

## THUS SAITH THE MOST HIGH!

3565 ""What manner of prayer is this, where you are consumed with want, bereft of knowledge and devoid of vision? Yea! You seek me only in your need and troubles, and not as My Beloved Akurians who pray but once! Yea, My Beloved Akurians whose every breath is a living prayer of True Service unto Me! Therefore, I hear not scheduled and vain repetitions of the vile and the vain, for I hear only the continuous single prayer of My Beloved Akurians: their every thought and their every deed of every breath as they live!""

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX THE TEST COMES

3566 It was now a few weeks after the death of Aeshmodeva, and Aku was attempting to keep warm in the historic freeze that struck Florida, lying on his bed under an electric blanket waiting for the news to come on the television. It was about eleven in the morning, and the first local news was at noon with a five-minute network spot just before. Since Aku cared nothing about normal daytime programming, he closed his eyes for just an instant.

3567 Suddenly, something shook the foot of his bed. He opened his eyes and standing at the foot of the bed was his long dead father, wearing only a waist wrap; the stitches of an autopsy made a grotesque zig-zag up the center of his chest. The scar on his forehead from coal mine injuries and his crippled right hand were exactly as Aku remembered them. His eyes were still just as blue as a light sky. He certainly was not dressed in his burial garb, but his manner was unchanged from when he was alive.

3568 He opened his mouth to speak, and by his manner he managed to betray his mission and give his son a warning without saying a word. Then he suddenly vanished. Aku knew the test was on and his father had beaten the devil at his own game!

3569 Aku was instantly up in the spirit, out of his physical body, and Lucifer stood at the foot of Aku's bed where the ghost of Aku's father had been. Lucifer, always with a perfect aire of being sure of himself, like a corrupt policeman who is certain about being able to railroad his victim, had begun the test. They were whisked away to the graveyard near Mannington, West Virginia, where Aku's father and both his paternal grandparents are buried. On the Etheric Plane it was dark, as though one should expect a full moon. There were no stars, which are seldom seen in the Etheric Plane of Heaven, but the image of the sky was clear, and solid black.

3570 Aku wanted to blast Lucifer then and there but had no weaponry whatsoever. He was dressed in full armor and regalia, but unarmed. That might have been a good thing too, or Lucifer would have had a scrap on his hands, power or no power. Aku was boiling mad that anyone should have involved his family, living or dead, regardless of their state after First Judgment.

3571 "All right, god-damn it! If this is your idea of a joke, I don't see the humor in it!" Aku was livid.

3572 Then from beside his father's grave Aku could see an image. He instantly knew it was his father, and moved closer to see more clearly. Under mental control, the material of the planes which is uncompressed light, can be manipulated to any degree of color, transparency or opaque, image or motion, and the effect often results in deceiving the unwary. Lucifer was doing a magnificent job!

3573 The ghost of Aku's father was still dressed in the waist wrap, but seemed to show no chill at the injected night breeze. There was a great sadness in his eyes, as though he wanted to make up for things left undone that death had revealed to him and caused him to understand.

3574 Lucifer was standing thirty or forty feet to Aku's right, two or three feet above the ground, floating like a statue in mid air. Aku's father was buried near the road where Aku now stood, close enough to recognize his father's ghost, or Etheric Image, should Lucifer be pulling that trick, and between Lucifer and the specter should it actually be his father's ghost.

3575 The spirit image was silent, showing only great sadness.

3576 "Dad, it's all right. Don't pay any attention to this lying son-of-a-bitch beside me, and don't let him torture you for things he can make you feel guilty about. It's the oldest trick in the book to create guilt, especially if you don't have any, and then sell you relief in the form of Jesus or some other equally asinine con game. It's how the churches operate, and this bastard is the Past Grand Master and creator of the process!" Aku said to the specter just in case it really was his father's ghost.

3577 The specter seemed to be relieved, at least his eyes showed a change toward comfort. He nodded in understanding, tears began to run down his face as he slowly vanished into the darkness.

3578 "Damn!" Lucifer spat angrily.

3579 He had lost round one, whatever it was.

3580 They began to drift upwards into the Higher Realms, the colors of flowing energies changing as they passed. It became lighter, whether by the norm of that plane or Lucifer's manipulation was yet unclear. They settled on a precipice, high above the world, but with a close-up view. Probably the same "exceedingly high plane," not 'mountain' as the translators erroneously called it, where Lucifer took Immanuel during the temptation. Since there is no 'mountain' in all the world, let alone in Judea, from where one can view "all the Kingdoms of the world," Egypt, India, China, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Chile, et cetera, all of which were flourishing at the time, the temptation clearly had to take place UP IN THE SPIRIT while upon an exceedingly high plane! And it was either here, or someplace like it.

3581 They could see all the cities, farmlands, industrial sites, commerce markets, and the whole rich gathering, including locations of vast treasures. There were women of great beauty offering their pleasures, inviting Aku to come and enjoy them with rich food, drinks, and the many comforts of their preparations. There were men of great power, riches and influence who offered Aku to come and be a leader of them, and enjoy and command all that they had. Lucifer made sure Aku understood that the most he would have to exert himself would be to signal a servant!

3582 "Well, Little One, if you'll accept these things from me, you can have all of them, and perhaps we can be better friends. I'll even forget you executed one of my dearest, Lord Aeshmodeva. I can be above petty things like that and let bygones be bygones."

3583 Lucifer and his kind will stoop to anything. For the most prime living examples, take a look at all politicians, supremacists, socialists, communists, fascists, marxists, liberals, false prophets, phony psychics, preachers and other liars.

3584 "I don't want your damned gifts!" Aku was still angry and in no mood to humor Lucifer even in the slightest.

3585 "But, Little One, there are no strings attached! I'll see to it that all you ever derive from these things is pleasure. You need not be burdened with trivial matters, or with making any decisions, or even bodily deterioration! I have experts to keep things smooth and pleasurable, and that includes physical restoration even unto immortality.

3586 "All you need do is accept it and enjoy it. Nothing more."

3587 "If you'll pardon the expression: 'go to hell!'" Aku was adamant.

3588 "I can see you have a taste for the finer things."

3589 Instantly they were in deep space. The stars were but points in the far reaches. Magnetic bands connecting each sphere with each other sphere glowed in iridescent beauty and music of the spheres played a rapturous symphony. Aku could see a rare composite of the many planes existing in the same place at the same time, all being visible at once. It was a magnificent sight.

3590 "Little One, will you take all this? I'll give it to you without any restraints whatsoever. No strings attached. It's yours. This minute I give it all to you." Lucifer was like a Grand Lord of the Manor who was bargaining all his earthly possessions for one more moment of life before having to face the Eternal Burning in hell for the crimes by which he became so rich.

3591 Aku was unimpressed.

3592 "If you want to give me something, why not access to my weapons, so I can give you an injection of Doctor Aku's sword-and-firelance rectal treatment?"

3593 Lucifer glared at Aku with a gaze that would have destroyed creation itself had Lucifer had the power. He vanished instantly.

THUS SAITH THE MOST HIGH!

3594 ""I am not willing that any should perish.

3595 ""But I have prepared Myself for My loss of many sons and many daughters.

3596 ""Therefore, have I required the Head of the House to put to death by their own hand each and every offending soul thereof; spouse, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother or father that shall make themselves a profanity unto Me; that every soul should know My loss at their own destruction.""