



Note to my Sci-fi readers: All the places, timelines, events, technologies, and organizations in Elements are real and true.

Contact me through the website if you have questions. Skyburton.com

This is the first teaser to the book. Several chapter excerpts follow below although I have skipped a few chapters in between so you get the highlights about what is happening.

Summary:

Sara Bryn Kenyon believes she's just a young data scientist until she discovers the mysterious connections between her son and long-term friends Tom, a retired cartographer on the verge of mental collapse and Drake, a brilliant and gay former model turned AI gaming entrepreneur.

As they begin to unravel their entangled relationships and strange powers, they discover it was not by accident. A strange being has brought them together for a world changing task. Their knowledge and unique abilities could save the future if they are willing to believe and act in time.

Prologue:

In March 2020 Catherine Reynolds-Carter received a letter from a lawyer in Maldonado, Uruguay. The letter was to inform her that Sara Bryn Kenyon's home near Piriápolis had been confiscated by authorities.

Hello,

After numerous unsuccessful attempts to locate Ms. Kenyon for the purposes of past due tax payments, it was declared that the contents of her property are to be released after payment is received in the sum of 28096.250 UYU. According to our research, you are the only direct relative. Please contact my office to make arrangements to make payment and claim the property by May 1, 2020, otherwise the property will be released to the state.

*Sincerely
Dr. Jonás Bergstein*

Within a week, Sara's good friend Catherine flew to Piriápolis to retrieve Sara's belongings. Among the personal effects and property was a large wood and leather trunk with marks and carvings that seemed to be very old. It was one of the few items Catherine took back to the USA.

The Letter in the trunk:

Hi Catherine,

I can only hope that you are the one reading this, that the trunk has not fallen into the wrong hands. Try not to worry about me. I can take care of myself. There is so much you should know, and I have spent years trying to understand and decipher the information I was given, but I did not want to tell you anything until the time was right.

Start by reading the journals dated 1994 because that's when it began. Do you remember when I told you about the incident in July 1995 when Jax and I were in Chicago? Over the years I discovered there was much more to what happened that night.

Remember when I went to Ecuador and the Galapagos for Jax's 13th birthday and Drake went with us? Drake and I discovered some important—very important humanity-altering information. They were things I could not share with you at the time. I have not gone crazy but reading the journals will cause you some concern. You will find that Jax and Drake know all of this, but I am sure that at this writing they have not told you anything.

Drake and I have been in close touch over the years. It might sound strange to you, but we found out that we have a physical relationship in common. No no, not the sexual kind, but some common ancestry that's quite unique. I'll leave that for a later discussion. It is time now to make things known. We are in that process now.

Try not to worry about me. Kiss the boys for me. They're not really boys anymore, are they? Give them a big kiss anyway.

Love Sara

ELEMENTS

Chapter Excerpt — Just a Small Bite

Sunday, April 24, 1994

Only a few years had passed since the mature discipline of statistics had started up a passionate affair with the very young and sexy computer science. It was going to prove to be a dangerous union—a black swan with world-reaching consequences.

The conference was one of the first KDDs or Knowledge Discovery in Database workshops to garner a large group of participants. The current ideas were based around consumer database marketing in an attempt to bring data mining into the eyes of investors. Few outside the industry knew that companies had started gathering large amounts of personal information with plans to start targeted marketing campaigns (that's what they told the public, anyway). The campaigns were already being highly focused based on an individual's personality, buying habits, color of their skin, gender, and political preferences, as well as utilizing the names and ages of children, birthdays, addresses, financials, and anything at all that could be discovered or recovered from an individual's online activity. Eventually, as everyone in the industry knew but did not openly discuss, the data gathering would link email address with streets and cities, and cell phone numbers with social security numbers and from there would progress to associating online photos and voice recognition. Personal privacy was already dead and 99% of the population of the world were oblivious.

Sara got involved in the late 80s, just after completing her masters in analytics, on an elevator ride with a handsome mid-thirties man in a dark suit, red tie and polished Ferragamo's. A twelve-floor conversation ended in a scheduled meeting set for the following day after which she was hired on the spot as a technical research analyst for an edgy, under the radar research company. She got several jobs that way—a random meeting turned into opportunity. She knew her intellect and abilities didn't go unnoticed, but she also knew that she often got the job because of her looks. The executive thought he might get lucky at some point. Sometimes he did—but always on her terms.

It was the second half of a two-week business trip to New Orleans. The annual conferences were deliberately held during Jazz Fest to loosen the wallets of the scientific and medical button-down crowd anxious to escape the tremors of children's feet running through the house and a pretty wife in comfortable shoes chattering about the deficiencies of the current housekeeper and how they must have a landscape architect do a redesign.

Sara took the short cab ride to Lafitte's to meet up with Tammo, a doctor from Amsterdam she had met at the conference in Dallas last month.

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She didn't care for Dallas, but she did love the Mansion. It was March and still cold. She dropped her jacket off her shoulders and decided on one more drink at the Mansion Bar before she would retire for the night. Tammo didn't hesitate to sit next to her and place his hand on the bar in front of her.

“Let me buy you another drink.”

His voice sounded like Jeff Goldblum—flirty, dirty, possibly dangerous. She turned to see a beautiful late-thirties tall man with fair hair, a strong chin and large eyes that shifted in the light from green to brown. He sat, white shirt tucked and open at the neck, tailored arm leaning gently on the bar; he spoke perfect English with a delicious accent. She focused deep into his eyes while she spoke.

“Scotch rocks water back.”

He motioned the bartender. She reached out her hand. “I’m Sara.” The hand that was on the bar lifted slowly and took hers, turned it over and kissed it as his eyes moved on her face and mouth. He was good, she thought and right out of the mastery of power workshop *manipulating unconscious processes*. She knew it well, and lucky Sara was right here in the middle of the year of exploration. She was in the mood. He got lucky. They both did, and they swore to meet in New Orleans the next month.

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Tammo looked better than she remembered.

“Beeldschoon!” He took her shoulders and kissed her three times cheek to cheek. “I have a surprise; Eric invited us to his party. Stuffy Eric is getting married, but this isn’t the ordained bachelor party. He hired out the entire State Palace and DJ—it’s some sort of underground dance club. Please don’t say no. I promise you an evening of sensual delights.”

Sara would not say no. The theater was in the uptown lake area and looked like it had been around awhile, but everything in New Orleans looked dated. Inside it was ornate—opera-like art deco with massive balconies.

“Eric rented this place?”

Tammo took her hand. “You don’t know Eric, but he often throws money around just because he can. He tells me this is the epicenter of the southern rave scene.”

“I don’t know what that means—what’s a rave scene?”

He laughed gently and leaned in toward her mouth and whispered, “The only thing I know is that it will get crazy so don’t take your drinks from anyone but me.”

Journal Entry, April 25, 1994

I wasn’t prepared for the deluge of strange people, beast-creatures, nearly naked, some in costumes but others looked so real it was impossible to tell. I looked deep at them as if to find a human form behind a mask.

They all roamed the huge theater through a field of neon light. Some had yellow eyes that lit up in the black light. Two clean cut and fit 20-something men had fluffy white angel wings over their bare shoulders and thin white tights held tight against every naked bulge underneath casting shadow in the neon like luminescent snakes.

Music screamed from the stage. People were weaving and jumping on the floor in rhythm—a frenzy of bodies smashed into each other and arms with animal claws shoved at the air. Many of the women had light circles on their heads; some wire-spiraled upward eight or more inches and glowed like an alien lighthouse.

“The neon crowns mean the girls are consenting to sex with anyone—any gender,” offered Tammo.

“Well, that cuts out the guesswork. These are all Eric’s friends? There must be a thousand people here.”

“He has a lot of friends in the city—his fiancé is from here too—wealthy family on the other side of town, but he’s been passing out fliers all week to people on the street or in bars—anyone he liked the looks of, particularly if they look like they might be gay. He swings that way most of the time, but I have found him versatile.”

“You’ve been with him?”

“Yes, Tammo whispered. He was delicious and so was Landon, his friend. You should try it sometime.”

“Try what?”

“Two men, of course.”

Tammo pulled her into a dance, and they hovered there suspended by the chaotic energy in the room. After an hour or more of continuous movement and flashing lights, Sara must have looked a bit overwhelmed.

Tammo turned toward her and took her face in his hands and whispered, “Ignore all these crazies; this was just a place I thought would loosen us nerds up. I’m only interested in you.”

Tammo put his arm around her and steered her to a dimly lit triangular alcove at the side of the theater. The eight-foot walls, like those in an art exhibit, formed a semi-private space about the size of a small 3-sided closet. Inside it was dark and a small bench seat was attached to the back wall about 3 feet up from the floor. He whispered something to Sara, but she could only hear fragments over the pounding music. He pushed his mouth to her ear. Words were pouring like a stream. Something—the alcohol she guessed—heightened the sound and sensations. The words echoed and sounded like hard rain falling on her face—wet, tight, lips, death. Did he say death? She wasn’t sure but her back arched and she reached for his face as if compelled to touch him—to move her hands all over him.

“Do we have an agreement?”

What did he say? Words swam in her head and mixed with the alcohol, and she thought for a moment she should leave, but he took her waist and pressed himself against her while pushing her dress up toward her waist. Wet breath was on her neck and shock waves ran down her spine. She thought she felt a small bite on her neck but there was no pain—only pleasure.

Chapter Excerpt — Right Place Wrong Time

Saturday, April 30, 1994

The conferences were nearly at an end—nearly two weeks of lectures and workshops with every sort of elite, some clueless, others simply fast-talking brokers or cunning agents looking for the next deal.

The men—and they were mostly men—were there to hunt deals and satisfy a forbidden hunger. In the early evening, receding hairlines and rounded bellies sat in small groups tossing back Jameson and puffing cigarettes, but as the night grew black, their monsters emerged, and they took to the streets alone like wolves. Sara could sometimes see their faces change to something animal-like; their shoulders would fold toward their chest, and if they looked toward a dim streetlight, she could see their yellow eyes flicker.

Sara was flying home the next day—this was her last night in New Orleans. Dennis and Tammo had left days before, so she was on her own. There was a rumor that Dr. John would play after-hours at Tip's. Tipitina's was a local icon for the music of New Orleans—a musical refuge of soul, zydeco, and funky jazz but losing to commercialization of the old city and the opening of the *House of Blues* in the Quarter. During Jazz Fest week, anything could happen, including impromptu jam sessions by local or visiting performers, and the only way to find out was word of mouth on the street. You had to walk it to find it—to become part of the inner circle of seekers that bedded down in this city of darkness, willing to exchange thought for pleasure.

Sara saw herself as a passenger—along for a ride this trip. She wondered what it was like to grow up here in this steamy jungle—a place of hurricanes, alligators in the canals, flying cockroaches, crawfish boils on the street, and people—otherworldly, that looked to be in costume both day and night. Music crawled out from every corner and the steamy smells of alcohol, rotting food, and decaying buildings emerged from the street like nocturnal creatures.

Journal Entry April 30, 1994

It was early evening at the VIP reception when I saw Rick again. It was the 4th year in a row I had seen him. I'm not sure why. We had said our goodbyes many years ago. I never told anyone this, not even Catherine, but Rick is Jax's father. Jax doesn't even know; I just told him that his father was a one night stand I had back when I was very young, in college and focused on my career goals, which is true. But I haven't told Jax that I've seen him since.

I met Rick in San Diego at Balboa Park 13 years ago. He was in shorts and had just run several miles from his hotel room downtown where they put up the pilots and crew. He was born in Sao Paulo with skin the color of honey and intense chocolate eyes. His body was that of an athlete with powerful shoulders and a body sculpted by the Greeks. He had an unusual confidence, aggressive yet kind, and sexually bold. I admit he had a powerful hold on me I can't explain.

Rick was a pilot for United and preferred the South America flight schedule. Come to think of it, I never got a straight answer from him as to why he was at these conferences. Data science seemed like an unlikely point of interest for him, except that he was highly intelligent and could talk about anything., He often seemed to read my mind. But outside of these conferences we didn't stay in touch.

We had run into each other for the last four years and always engaged in a lively discussion of politics or religion—most subjects people avoid, or we would compare where we had recently played an overpriced round of golf during our travels. I claimed Pebble Beach but admitted it had once again kicked my ass. He admitted to his yearly pilgrimage to Myrtle Beach with his entourage of conservative, and mostly older, finance cronies—men I thought too young to be fascinated by senior day at the country club, dollar bets on the 18th and strip clubs.

I felt a hand on my shoulder and turned to see Rick's smiling face. He bent his 6-foot 3-inch frame to my ear and said, "You are not getting away this time."

A phantom passion swept over me as always with Rick, and I reached out and ran my fingers along the buttons of his white shirt and through it could feel the heat coming from his body. All around us were circles of people chatting about the collection and interpretation of data in financial markets while we were being absorbed into each other. I could feel his heart beating faster and our usual flutter of words stopped and held there, suspended in the thick atmosphere of bull-shitting old men.

Something took hold of us simultaneously—a devil's compulsion—as if we were being manipulated beyond our thoughts. He took my arm without saying a word and led me to the

balcony through glass doors, foggy with condensation. Only two couples were outside sitting together at a round bar table. One woman fanned herself with a floppy research report and the other swept blonde hair away from her face and then let the hair fall back again.

He led me to a corner behind a column and a large potted plant and pushed against me. One hand took the side of my face and pulled it up toward him as his lips reached for my mouth. I was completely seduced by his firm hand and confident kisses that pressed me suddenly and firmly to the wall. I can barely write this—commit this to words that don't exist. I felt out-of-body, consumed, and euphoric—unable to move as if I had been drugged. Was I? The thought crossed my mind.

He kissed my neck and said, "Now we can go to my room."

Two hours later, we fell back onto the bed, energy drained from me like a vampire takes blood.

All I could think to say was, "Come with me to Tips."

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The singer that preceded Dr. John was a young girl barely in her twenties. She had long straight dark blond hair and a small frame—almost too thin. She sat on-stage on an old stool with an acoustic guitar and played quiet songs from the seventies. Her voice was smooth and bold, but the songs were cool and distant.

The singer had a striking resemblance to Sara's former college roommate named Jessica, who insisted on spelling her name, *Jesika*. Although they were very different in spirit and cause and action, they shared the details of their lives, dreams, and ambitions for those years they spent in that small apartment near UCLA.

Sara had many ambitions, but Jesika had only one. She wanted—needed, she said, to be wealthy and refined—like royalty. She believed she was a queen—a dark queen in a former life. She didn't seem to have a plan on how to become wealthy except to find a man of that comfort to take care of her. Jesika's innocent exterior had a gothic side, and Sara was wary of her outbursts and irrational behavior. Jesika was obsessed with horror and fantasy—the works of Eddings, Tolkien and Lovecraft and would sometimes read out loud to Sara in the late evening.

It seemed so coincidental that night—the singer looking like Jesika reminded her of the stories she would tell—some sexual and brutal and in others, she would mimic the guttural voice of the monster Cthulhu. She would say that he was the subconscious source of mankind's anxiety. Some would see him as a monster, but to others he was the subject of worship in places—particularly in New Zealand, China, and Louisiana.

Excerpt from Sara's Journal: April 30, 1994

A chill ran through me after seeing the Jesika look-a-like singer and my impulsive and dominated encounter with Rick tonight. Both awakened old, dark memories of abrupt madness. Jesika's readings were often shocking as she read them with character, as if she was one of her monsters. At first, I thought it quaint and harmless until she sleepwalked one night out and onto the balcony rail. I heard her open the patio door and got up to look. I called to her, but she didn't respond. I walked out onto the patio, approaching her from behind. Her head turned and I saw the face of a raven, dark and angry.

"Leave me," she said. "I see you and you don't frighten me."

It was her voice, but not her face. I called to her to get down from there. I said I would help her and asked why she was there. How can I help you? I really didn't know what to say. I didn't even recognize her. Was it even her? Suddenly her arms spread out, and the wind caught her nightgown, causing it to billow out as she leaped off the edge. I ran to the balcony edge and

peered over, expecting to see her falling. I didn't want to see, but I was compelled to look. But when I looked over the edge, there was nothing there. There was no one flying, there was no one falling, there was no one on the ground shattered and bleeding.

Drake's Catacombs

Reality is one of the possibilities we cannot afford to ignore.

Friday, September 2, 1994

If male models were show dogs, Drake was once an Irish Setter—elegant, edgy—a little bit crazy. When he was 21, he lit up the runway with his blond hair whipping his face and hips twisting as if he was riding a wave on his surfboard. His face was flawless and smooth with delicate shapes perfectly proportioned. His best features were his cheekbones and the curves of his full lips. He got into modeling because he wanted to travel the world. Besides all the time in Milan and Paris, his first love was the exotic. He lived with the Berber tribes in Morocco, did a photo shoot with the Sarawak headhunters in Borneo, and danced in the Diablada in Ecuador.

Drake arrived on the scene during the disco era and became a favorite of Versace, Lauren and Armani and photographers who appreciated his tanned and athletic California-easy style. By the early eighties the evolution from wholesome good boy looks to hypersexualized mystery man had transformed the scene, and meanwhile, Drake made his own transition and came out as gay—to the surprise of no one.

It was about that time that Drake took up a more flamboyant style on the runway, and it wasn't long before his wild catwalks, that included spontaneous jumping and spinning, annoyed the designers too many times. It distracted from the clothes they said, but rumors persisted that Drake's fall from grace went beyond the hijinks. Drake was beginning to scare people with his stories about the lizard people, and one day his agent just stopped returning his calls. Drake's modeling career came to a halt after three years.

Catherine, Drake's sister was a library scientist—curator of manuscripts at UCLA and later took a position as a rare book curator at Stanford before becoming a rare book broker mostly so that she could work from home to be with her twin boys.

For everything Drake was, Catherine was the opposite. She was cerebral and grounded—a linear mindset always in control. She knew nothing of hijinks and risky behavior. She got married and had the boys who were close in age to Jax. She was the perfect mother with naturally pink lips shaped like a rosebud and fair skin without a freckle or blemish—ever. Her dark hair curled gently and hung naturally below her ears as if she never laid a hand to it. It danced around her pale neck like delicate ivy tendrils. She was tall and slender and would wear mid-calf slim skirts with Cole Hann suede boots like they were designed just for her.

In 1989 Catherine and her husband, a real estate developer, and impeccably mannered twin boys moved into a big house in Los Gatos not far from Sara's two-bedroom California bungalow. The boys all went to the same school as Jax and soon, Sara and Catherine became good friends.

Journal Entry September 2, 1994

Jax is off Monday for the holiday, so I decided on a last-minute whim to take Jax to Malibu for the weekend to visit Drake. Catherine and I received only one short email from him in the past 18 months, until a few days ago when he sent a text insisting, I come down and bring Jax.

I heard from mutual friends that he's fine but holed up at the Malibu house developing a computer game. I guess he had that awakening he mentioned in the email. I need to see him now. He wallowed in that depression, drinking too much wine and eating his way through his perceived inadequacies for nearly two years but now, apparently, he's into computer gaming.

"Did you get my message?" Drake called out while rushing out of the house to greet Sara with cheek kisses like he still lived in Italy. "I messaged you to bring a bag and stay until at least Monday—I have a *thing* I want you to see."

"I did—we're saying until Tuesday morning—but curious about this *thing* you mentioned."

"Excellent! Hey, Jax," enthusiastically grabbing him by the shoulders and posting air kisses on both cheeks. I hear you have now entered my age group of double-digits. And, this "thing" is probably more to your liking than your mom's—it's a sort of gaming conference. Did you bring your sketchbook? I want to see what you are doing."

"Gaming conference? We're in Malibu and I want some solid beach time," said Sara.

"Not only beach time, but a beach party with some of my crazy neighbors. It can be a bit wild, but Jax is old enough now, right pal? Mostly men and some women in few clothes—just topless... maybe a few smoking weed."

"What? No! He can't go to that."

"It's okay mom, I've seen boobs at dad's house—the man loves his *Penthouse* and *Big Tits*. Those are magazines, you know. Besides, I'll come down for burgers and then come back here to hang out with Alex or Brian, if they're in town."

"Hey, yeah dude, I think they are here—it's a holiday weekend, right? Give 'em a call."

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Sara met Drake during a technology workshop at Stanford years ago, but it wasn't until four years ago she discovered that Drake was Catherine's brother. By that time, Drake was already immersed into advance computing architecture and an early member of the ACE consortium and working as a consultant for Silicon Graphics, 3dfx and a few inventors still in the creation phase, who all claimed to be revolutionizing the world of computer gaming in various ways.

Back then, Drake was a stimulating contrast to the players of Silicon Valley who were only obsessed with finding funding and being the first to market with new objects. They all had egos the size of the Golden Gate and perpetually distracted by every new idea.

Drake's gayness was a welcome island of peace for Sara, but his beautiful face and body was a distraction that came with complications for him.

Journal entry from 1992

Drake and I attempted sex last night after a lot of martinis after that tech symposium at Stanford. I tried to look interested in the conversation, but I drank a bit too much in the process of drowning out what Drake and the guys (yes, ALL guys! Not one female nerd in the bunch unless

you throw me in the mix) considered an exhilarating evening of conversation about the DEC 64-bit RISC, open source, and cultural consumption among Drake's colleagues. The whole thing seemed to have an aphrodisiac-like effect on him. When we got back to his house, he grabbed me and started kissing me with very wet wide-mouth kisses. I might have suggested that we stop, but I quickly thought, what the hell.

The attempt dissolved quickly, and we ended up falling onto the floor laughing. He couldn't get hard, and I recall joking about it—which does not go over well with men of any gender preference. They simply cannot take a joke about their dicks.

We made up quickly though and so we put on robes and went to the kitchen and Drake made pancakes at 3 A.M. and told me his latest theories about his lizard people (not really lizards apparently).

“Come in—I’ve decorated, and you have to see my new Alison Saar piece—very philosophical and revealing—says her materials have former lives and exude an aura of what they’ve witnessed. Oh, and my new serigraph by Norval Morrisseau. It has snakes—I know you’re not fond of those, but snakes—everything is sacred my dear Sara.”

“So, still into your snake people?”

“No darling, I told you they are not snake or lizard people—more likely a race of exceptional entities who admired—perhaps worshipped—reptiles as a symbol of long life. This concept is documented in cave drawings around the world. The whole lizard people idea of the LA catacombs is just a way to label people crazy who are simply willing to explore and consider possibilities that we—modern humans are not the first entities on this planet. You and I, we are the curious ones, like you Sara—not freaks—not high on something—just thinkers. It’s not so far-fetched you know.”

Sara’s mind flashed back to Tom and their recent visit, and she wondered how he was. She must call him, she thought. She had heard variations of this before from Tom, who had explored and mapped caves his entire career and was now in some sort of long-term depression over something he saw but refused to talk about.

“I’m making you a pineapple martini darling—to die for.”

Drake glanced around for Jax who had disappeared down the hall and into the game room, leaned in toward Sara and whispered, “Got this recipe from a bartender in Milan after I sucked his cock behind the counter, while he continued, well, attempted to continue to make drinks for people.”

Sara put her hand to her mouth and her eyes moved around the room, “Oh, why do you tell me these things. I don’t want that visual.”

Drake laughed and handed her a crystal glass with a stacked geometric stem what looked like a totem. “Baccarat. Exquisite, aren’t they?”

“Yes, and spectacularly pretentious. I expect nothing less from you,” said Sara.

“But enough talk about men or you’ll get me all worked up, I want to tell you more about the lizard people. But to clarify, not lizard people specifically just entities that aren’t human—something that came here long before us. I promise to stop in just a minute, but you brought it up. Just think about this. There are similar-looking cave drawings all over the world, and many caves are thought to be underground cities, yet we can’t explore them because they are considered sacred and protected by the locals—South America for instance. Why do they consider them sacred? Don’t we want to know?”

“Yes, I guess it would be good to know, if there is something to know,” said Sara.

Drake continued, “There was a guy named Warren Shufelt—a geophysicist and engineer in the 1930s. He claimed lizard people once lived in the catacombs under Los Angeles. Shufelt told the Los Angeles Times he discovered a vast system of tunnels that stretched from Central Public Library to the Chavez Ravine. Although the tunnels have been verified to exist, no one took Shufelt seriously after seeing his discovery equipment. It was some sort of a cylindrical, tripod-mounted device with a pendulum suspended in a glass cylinder attached to a black case with several compass-like gages. Of course, everyone dismissed him as a kook. Over the years, the stories grew to include a vast network of military-based tunnels that reached far beyond Los Angeles and covered the western states through to the eastern border of Colorado. More stories would emerge from a handful of explorers willing to risk ridicule in the name of science, that there were similar networks in South America that reached from Ecuador and Peru and all the way to the far side of Brazil.”

“Do you believe all that Drake, catacombs and lizard people and hidden underground caves? You know me. And I know you. We’re logic-based people. I need to see some science—real evidence,” said Sara.

“Exactly. I’m not taking these things lightly. I know you know me which is why you know that I don’t take things at face value. I explore. I examine, or at least I want to examine. And you know that there are references and oddities in Biblical texts—and people believe anything they read there—a serpent tricking Eve, Tannin in Genesis, Leviathan the sea serpent and the behemoth in Isaiah and Job, the Nephilim interbreeding with humans, Satan as a dragon. And then we have mythology. It all overlaps so why do people—religious groups and even scientists—choose what’s real? The information is out there—I just want the truth and I am willing to suffer for it. And you do too. I know you Sara—you are a quiet thinker—a seer.”

“Yeah? I’ve heard that before. I do think I see things—I’m just not sure what.”

“Embrace it. If we are to survive as a species, we have to radically move the world forward. We need to see the world beyond the faces and help us find the truth.”

“You know what I see right now?”

Drake looked up from shaking vodka and peered into Sara’s dark eyes, “What gorgeous?”

“I see another pineapple martini in my future, and I really need to tell you something, so I think we better get drunk.”

Drake’s face suddenly turned serious. “I have some things to tell you too. Go check on Jax. I don’t want him to hear this.”