

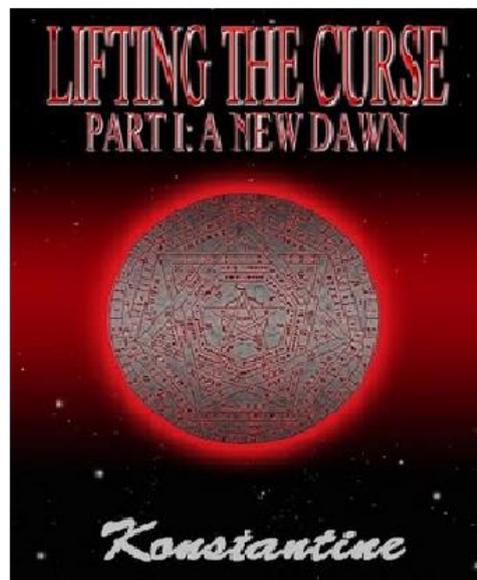
LIFTING THE CURSE

PART I: A NEW DAWN



Konstantine

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CHAPTER 4 FREE EXCERPT #1

“What do you want from me? Who are you?”

“Who, me...?” Otto said and touched his chest with his free index finger. “I’m just a guy who’s doing all he can to help the planet get *out* of this mess. You have no idea what I’ve seen; what I’ve *been* through...the risks...the sacrifices! You do this sort of thing long enough, after a while certain people get real pissed at you; *powerful* people. So I need to be extra cautious; nothing personal: it’s been a *hell* of a morning, right?” He motioned left with the gun, “Drop the weapon and get over there. Go! On the other side of the bed, quickly.” He briefly glanced at the door to his left, “We wouldn’t want you making a run for it, now, would we?” John reluctantly complied and now sat at the head of the bed, in the front left corner of the room, while Otto stood a few feet away, between J.C and the front door. He continued. “See, I’m going to need a blood sample from you, chief. I have to be certain.”

“Certain of what?”

“You know, for someone who has a gun pointed straight at ‘em, you ask a *lot* of questions.” Otto then pulled out a switchblade from his right pocket and tossed it on the bed next to John, “Like I said: blood sample!” Next he took out a small, black device from his back left pocket. It was like a twenty first century iPhone, except circular in shape and smaller –about the size of an ancient mini disc. “Here,” he threw it into J.C’s lap, “a few drops should do it; on the little screen there.” John stared at him in disbelief. “C’mon, make it snappy, navy boy, we haven’t got all fuckin’ day!”

John put the device on his right thigh and held the knife with his left hand. He pressed the release button: the blade flicked out. He then placed his right hand a foot above the device, palm facing upwards, and brought the tip of the knife to it. “Like this?” he said.

“Yeah, that’s right. Get on with it!” Otto grew impatient.

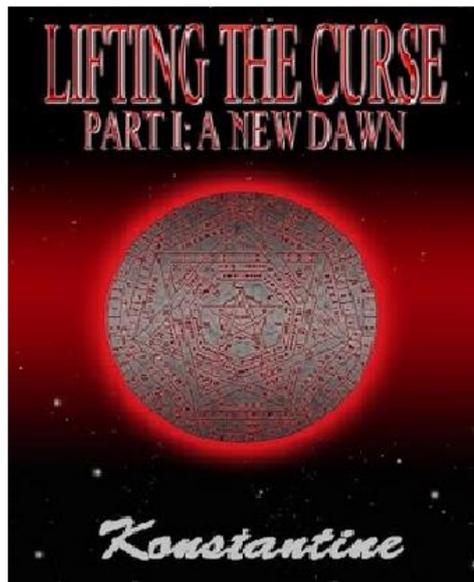
“On second thought, I – I can’t; the sight of blood makes me faint actually. I won’t be able to do it. You’re gonna have to do it for me.”

“What! Are you serious?!”

“I’m not shittin’ you: one time, I remember there was this bedside lamp,” in what seemed like a blink of an eye, J.C dropped the knife, grabbed the lamp a couple of feet to his right and smashed it against Otto’s left shoulder, “and I *whacked* it against this asshole’s head!” the gun fell from Otto’s hand.

By the time he could react, John got up and gave him a roundhouse kick with his right leg. Otto blocked with his right forearm, grabbed the leg with both hands and threw John to his left and onto the front window! The window smashed and J.C fell on the floor. He got out of the way just in time to avoid his throat being sliced open by a large shard of glass. Then he saw Otto’s gun on the ground a few feet ahead of him and reached for it. Otto stepped on his hand before he could grab it, pushed the Luger to the side with his other foot and kicked him in the stomach; John replied by punching him in the groin with his free hand. Otto was winded and buckled over from the pain. J.C jumped to his feet, grabbed his left arm and judo flipped him onto the bedside table, which broke under his weight. While Otto lay on the demolished table, moaning and holding his groin, John turned and saw the gun was now at the other side of the room, near the bathroom door. He leapt to the floor in an attempt to get it. Just as he was about to grasp it, he felt a searing pain in the back of his right thigh and screamed: Otto had stabbed him with the switchblade! He then lifted him by the shoulders and threw him onto the bed, face down. Otto bent over, with effort, and picked up the gun, which now lay a foot away from him. He fitted the silencer onto his pistol, all the while watching John like a hawk. John soon heard the Luger’s familiar click and, not a second later, felt the cold steel of the suppressor pressing against the back of his neck.

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