 “Uhm, yeah, I guess. Why?”

349 “You were late and have been out of it all day. That’s not like you. You need help or
350 somthin’?”

351 “Naw, I didn’t sleep good last night. Just tired,” I mumbled. He handed me the check and I
352 clocked out.

353 I returned to the locker room, opened my locker and grabbed my coat. As I got ready to
354 leave, fear and doubt seized my spirit. I plopped down on the bench. *What am I supposed to do?*
355 *If He is God, isn’t He all-powerful? Why does He need me?* Full of self-doubt, I closed my
356 locker, took a deep breath and walked out.

357 I hurried home with my head down, focused on the sidewalk. I didn’t want to think about or
358 see any demons. My stomach grumbled. I had missed breakfast and skipped lunch. I only had a
359 bottle of water all day long. *I’m starvin’. I’ll stop at Krantz’s Deli.* Krantz’s made the best subs in
360 Stanton.

361 The deli was on the opposite corner. I crossed at the signal light, and approached the ancient
362 eight-foot tall doors. I looked at the entrance. *Oh No!* Besides posters of this week’s specials and
363 community events, there were three small demons stuck to the windows peering inside. *Caleb,*
364 *stay calm. They don’t know you can see them.* I held my breath, walked up to the door and pulled
365 it open.

366 As I crossed the threshold, I stepped out of a desert and into an oasis.

367 Bright, spiritual warmth hit me as I stepped into the shop. Instantly, my mood brightened and
368 a grin broke out on my face. Looking around, I examined the scene before me. Patrons bought
369 dinner and other supplies to take home. The Krantz family behind the counter served customers

370 with good cheer and friendly banter. Ron Krantz, his wife Judy and adult children, Ben and Sue
371 emitted bright white auras. I waited in line and soaked up the warmth. My wilted soul was
372 watered with hope and promise.

373 The line moved quickly and I was next. Ron called from behind the counter, "What'll it be,
374 Caleb?" I ordered a roast beef sub and a large coffee. Ron handed the order to Ben, reached for
375 the coffee pot and poured it into a foam cup.

376 As he handed me the coffee, I asked, "Hey, Ron, can I ask you a personal question?"

377 "Sure Caleb. What is it?"

378 "Do you and your family have a strong faith in God?"

379 "You're right. That is a personal question, but I don't mind answering. Yes, we do. Jesus
380 Christ is our Lord and Savior. We like to think of Him working the counter here with us," he
381 replied with a smile. "Why do you ask?"

382 "I just want you to know that your faith shows. Thanks, Ron." I grabbed my tray of food and
383 headed for a table.

384 While I ate my sandwich, I watched people stream in and out of the shop. Small demons
385 bobbed outside the doors of the deli. A man came in with a small demon on his shoulder and got
386 in line. The demon appeared agitated. It whipped its head back and forth, eyes wide with panic. I
387 leaned forward. *Is the skin smoking?* Blisters boiled up on its skin and little plumes of smoke
388 escaped when they popped. The small creature's agitation increased and its pain was obvious.
389 Suddenly, the creature released its charge and made a beeline for the door. It passed through the
390 glass, did a U-turn, plastered its face against the front window, and watched its human. After the
391 demon left him, the man's face broke into a large smile. Outside was cold and dreary, while

392 inside was bright with physical and spiritual warmth. I lingered longer than normal, basking in
393 the pleasant ambiance.

394 Another man grabbed his order and headed for the front door. As the door opened, one of the
395 little imps pounced on him like a cat on a mouse. The man shoulders sagged as the demon
396 inserted its hand into his skull. *Sad. . . BUT not my problem.*

397 My anger and fear reignited. *Why me?* Several people hovered looking for seats so I decided
398 to leave. I paused, hand on the door, and braced myself for the chill and the demons. Reluctantly,
399 I pushed and turned down the street toward home. I locked my eyes on the pavement in a vain
400 attempt to block out the demons and the spiritual darkness surrounding me. A few minutes later, I
401 reached my apartment door, unlocked it, entered the apartment. I closed the door behind. I leaned
402 back against the door, closed my eyes. I tipped my head back and breathed a sigh of relief. *Safe.*

403 I opened my eyes and looked around. The apartment hadn't changed since I'd left. The sink
404 was stacked high with dishes, table full of books and papers, clothes draped over chairs and a
405 plastic tube lying in the middle of the floor. *The Sword of the Spirit. It's a stupid, plastic vacuum*
406 *cleaner attachment!* I picked it up and gave it a once over. It remained a plastic tube. "It sure
407 doesn't look or feel like a sword," I spoke to the room. *This is crazy. I'm crazy!* I set the plastic
408 tube down on the small dinner table.

409 Three days of dishes filled the sink. I grabbed a scrubber, squirted some dish detergent and
410 tackled them. The dried on food required lots of elbow grease. I kept turning my head to look at
411 the plastic tube. *If this is suppose to be the Sword of the Spirit, then why isn't it a real sword?*

412 I thought back to the dream. *Words were spoken in my mind. What were they?*

413 I put down the scrubber and the pan and walked over to the table. Picking up the thick end of
414 the tube, I said, "The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Instantly the plastic tube

415 became the double edged, shining sword. As it transformed, warmth flowed into my hand and up
416 my arm. It was the sword from my dream.

417 I collapsed onto a kitchen chair and stared at the sword. Several moments passed before my
418 mind started to work again.

419 “Aren’t you a little short to be a mighty sword?” It was about two and a half feet long. I
420 gripped the hilt harder and as I squeezed, it molded to my grip. The guard protectively grew and
421 extended to cover my right hand. I resisted the temptation of running a finger along the blade. I
422 didn’t need to learn that lesson twice. It only weighed a pound or two. The blade had no nicks or
423 imperfections.

424 *What?* I saw text. Faint text embedded into the blade seemed to move. Up and down the
425 length of the weapon the words traveled. I held the sword flat across both hands and lifted it to
426 my face. Tiny inscriptions peppered the surface of the blade. The text wasn’t on the surface. It
427 was part of the material of the blade! The words weren’t in any language I recognized. As I
428 stared at them, they slowly shifted and changed. Some of the text faded and new words came to
429 the forefront. Warm, adaptable and full of ever changing words. It seemed like the sword was
430 alive.

431 Speaking to the sword, I said, “According to the angel, I’m to seek the full Armor of God.
432 What is the Armor of God? I don’t know about spiritual things and hadn’t been to church in
433 years. I don’t own a Bible. Wait, churches have Bibles. Where’s the nearest church?”

434 Then I remembered. The City Mission Soup Kitchen was two streets over. I had met the
435 pastor during my last bout of unemployment. It was that pastor who said the words that got me to
436 take this job seriously. He helped to turn my life around. At the time, he kept trying to get me to

437 turn my life over to Jesus. I told him I got Jesus as a teen, but he kept saying being saved and
438 turning my life over to Him wasn't the same thing.

439 *But what was his name? I think it was Bill . . .no . . . Bob. . . Pastor Bob Bennett. This can't*
440 *wait till tomorrow. I need to visit him . . . tonight.*

441

442 Chapter 3

443 Bob

444 Friday Night

445 Mary cupped both her hands around mine.

446 "Thanks for singing and teaching tonight Pastor Bennett. I know you spoke to their hearts."

447 *Not likely.* I mentally snorted.

448 Surrounded by a small troop of volunteers, I stepped back to let them out. "Good-bye's"
449 drifted back down the hall. A half dozen folks from one of the area churches filed out of City
450 Mission's front door.

451 I turned my attention to a pair of men waiting nearby.

452 "Brother Tim, Brother John, please go to the dormitory and get the men settled in for the
453 night.

454 "Sister Carla, it's eight o'clock. Please lock the doors to the dining room. I'm going to the
455 Sanctuary to lock up and pray a while."

456 "Okay, Pastor Bob," replied Carla as she turned and headed for the front door.

457 Deep in thought, I slowly walked to the sanctuary. Hidden, despair coursed through my
458 veins. Any dreams and aspirations had withered long ago. *Oh, Lord! How long has it been? A*
459 *year? More? I've lost track. It's been a long time since I felt any purpose or joy.*

460 Daily I begged God for release. Release from this mission. Release from the despair. Even
461 release from this life. I ached to be done and to be with God. So far every prayer had been met
462 with silence. God's voice used to whisper in my mind, but it had been quiet for a long time.

463 I did a pretty good job hiding how I felt. Always wore a smile Sunday or during the teaching
464 at the Mission.

465 I shook hands. "Hello Sister Claire, Brother Steve, how are you this fine day?"

466 I said encouraging words. "Brother Tom, that was some fine singing this glorious morning."

467 I usually put up a good front. And on those days when the despair slipped out, I said I was
468 "tired" or "slept badly."

469 I should've been proud of what we've accomplished with the Mission. I've been the Senior
470 Pastor of Stanton Community Church and overseer of the City Mission Soup Kitchen for the last
471 ten years. Early in my ministry, hundreds of people came and accepted Jesus as their Savior. I
472 poured myself into the ministry that resulted in heaps of spiritual fruit.

473 *Lately nothing . . . nobody saved . . . nobody growing spiritually. Just a bunch of ungrateful*
474 *mooches that wanted free food. I've delivered hundreds of sermons to the homeless, poor and I*
475 *resent them.*

476 *When I first took the job, missionary zeal filled me. People said I was a fountain of energy,*
477 *drive and ambition. God and I planned to bring revival to this city. It had been so clear. I was*
478 *God's messenger. With my feet set apart, one had clutching the Bible and the other raised in*
479 *worship to God. My cape blew in the breeze. I stood ready to battle the forces of evil in the*
480 *world.*

481 *But all this time has passed. Why did I even try. When was the last time anyone had been*
482 *saved? I have failed. FIRE ME! Yet God, you remain silent. Why has no door opened?*

483 I entered the sanctuary, stood in the center and gazed upon the Cross hanging behind the
484 podium. I fell to my hands and knees at the foot of the altar. Tears moistened the carpet.

485 "God . . . why have you . . . forsaken me? I only desire to do your will. Each day, I reach out
486 to teach people about Your Son. Each day I have little effect. I'm a failure Lord."

487 I don't know how long I prayed. At times I babbled or sobbed, unable to form the words.

488 Emotionally spent, I lay prostrate before the altar. I heard shoe scuff the carpet behind me.

489 *Oh no. I forgot to lock the door.* I rose to my feet, wiped the moisture from my cheeks. I
490 turned. In the dim light, a silhouette of a man stalked down the center aisle. He held something in
491 his right hand. *What is that? A pipe?*

492 "C-c-can I help you?"

493 The stranger walked up to me and stared at the space above my head. *Whew. It's a plastic*
494 *tube. Why does he have that?* He looked a bit rough. His craggy face had seen its share of pain.
495 *He looks familiar.*

496 "Hey . . ." I ducked as the man stabbed the air above my head.

497

498 Chapter 4

499 Caleb

500 Friday Night

501 I arrived outside the City Mission Soup Kitchen, where they did more than feed the
502 homeless. It was also a church, a community thrift shop and a dormitory for the city's vagrant
503 males. The sign on the wall said "Doors lock at 8:00PM." I pushed the button lighting up my
504 cheap digital watch. *8:15 PM. Rats, I hope I can still get in.*

505 *OK Caleb, here goes nuthin'*. I tugged on the dining hall doors. *Locked*. I moved down the
506 block to the church's front doors. The hinges creaked as the door opened. The night lights guided
507 me through the front foyer. My footsteps sounded loud on the slate floor and incense hung
508 lightly in the air. I skulked into the sanctuary feeling like an intruder.

509 ". . . failure . . ." came from somewhere in the front. In the low light, a figure lay crumpled
510 on the floor. Behind the altar, a single spotlight lit up a huge cross with a figure of Jesus hanging
511 from it. I hesitated. The garbled words rose from the body before me. *He's praying*. It seemed
512 wrong to interrupt.

513 As I watched the figure on the floor, I noticed something hovering in the air above the man.
514 Silhouetted against the spotlight floated a small demon. The air between them shimmered, like
515 heat off sun baked pavement. I crouched and crept forward down the main aisle. As I drew closer
516 to the demon, its white teeth glowed in the dark as a huge smile stretched from ear to ear. Its red
517 eyes focused on its victim below. Once in a while, it twisted its hand like a puppeteer pulling the
518 strings of a marionette.

519 With a thought, I transformed the tube into the Sword of the Spirit. Even though I expected
520 the change, it startled me. The warmth and the molding to my hand felt like something alive. A
521 slight vibration made its way up my arm like the sword anticipated the coming battle. With a new
522 boldness, I walked forward.

523 As I neared the altar, my steps faltered. My mind filled with unexpected thoughts. *I can't do*
524 *this. I'm no warrior. I don't even know how to use a sword. Why bother, nobody cares*. I stopped
525 in the middle of the aisle. Despair and hopelessness crawled over my skin. I wanted to run away.
526 Then I looked up at the demon. One arm pointed at the man below while the other pointed at me.

527 Contempt and a wicked smile covered the demon's face. It was having fun. Shimmering waves
528 filled the air between me and the little monster. *This demon emanates despair!*

529 *Jesus, be my shield.* With new resolve, I dragged my feet against the carpet and approached
530 the altar. The man rose and spun to face me. It was Pastor Bob.

531 The demon floated about nine or ten feet above the floor. I swung the sword at it. It bobbed
532 and danced just out of reach while it taunted me.

533 "Nyah, nyah human, you can't reach me . . . Hey! You can see me!" its raspy voice reached
534 my ears then it stuck out its tongue. I jabbed at the creature. Foul taunts flowed from its mouth.
535 No good, the little beast stayed just out of reach. I lowered the sword and glared at the demon.
536 My mind sought a solution. Pastor Bob threw questions at me. I ignored them. Then a thought
537 popped into my mind. *The sword can mold to fit and protect my hand. And if thinking "Sword of*
538 *the Spirit," transformed the tube into a sword. Would different words give me a different*
539 *weapon?*

540 "Pastor Bob, do you know any Scripture that talks about a spear?"

541 In a deep voice Bob sputtered, "I-I c-can't think of any." He paused. "Wait. In Joel it says
542 'Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears.'"

543 Pointing the sword at the demon, I repeated Bob's words "Beat your plowshares into swords
544 and your pruning hooks into spears." As the word "spears" left my throat, a surge of energy
545 rushed into my arm. The sword rapidly elongated and pierced the demon. It disappeared in a puff
546 of wispy smoke, just like my dream. The sword had become a six and a half foot long lance. It
547 still had the white aura and shiny like chrome. And even though it had grown three times its
548 normal length, it still weighted the same.

549 Now I had a different problem. The sword was six and half feet long. *How do I return it to*
550 *normal?* I thought “Sword of the Spirit.” My arm grew warm again and it returned to normal size
551 and shape. *Cool.* Smiling, I turned to Pastor Bob.

552 “Are you OK,” I asked the Pastor.

553 “Am I OK? Brother, you're the one swinging a plastic tube around. Who are you and what're
554 you doing here?”

555 “Pastor, I really needed to see you. I'm not sure if I'm delusional, but a lot of weird stuff has
556 happened in the last day. I am desperate for help.” The words rushed out of my mouth. He stared
557 at me like I was nuts.

558 “Sorry Pastor, let's start over. I'm Caleb Kincade and I live nearby.” I sat on a pew. Bob
559 hesitated, then he too sat down, a few feet from me. He turned sideways to face me.

560 “I've been to the Mission previously for meals so I knew who you were. I have a story to tell
561 that you will not believe. I'm not sure if I am crazy.”

562 He looked at me. When he didn't respond, I started my narrative. I went into detail about the
563 dream and told him what happened to me that day; the demons, the angel's message, Krantz's
564 deli. He watched me intently. His eyes bored into mine as he listened without interruption. I
565 finished my story and waited for some kind of response. Bob turned toward the altar and he
566 leaned back in the pew and stared at the ceiling. *Say something, the suspense is killing me.* A few
567 moments later he leaned forward, turned and asked, “Please tell me again, why you needed a
568 scripture about a spear?”

569 “A small demon hovered above your head. As I approached, despair and hopelessness
570 flooded my mind. It paralyzed me. Then I realized the demon filled my mind those thoughts. I
571 resolved to kill it and attacked. But the sword was too short. The sword can change it's shape.

572 Once I repeated the verse from Joel, the sword elongated into a spear striking the demon. Once
573 the it disappeared, the despair in my mind stopped. You're feelin' better, aren't you?"

574 Bob stood, "You know, all I can see is a plastic tube and that tube never changed shape or
575 color. Everything you said sounds pretty looney."

576 I looked down at the sword in my hand. "You see a plastic tube and not a bright and shiny
577 sword?"

578 "I see a only black plastic tube. But I am feeling better, like a great burden has been lifted
579 from my shoulders. How could you tell?" He smiled and sat back down on the pew.

580 "Those with demons are covered with a shadow. People who believe Jesus is their Savior
581 have a white aura. The brighter the glow, the stronger the faith. Your aura was very dull. It has
582 steadily brightened with the monster gone. All the demon hitch hikers either had their hand in the
583 person's heart and/or their head. None of these people had the least bit of white aura. This demon
584 circled above your head. I think they can influence God's people, but can't touch them."

585 Pastor Bob countered, "When you first spoke, I thought you were a nut job with a plastic
586 tube. As I listened to you, I sensed the truth of your story. Like you said, I am much feeling better
587 and can feel my faith reviving like a moisture starved plant. Part of me still thinks you're a nut,
588 but for now, I'll accept your story as truth. Thank you for defeating the demon." A weary smile
589 crossed his face.

590 "You're welcome, but I came here for another reason. The angel said I needed to find the
591 whole Armor of God. What is the Armor of God? I have the Sword of the Spirit. What am I
592 looking for and how do I find it? Can you help me?"

593 “Yes, at least with some of that,” Bob said. He stood and walked up to the altar. Standing
594 behind the podium, he opened the enormous Bible resting there. He turned a small reading lamp
595 on and turned the oversized pages to the back of the Bible.

596 “Ephesians describes the Armor of God. Ephesians 6, verses 10-18:”

597

598 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on
599 the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the
600 devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but
601 against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this
602 dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly
603 realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day
604 of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you
605 have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of
606 truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of
607 righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness
608 that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up
609 the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming
610 arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword
611 of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all
612 occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind,
613 be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. (NIV)“

614

615 “Wow. Would you please read that to me again?”

616 “Let me write the armor down for you.”

617 The Pastor pulled a notepad and a pen from below the altar and began to write. When he
618 finished, he handed me the paper.

619 Belt of Truth

620 Breastplate of Righteousness

621 Feet fitted with the Gospel of Peace

622 Shield of Faith

623 Helmet of Salvation

624 Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

625 “God gave you the sword. Brother, do you have any ideas about finding the rest?”

626 “No. I woke in the spirit world, wandered to the swords location and a voice in my head said
627 to pick it up. I don’t know how to find the rest.”

628 “Ephesians talked about praying in the Spirit. Brother, at some point in your life, have you
629 asked for your sins to be forgiven and for Jesus to be your Savior?” questioned Pastor Bob.

630 “Yeah, when I was a teenager. While my prayer had been sincere, my commitment . . . let’s
631 just say my faith has been weak.”

632 “Then the Holy Spirit already resides in you,” he muttered more to himself.

633 Pastor Bob returned to the Bible and flipped toward the front a few pages. “In Romans 8:26-
634 27 it states: "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we
635 ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.
636 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for
637 the saints in accordance with God's will." (NIV)

638 “You must pray to God to find the rest of the armor,” Bob concluded as he stepped down
639 from the altar. He moved to the second row of pews and flipped down the kneeler. He knelt and
640 motioned me to join him. “Kneel, close your eyes and in your heart, talk to God. Tell Him you
641 need His help.”

642 Feeling awkward, I knelt next to Bob, his hand reassuringly resting on my shoulder. I said
643 nothing audible, but my mind screamed, *“God! I’m so lost. I know You placed this task before*
644 *me. I don’t know why. I’m scared. I’ve never done anything like this. I don’t think I can do it. But*
645 *... but ... I’m willing. What do I do or where to go? Please God, I’m desperate and need you.”*
646 Then spiritually and physically, I collapsed before God and over the back of the pew in front of
647 me. My eyes remained closed; tears streamed from the corners. My mind went blank. Time and
648 my ability to form thoughts came to a stop.

649 An odd fluttering sensation built in my chest and a soft moan escaped my lips. I wiped the
650 tears from my face and straightened up. I looked at my chest then at Bob with alarm. “Pastor,
651 this will sound weird, but I feel like something is whirling around in my chest. It’s like God has
652 reached inside of me and flicked a game spinner.” The spinning sensation slowed, stopped and I
653 felt a pull. I stood and the pastor followed.

654 “I know the direction. Will you come with me?”

655 Bob’s steel gray eyes bored into mine. I returned his gaze and imagined a battle being waged
656 in his mind. “Lord, I’m tired and this guy might be crazy.” The seconds dragged by.

657 Decision, or perhaps resolve, flickered across his face.

658 “Let me grab my jacket from my office. I’ll meet you by the front entrance.”

659 Bob did a slow trot out the side door while I turned around and walked up the aisle to the
660 foyer. The pull on my chest remained steady and strong. I paced back and forth. Every time I

661 turned, the needle reversed direction like a compass always pointing north. *What's taking so*
662 *long?* Bob returned and I bolted though the door. The sharp October air slapped me in the face. I
663 stopped on the sidewalk, foot tapping, waiting while Bob locked the door. My internal compass
664 pushed against my rib cage. As soon as the Pastor turned toward me, I followed the pull of the
665 spinner. Bob's loud footfalls followed me up the street.

666 We walked briskly, my sense of direction sure. We hiked three blocks. My chest hurt as if the
667 point of the spinner was going to poke through my sternum. I stopped at the corner and felt a
668 compass needle swing to the left. Pastor Bob asked a bunch of questions as we walked. I really
669 didn't pay much attention to what he said and grunted responses. He eventually stopped asking
670 and kept pace with me. Following the needle commanded my full attention. We passed an alley
671 and the compass needle swung to my back. I stopped, turned around and walked back a couple
672 of steps and stood at the alley entrance. The spinner pushed me into the opening. I looked at
673 Bob. "This is it." The dark passage loomed before us. We cautiously entered it and the urgency
674 became stronger. A bright light lit up the ground before us. Bob had also grabbed a flashlight
675 along with his jacket. He handed it to me. About thirty feet in, my feet stopped again as the
676 needle swung to my right. In a little alcove, lay a refrigerator box on its side. A "door" of darkly
677 stained material covered the end of the carton and dim light seeped out the seams. A fit of
678 coughing and a low moan escaped from the box.

679 "H-h-hello-o-o?" I whispered.

680 A weak, hoarse voice responded "Yesss."

681 Dropping to my knees, I lifted the door flap and crawled half way in. The stench of an
682 unwashed body and sickness assaulted my nose. Bob squeezed in next to me. A single candle

683 provided light and heat. On the other side of the candle lay a dark heap of rags. The pile moved
684 and I was able to discern a wizened face in the soft glow of the candle.

685 "I'm Caleb and this is Bob. This sounds nuts, but God led us here."

686 "Yes. . . I know," he responded weakly. "My name . . . Albert. Dying . . . soon." A fit of
687 coughing racked his frail body.

688 "Don't want . . . die alone. God said . . . never alone." More hacking coughs. Albert wiped
689 the spittle from his mouth with his sleeve.

690 "He said . . . not to . . . fear. But must . . . tell story and . . . give gift."

691 Albert's labored breathing hurt my ears and his face, twisted with pain, was difficult to
692 watch. I had never been with someone as they were about to die. Both of my parents died
693 tragically several years ago. They were already dead when I saw them. I didn't have to watch
694 them suffer. *Although I wish I could have watched my father suffer.* Albert continued, his voice
695 low and rough.

696 "Year ago . . . free clinic said . . . cancer. Get treatment . . . or die. I'm old." Albert doubled
697 over with pain.

698 When it passed, he continued. "No money . . . no treatment. . . City Mission met Jesus."
699 Albert's back arched. The pain etched on his face. Soon it passed and he continued.

700 "Free hat. . . named it 'Helmet . . . of Salvation.'" Albert's laugh degenerated into another fit
701 of coughing.

702 "Heaven soon . . . must give you . . . my hat."

703 He reached up, pulled the dirty knit cap off his head and handed it to me. I took the hat from
704 him as his hand fell limply to the ground. Albert died.

705 I looked at the hat in my hand and caught movement in the corner of my eye. I glanced at his
706 body. Wait, another figure knelt next to us. I blinked. The person was semi-transparent. I could
707 see them and what was behind them.

708 “Albert, is that you?”

709 The new Albert looked younger and had a big smile on his face. The apparition turned his
710 head toward me. “Yes Caleb, it is,” the spirit replied. “I’m feeling much better.”

711 Albert’s ghost peered at the cardboard wall to my left with a faraway look on his face. He
712 turned his head back and spoke to me again. “Thank you Caleb for being here, but it is time for
713 me to go. We’ll meet again someday.” Albert’s spirit stood, his torso going through the top of the
714 box and walked through the carton to my left. I backed out to watch him go and all I saw was his
715 back as he passed through the wall of the building next door.

716 Dumbfounded, I knelt there, staring at the bricks. I turned my attention to the knit cap
717 dangling from my hand. *This must be the Helmet of Salvation.* And as my thought finished, the
718 knit cap transformed just like the sword. It became a bronze helmet surrounded by a white aura.
719 The Helmet of Salvation looked like something a Roman Officer might wear. I put it on my
720 head. Warmth flowed down my neck and it molded to my head like the sword molded to my
721 hand. Nose and cheek guards expanded and protectively covered much of my face without
722 obstructing my view. I took the helmet off and with a thought it became a knit cap once again.

723 I re-entered the box closed Albert’s eyes, blew out the candle and backed out of the box
724 again.

725 *Wait! Where’s Bob?* I had forgotten about Bob.

726 I swung the flashlight up and down the alley. Fifteen feet away huddled in the dark was
727 Pastor Bob. I walked over to him; he sat on the cold ground with his back against the building,

728 knees drawn up and his head buried in his arms. He was crying. “Bob, what's the matter?” I
729 asked putting my hand on his shoulder. More sobs. I waited.

730 Several minutes passed. My attempts to comfort felt weak and insufficient. Bob lifted his
731 head and looked at me. In the dim light moisture glistened on his cheeks. Bob said, “Brother, He
732 was saved at City Mission. I had no idea. During one of my sermons. My Sermon! Hopelessness
733 and despair made it so I couldn't see. I thought the work made no difference. And because I was
734 focused on ME, I didn't notice Albert. I wished I had known him. Lord, please forgive me.” He
735 buried his face in his hands again.

736 A few more minutes passed. As gently as I could, I said, “Bob, there's nothing more to do
737 here. Let's call 911.”

738 “Yea, you're right,” as he reached into to his jacket pocket for his cell phone. Bob pulled
739 himself together and made the call.

740 We exited the alley and waited on the main street for the police to arrive. Within a few
741 minutes a patrol car pulled up next to us.

742 “Are you Pastor Bob Bennett?”

743 “Yes Sir,” replied Bob.”

744 “I'm Officer Hayes. You found the body of the homeless man” . . . he flipped through his
745 notes, “Albert. What can you tell me?” The cry of the ambulance grew in intensity as it turned
746 the corner and pulled to a stop in front of the cop car. The driver got out and walked over to us.

747 “Where's the body?”

748 I pointed the way. “I'll show you.”

749 The other EMT had opened the back doors of the ambulance and they pulled the gurney out.
750 He wheeled it in our direction. Resting on the gurney sat a couple of portable spotlights. I turned

751 and lead them down the alley. I pointed to the box. They set up the big flashlights bathing the
752 side street in light. Then they crawled into box. Soon they gently pulled Albert out and lifted him
753 on the gurney. He looked even smaller and frailer.

754 “What happened here?”

755 “We were out walking and heard a cry from the alley. We decided to investigate.”

756 “You know that was pretty stupid. You could've been ambushed.” the driver said.

757 “I know, but at the time it seemed like a good idea. He lived long enough to tell us his name
758 was Albert, he had cancer and thought he was going to die. And before we could call you, he did
759 pass away.”

760 “OK, thanks we'll take it from here.” I returned to Bob and the police officer.

761 Officer Hayes continued, “. . . and you don't know his last name?”

762 “No, but he said he'd been to the City Mission Soup Kitchen a year ago. I manage the
763 Mission, but I didn't recognize him.”

764 “Why were you out walking so late? It's pretty cold. Not exactly the best walking weather,
765 plus you know it's dangerous to walk around this area at night.” Officer Hayes said, his eyes
766 bore into Bob's searching for the truth.

767 “I was counseling Caleb . . .” Bob pointed in my direction.

768 Turning from Bob, he asked me, “What is your full name please?”

769 “Caleb Kincade.”

770 He returned to Bob, “Please continue.”

771 “Caleb became agitated and said he needed to go for a walk. Like you said, it's dangerous to
772 walk around here at night. I decided to go with him figuring two would be safer than one.”

773 Turning to me the cop asked, “Why were you so agitated, Mr. Kincade?”

774 Bob interrupted, "I'm sorry, but that is private matter between client and counselor."

775 Officer Hayes must have been satisfied with that answer. He jotted a few more notes down.

776 "And Albert never said what his last name was?"

777 The back doors of the ambulance thudded closed. The EMT's got in the cab, started the
778 engine and pulled away from the curb. No lights or sirens though. They didn't need to hurry.

779 "He didn't tell us his last name, but Albert said he had been to the City Mission for meals
780 about a year ago. We make anybody wanting a meal sign in. Sometimes they give us their last
781 name and sometimes they don't. I can look over the sign in sheets in the morning. May we leave
782 now? It's getting late."

783 "You may go. Someone will stop by in the morning to see if you found his last name."

784 "Thank you, Officer," I said and we headed back to the church.

785 As we rounded the corner I looked around to make sure no one watched us. I stooped over
786 and slid some garbage aside and picked up the Helmet of Salvation. I had hidden it while we
787 waited for the police to arrive. I put the Helmet of Salvation onto my head again and
788 transformed it with a thought and enjoyed the warm sensation that flowed down my neck.

789 "Is that really the Helmet of Salvation?" Bob asked.

790 "Yes. As soon as I touched it, it transformed into the bronze helmet you see now."

791 "Caleb, remember, all I see is dirty knit cap on your head."

792 "Amazing, because to me it's a bronze helmet a Roman soldier might wear. It seems, in the
793 spiritual realm, this is special and it's not so special in the earthly realm."

794 "I also think we need to wash it as soon as possible. It stinks," commented Bob as we
795 walked.

796 When we arrived at the church, Bob said, “It’s late. You shouldn't be walking home alone
797 tonight. I could find you a bed in the dormitory with the rest of the clients. However, there’s a
798 couch in the room behind the sanctuary. It’s quieter and more private. Why don't you stay there
799 for the night and in the morning we'll decide the next step. I have an apartment behind the
800 kitchen. I'm up early, just come find me when you're ready.”

801 Bob escorted me to the room with the sofa. He excused himself to go and get some bed
802 linens and a blanket. When he returned, he tossed them to me and excused himself again. I
803 started to make my bed with the sheets he'd given me. When he came back the second time, he
804 brought two, five gallon buckets; one half full of hot soapy water and the other with hot clean
805 water.

806 “What’s that for?”

807 “The Helmet of Salvation,” he said. “I was serious about washing it. Can’t you smell it?”

808 “Yea, it reeks, but do ya think the water will hurt it?”

809 “It’s the Helmet of Salvation, imbued with power from God to help fight evil. I’m pretty sure
810 a little soap and water won’t hurt it,” Bob chuckled. With those final words, he relieved me of
811 the hat, tossed it in the soapy bucket and dunked it up and down. Then he repeated the process in
812 the clean water. When he started ringing it out, I winced, expecting it to fall apart. But my fears
813 were unfounded. Bob hung it over the edge of one of the shelves to dry.

814 Bob said, “I’m beat. Come find me in the morning.”

815 “Okay. . . and Bob thanks for believing me even though you can’t see what I see.”

816 Bob quietly responded, “No, it is I who should thank you. You rid me of the demon of
817 despair and helped rekindle the faith I thought lost.” Handing me a blanket he said, “Good
818 night” and left the room.

819

820

Chapter 5

821

Caleb

822

Saturday Morning

823

I woke with a start. *Where am I? What time is it?* I rolled over looking for my clock and

824

found myself looking around a strange room. Then memories filled in the void between my ears.

825

I was in one of the back rooms of Stanton Community Church. The flow of memories didn't

826

stop, they kept coming; Pastor Bob, vaporizing the demon, Albert dying, the Helmet of Salvation

827

and more poured in. *Was it real? It must be, here I am.* I examined my watch, 8:05 it read.

828

While my body ached from sleeping on the sofa, I felt mentally alert and ready to face the

829

day. Muttering to myself, "I need to find Bob."

830

I opened the door and went into the sanctuary. Gold, red, aqua, and purple sunlight streamed

831

through the stained glass windows. I just stood there in awe of the beauty.

832

"Glorious isn't it?"

833

Pastor Bob remarked with a broad smile as he strode up the center aisle.

834

"When the church was built, it stood alone. The sun shone through the windows much of the

835

day. It was a kaleidoscope of colors. Now, it's surrounded by buildings. Because of a break

836

between two buildings, the sun can only come through the windows about 8:00 A.M. and lasts

837

not even thirty minutes. This has always been my favorite time and place to pray and study

838

God's word. But I stopped when the despair crept in." We stood for a moment marveling at the

839

beauty.

840

"So what's the plan?" Bob asked.

841

"I don't know. Last night my sense of purpose was strong and clear. Now I don't know."

842 “May I make a suggestion?” Bob asked. “I’ve called the police a second time to claim
843 Albert's body if nobody else claims it. I want to give him a proper funeral. The police said they
844 were stopping by to ask more questions. Stay here, pray and seek counsel from God. When
845 you’re done, come to the kitchen. We'll talk to the police when they arrive.”

846 “That sounds better than my plan.”

847 Bob turned away, walked down the aisle, and then quickly turned back. “I need a favor.
848 Would you be willing to help serve lunch today? Two volunteers have called and said they won't
849 be in. I could really use your help.”

850 “I’d be glad to assist.”

851 Bob turned and headed down the aisle again.

852 “Uhm, Bob,” I called out. Bob turned around.

853 “I-I don't really know how to pray. I mean, I did it last night, but I’m not sure I did it right.”

854 Bob gave me a kind smile. “Caleb, close your eyes and just talk to God inside your head or
855 out loud.” With that, he turned and left the sanctuary.

856 I sat down in one of the pews bathed in a shaft of glorious warmth and color. I flipped the
857 pew kneeler down and knelt. Bowing my head, I closed my eyes. “Dear Lord, in the last day You
858 have done a miracle in my life. My faith in Jesus and You are growing at an incredible rate. I
859 care about doing your will. I don't understand why you chose me and I don’t understand what to
860 do. And even though I don’t understand, I’m willing to serve you. Please Lord, what is the next
861 step? I need your guidance and wisdom.”

862 I knelt there. Waiting, listening, my mind wandered. *I wonder what we’re having for lunch. I*
863 *smell. I need a shower.* Refocusing, “Please Lord, I need to hear from you.” More waiting,

864 mental wandering and nothing. There were no spinners, tugs, pulls or urges. My stomach
865 growled.

866 By now the shafts of light had faded as the surrounding buildings shadowed the church. *I*
867 *guess I wait.*

868

869 Chapter 6

870 Bob

871 Saturday Morning

872 As I unlocked the front doors of the Soup Kitchen, the police arrived. “I’m Officer Brown.
873 I’m looking for Pastor Bob Bennett.”

874 “I’m Bob Bennett.”

875 “I understand you found the body of the homeless man, Albert, last night?”

876 “Yes.”

877 “Did you find out his last name?”

878 “I think so. I looked over the sign in sheets this morning and found a three Albert’s in the last
879 year and a half. I was able to eliminate two, leaving one. I believe his last name was Paxton,
880 Albert Paxton. He hadn’t been here for several months.”

881 Officer Brown continued, “My Sergeant said you wanted claim the body and give him a
882 proper burial. Why would you do that for a homeless man?”

883 “I didn’t know the man, but before he died, he told us that he had accepted Jesus as his
884 Savior during one of his times here. I feel a connection to and a responsibility for him. If nobody
885 else claims him, I will.”

886 The Officer gave me a piercing look. I imagined he's trying to gauge whether I spoke the
887 truth or not. I stood there and tried to look innocent.

888

889

890 Chapter 7

891 Caroline

892 Saturday Morning

893 "Mommy! You promised!" six year old Anna whined. "You said we'd leave right after
894 breakfast."

895 "Sweetie, yesterday it seemed like a good idea, but today it just seems silly."

896 "It's important, Mommy. I have to give it to the man today!"

897 I wiped the tear from her cheek with my thumb. My heart melted.

898 "Okay."

899 *Caroline, what have you gotten yourself into?*

900 When I arrived home last night, Anna bounced into my arms and announced she had a "gift"
901 to give to a man at a soup kitchen on Saturday.

902 "Great, we'll take it right after breakfast tomorrow." I boldly stated.

903 That was yesterday.

904 Yesterday, the sun rose above the horizon of my soul and burned away the mental fog and
905 darkness that plagued me. I felt alive; light as a balloon. Yesterday, I danced my way through the
906 work day and raced home to be with Anna. Yesterday, I would have agreed to anything.

907 Today, reality and guilt assaulted my mind. Watching Anna eat her breakfast, I realize how I
908 had neglected my sweet daughter; the only bit of color in my black and white life. I kept her fed
909 and clothed, but that's about it. I hadn't realized how dark my mind had been until the fog lifted.

910 Tears threatened to spill from my eyes and I grabbed a tissue from the box on the table. I
911 loved her so much; nothing else mattered.

912 Other than Anna's babysitter, Grace, I had no real friends. Every day I struggled to get out of
913 bed, feed Anna and go to work.

914 "I need to take a shower and get dressed. When I'm ready, we'll go."

915 Sighing, I returned to the bedroom for some clothes, crossed the hall and entered the
916 bathroom. I turned on the shower faucets. Steam filled the air. Sliding the curtain aside, I stepped
917 into the tub and relished the warmth that flowed over me.

918 *Without Anna, my life had no meaning and without Jack, I wouldn't have had Anna. The jerk.*
919 *I loved him so much. He said he loved me. I didn't care that he was twenty-eight and I was only*
920 *eighteen. He seemed so worldly and sophisticated. It was six months before I figured out he had*
921 *a wife and kid. I didn't care, I was in love. Why didn't he leave his wife like he promised? Oh,*
922 *yeah, the time was never "right." Six years. I gave him the best six years of my life.*

923 Tears mingled with the water running down my body.

924 *And then I saw him and his wife at the coffee shop. He saw me and his eyes got big for*
925 *moment. Then he turned away and I became invisible. I realized this guy would never leave his*
926 *wife. Just a gullible and pleasant distraction; that's all I was.*

927 *Love. I had it and wanted to give it to someone. Since I couldn't have Jack, I'd have a piece*
928 *of him; a tiny piece. I threw my birth control pills away that day. We rendezvous several more*

929 *times. I should have won an Oscar for my performance. I don't know how long I could've kept*
930 *the false front. My disgust grew with every touch. Fortunately, I got pregnant in 2 months.*

931 I watched the remaining water swirled down the drain as I twisted the faucets closed. *Kinda*
932 *like my life. I grabbed a towel and dried off.*

933 *I loved the look on his face when I told him where to go. He couldn't believe his free ride was*
934 *leaving. He yelled and called me names. I knew I had to move.*

935 The blow dryer roared in the small bathroom. In the mirror, I noticed the dark roots in my
936 hair.

937 *And where did those thoughts come from anyway; "failure", "lousy mother", "not good*
938 *enough" always whispering through my mind. And the nightmares. Every night horrible dreams.*

939 *Someone stole Anna or someone chased or tortured me. You know, If it wasn't for Anna and*
940 *Grace, I . . . would . . . I . . . would've . . .*

941 The blow dryer clattered into the sink and my hands caught the edge as my legs turned to
942 rubber. Understanding and fear stared back at me from the mirror.

943 Closing the toilet seat cover, I sat down and buried my face in my hands. Fresh tears
944 squeezed between my fingers.

945 The pounding on the door startled me.

946 "Mommy, what's taking so long?"

947 I stood and reached for a tissue box on the back of the toilet to wipe my eyes and nose, "J-j-
948 just a minute S-sweetie, I'm getting dressed."

949 On went the blouse and slacks. The comb made several trips through my hair and the
950 toothbrush raced around my mouth.

951 For the last 3 days, I had ridden an emotional roller coaster. Thursday, depressed. Friday, I
952 floated on cloud nine. Saturday morning, I was confused.

953 Yesterday morning, the euphoria I tasted lasted all day long. Last night I wanted to be with
954 Anna so bad I flew home. I knocked on Grace's door and dropped to my knees. After a couple of
955 round of hugs and kisses, Anna reached for a plastic bag lying in the floor behind her.

956 'Close your eyes Mommy, I wanna show you something.'

957 Amused, I did as requested. After a bit of rustling, I heard an excited, "Open your eyes."

958 Again, I obeyed and draped between her two tiny hands hung a finger-thick, five foot long,
959 dirty yellow rope.

960 "A yellow rope . . . that's interesting . . .uhm, where'd you get it?"

961 "From the angel in the park."

962 Alarmed, "You mean a man gave it to you in the park?"

963 "No Mommy, an angel! Me 'n Grace was sitting on the bench feeding bread to the pigeons.

964 The angel walked up and put it on the bench next to me. He said he was an angel 'n I had to help
965 God bring that rope to a man at the soup kitchen. And when I saw the man, I would know him."

966 Concerned, I looked up at Grace again.

967 "Did Grace see this "angel"?"

968 Grace gave a little shrug. "We sat there feeding the pigeons like she said and the next thing I
969 knew she had that rope in her hands with a story about the angel. She must have found it on the
970 bench. I didn't see it when we sat down, but it must have been there. No one approached us."

971 *Ookkaayy!* Relieved, my concern past, I stifled a chuckle. My good mood didn't care where
972 the rope came from. If Anna wanted to deliver a rope to a man at the soup kitchen, I'd be willing
973 to help her. I would've agreed to deliver a donkey to the President at that point.

974 That's what happened on Friday. Now Saturday morning had arrived and I felt pretty foolish.
975 I only knew of one soup kitchen, the City Mission Soup Kitchen. It's a twenty to thirty minute
976 walk. I didn't have a car and couldn't afford a cab today. Thankfully, I lived within walking
977 distance of work; it had been a miracle that I found an apartment so cheap and close. Not having
978 a car had its pros and cons, but it limited my options on when and where I could go.

979 I took one last look in the mirror. *What are you doing?* Then I exited the bathroom. With a
980 defeated sigh, "Alright Sweetie, let's go." Anna squealed with delight. We sat down and put our
981 shoes on. Anna picked up the plastic bag with the yellow rope.

982 Earlier, the radio weather man said it would start clear and sunny, then turn colder and rain as
983 the front passed. I peeked out the window. As predicted, the sunny day had been replaced with
984 clouds and a light rain.

985 "Anna, please get our jackets. It's raining; we'll need to dress warm."

986 She brought my coat and I helped zip hers up. She didn't care about the weather; a big smile
987 adorned her face as she eagerly waited for the adventure to begin. In a few minutes we had our
988 coats on and hoods up.

989 We walked down the second story stairs, opened the door and the water pelted our faces. I
990 pushed Anna back inside.

991 "Sweetie, are you sure we need to go now?"

992 "Yes Mommy. We ha'f to go noowww."

993 I tightened Anna's hood and zipped the coat all the way up to her chin then did the same for
994 mine. *Here we go.* We left the warm building and walked briskly down the sidewalk. With every
995 step, conditions worsened. We leaned into the wind and pushed on. *This is stupid.* I examined
996 Anna's face for defeat and found determination, so we trudged on. She clutched the bag with the

997 rope. *This is important to Anna. We'll go find this "man" and hopefully he won't laugh in her*
998 *face.* Steeling myself against the cold wind and we marched on.

999

1000 Chapter 8

1001 Caleb

1002 Saturday Morning

1003 I gave up praying. *Better go find Bob, but I need to put the Armor of God in something.* I
1004 returned to the back room where I had slept and found a box of black garbage bags. I grabbed
1005 one of the bags and put the Sword of the Spirit and the dry Helmet of Salvation in it. Then I
1006 headed for the dining room. I found Bob by the front door of the dining hall speaking to a
1007 policeman. *That cop could be a line backer.*

1008 Bob introduced us.

1009 "Caleb, this is Officer Brown. Officer Brown, this is Caleb Kincade."

1010 "Hello," I said and we shook hands.

1011 Officer Brown continued, "The coroner took a quick look at him early this morning. He said
1012 it was clear he had been sick for some time and he had some suspicious lumps that he thought
1013 might be tumors. I'm just here to get your statements and wrap things up," said Officer Brown.
1014 He continued reading from his notes. "You were out walking, heard some noise from an alley,
1015 investigated, found Albert Paxton, he told you he had been to City Mission before, and you are
1016 willing to bury him if nobody claims him. Does that sum it up?"

1017 "Yes, sir," Bob said.

1018 "OK, thank you gentlemen. We'll contact you if we have further questions," said Officer
1019 Brown. He turned and headed back to his patrol car.

1020 The glorious sun now hid behind a bank of clouds. A few wet spots fell on the sidewalk.

1021 When the police officer got into his car, we turned and headed toward the kitchen. I said,

1022 “I’m glad that is done.”

1023 “Agreed. Did God tell you the next step?”

1024 “No, I don’t have any clear idea what to do.”

1025 Bob said, “Then we wait. Let’s go to my office.”

1026 I stepped into Bob’s office and wondered. I wondered how he stuffed so much stuff into a

1027 small space. I wondered why he didn’t dump half of it. And I wondered where I would sit. Years

1028 of magazines, books and papers had been stacked on every flat surface. Bob took a stack off of

1029 one chair and placed it on top of the stack in the other chair. I sat down.

1030 “Is the Armor of God in the bag?”

1031 “Yeah,” I replied.

1032 “Take out the sword and let’s have a look at it,” Bob directed.

1033 I pulled the plastic tube and the knit hat from the bag. I set the hat on the desk. I held the

1034 tube in my right hand, thought the words and the sword transformed. Well, at least to me it

1035 transformed.

1036 “Ok, it’s done.”

1037 “I see a plastic tube. What do you see?” Bob asked.

1038 With both hands I held the Sword of the Spirit up before my eyes. “I see a two and a half

1039 foot long silver colored sword surrounded by a white aura. It is warm to the touch. It molds to

1040 my hand when I squeeze the hilt and it elongated to stab the demon last night. It has words

1041 inside, not on the surface, of the blade. It’s almost like I can see into the metal itself and floating

1042 in there is text. The words are written in a language I don't recognize and they're constantly
1043 moving and shifting position. Some fade, others get more pronounced and then fade again."

1044 Bob opened the Bible on his desk and said, "Ephesians 6 says ' . . . sword of the Spirit, which
1045 is the word of God.' The Word of God is scripture. Some think it is just the four Gospels, many
1046 believe it is the entire Bible. Most scholars agree you need to be knowledgeable in God's Word
1047 so you can speak its truth into other people's lives. The Word of God is the only true answer for
1048 evil in this world. Evil cannot tolerate the presence of the truth. Evil will either flee or try to
1049 smother the Word of God."

1050 Bob turned some more pages in his Bible. "The Word of God is living. Hebrews 4:12 says:
1051 'For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword,
1052 it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the
1053 thoughts and attitudes of the heart.' (NIV)

1054 Bob closed the Bible. "You understand that I can't see what you see. Assuming your
1055 description is accurate, then it doesn't surprise me that sword can change shape and it feels alive.
1056 If it is the embodiment of God's Word, then it is alive."

1057 Bob leaned back in his chair with his hands clasped behind his head. Talking to the ceiling
1058 Bob continued, "The languages on the sword are probably Hebrew and / or Greek which is the
1059 original language the scriptures were written in."

1060 Bob tipped his chair forward and looked intently at me. "Describe again, what happened
1061 when you struck the demon?"

1062 "There was a brief sizzle sound and the demon turned to a wisp of smoke or vapor."

1063 "Fascinating, I need to think on that for a while," Bob said. "What do you see when you look
1064 at the Helmet of Salvation?"

1065 I reached for the knit hat and transformed it into the Helmet of Salvation. “It is a brown
1066 metal; I think it might be bronze. There is a flap of metal extended over the nose and one on each
1067 side wrapping around to cover about half the cheek. There are words in the metal much like the
1068 sword, but they don’t move around. It is warm like the sword and molds to my head.”

1069 Bob looked at the ceiling again. *That must be how he does his best thinking.*

1070 The Pastor spoke, “In battle, the head is one of the more vulnerable places on the Roman
1071 Soldier. The helmet protected this vital area. It could keep the soldier from harm and allow him
1072 to continue fighting. Salvation is the deliverance from sin and evil. Jesus is our salvation; our
1073 deliverer from sin and evil. In the spirit realm the helmet must either protect you directly from
1074 the blows of demons or perhaps it guards your mind from their influence. Either way, it will help
1075 you with those spiritual battles.”

1076 Bob sighed. “I wish I could see what you see.”

1077 We sat there, both lost in thought for a minute. “Without word from God, what do we do
1078 next?” I asked subdued.

1079 “We wait. You go help with the preparations for lunch. I’m giving the message today and I
1080 need to put some final touches on it,” Bob said rubbing his hands together. You could see the
1081 excitement in his face.

1082 I stood, said good-bye to Bob and headed for the kitchen. I introduced myself to Carla and
1083 she put me right to work. The kitchen offered 2 sermons and 2 meals a day. They had a light
1084 lunch of soup and sandwiches and a hearty Dinner. Carla parked me in front of a stack of cans
1085 instructed which can needed to be dumped into which pot or pan. Some were for lunch and the
1086 rest in preparation for dinner. I also dumped boxes of ziti pasta into a giant kettle. Then Carla
1087 handed me several pounds of cold cuts and instructed me in the fine art of Soup Kitchen

1088 Sandwich making. Carla redefined multitasking, she seemed to be everywhere. As we worked,
1089 she chatted amiably about the Mission.

1090 The City Mission Soup Kitchen began during the Great Depression in the 1930's. It is one of
1091 the oldest ministries to the poor in the state. Monday through Friday, at 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM,
1092 Bob or another volunteer begins the worship service / meal by singing songs out of the old
1093 hymnals. Then about 12:00 PM and 7:00 PM, a hearty lunch / dinner would be served and the
1094 clients took the leftovers "home." Strong community support normally meant enough volunteers,
1095 but not today for some reason.

1096 That's the schedule for Monday through Saturday. On Sunday after the main church service,
1097 a team of church members made bag lunches. The homeless could wander in and eat when they
1098 felt like it. Anybody coming for a meal had to sign in. Since their names were never verified,
1099 you never knew if they used their real name or made up one. They encouraged anybody who
1100 wanted to eat, to listen to the message first. But state law said they could not force them to listen
1101 to the teaching in order to eat. So the front doors remained open and people wandered in until
1102 the doors locked about 11:50 a.m. Many came day after day to listen, even though they didn't
1103 have to. Following the message, the leader blessed the meal and they lined up to receive their
1104 meal.

1105 About 11:00 AM a stream of people flowed in the teaching / dining area and found seats
1106 around the various size tables. The crowd consisted mostly of men, but there were a few women
1107 and children. It was getting crowded. The weather had turned nasty outside. *The cold has them*
1108 *thinking about warm food and a place to get out of the rain and wind.* As I stood behind the
1109 counter, I listened to the people sing the old hymns. Carla, behind the old upright piano, banged

1110 away on the keys. The tunes tickled my memory. I recognized “Amazing Grace.” One or two
1111 others sounded familiar. I must have heard them in my youth.

1112 Pastor Bob spoke now. The men started to shift and fidget. You could tell his sermon ran into
1113 overtime, but Pastor Bob was on fire. He gave the gospel message with great fervor. Then Pastor
1114 Bob asked if anyone there would like to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. Three hands shot up.
1115 Two men and one woman with a child raised their hands. Bob asked them to join him up front.
1116 The men shuffled forward, but the woman and child remained sitting. Bob gave thanks for the
1117 food. The chair legs scrapped the floor as the clients stood and began to form a line. That was
1118 my cue to get ready to dish out food.

1119

1120 Chapter 9

1121 Caroline

1122 Saturday Noon

1123 “Are we almost there?” Anna’s question dripped with excitement.

1124 Amazing. Cold and wet and excitement still bubbled from Anna. On the other hand, doubt
1125 and anxiety had its hold on me. “I think so Sweetie.” The rain came down heavier. Up ahead, the
1126 City Mission Soup Kitchen sign peeked between the rain drops.

1127 “There it is, let's hurry.” We moved our feet faster and we soon arrived at the door. I stopped.
1128 *This is really stupid. Even if the guy is here, he's going to think we're nuts.* “Anna, are you sure
1129 you want to do this?”

1130 “Yes Mommy. The angel said so.” She pulled my hand with her whole body toward the door.

1131 A smiling elderly woman sat at a table by the door. “Welcome. You made it just in time.
1132 Have you been here before?” she asked.

1133 “No.”

1134 “Please sign in and go find a seat. There are usually a few seats up front because nobody
1135 likes sitting that close to the pastor.” She gave me a wink and continued. “And there’s a short
1136 service that has just started. The Pastor will say a blessing over the food and you will then be
1137 able to eat,” she added.

1138 “Oh, we’re not here to eat,” I said.

1139 “Mommy, I’m starving,” Anna stated. The woman gave me a patronizing smile.

1140 “Names?”

1141 “Caroline and Anna Sullivan,” I said and quickly signed the paper. Feeling awkward, I
1142 grabbed Anna's hand and headed down the hall to the dining room. My senses came under attack
1143 as we entered the room. We walked into a wall of heat and humidity. The pleasant smell of food
1144 and men made my nose crinkle as the odors collided. We waded through the crowd toward the
1145 empty seats up front. Most of the patrons were male with a few women and children sprinkled
1146 about. “Excuse me . . . pardon me . . . sorry about your foot.” My face warmed with
1147 embarrassment as every head turned in our direction. The gruff singing sounded surprisingly
1148 beautiful. Not tabernacle choir caliber, but still pleasant to the ear.

1149 Anna and I arrived at our seats. Old and well-worn hymnals lay scattered on the table. We
1150 stood by our chairs and picked up a hymnal. A neighbor with a scruffy black beard and a missing
1151 tooth smiled and pointed to the hymn number. The pages rustled as I searched for the hymn. “A
1152 Mighty Fortress is Our God,” read the title. They had just finished verse two. I opened my mouth
1153 to sing and the words died in my throat. I stopped and listened.

1154 Tears pooled in the corners of my eyes and ran down my cheeks. From deep within my mind,
1155 memories welled to the surface.

1156

1157 Verse 3.

1158 And though this world, with devils filled,

1159 should threaten to undo us,

1160

1161 *I found myself trapped in one of my frequent nightmares. Someone had taken Anna and I*
1162 *chased the kidnaper through a dark forest following Anna's terrified screams. I yelled her name*
1163 *until my voice gave out. Her screams mixed with evil laughter faded in the distance. I ran fast*
1164 *but not fast enough. Exhaustion overwhelmed me. I tripped on a root and fell to the ground; my*
1165 *heart pounding and my breath ragged, I couldn't get up. Anna's cries faded until I no longer*
1166 *heard them.*

1167

1168 we will not fear, for God hath willed

1169 his truth to triumph through us.

1170

1171 *I screamed and beat the ground sobbing. I looked in the direction of the last cry and the*
1172 *forest faded into a white mist. A voice whispered in my ear, "Awake, the demon is gone."*

1173 *"What? What demon?"*

1174 *Several moments passed, then the voice whispered again, "In the name of Jesus, awake." I*
1175 *felt like a rope had been wrapped around my middle and someone pulled. The fog in my mind*
1176 *cleared. I opened my eyes. They darted about. My confused brain moved slow, like molasses.*
1177 *Where am I? I sat up and looked around. A room lined with dirty white ceramic filled my vision.*
1178 *Three large stainless steel tables sat in the middle of the room, one with some junk on it. The*

1179 *room reminded me of a hospital, a very grimy hospital. I sat on some kind of bed. The thick air*
1180 *suffused with dim light.*

1181

1182 The Prince of Darkness grim,
1183 we tremble not for him;
1184 his rage we can endure,
1185 for lo, his doom is sure;
1186 one little word shall fell him.

1187

1188 *A man stepped into my line of sight. He held a sword surrounded by a pale white light. I*
1189 *looked into his kind and warm brown eyes. He had auburn hair. His ragged face looked old*
1190 *before its time.*

1191 *The man said "Go, see if you can find a way out. Remember, Jesus will save and protect*
1192 *you."*

1193 *Jesus would protect me? I had rejected Jesus a long time ago. Why would He protect me*
1194 *now?*

1195

1196 Verse 4.

1197 That word above all earthly powers,
1198 no thanks to them, abideth;

1199

1200 *I did as the man said. I stood up and left through the door he pointed toward. Exiting the*
1201 *room, I met a sea of hospital beds similar to the one I woke on. Scared, I slowly walked down the*

1202 *main aisle and looked around. What I saw didn't make sense. Screams pierced the gloom and*
1203 *foul looking shapes walked and floated among the bodies. Stopping to survey my surroundings; I*
1204 *examined the nearest bed. Panic exploded in my mind and my joints locked. A man laid on his*
1205 *back on the bed. A small, gangly limbed creature sat between his head and heart. One burnt red*
1206 *arm dug in his forehead, the other clutched his heart. The man screamed and then sobbed. My*
1207 *screams echoed his as I ran down the aisle. The beds on both sides of me stretched on and on. I*
1208 *looked down the side aisles for an exit.*

1209

1210 the Spirit and the gifts are ours,
1211 thru him who with us sideth.

1212 Let goods and kindred go,

1213 this mortal life also;

1214

1215 *Out of breath and my heart pounding, I stopped and wildly looked around. I turned and*
1216 *checked the aisle behind me and down both side aisles. "Am I going the right way?" I wondered*
1217 *aloud. I must come to a wall at some point and turned to continue in the direction I was going.*
1218 *Inches from my face hovered a creature; the same kind of creature I just ran from. I jumped*
1219 *back. The thing floated in the air. About the size of a small monkey with large red eyes on its*
1220 *human looking face. Sharp claws tipped its fingers and toes. Dark red and hairless, the creature*
1221 *opened its mouth and a puff of foul breath escaped.*

1222 *It rasped, "What are you doing awake? Back to your cot human. GUARD!"*

1223

1224 the body they may kill;

1225 God's truth abideth still;
1226 his kingdom is forever.

1227

1228 *I turned and froze with fright. A seven foot monster lumbered in my direction. The beast wore*
1229 *deep red skin with scarlet eyes that bored into my soul. It carried a double edged executioners ax*
1230 *in its claws. My mind raced. "Remember, Jesus will save and protect you," the man's voice*
1231 *whispered in my head.*

1232 *I screwed my eyes closed. "Jesus, save and protect me from this beast," I whispered. I*
1233 *cringed, collapsing to the floor as I waited for a blow or to be picked up and returned to my bed.*
1234 *The creature screamed and I opened my eyes.*

1235 *And I woke up in my own bed breathing hard and sweating. What a dream! Even though, this*
1236 *topped all my past nightmares, I felt wonderfully alive for the first time in years. But like most*
1237 *dreams, the memory faded quickly in the light of day.*

1238 Dazed, I came back to the present. The song had ended and the Pastor spoke now. The words
1239 seemed to glow and hang in the air. Heaven. Hell. Sacrifice. Redemption. Forgiveness. Jesus.
1240 The Cross. Lord and Savior. Then the Pastor asked the question. "If you were to die tonight, do
1241 you know if your spirit is going to heaven?"

1242 "No," I whispered with a sob.

1243 The Pastor continued "Do you need a savior. Jesus can be that savior. If you're ready to
1244 receive Jesus as your Savior, raise your hand." I raised my hand. "If you raised your hand, please
1245 come see me after I give thanks for the food."

1246 The Pastor prayed and I sat there emotionally drained. The “Amen” at the end of the prayer
1247 acted as a pistol shot at the beginning of a horse race. Most of the men quickly pushed back from
1248 the table to form a line by the food.

1249 I just sat there and cried.

1250 “Mommy, what's wrong?” Anna said sounding small and frightened. Through tears, I
1251 watched the Pastor speak with two other men. They bowed their heads and prayed. When they
1252 finished, he gave them each a small book.

1253 I rejected Jesus years ago. *Am I really going to accept Him as my Lord and Savior based on*
1254 *some dream? . . . Yes.*

1255 The Pastor had another book in his hands with “New Testament” stamped on the front. He
1256 came over and sat down next to me. Tears refilled my eyes.

1257 “I'm Pastor Bob. Would you like to receive Jesus as your Savior?” he kindly asked.

1258 “Yes,” I whispered as the tears escaped my eyes.

1259 “Pray with me Sister. Repeat what I say with sincerity and truth,” Pastor Bob said. He bowed
1260 his head and closed his eyes.

1261 “Lord God, I have sinned against you. I repent, turning from those sins and seek your
1262 forgiveness. . . ” the Pastor began.

1263 I repeated “Lord God, I have sinned against you. I repent, turning from those sins and seek
1264 your forgiveness. . . ”

1265 Then a small voice beside me echoed the same line. Startled, I looked down. Anna's little
1266 head was bowed and her eyes closed. I took her hand in mine and closed my eyes again. As Bob
1267 prayed, Anna and I repeated each line.

1268 “You are the mighty creator of Heaven and earth . . . ”

1269 “You sent your son, Jesus, to die on the cross . . .”
1270 “You accepted His blood as payment for my sins . . .”
1271 “So I may be forgiven and be adopted into the family of God. . .”
1272 “Jesus, I ask you to be my Savior and to take charge of my life . . .”
1273 “Help me to live a life pleasing and obedient to You for all eternity. . .”
1274 “In Jesus name, Amen.”
1275 We lifted our heads. Relief and emotion crashed over me like an ocean wave. Again, tears
1276 welled up in my eyes and ran down my cheeks, but this time these were tears of joy and
1277 thankfulness.
1278 Pastor Bob handed me the Bible. “Bless you child,” He said to me.
1279 “And bless you too little one,” he said to Anna.
1280 “What’re your names?”
1281 “I’m Caroline Sullivan and this is my daughter, Anna,” I replied with a big smile as I
1282 continued to wipe the tears away.
1283 “I think you need to have some lunch. The line is almost finished. Just go over to the end,
1284 each of you grab a tray and let the server know what you want.”
1285 I took his hands in mine. “Thank you Pastor.” I turned to follow Anna who had skipped over
1286 to the line. I followed and picked up two trays and handed one to Anna.
1287 “Mommy, what is there to eat?”
1288 I looked down at the food choices. “It looks like there is salad, carrots, sandwiches and I see
1289 a sign that says ‘Chicken Noodle Soup’.”

1290 Anna reached for some carrots and moved down to the sandwiches. I picked up a bowl of
1291 salad and added some ranch dressing. Suddenly Anna squealed and pointed “Mommy, there he
1292 is. There’s the man I’m supposed to give my rope to.”

1293 I looked where she pointed. Behind the counter stood a man serving sandwiches. A shock of
1294 auburn hair covered his head. He looked to be about five foot, eight inches. He smiled at Anna
1295 and turned his head in my direction. Our eyes locked. His were brown and gentle just like in my
1296 dream. *Wait! This is not possible!* They were the exact same eyes that I saw in my dream. “You!”
1297 I squawked. Suddenly, the room spun and all went dark.

1298 Chapter 10

1299 Caleb

1300 Saturday Noon

1301 “Caleb, make sure the sandwiches don’t run out. It’s okay to have extra, the clients will take
1302 any leftovers with them,” Carla said. I had already made about sixty and had enough bread and
1303 lunch meat for about thirty more.

1304 As Pastor Bob finished blessing the food, the group rose in unison and headed for the trays.
1305 Dirty hair, clothes and faces formed a neat and orderly line. Each person picked up a tray and
1306 patiently waited. I heard a few gruff “’scuse me” and “sorry” as the line developed. I thought I
1307 had lived a pretty rough life. I’ve been a client myself at the mission, but I now realized, I hadn’t
1308 yet hit bottom. These guys had. My eyes moistened and I wiped my face on my forearm. I
1309 couldn’t respond to the thank you’s for a several minutes. I could only nod my head.

1310 When the crowd thinned a bit, I looked out over the room at the men and women wolfing
1311 down their meals. Up front knelt Bob with head bowed and his hand on the shoulders of a

1312 woman and young girl. *Probably a mother and daughter.* The woman's shoulders shook as she
1313 cried.

1314 The last person in line accepted the sandwich I handed him when Bob and the two ladies
1315 stood. The mother and daughter both had bright new believer auras surrounding them. The little
1316 girl came bounding over to the stack of trays. She said some things to her mother. The mother,
1317 still wiping her eyes, responded and picked up two trays, handing one to her daughter. The
1318 young lady picked up a paper plate and added some carrots to it. She bounced over to where I
1319 stood. She inspected the sandwiches, and then she looked up at me.

1320 She squealed with delight pointing at me "Mommy, there he is. There is the man I am
1321 supposed to give my rope to." Her scream startled me and I stood there unsure how to respond. I
1322 gave the young girl an awkward smile. Then I turned my head and had my first good look at the
1323 mother. She had the most startling pair of hazel eyes. I couldn't believe it, this was the woman
1324 from my dream. Hers was the first demon I sliced in the white tiled room. Our eyes locked.

1325 She cried, "You!" And much to my surprise, her eyes rolled up into her head and she
1326 collapsed onto the floor.

1327 I rushed from behind the counter calling for Pastor Bob.

1328 "Bob, Bob this lady passed out," I shouted.

1329 Her daughter knelt next to her mother and cried "Mommy, Mommy wake up!"

1330 "Excuse me," Bob said as he gently pushed Anna out of the way. "Sister Caroline, Sister
1331 Caroline, come back to us," as Bob gently patted her cheek. In about a minute, moans escaped
1332 from her throat. Her eyes fluttered open and she wore a dazed expression on her face.

1333 Memory then panic appeared on her face.

1334 “You. How can this be? You were in my dream Thursday night. You woke me up,” she said
1335 hysterical.

1336 Bob spoke a low voice, “We need to take this to my office. Help me get her up Caleb. Sister
1337 Carla, would you finish adding food to Anna's tray and bring it to my office please?”

1338 Bob and I got on each side of her, we each grabbed an arm. We half shuffled / half walked
1339 down the hall to Bob’s office. We sat her in the chair I had occupied earlier. The “wump” of a
1340 stack of papers hitting the floor startled me as Bob cleared the other chair for me. Anna sat on a
1341 stack of books next to Caroline's Chair. The concern on her face had replaced the innocence that
1342 it wore earlier.

1343 Caroline still had a wild look in her eyes.

1344 Gently Bob introduced us. “Sister Caroline, this is Caleb Kincade. Brother Caleb, this is
1345 Caroline and Anna. Caroline, you need to hear Caleb’s Story. I know this is going to be hard for
1346 you to hear, but I believe he is speaking truth. Brother Caleb, please begin.”

1347 My story began when I woke up inside the dream world. I told them about the first demon I
1348 saw and my trip to the white tile structure. How I found her screaming while a demon had its
1349 claws inside her and how I turned the demon into a wisp. The story took a while. She sat there
1350 very still and quiet. I wasn’t sure if she even listened, but I kept going. I told her everything that
1351 had happened up until the moment she fainted. As I spoke she relaxed. I paused the story when
1352 Carla arrived with Anna's food. The tray now held a sandwich, a cup of soup, a carton of milk
1353 and a cookie. Anna sat on the books and watched me while she ate. Caroline stared at the floor. I
1354 hoped I wasn’t wasting my breath.

1355 When I finished, Caroline snapped out of her reverie. “So is the dream world real?” she
1356 asked.

1357 "I think so. If I can see demons and the Armor of God in this world, then I have to believe
1358 the dream world is equally real."

1359 "I've been fighting depression for at least three years. Have they been tormenting me that
1360 long? I would hear whispers in my mind. Was that a demon?"

1361 "Last Wednesday, I'd said that was impossible. Today, yes, I think a Demon of Depression
1362 tortured you; making you think you were good for nothing and an bad mother."

1363 Then Caroline told her story. The affair, her move to this city, Anna's birth, struggles of a
1364 single mother and her depression. She told her part of our shared dream, about the demon and
1365 her escape from the dream and how she felt good for the first time in years.

1366 She continued "The only reason we're here is because Anna said an angel told her to give the
1367 man at the soup kitchen a gift. Anna where is the bag?" Caroline asked.

1368 "Oh, I left it on the table. I'll get it," she said as she ran out of the room.

1369 A shriek echoed down the hall and into the office. "MMMOOOMMMMMYYY, the bag is
1370 gone!" Anna screamed.

1371 We erupted from our chairs and ran down the hall to the dining area. Anna sobbed. "I-I-It
1372 was right here."

1373 "What was in the bag Anna?" Bob asked.

1374 "A yellow rope," she replied.

1375 Bob went to the front, flipped some switches and grabbed a microphone. Most clients had
1376 left, but a few still milled about.

1377 "Attention. Can I have everyone's attention please? Did anybody pick up a bag with a yellow
1378 rope in it? Brother Tom, did you see anything? No. This is very important. Any information will
1379 help."

1380 "Past'r Bob, I saw Jed putting a yeller rope on fur a belt," said one of the clients.

1381 "Is he still here?"

1382 "No, he j'st walk'd out da door."

1383 I bolted for the front door, Bob right behind me. The cold rain pelted us as we hit the
1384 sidewalk. Shielding our eyes, we both looked up and down the street.

1385 "You go left, I'll go right," Bob commanded. "Jed is 50ish and very short and stocky. He
1386 normally pushes a cart."

1387 We took off in our respective directions. I half ran down the street. I stopped at the corner
1388 and looked in all directions. Across the street to my right, I saw a short person pushing a cart. A
1389 demon stood on his shoulders with both hands in his head. I crossed the road, dodging cars,
1390 horns blaring.

1391 I called, "Hey Jed. Wait. Stop! I need to talk to you."

1392 The demon turned and glared at me. "Keep running Jed, this man wants to hurt you." I heard
1393 the demon say.

1394 I reached for the Sword of the Spirit and realized . . . I left it at the Mission. *Oh no!*

1395 Jed had stopped and turned to face me. "Get 'way from me. I din't do nutin'." I saw the
1396 yellow rope holding his pants up. The demon had a smug look on his face.

1397 "Demon, tell him to give me the rope."

1398 "No. . . Hey, you can see me."

1399 "Not only can I see you, but I can hurt you."

1400 "There ain't a human alive that can hurt me, " the imp rasped.

1401 "You're crazy man, ge' a'way frum me," Jed cried.

1402 "Now demon, tell him to give the rope to me."

1403 "NO!" it yelled.

1404 I had enough. I reached above Jed's head and grabbed each of the little monsters arms below
1405 the shoulders. The demon howled in pain, the red skin beneath my palms started to sizzle and
1406 smoke. It let go of Jed and batted at my arms.

1407 I opened my hands and the demon shot into the air. Palm prints branded into the monsters
1408 upper arms. The demon howled again and shot out of sight.

1409 I turned my attention to Jed. "Are you okay?"

1410 Jed had this glazed look in his eyes. I wondered how long the demon had been riding him.

1411 "Jed, let's go back to the Mission. I need the yellow rope you're wearing. I am sure we can
1412 find a different rope to hold up your pants." Dully, he nodded his head. We turned his cart around
1413 and returned to the mission.

1414 We parked the shopping cart outside the door and went in. Caroline and Carla comforted
1415 Anna.

1416 "Is Bob back?" I asked.

1417 "Not yet," Carla answered.

1418 "Carla, do you have a different rope we can give Jed?"

1419 "Yea, I think there is one in pantry, I'll go get it."

1420 "Jed, we need to take the yellow rope off." He raised his arms up.

1421 "You want me to untie and pull the rope off?"

1422 He nodded his head yes. *Oh Boy.*

1423 "Jed you gotta help me with this," I said.

1424 Jed reached down and untied the rope and slipped it out of the belt loops. He laid it on the
1425 table. Caroline picked it up and took Anna by the hand and headed back to Bob's office.

1426 Bob returned, breathing hard. "You found him, good."
1427 "Caroline and Anna went to your office with the yellow rope. I'll be there in a minute."
1428 Bob headed down the hall and Carla returned with a length of rope.
1429 "Here ya go Jed, you can use this rope as a belt." he took the new rope from Carla.
1430 "You go with Bob, I'll tend to Jed here," Carla said.
1431 "Thanks Carla. Thanks Jed." and I returned to Bob's office.
1432 I entered the office. All three had returned to their previous seats. Anna held the yellow rope.
1433 I sat down in my chair.
1434 "I need to give this to you, Mr. Kincade," Anna said as she handed me the rope.
1435 I gently took it from her grasp. *Which piece of the armor is this?* Mentally, I ran through the
1436 list. Then I announced, "The Belt of Truth" and before my eyes the simple, dirty, yellow rope
1437 transformed into a belt of wide leather pieces held together by bronze rings. A wooden scabbard
1438 hung from it. A bronze buckle connect the two ends together. It was beautiful. I put it on. "Anna,
1439 thank you so much for giving me this. It truly is a gift from God," Anna's face beamed.
1440 Caroline whispered to Bob "It looks like a yellow rope to me."
1441 "I know," Bob said "But Sister, you better get used to it. You should see the helmet and
1442 sword."
1443 Anna piped up "Wow. I didn't know it could do that. It's pretty."
1444 Startled, Caroline asked "Sweetie, what do you see?"
1445 "I see thick pieces of dark brown material. It's not cloth, but like cloth. It's all hooked
1446 together with shiny brown metal rings and a big buckle."
1447 Caroline shook her head and looked again. She frowned, "I only see a yellow rope."

1448 I reached down. I pulled the Sword of the Spirit and the Helmet of Salvation from the bag I
1449 stored it in earlier in Bob's office. I slipped the hat on my head and held the tube in my right
1450 hand. I called them and they transformed.

1451 Anna stared at me wide eyed. "Anna, what do you see?" asked Pastor Bob.

1452 She replied, eyes still wide, "In Mr. Kincade's hand is a silver sword that glows white. On his
1453 head is a shiny brown metal hat that looks like the same metal as on the belt."

1454 "I have always believed that children were more sensitive than adults to the spiritual realm.
1455 Now, I truly believe it. Perhaps that is why Jesus in Matthew 11 said "I praise you, Father, Lord
1456 of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and
1457 revealed them to little children." (NIV)

1458 "I see a plastic tube, a yellow rope and an old knit hat. How can they be the things that Anna
1459 sees?" Caroline demanded.

1460 "Apparently, in the spiritual realm these things are mighty weapons. This sword is what I
1461 struck the demon of depression with in our dream. And here you are now, free of depression,
1462 saved by Jesus and have met "the man of your dreams" so to speak. This could only have been
1463 orchestrated by God."

1464 "You have half of the Armor of God. I wonder how we're going to find the other half," said
1465 Pastor Bob.

1466 "Half? What's the other half?" Caroline asked.

1467 "We still need to find the Breastplate of Righteousness, Feet fitted with the Gospel of Peace
1468 and the Shield of Faith," Bob said.

1469 "How do we find the other half?" Caroline questioned.

1470 Pastor Bob got on his knees and said, “We pray and wait.” I dropped to my knees followed
1471 by Anna. Caroline hesitated for a moment, unsure what to do and she too dropped to her knees.
1472 Taking turns we all talked with God and waited.

1473 *****

1474 This is the end of Chapter 10. Please send any comments to info@accidentalauthor.com