

Take heed, and bear witness  
to the truths that lie within,  
for they are the last legacy  
of the Horadrim.







# DIABLO

## BOOK OF CAIN

*Text by Flint Dille*

INSIGHT  EDITIONS

SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA







My dear Leah,

In the inevitable event of my death, may I precede you by many decades to the grave.

Do not mourn me, Leah. Despite all I have been through, I have had a long and amazing life. I have died doing exactly what I was meant to do. I have lived and loved freely these long years—and have known only joy at seeing the bright, beautiful woman you've become. I believe that I now go on to a place beyond imagining, though I have no name for it, nor real understanding of where it lies, save beyond the broken bounds of this world.

I long for this paradise, Leah—and the peace and rest I might find there on the other side of this mortal existence. I want you to know this, dear one, above all other things I could have taught you—that there is hope beyond this reality, beyond the realms of Heaven and Hell and all the shadowed spaces that lie between. Hold fast to that hope in the face of the dark times ahead, and you will find the truest meaning of your life.

Though I know that you do not believe me when I speak of dread omens, I think you are beginning to suspect that my words ring of truth. I was a nonbeliever as well. I remember, even as a child, reading the Horadric tales and thinking that while they were wonderful stories, they were only that—wonderful stories. Tales such as those of Anu and the Dragon, the Mage Clan Wars, the Sin War, and the Hunt for the Three merely were told to embrace imagination. I now see, much to my regret, that even within these legends there lives a deeper and more profound truth. For, as I have come to discover, truth is hidden in unexpected places.

If events are as I believe them to be, some truths will be revealed very shortly which will make you a believer—perhaps even upon the day of my death. For I believe that if our world is to be saved, you have a pivotal role to play in its salvation, though I know not—nor do I begin to speculate—what that role might be.



Many of the things you will see in this book will be familiar to you. There are texts from the Great Library at Caldeum. I can never forget how, even as a young girl, you mastered the city. Although I was quite aware you were sneaking around the sewers (when you and I were not exploring old ruins), which led some to call me a negligent uncle. I further knew that the survival skills you would develop there, and likewise on the rest of our journeys, would prepare you for the work you have cut out for you. Here also you will find the drawings I made of the Neztem Petroglyphs, the strange mirrored cuneiform writings which I believe were made by one of the original nephalem. Much of this you will see again, but this time with the eyes of a Horadric scholar, not the eyes of a young girl. Understand this: As of my passing, you will become the last of the Horadrim.

At one time it had been my objective to write the first-ever history of the world, starting with the myth of Anu and the Dragon and continuing on to the events that unfold before us even as I write this letter. I use the example of the Stranger, who came to us so recently. It's becoming more and more clear who the Stranger in our midst truly is, and the sacrifice he must have made. Further, I have speculated on the true nature of the heroes who have also joined in our fight against the shadow. And most certainly you have done so as well.

Some material in here will be familiar to you from the dreams which have plagued you since childhood. Indeed, those dreams might be the key to preventing the end times.

Always, dear Leah, keep your eyes on the Prophecy. It is the key to the salvation of our world.

... And, at the End of Days, Wisdom shall be lost  
as Justice falls upon the world of men.  
Valor shall turn to Wrath—  
and all Hope will be swallowed by Despair.  
Death, at last, shall spread its wings over all—  
as Fate lies shattered forever.



I cannot pretend that even I fully grasp how the knowledge contained herein informs the recent events in New Tristram, save only to say that we have already witnessed reawakened evils, and the mortal realm will see more before this is over. I must beg you, Leah, to stay vigilant and probe this book and, indeed, the people and lands you shall encounter. For within them, further glimpses of the truth shall be revealed to you.

The one thing I know is that the end times are not preordained. As I said, I believe there is something beyond all of this. I know not what, only that it exists. Jered Cain saw it, and, I am told, even Zoltun Kulle glimpsed it. Mark well this truth, though you do not yet believe that there is something far greater that awaits us outside all the suffering of this world. Sweet Leah, trust in your uncle until your doubts are removed.

Your first duty calls for you to forestall the end times. And now I must reveal to you that I, like you, have had prophetic dreams. In one such dream, not only did I see malefic forces at work, haunting echoes of the distant past—demons and angels—but, in the center of it all, I saw you standing between light and dark, between the Heavens and the Hells. The odd thing is that I had this dream of you when you were a child. However, in the dream you appeared just as you are now.

Study all that is written within these pages. All the work of my life, I now bequeath to you. I know not what in the writings is vital or what is offal. It is a compendium of knowledge collected throughout hundreds of years by adventurers, purveyors of dark arts, Horadric scholars, and madmen. Inside is information that will aid you in confronting the dark days that lie ahead. Do not mourn me, Leah. I have seen and heard accounts of those who have been beyond and returned. It is my belief that in death there are yet other mysteries to be revealed.

Live life well, my dear Leah.

All of my love,

Uncle Deckard



... addition pour l'ensemble, 22 pour l'ensemble en tout





# The Dawn

## Anu and the Dragon

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**A**s with all things, it is best to begin with the beginning. The Creation. All things after it are a result of it, and the nature of it reverberates down through the millennia.

A great many mystic and tribal storytellers impart some version of this story. I am using ancient writings from the *Black Book of Lam Esen*. I choose this source because Lam Esen was a skilled sage renowned for his knowledge of Skatsimi mysticism and folklore. In his time, he collected vast stores of knowledge from diverse places, and had a unique genius for distilling the essence of things from a vast array of different sources.

He describes the creation of our universe in the following terms:

*Before the beginning there was void. Nothing. No flesh. No rock.  
No air. No heat. No light. No dark.  
Nothing, save a single, perfect pearl.*

*Within that pearl dreamed a mighty, unfathomable spirit—the One—Anu. Made of shining diamond, Anu was the sum of all things: good and evil, light and dark, physical and mystical, joy and sadness—all reflected across the crystalline facets of its form. And, within its eternal dream-state, Anu considered itself—all of its myriad facets. Seeking a state of total purity and perfection, Anu cast all evil from itself. All dissonance was gone. But what of the cast-off aspects of its being? The dark parts, the sharp, searing aspects of hate and pridefulness? Those could not remain in a state of separation, for all things are drawn to all things. All parts are drawn to the whole. Those discordant parts assembled into the Beast—the Dragon. Tathamet was his name—and he breathed unending death and darkness from his seven devouring heads. The Dragon was solely composed of Anu's cast-off aspects. The end sum of the whole became a singular Evil—the Prime Evil, from which all vileness would eventually spread throughout existence.*









*Though separate beings, Anu and the Dragon were bound together within the Pearl's shadowed womb. There they warred against each other in an unending clash of light and shadow for ages uncounted.*

*The diamond warrior and the seven-headed dragon proved to be the equal of the other, neither ever gaining the upper hand in their fierce and unending combat—till at last, their energies nearly spent after countless millennia of battle, the two combatants delivered their final blows. The energies unleashed by their impossible fury ignited an explosion of light and matter so vast and terrible that it birthed the very universe all around us.*

*All of the stars above and the darkness that binds them.*

*All that we touch. All that we feel. All that we know.*

*All that is unknown.*

*All of it continues through the night and the day in the ebbing and flowing of the ocean tides and in the destruction of fire and the creation of the seed.*

*Everything of which we are aware, and that of which we are utterly unaware, was created with the deaths of Anu and the Dragon, Tathamet.*

*In the epicenter of reality lies Pandemonium, the scar of the universe's violent birth. At its chaotic center lay the Heart of Creation, a massive jewel unlike any other: the Eye of Anu—the Worldstone. It is the foundation stone of all places and times, a nexus of realities and vast, untold possibility.*

*Anu and Tathamet are no more, yet their distinct essences permeated the nascent universe—and eventually became the bedrock of what we know to be the High Heavens and the Burning Hells.*

*Anu's shining spine spun out into the primordial darkness, where it slowed and cooled. Over countless ages it formed into the Crystal Arch, around which the High Heavens took shape and form.*



*Though Anu was gone, some resonance of it remained in the holy Arch. Spirits bled forth from it—shining angels of light and sound who embodied the virtuous aspects of what the One had been.*

*Yet, despite the grace and beauty of this shining realm, it lacked the perfection of Anu's spirit. Anu had passed into a benevolent place beyond this broken universe—a paradise of which nothing is known, and yet represents perhaps the greatest-kept secret of Creation.*

*Longed for, but unimaginable.*

*Just as Heaven cooled in the spaces above, Tathamet's blackened, smoldering husk spiraled into the lower darkness of reality. From his putrid flesh grew the realms of the Burning Hells. The Dragon's seven severed heads arose as the seven Evils—the three strongest of which would be known as the Prime Evils. They, along with their four Lesser brethren, would rule over the ravening, demonic hordes that spawned like maggots from the desiccated cavities of the Burning Hells.*

*Thus was how all of what we know began . . .*

*In time, the Lords of Hell and the angels of Heaven met and clashed. The battle raged unceasing, and thus would come to be known as the Eternal Conflict.*

*It is written in the Book of Long Shadows that the Eternal Conflict shall continue on forever across countless planes of existence, until further mysteries, unknown even to the angels and the demons, shall reveal themselves.*





Over the millennia, many scholars have interpreted this in various ways. Some, especially in the primitive tribes who look to the sky for their understanding of the universe, view all this as literally true. They believe that Anu's spine is a physical object in the universe. That demons are born from the rotting flesh of Tathamet.

Other scholars and mystics take this less literally and perceive the telling of Anu and Tathamet's battle as an elaborate metaphor for good and evil and the constant, warring dynamic seen among the forces of nature.

## The Eternal Conflict

I take the following knowledge from a surviving fragment of one of the scrolls of the Church of Zakarum. In it, the unknown scribe tells of events which took place millennia before the founding of the church. Thus, the descriptions are of questionable validity. I personally believe that the tales came from earlier and unknown sources. I have my suspicions, which, for the time, I will keep to myself—although I might expatiate on these things in a later writing. The scroll describes a war fought by agents of light and order against creatures of chaos and shadow. That is to say, forces both of the High Heavens and the Burning Hells (see later sections).

This war was most commonly fought within the realm of Pandemonium. According to one of the earliest necromancers, the angels and demons battled over control of one essential object, the Heart of Creation—the Worldstone.









The Worldstone is not, as the name implies, a mere stone. It is a colossal, mountain-sized object which was believed by many (and is supported by multiple petroglyphs and ancient sculptures) to be the actual Eye of Anu, the One. According to legend, to which I subscribe, the Worldstone is an artifact of unimaginable power.

Lacking the specificity and background a scholar such as I would like, a belief exists that control of this stone changed hands many times over the eons. Oral history tells us that the Worldstone *"allowed the side that possessed it to alter reality and create life and worlds almost without restriction."* The account continues that *"angels used the stone to build worlds of perfect order in line with their ideals of justice, hope, wisdom, fate, and valor,"* whereas demons used the stone to *"create unfathomable engines of annihilation and worlds of destruction, terror, and hatred."* However, *these worlds created by angels and demons never flourished. They were inherently flawed, and doomed to wither and die."*

I know not whether such worlds were ever created or, if they were, whether any of them still exist. To the best of my knowledge, no man has ever beheld such a world. Therefore, I suspect that this account is literary license. What we can all agree upon, however, is that this object was of great importance and that, whatever its use, it was greatly coveted by the angels and demons.

Further research suggests that in time, an archangel called Tyrael ordered a bastion to be built around the Worldstone, a stronghold which would come to be known as the Pandemonium Fortress. Throughout these writings, I will explore much further the tales surrounding Tyrael, as I have, indeed, actually met the angel.

*Read these sections carefully, my dear. Read all things about him carefully, for if my suspicions are correct, he still has some role to play in this grand drama.*



I can testify to the existence of the Pandemonium Fortress, as I was once there. I can tell you from firsthand experience that this stronghold embodies the warped-reality traits ascribed to Pandemonium as a whole. Indeed, I have never seen anything quite like it. That having been said, I cannot be sure whether it is simply otherworldly in nature or it was built by an angel or a mad demon. In any case, over the course of the Eternal Conflict, the fortress changed hands between angels and demons. Thus, it has taken on structural and metaphysical traits from both the High Heavens and the Burning Hells.

Long ago, an angel known as Inarius seized the Worldstone and, through some impossible act of magic, veiled it from the sight of both Heaven and Hell. He had accomplished this with the aid, I presume, of the mysterious demoness Lilith and a cadre of other angels and demons who had grown disillusioned with the Eternal Conflict. Inarius succeeded in manipulating the power of the stone to create the world of Sanctuary, a hidden paradise where he and his followers could live free from the madness of unending strife.

This is the place we know as the mortal realm. This is our world. We must pause a moment to think upon this. Our world, unlike all the other worlds, was created by both angels and demons.

The day of Sanctuary's creation, the nature of the Eternal Conflict changed. Much confusion spread through the Burning Hells and the High Heavens. The center of all things they had fought over for countless millennia had vanished. It was simply gone. At first both sides suspected the other, but in time, they realized that the truth was something different. Thus it was that the battle for possession of the Worldstone became the search for it.

It is interesting to note, before we begin delving into the Burning Hells and High Heavens, that not all things assumed of them are true.

For instance, there were different cults which reigned in the period between what we now know as the Sin War and the Dark Exile (both of which I will discuss later). It was believed by some that the High Heavens and the Burning Hells were places where the souls of men went when they died—that men either were rewarded for their virtues (the High Heavens), or received



punishment for their failings (the Burning Hells). Aside from the unfounded beliefs of various cults, there is nothing in academia to support this. It is important that the reader understand that the High Heavens and the Burning Hells, much like the realm of Pandemonium, are actual, physical locations in this universe.

Personally, I believe that there exists a place where the souls of men go after their death, but that discussion is beyond the place of this treatise.

This being said, I must confess that even I do not always know where myth ends and truth begins. That, reader, I will let you judge for yourself.

