



[Jan 10, 2021 at 12:36 PM](#)

### [Behind the Scene: Of Heaven and Hell \(the novel\)](#)

Many of you have seen the title image. Whether it is from my facebook, blog posts or instagram. It is a concept art from a novel I am working on. Exciting news, I am going to post this novel in its entirety on Patreon, to you, my supporters. You get to read the manuscripts and see the illustrations a full two weeks before I release it to the public.

What's more, you get to comment and receive feedback from me on each post. We will have a very interactive experience. We will be writing an epic story together as partners. When the novel goes to the publisher, your names will appear as "Special Thanks". So go ahead, I love all kinds of comments.

Here's a little taste of things to come.

**Title: Of Heaven and Hell**

**Authors: Zheng(Zen) R. Wang and Tom Ball**

**Genre: Sci-fi Fantasy**

**Length: 100 Chapters**

**Logline:** On a planet called Olde Earth, after the Age of Magic, descendants of once-powerful warriors must find the courage, strength and unity to fight for their world against an invasion from another civilization.

### **Prologue**

Those who remember still talk of the Golden Age of Magic. When the Olde Earth was plush and green. The land was cared for by a council of wise druids. Nine golden medallions were made from a mysterious core and sent to the nine corners of the land. Powerful warrior kings protected the medallions and looked after the people. The strong protected the weak; The young cared for the old; The fortunate helped the common folk. Magic lived in the blood of the people. Magic was alive in the land. Centuries and centuries passed like dreams on a hot summer afternoon. Dreams aren't meant to last. When the magic wanes, the thunder clouds are close behind.

A full moon hangs on the autumn night sky. A smaller moon sits beside it like a younger jealous sister. Shadow of a night predator flies across the sky. It attacks a crustacean rat and carries it away. It is a giant Falcon Owl. The hunter flies over rivers and forests, villages and castles. People live, laugh and love in this medieval world. The swift predator finally lands in her nest on the ledge of an old temple.

As the young chicks devour their supper, the inners of the temple is revealed. The great hall has nine walls built with black and white fossil rocks. The floor is a splendid mosaic using volcanic rocks of different colours. In the middle of the floor, a vivid depiction of an Unicorn-Pegasus. It is worn by centuries of footsteps but remains resolutely vibrant under the torches' lights.

Old druids dressed in white tunics gather and murmur in hush voices. Suddenly a heavy iron door opens and out comes a tall druid. He carries with him a plate of golden sand. Blood stains were visible on the sand.

“It is true! It is coming! The war council must be summoned.”

Another druid pulls a golden ring attached to a rope. A deep bell is heard somewhere above the chamber. As the sound rings throughout the surrounding forest nine hooded riders spread from the tower. They ride like the night breeze on gravel roads that point to the nine corners of the realm of Olde Earth.

(End of Prologue)





[Jan 25, 2021 at 2:00 PM](#)

## [Chapter 1: The Fire](#)

Seventy-five years after the druids' prophecies, at the foot of the once mighty storm tower, only a circle of gigantic rock pillars remain. Instead of lush forests, the pillars are now surrounded by a desolate wasteland. On this particular evening, unlike all other evenings, a single smoke column rises to the dusk sky from the center of the ruins.

Two shadows approach from the outskirt. Helmkin, (25 years old, strong and blonde) dismounts and gestures for his companion Knnuhd (30 years old, mixed race, two heads taller than Helmkin) to wait while he checks it out. Helmkin walks in to the circle of rock pillars and sees a person sitting by the bonfire. He has long dark hair that is bound to a high pony tail. He is about thirty-five years of age. The suit of armor he wears looks much older than him. It is still well looked after but one can't help noticing the fading trims and patched joints where gilded silk ropes used to be.

Beside the man stands a long curved sword. The scabbard and handle are impressive beyond words. Smooth dark lacquer covers it from tip to base. Golden trims of celestial clouds decorate the edges. Where the scabbard and sword meet is a golden castle rising above the clouds. The hand guard is the tiled roof of the mini golden castle. Its long handle shows off a pair of sea serpents coming out of the castle and spiralling upward toward the heavens.

Completely taken over by this magnificent weapon, Helmkin walks over and reaches for it.

“Touch it and suffer the consequence.” The man at the fire speaks, without looking away from the fire.

“Oh, hello, so you did notice me.” Helmkin pulls back his hand. “My friend and I are looking for a spot to sleep for the night. Is it? Are you?..”

“I am not afraid of a couple of passerby's.” The man cuts Helmkin off.”But it would be my sister’s decision whether to allow other men around our fire.”

“Sister? Is she here?” Helmkin presses.

“Hunting.” the man answers.

“I see, could my friend and I warm ourselves while we wait for her return?” Helmkin asks.

“Suit yourselves.” He replies.

Knnuhd and Helmkin tie up their mounts and joins the man around the fire. In the dim light one can see the animals they rode in are not ordinary beasts. Helmkin has a T-Rex and Knnuhd has a wooly rhino. The man at the fire does not mind. In fact he barely acknowledges them.

To break up the awkward silence Helmkin asks for the man’s name. “Santoro” was all he let out.

Knnuhd takes out his beloved pipe, lights it in the fire and offers it to Santoro.

“The body is a temple that shall not be tarred with yard wastes.” Santoro says coldly and goes back to tending the fire.

Before Knnuhd can find something unpleasant to say in his limited common tongue vocabulary Helmkin silences him with a look. The trio sits in silences watching the bonfire.

Suddenly, an alluring, high-pitched musical comes out of the meadows. Helmkin rises up to search for its source. He climbs on top of one of the fallen pillars and looks beyond. The moon shines over the sea of tall grass. Something comes closer and closer through the grass. The music is sorrowful and mellow. It is unlike anything Helmkin has ever heard before.

As the moving grass parted, Helmkin can see two shiny green eyes piercing through the darkness.

“Sister” Santoro speaks without turning his head.

End of Chapter One

DESTINY WAITS FOR NO ONE.

# Heaven & Hell



CHAPTER ONE: THE CALLING.

VFS PRESENTS "THE CALLING" DIRECTED/PRODUCED/Written BY ZHENG WANG CO-PRODUCER AMRITA BATH AND SHINES CHAN  
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CAST SEBASTIAN BERTOLI MIEKE VERHELST CARL TOFTFELT CASSANDRA CAVALLI DRUMMOND MACDOUGALL

**THE JOURNEY BEGINS JUNE 22<sup>nd</sup> 12:00<sup>pm</sup> VANCITY THEATRE**

(We made a teaser to the story called "The Calling". It premiered in Vancouver in 2021. This was the poster.)



[Feb 13, 2021 at 5:00 PM](#)

## Chapter Two: Yingying of the East

Helmkin and Knnuhd's eyes are glued to the moving meadow. The green eyes belong to a full grown mountain wolf. Magnificent yet terrifying, its shoulders are as tall as a man. Its long and powerful jaw is glistening with saliva and teeth. The two emerald eyes keep a close watch on the new comers.

A delicate little girl sits on top of this furry beast. She wears a silk garment that gives off a slight sheen in the moonlight. She reminds Knnuhd of a fish. Helmkin on the other hand is more mesmerized by the music that comes from her long bamboo flute. She holds it side ways with her intricate fingers and blows it with her flower pedal mouth. Her long raven black hair hangs straight down on both sides of her smooth face. A straight bang compliment her long and slender eyebrows. Her eyes are half closed as if in a trance. The rest of her body is completely motionless except for her dancing fingers.

The wolf giant slows down and makes a low growling sound. The little girls stops playing and pets the wolf on its head.

"Who joins our fire? Please announce yourselves." A crisp, clear voice comes from the girl.

"I am Helmkin of the Valley Greene, this is my friend Knud. He's from the northern shores." Helmkin speaks with courtesy.

"K-NN-U-HD" Knnuhd grumbles to himself. No one hears him.

"I see, pray tell, what is your trade my esteemed sirs? Merchant? Warrior? Magician?" The girl asks with a royal flair.

"I was a farmer until a few days ago. Now I am a traveling man, You can call me a warrior, not that I have seen much war, or any war for that matter. B-B-But I do have a sword and I am ready to fight if it is called for. That is if the cause is just of course." Helmkin can feel beads of sweat forming on the side of his forehead. Knnuhd notices and chuckles.

“Here, you go and introduce yourself.” Helmkin becomes defensive and nudges his friend forward.

“KNNUHD, WA-RI-ER.” was all he said. It was a better introduction than Helmkin's.

“Excellent, please help me down, Warrior Knnuhd.” The girl commands politely.

Knnuhd goes toward her. The girl extends her left hand and Knnuhd catches it like a gorilla catching a butterfly. She then starts to feel up his entire arm. She feels up Knnuhd's beard and face. Her lily pedal fingers tickles him and he pulls away shyly.

“A mighty warrior indeed!” the girl speaks softly, “Well, kneel warrior! Do I have to teach you everything about royal etiquette?” Before Knnuhd could react, there is a light tap from the bamboo flute.

Knnuhd is inflamed, his fury instructs him to snap that twig of hers and throw it at her little pretty face. Luckily he has the good sense of checking with his friend first. Helmkin stops him with a disapproving look.

The hairy giant Knnuhd now kneels beside a furry giant wolf and a tiny, shiny girl steps down between them, light as a dragon fly. Helmkin finds the entire scene hilarious but he only lets out a smirk. Knnuhd's anger needs no fuel.

The girl lands on the ground and reaches her left hand out again. Obligated, Knnuhd takes it and leads her toward the fire. On the way she holds her stick with the right hand and probes the ground for unevenness and rocks. It is at this moment that both Helmkin and Knnuhd realize this little girl is actually blind. Helmkin for one, feels terrible about wanting to laugh a moment ago.

Santoro goes to unload the goods from the hunt. There are pheasants and hares tucked behind the wolf's back. Santoro takes out his waist knife and goes away to clean the game.

*Blind hunter.* Helmkin thinks to himself. *Now I have seen everything.*

Near the fire, the girl begins to brush her hair. “You have the permission to address me as Princess Yingying, or Your Highness. Whichever suits the occasion.” She continues. “I lost my sight in a castle fire. I set the fire myself to test the gallantry of my countless suitors.

Unfortunately none of them came even close to scaling the castle walls and saving me from the attic of the wind tower. My father had to save me himself, but by then the thick smoke from the cedar beams has gotten into my eyes. I weeped blood for three days, not because my loss of sight but because my loss of faith in true love. There is no real knight left in this world, no one worthy of my love and devotion.”

Helmkin does not know what to say. Knnuhd takes out his pipe as he does in any uncomfortable situation. Helmkin stops him and says in a low voice: “No! No more smoke!”. Grudgingly, Knnuhd bags his wares. Just at that moment his other passion in life arrives - Food!

Santoro skinned the two hares and cut them into six pieces each. The pheasants were too small to divide so he plucked and gutted them. He sprinkles the bony meats with some sea salt and rubs a dry herb powder on them. Next, he sticks them on young soaked branches and hands them to each guests for roasting.

In the time of half a song, the meat starts to sizzle. Charred fat and crispy skin fill the air with a wonderful smell that makes all creatures hungry. Luckily, the smells of Dragon, Rhino and Mountain Wolf was enough to keep any unwanted visitors away.

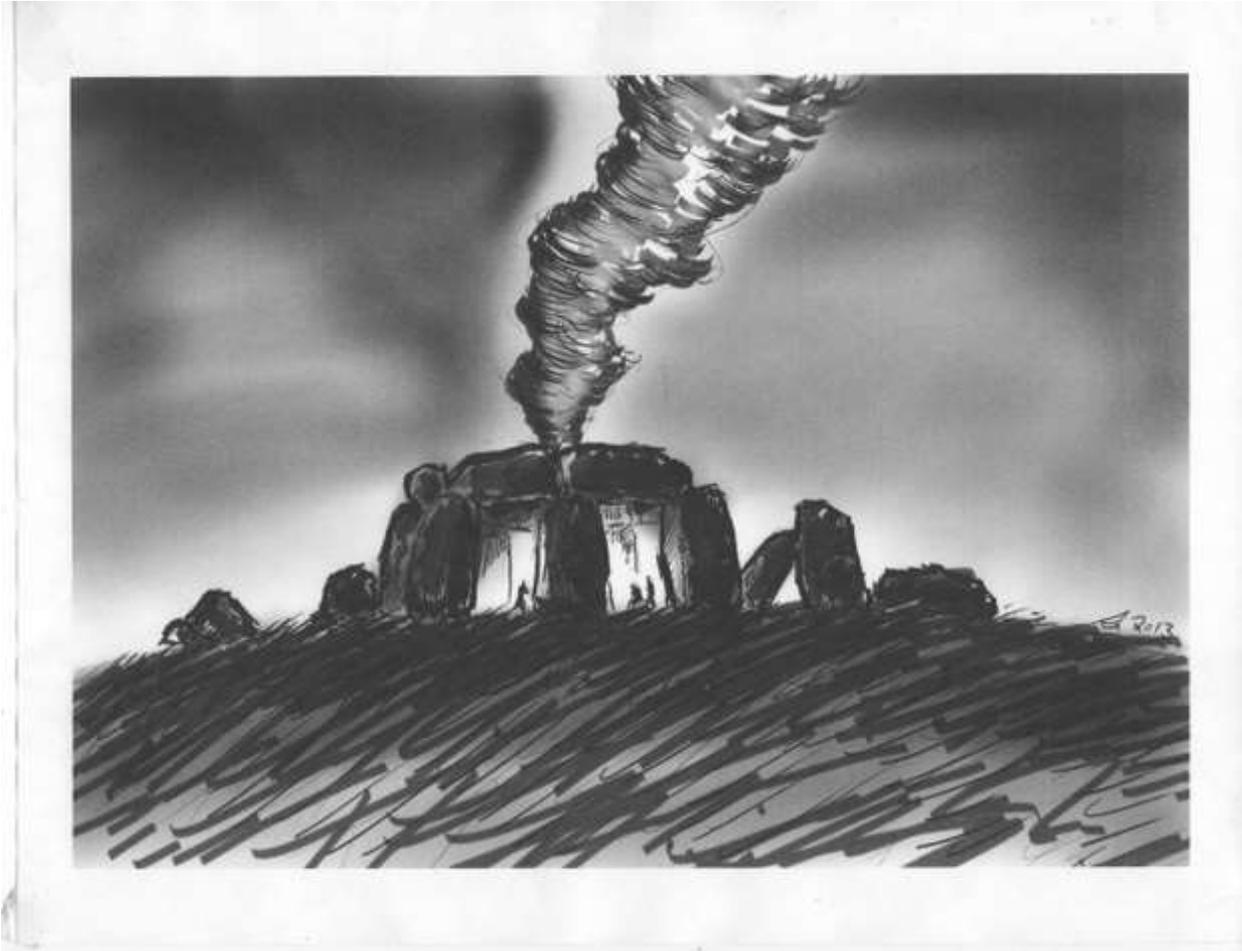
Helmkin and Knnuhd adds their flat breads to the feast and Santoro finds some wild onions from his food pouch. Under the grand purple sky, the party of four starts to loose up. Though they are vastly different, they all welcome the companionship that food and fire bring together on this sparsely populated plain.

Shooting stars scars the perfect night sky. The big moon shines ever more brightly. The smaller orange moon beside it is waning and hanging on like a younger sister.



(I did this sketch during my lunch hour when I was working as an engineer in Kitchener.)

End of Chapter Two



### [Chapter Three: Different Dreams](#)

Princess Yingying sits squarely with a napkin on her lap. She eats slowly and chews quietly with her mouth closed. She wipes the corner of her mouth every three bites.

“Oh, I am forgetting someone.” Princess Yingying exclaims suddenly. She gets up, holding her rabbit skull in one hand and her bamboo stick in the other. She turns toward her Mountain Wolf and attempts to walk. Hearing Helmkin moving, she intercepts: “Don’t get up, I can manage these short steps myself.” Yingying disappears in the darkness. Endearing noises between her and the wolf is heard and soon followed by bone crunching and profuse amount of licking.

“She really can’t see ANYTHING?” Helmkin asks Santoro in a hush voice.

“Who?” Santoro concentrates on his food without looking up.

“Your sister.” Helmkin moves closer.

“What are you talking about?” Santoro looks at Helmkin squarely.

“She lost her sight in a fire. Right?” Helmkin is confused.

“Oh, is THAT what she’s playing? I thought she was acting more strangely than usual.” Santoro goes back to his meal nonchalantly. “My sister likes to jest with people. Don’t pay too much mind to her.”

“So you ARE NOT royalty?” Helmkin feels foolish.

“That much is true. We are of the Iching Clan, The legitimate ruling family of the NiJin Islands.” Santoro loses his appetite and throws the rest of his dinner into the fire.

Knnuhd moves closer to Helmkin and speaks in a muffled voice. “NO BLIND?” Helmkin nods. “EYE SEE?” Knnuhd points at his own eyes just to make sure. Helmkin nods again.

The sounds of bamboo stick knocking gravel announces Yingying’s return. Helmkin exchanges a look with Knnuhd and carefully move the water bucket further away.

“All right, what shall I have next? I think I’ll just have a nibble of that delectable pheasant.” Yingying sits down gently and places her napkin squarely on her lap.

Helmkin takes the stick with the pheasant and stick it deeper into the flame. “If I may, I will gladly serve your highness.”

Moments later the fat dripping meat catches on fire and Helmkin hands it to Yingying quickly. The fat drips along the burning stick and is threatening to ruin her silk dress.

Yingying hops up and away like a frog, escaping from the falling, burning oil. She runs to the water bucket on the other side of the fire and extinguishes the skewer. Noticing no damage on her silk dress she angrily yells at Helmkin: “What on Olde Earth did you do that for?!”

“Not so blind now, are we? Princess.” Helmkin says with a wide grin.

Caught, Yingying shouts over to her brother. “San!!! You never let me have any fun!” Santoro ignores her.

With Knnuhd laughs up a storm beside him Helmkin quietly eats his portion. Infuriated and embarrassed, Yingying takes her pheasant from the water bucket and tries to salvage it. She mumbles something to herself.

Knnuhd is thankful that his smoking ban is lifted. He takes full advantage and turns the camping site into a mini smoking parlour, offering a drag to everyone including Yingying. She refuses the offer and goes to change her cloth fearing any more *accidents*.

Helmkin cozies up to Santoro and strikes up a conversation. “So you come from the NiJin Islands?”

“Not exactly, we haven’t seen our homeland since I was a boy.” Santoro starts to open up. “Our father’s throne was taken by trickery and black magic.”

“Black Magic?” Helmkin heard that word before.

“Yes, My Father’s second in command betrayed him with the help of the Dark Wizard.” Santoro says with grinding teeth.

“WIZZARD KIN?” Knnuhd suddenly interrupts.

“Yes, the same one.” Santoro continues. “His Black Hooves suddenly appeared on the island and caught my father off guard.”

Out on the fringe of the campsite, Yingying’s flute sounds again. Her silhouette sits high upon a rock with the rising moons behind her. Santoro watches over her lovingly.

“Our father used to play that tune.” Santoro speaks with nostalgia.

“Did he leave you with a golden medallion by any chance?” Helmkin asks abruptly.

“What did you say!?” Santoro stands up suddenly. His hand on his East Blade.

Knnuhd is startled he falls backward from his seat and looks at the two men with confusion.

Helmkin retrieves his medallion from his chest and says: “My father left me this.”

Santoro does not hide his surprise. He steps closer for a look.

“Knud has one too. Knud! Show him yours!” Says Helmkin/

Knnuhd digs it out and shows it. From Santoro’s hesitation Helmkin gets the answer he was looking for. “I was right! Suppose we did not meet here by chance. Suppose we were pulled together by forces unknown.”

Santoro stares at Helmkin’s medallion with locked brow. His hand is still on his weapon.

Helmkin walks threatening to Santoro while holding up his medallion. In a demanding voice Helmkin demands: “SHOW US YOURS!!!”

Santoro reaches into his waist and produces a golden medallion just like Helmkin and Knnuhd’s. The difference is his unicorn is in a resting posture.

Helmkin walks even closer and whispers: “Now, do you also have the dreams?”

Santoro is silent.

Helmkin gets into Santoro’s face. “What is YOUR dream!!!” He grabs the chest plate of Santoro’s armor.

Finally Santoro looks down and says: “I dreamed of sitting on my father’s throne.”

Hemline backs down and the tension finally reduces. The three men all take a deep breath.

“That is just great! Three Medallions, three different dreams. I feel like a big fool!” Helmkin walks back to his seat.

Knnuhd counts on his fat fingers. “FATER, QUEST, TRONE...”

"Knnuhd dreams of a ghost telling him to go on a quest. I dream of finding my father and you dream of your father's throne." Helmkin explains.

“A joke! A trickery! Someone is toying with us!” Helmkin throws his medallion away in anger and disgust. “A Grand Deception of Black Magic!”

Santoro handles his medallion in disbelief. He is lost in thoughts.

The thickening night fog grows and surrounds them like a blanket of mystery and illusions. Only now do they notice the flute has stopped playing, but it has stopped some time ago.



(Santoro's Eastblade detail.)

End of Chapter Three



[Mar 6, 2021 at 11:00 AM](#)

## CHAPTER FOUR: The Storm Tower.

“Yingying! Yingying!” Santoro hasn't seen his sister for some while and he panics. Heart pounding he climbs onto a boulder and screams into the dark night air.

Yingying jumps out from the opposite side of the fire circle and says: “Look what I found! A gold coin in the long grass. Actually my wolf found it and was chewing on it.” She looks innocently at her brother and then Helmkin. “Splendid, don't you think? May be it'll buy us a hot meal at the next village.”

Relieved, Santoro gives Yingying a disapproving look. She smiles back and keeps playing with the medallion, unawares it belonged to Helmkin a moment ago.

“Do any of you know where we are?” Santoro speaks without a leeway.

“This is the East Fola plains isn't it?” Helmkin recalls from his map.

“No, I mean THIS. This pile of giant rocks.” Says Santoro.

Silence.

Santoro continues.”This is the famous Storm Tower of the Olde Order.”

Knnuhd sits up. Helmkin folds his legs.

“The Storm Tower is where the old warrior kings used to hold council.” Santoro stands up and walks to the closest pillar. He touches its rough granite surface with his calloused palm. “Legend say it was as high as a mountain. Five thousand men toiled for fifty trips of the sun(\*fifty years of their world).” Santoro looks up. ”The old warrior kings wanted to show what unity can accomplish. The old dreams of the nine realms.”

Helmkin starts to appreciate the size of these stone pillars. Each one is ten huts high and as thick as an ancient tree that's never been cut. They were placed in perfect circles. Four of the nine pillars were lying flat. He can see blade marks and arrow head chips. Archers and swordsmen do not destroy towers. “So what knocked it down?” Helmkin pursues the story.

“Of all the things the tower stood for the most important one was peace. And that is why it was destroyed. The Dark Wizard cannot have peace. Peace does not fill his treasury.” Santoro's eyes start to burn. “His Black Magic unmade five thousand men's work in a blink of an eye.”

Knnuhd coughs out some smoke from his nose in surprise.

”Old folks' tale! No magic is that strong!” Helmkin exclaims in disbelief.

Santoro walks closer to the fire. “The chronicles see you says the siege of the Storm Tower lasted thirty-five days. When the Dark Wizard finally showed his face he brought a terrifying weapon. Dark fire crystals as black as his heart.”

“Then what happened?” Helmkin heard of the fire crystals before.

“Then nothing! Those that witnessed it, none lived to tell. The Chronicles ended there.” Sensing his disappointed audience, Santoro puts another branch into the fire. “When the usurper dethroned my father the king he also used Dark Wizard's power. It was a horrifying sight. This I DID see with my own eyes.”

Yingying can see her brother's blood is stirring so she tries to distract: “Thaaaat's enough about us. What about you Helmkin? Why are you here? Treasure hunting? Adventure seeking? Looking for a lost lover? All of the above? Really I am famished with curiosity.”

“I am here because of my father.” Helmkin continues. “He left my mother and I when I was five. Some say he went to a war, others say he was enslaved, still others say he died from the plague. No matter what, I hated him growing up.” Helmkin takes a sip of water. “Then on my twentieth birthday, my uncle gave me two presents. This Greatsword and that golden coin in your hand.” Helmkin looks at Yingying. She stops flipping the medallion.

“Uncle said they both belonged to my father but my mother didn't want me to have them. That very night, I started having strange dreams. Dreams that didn't make any sense.” Helmkin looks at Santoro and then Knnuhd. “In my dreams a voice keeps telling me to go east and find my father.”

“Chasing after a father who left fifteen years ago?” Yingying interrupts. “And I thought WE were fools.” She avoids Santoro's eyes and says in a pretend deep voice. “A scroll that would return the throne to our family.”

Santoro's patience runs out. “Are we being played?”

“If Black Magic can bring down this tower, it can certainly deceive ordinary men like us.” Helmkin nods.

“Strange dreams every night? You can keep that.” Yingying flips the Medallion back to Helmkin like it was a thousand degrees.

Helmkin catches it, wipes it lovingly on his cloak and puts it back inside his pouch. “May be I CAN get a couple of hot meals and a soft feather bed on the way back.”

“QUEST!!!” Knnuhd erupts like a volcano. “QUEST! ICE MAN! MISSION!”

His excited state startles everyone. Helmkin pats his friend on the shoulder and says: “Go to bed my big friend.”

“QUEST!” Knnuhd refuses to back down.

“Very well! Tell us about your quest then! What are we supposed to do? Where do we go? Who do we see? Why don't you go ask your iceman in your dreams tonight?” Helmkin speaks harshly with frustration.

Knnuhd tries to think but his head does not work after all that eating. He makes his way to his Rhyno grudgingly, muttering in his native tongue. Soon his famous snoring is the only thing that can be heard.

Helmkin turns in but cannot fall asleep. *Is all this really just a hoax? Who wanted to trick us? To what end?* Helmkin switches sides. *Maybe we just WANTED to believe. I with my father and Santoro with his throne.*

Helmkin closes his eyes and moments later he starts to dream.

It was a glorious summer afternoon. Helmkin is a little boy again sitting beside his father. They are fishing on a rock beside the river. Helmkin focuses on his wooden bobber while father is looking at him. His gaze is sorrowful. He caresses Helmkin's head and takes a deep breath.

"My son, one day I may have to go away." Father speaks.

"For how long?" young Helmkin asks, still looking at his bobber.

"For quite a long time." Father says.

"You mean like a whole day?" the Boy turns to his father.

"No, not like a whole day," Father touches Helmkin's head. "much longer than a whole day my sweet boy."

His focus no longer on fishing, young Helmkin looks down to the ground. A sadness washes over his tiny body.

"Can I come with you?" The boy looks up suddenly with hope.

"Where I go, it is dangerous. There will be monsters, evil men, storms and shipwrecks." The Father shakes his head and smiles.

"I am a big boy now. I'm not afraid." Young Helmkin answers.

"I know you are. I know you are." Father hugs his boy's tiny body. His eyes moist.

"So I can come right? I can help you fight the monsters." Young Helmkin lights up.

Father looks at his boy: "You will be by my side always. I promise." That brings a big smile to the boy's face.

At that moment there is a tug on the line. A big fish bites and father and son works as a team to bring it up. They get splashed but both are laughing like crazy.

The sun starts to set and the two moons come up behind them.

End of Chapter Four





[Mar 20, 2021 at 12:00 PM](#)  
[Chapter Five: Departure](#)

In the morning, the sound of Yingying breaking twigs wakes up everyone except Knnuhd. Around the fire, Santoro, Helmkin and Yingying realize in earnest that the illusions must end here. Today they depart for their own homes, back to their old lives. No matter how painful it is, they all must face the cruelty of reality.

As everyone packs, Knnuhd finally wakes up and gets a bite to eat.

“Santoro,” Helmkin calls out as he rolls up his sheepskin.”It dawned on me, I never saw your mount. What did you come here by? You didn’t both ride that Mountain Wolf did you?”

“Yes, I have a mount as well but he’s a wild one.” Santoro says almost embarrassingly.

Helmkin looks at Yingying for answers. “It is a Fiory Dragon.” She says with a tone of jealousy.

“A Dragon like mine?”Helmkin can’t hide his excitement.

“No, A Fiory Dragon is half the size to your Myrollie Dragon.”

Yingying takes Helmkin to the other side of the stone pillars and whispers: “He has a mind of his own, totally untrainable if you ask me...” She searches for something in the distance.

Suddenly everything is uncomfortably quiet. "My Myrollie is quite agile too, just the other day he jumped..." Helmkin starts a conversation.

"Shhh... Be quiet!" Yingying spots something. Her soft fingers is on Helmkin's forearm and he remembers the feeling of being close to a woman again. It filled him with dread and longing.

"Over there in those bushes, shy old girl." Yingying's fingers starts to slide, arousing him even more.

Without warning, Yingying jumps on a fallen pillar and whistles loudly.

Santoro looks up in confusion."Food Call? But the Packing's only half done!" Yingying ignores him.

The bush moves and a shadow jumps out. Before Helmkin has the time to adjust his eyes, it is already within striking distance. Dashing in and out of thickets of long grass the shadow never lingers for more than a second. When it finally settles down behind a boulder, Helmkin walks closer. "No! watch this." Yingying stops him. She takes out a strip of dried fish and shows it to her mountainwolf. The dark green shadow springs out from behind the rock and flanks the wolf. The two beasts fight and tumbles into a ball of fur and scale.

Helmkin watches in horror as the two animals growl, bark and tear at each other's throats. He jumps on to a rock but notices that no one else is alarmed by the savage brawl.

"Get him! Fenix!" Yingying is laughing and giggling beside him. She sees Helmkin's anxiousness and laughs even harder.

The clouds of dust finally settles when Yingying produces another piece of meal and throws it way up in the air. The Fiory Dragon leaps for it and gets his own breakfast. Helmkin cautiously walks closer. It is a fierce beast in every sense of the word. A long-legged lizard built for speed and agility, muscular limbs and tail, powerful hind legs, fearsome jaws and huge, mesmerizing reptilian eyes. Presently its legs are clicking the ground its eyes are focused on the newcomers while its nostrils is bobbing for more food.

Fenix the mountainwolf gets a pat from Yingying and whines like a puppy. With the other hand Yingying caresses the Fiory Dragon tenderly and it purrs like a kitten.

Helmkin has never seen this before. His legs are still stiff from the tension so he slips and falls backwards. Before Helmkin can blink the Fiory Dragon is upon him. Its large eyelids blink as the head turns side ways to smell Helmkin's neck and crouch. Then it makes a crisp sound from deep within its throat. Click- Click- Click.

The hair on the back of Helmkin's neck stands up. He turns around to find his own mount, the Myrollie Dragon. Its half opening jaw and pulsating neck veins are telling the Fiory Dragon to stand down. As if that wasn't enough, The Myrollie dragon lowers its head and makes a threatening hum.

The Fiory dragon steps off begrudgingly as if someone just stole her lunch. Its eyes never veer away from the much bigger dragon's gaze.

"Kirin likes your smell!" Yingying laughs."That's why she clicks her tongue."

Closing his legs, Helmkin blushes. He leads his Myrollie back to the tree and passes Santoro. "Where did you find that? It is quite something." He asks Santoro.

“I did not.” Santoro answers as he ties the last knots on his pack. “It found me. The dreams told me to go north and this Fiory Dragon was waiting by a river crossing. It tackled me to the ground and was about to eat me alive until it saw my medallion.”

“No no no! You are telling the story all wrong.” Yingying interrupts. “Kirin stopped biting your throat when I called her off!”

“Yeah your smelly hair distracted her.” Laughing, Santoro kicks Yingying playfully. She evades him and makes a funny face. “You are welcome for saving your life.”

“If it was up to me, I would have chosen a more regal mount, like a BearHorse or something.” Santoro dresses his Fiory Dragon Kirin with chainmail like reins. It reminds Helmkin of the Bose Fullang Dungeons.



(Bose Fullen Castle - a famous dungeon where high profile prisoners are kept.)

Helmkin takes a step back and admires Santoro and his Fiory Dragon Kirin in the morning sun. He then turns to gaze at Yingying and her Mountain Wolf Fenix. Finally he glances over at his Myrollie Dragon and Knuhd and his Rhyno. Something sparks inside of him.

“Why? Why are we here? Why are we given these magnificent Alderbeasts? Why the Medallions? My Greatsword? Your Eastblade? Storm Tower? Why?” Helmkin stands in the middle of the camp so everyone can hear him. Helmking continues. “Too many coincidences to be just a hoax. There must be more to this scheme.”

“Well our swords were passed down to us from our fathers and Alderbeasts are naturally attracted to magic. No doubt there is magic in the medallions...” Santoro does not get to finish when Yingying interrupts. “I was thinking about Knnuhd's dreams last night. 'Go find the others'. Well, by Gods, WE ARE the others. He found us!”

“You are forgetting about his KUEST!” Santoro mimics Knnuhd. “What is it? We can't just roam around the Olde Earth and hope some big glorious quest will land on our laps.”

“Why not? What's stopping us?” Helmkin questions.

“The Dark Wizard's Iron Hooves.” Yingying answers with a lower tone. “Let us not forget we are breaking the law by carrying weapons and gathering.”

“I am tired of hearing about this Dark Wizard of yours. Where is he? Who is he? I am not afraid of him!” Helmkin stands firm, feeling the weight of the sword in his hips.

“That's because you had the good fortune of living on the outer fringes of Olde Earth. In the central realm, we suffered long and deep in his shadows.” Santoro walks closer to Helmkin. “His arms long, his magic strong. His WILL, reddens the eastern dawn.”

“What? pray tell, is his WILL?” Helmkin pursues.

“To Rule Olde Earth with Absolute Power!”. Santoro answers solemnly. His armour rattles beneath his shaking body.

## END OF CHAPTER FIVE

### Author's Vision:

Heaven and Hell (a.k.a. Pegasus Rising) is the result of some major extension to a short film called "The Calling". In the film the hero answers a call that came in his dreams. He leaves his woman and his unborn son in order to fulfill a blood-oath his father swore into. He does this to alleviate this obligation from his beloved family forever.

The novel picks up where the film left off. We follow Helmkin on his journey to the east, guided only by his nightly nightmares. Soon he is caught in a terrible storm; loses his horse and is pursued by a mysterious monster. Without further ado, we give you: "Heaven and Hell" the novel.

### Author's Biography:

Zen is a polymath who makes films; paints; sculpts; does digital art; is fluent in 2.5 languages, has an engineering license; holds a MBA; is a film-school grad; is a member of Director's Guild; writes a blog with 500+ followers and is currently building a tree house for his daughter in the mountains of British Columbia. His genius comes in the form of downloads from the divine, often in dreams or in dream-like states. He is very blessed to have you be part of his journey in this lifetime. Dream on! Friends.

Zen R Wang

