

1 The Divinity of the Damned

(Present day)

The unremarkable window in the office revealed, if anyone bothered to look, the statue of George Washington nineteen stories below. In flowing overcoat, he pointed down Broad Street toward the New York Stock Exchange. He beckoned the nation: Come hither to the Chapel of Corruption, the Warehouse of Whores, and the Garrison of Greed. It was all a sham. When television media covered Wall Street there was always the obligatory picture of the grandiose entrance to the famed capitol of the financial world where the neo-Greek façade appeared massive. However, the mystique would become subdued if the camera would zoom out to reveal the surrounding narrow street dwarfed by the artificial mountains protecting the Exchange.

The sun peaked over the cliffs and threatened to illuminate the valleys where the vast legions of Brook Brothers-clad troops were awakening, those that goose-stepped to the metronome of the silent electronic tickertape. These were the troops that executed orders that affected millions of households throughout the world. Speculation could lead to massive upturns in the economy that would fuel expanded hopes for the sheep. Speculation could also shatter retirement accounts and call forth the forces of darkness that would destroy families and their dreams.

Daniel Wentworth shared with those around him the Wall Street tan; that pasty-white pallor of those anonymous souls that hid within the Street and wielded that omniscient power. His cramped office was typical and, as the window suggested,

unremarkable. Despite highly polished cherry wood throughout the office, it had the scruffy look of a fly-by-night operation with papers stacked upon folders and more papers littering his desk, books and files skewed haphazardly in the bookshelves and on the small coffee table that was pushed under the window. But it wasn't fly-by-night. It was a space where the man worked hard for two masters. The first was a real company that provided real services, a company whose name was a household word for it flooded the TV with the message of building personal portfolios. Wentworth was a market intelligence consultant and his work was impeccable.

The other master was the shapeless and invisible force that came into being unto itself from the darkness and into the shadows it had grown. Wentworth had been recruited his junior year at Yale into the shadows and his initiation continued to grow as he graduated and was assigned his home on Wall Street and now he was in the gray, helping the Group come into the light.

The phone call had come the night before, as he was about to leave the office. The conversation was brief and the assignment even briefer. It was up to him how to achieve the impossible when months and years now became days and weeks.

Before him were three unmarked binders containing reams of paper. The first was the subject material. The second was the assembled assets and the third an operational plan. With the advent of technology and the massive records that were electronically stored, it was archaic to use paper and folders but paper and folders could not be hacked. The safe that was built into the floor beneath his chair was not *hackable* and to gain access, one actually had to be physically present, not safely and cowardly hidden behind a computer

screen.

Information is gold and technology its market place. This particular market would be manipulated in Wentworth's office and could, if done properly, lead to a monopoly in this gold. When the operation was completed, he could then rest assured that his very thoughts could be stored electronically and disseminated throughout the world with no fear of compromise. But it was the other thing that made this operation important.

We know what happened in Belize.

That would be the opening gambit. It would fester in the target's mind, softening him until the trap was ready to be sprung. But now, he had to construct the trap.

He read information and paused, allowing it to penetrate into a region of his brain that produced miracles. The research was here before him and he trusted his pipeline to God so he must feed the system and it would manifest. Wentworth was not particularly religious but piety was not achieved through the myths and rituals of past civilizations. It came from the understanding of oneself and the discovery of what truly *is*. He was a savage—as he had discovered on Deer Island years before—but his savagery strengthened through clarity and though in the common world he would be diagnosed as manic depressive, in this existence he was an asset to be used and managed, nurtured and encouraged. His strength was detachment and his wisdom enrapture. He was truly, in his mind, an instrument of God.

It is indescribable to mortals the experiences of manic depression and the merging with the Almighty; those unworthy cannot fathom the depths that it transforms the soul. The heavens open and the beam that unlocks all mysteries strikes in the center of the chest

and for that moment a man can truly know the all, see and feel and *be* the ultimate plan. The moments can be slowed and the paths examined in great detail of what is, what can be, and what will be. But even using the term “paths” cannot quite deliver as a descriptor. Within that realm, there is no two dimensional thought which would give rise to the use of “path.” In reality everything is hidden among all but the select few, and the dimensions are infinite, understood only as the depth that this so-called “disease” opens the mind. It really is time that limits the mortal mind. Time, the process of measuring between point A and point B. Time, a human contrivance that is false. Existence is not governed by the restrictions of time. Existence—all happenings, actions, and reactions—occurs simultaneously. There is a single source of light, of energy and this is God. The light comes into the existence on its own and explodes and it becomes all that is, that was, and that will be. Time is a measurement of a moment plus or minus one. If everything happens at once, there is no moment and thus, no time. This is the gospel that Daniel Wentworth understood and the prophecies with which he had been blessed and his condition allowed him to glare into the sun without burning his eyes and to peer into the depths of the darkness to what people call hell. He fancied himself much like Christ for he too could submerge into the darkness and rise without damaging his soul. Well, this was not entirely true for if he wasn’t managed, wasn’t nurtured, and was not taught, he would go quite mad.

He closed the asset folder and sat back in his chair. Though he rarely took time to glance out his window, he saw the beginnings of a new dawn and he knew the rush below had started. He would begin to hear cabs honking and people cursing, and there would be the passers-by oblivious to what was happening to them in the mountains of Olympus

above.

His eyes closed and he witnessed the dark, shifting amoebic shapes caused by the eyelid pressure on the eye but these naturally occurring shapes were like tarot cards determining the fate and futures he enjoyed changing. He felt the tug of something special. It was a sound of thought. Then something else entirely new; completely unconnected to the first and it bent and flowed, melding and becoming one with the original thought. He felt the old comfort—the relief an alcoholic finds when abandoning hope and taking that first drink—and he cleared all feelings of consciousness as he had been taught and more thoughts were given birth. There was a thread that formed a chord and then a chord that scored a rhythm, and a rhythm that became a melody and finally, a symphony bursting forth as a child being pushed painfully into the new world and he felt the connection, the one connection with the Hereafter that brought forth the wisdom of the ages and it struck him in the chest like a consecrated beam of light and, as always, it felt magnificent.

He experienced it as a three dimensional model. He examined it back and forth, up and down, inside and out. It was perfection as only a deity could provide and it was complete. Yes, once again, his mind had produced something very special indeed. No. Wait. He had to remind himself that it was a gift and not of his construction. He was not the carpenter, simply the wood. He was the virtuoso, God the conductor.

He picked up the phone and dialed a number. As it rang, he closed his eyes again and let the mania wash over him like melted water from the last snow of the season and it felt marvelous. It was an opiate and like an addict he had sought a cure. When none was forthcoming he had been taught to control the ingestion of the “drug” and it made him

stronger. It could not fail. It would not fail but was there time? Surely there was time for God had given it to him and he would sing His praise. Amen.