

*A powerful organization that will hold the world hostage. With their new leader Nik Alevras, will our intrepid pair of spies be able to stop a returning evil, before the dawn?*

## **BLACK DAWN**

By K.E. Pottie

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BOOK FOUR OF THE CODE NAME SERIES

# BLACK DAWN

K.E. POTTIE 

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## THE SENATOR - PRESENT DAY ENGLAND

### REVELATION 6:12

AND I BEHELD WHEN HE HAD OPENED THE SIXTH SEAL, AND, LO, THERE WAS A GREAT EARTHQUAKE; AND THE SUN BECAME BLACK AS SACKCLOTH OF HAIR, AND THE MOON BECAME AS BLOOD.

A car stopped in front of a heavily weathered iron enclosure. Behind its rusted bars appeared the main entrance of an ancient castle. The closest village was West Wycombe at the southern edge of the Chiltern Hills near High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, Southeast England. The driver got out and opened the trunk and placed the senator's overnight bag on the ground. A cloud of dust permeated the air around the leather bag.

"They are waiting for you inside," the driver said.

Senator John Fishborne stood for a moment in front of the edifice. *Not what I expected*, he thought, scanning the ancient gate.

He picked up his bag and walked towards what he believed was the main gate entrance. Beyond the entrance, at closer examination, the castle looked like the front of a church and stood about one hundred feet high. Its lofty steeple was covered in English ivy. At its base, the entryway was blocked by another rusted iron gate.

A man appeared from behind that gate. He dutifully waved to the senator as he opened the gate, which made a loud creaking noise.

The man had a distinctly English accent when he greeted the senator.

“Welcome, Senator Fishborne,” the man said. “My name is William Somers.”

“Pleasure, Mr. Somers,” Fishborne said. “I’ve come a long way to be here. Frankly, though, I’m surprised at the dilapidated appearance of all of this.”

“Ah, appearances,” William replied. “Don’t be fooled. Come inside. May I take your bag?”

“I got it,” Fishborne said, following Somers to a small door set inside the wall.

Leading the senator inside, Somers closed the door and threw the bolt into place to prevent anyone else from entering what was in reality a keep.

“This part of the castle has been closed for years to the public,” Somers said, opening another door made of solid wood. The senator noticed that metal spikes were driven into the wood by some ancient hammer. “You were correct in calling this structure dilapidated, Senator. I am afraid it isn’t what it used to be. We have delayed renovations until our project is in full swing. You see that our underground space is quite adequate, however.”

“Good,” the senator said. “You have piqued my interest.”

“This way, if you please, Senator,” Somers said.

Somers led the senator down a flight of stairs to a steel door. It seemed out of place in this ancient stronghold. To the left of the door, mounted on the primeval rock, Somers punched a code into a keypad. The door popped open with a whoosh of air. Pushing the door completely open, he led the senator in. The door slowly closed behind, sealing them inside.

“Airtight?” Fishborne asked.

“Yes,” Somers said. “A precaution against any chemical or gas attacks.”

“Are you planning a war, by chance?” the senator asked with a nervous smile.

“Just being prepared, Senator,” Somers replied. “Now, Helena and Alex are waiting for you in the conference room. Please follow me.”

They made their way down steel and concrete covered corridors to a set of large ornate oak doors. Somers opened the doors and Fishborne peered inside. A man recognizable to the senator and a blonde woman with stark facial features sat in large leather chairs around a mahogany conference room-size table. *She is beautiful*, Fishborne thought.

“Senator, come in,” the woman said, standing up and walking towards him. The man stayed seated and stared at the U.S. Senator from Iowa. He stared boldfaced and refrained from greeting him.

“It is a pleasure to meet you,” the woman said, extending her hand. “My name is Helena.”

Fishborne nervously took her hand, “I thought I was meeting a certain Sir Willingham?”

“He is indisposed,” Helena replied bluntly.

“Well, it’s a pleasure to meet you,” the senator replied. “By your accent, I see that you are German?”

“You are correct, senator,” Helena replied. “An inconsequential matter. We Europeans cross borders easily these days.”

He had been forced here, but the politician in him knew he needed to play the game.

“Please be seated,” Helena said, gesturing to a leather seat on the opposite end of the table.

“You have met Alex, of course,” Helena said. “He is the security chief in our operation.”

Alex nodded but kept silent. This made Fishborne nervous. *I don’t think I’ll ever like him*, he thought to himself, examining the man.

As if reading his thoughts, Helena explained. “Alex can be the friendly sort when he gets his way.”



“Herr Somers,” Helena said. “That will be all for now. Please take the senator’s bag to his room.”

“*Ja, Fräulein,*” he replied. Somers picked up the senator’s bag and closed the doors behind him with an ominous thud, making Fishborne flinch. He had the composure as a politician to keep the outside world buried, but this place, coupled with Alex’s presence, gave him the creeps. Regardless of his experience, he felt entombed, the same as he had as a young boy, trapped once in an abandoned cellar. He fought down rising panic.

Fishborne took his seat in the comfortable chair. This meeting had come out of nowhere and he was on tenterhooks because it had been Alex who had forced his attendance. The senator didn’t know what to expect and as a politician used to being briefed, he was in unfamiliar territory and clueless far from home in a foreign land.

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The week before, back in the states, the senator was just settling in at his home after the government had shut down for a brief break. A rogue senator, Fishborne, was shunned by his fellow politicians, at least in public. He was on the fringes of the far left in politics. His stance towards most conservative senators made him persona non grata in the Senate. Fishborne’s suspected involvement in framing other senators who stood up against him reminded some of the Watergate scandal. Somehow, he was always cleared of any wrongdoing.

But behind the scenes, several senators, keenly interested in his goal to overthrow and create a new government based on new ideals, had approached Fishborne. They formed a council, meeting in secret, in dark places frequented by revolutionaries intent on covert, illegal operations. It was after one of these meetings that a tall, dark, swarthy man had appeared at the senator's home, just after supper.

"Can I help you?" Fishborne said to the man who had just rung his doorbell.

"Senator Fishborne, I have a proposition for you," the man announced. "May I come in?"

"Who are you? How do you know my name?" Fishborne demanded. "This is my private residence. Please leave and if you must see me, come to my office in the morning."

Fishborne started to close the door, but the man snatched it with incredible force, wrenching it from the senator's grasp.

"Leave or I'll call the police," Fishborne stated firmly, backing up defensively.

"Please believe me, Senator, I mean you no harm," the man replied. "My name is Alex Alevras, and I must see you now. I have come a long way. May I please come in? I will not take much of your time."

The senator relented. *This guy seems like he could force the issue if he wanted to*, he thought. Either way, he

would have to see him. It seemed more logical to take the political, safe approach. *The man won't be denied.*

“Have a seat,” Fishborne said finally.

Alex came in and sat in a large chair opposite the senator, unbuttoned his trench coat and crossed his legs. He waited until the senator sat down.

“Now, what do you have to tell me that’s so urgent?” the senator asked.

“I belong to an international organization that holds the same interests as you and your fellow subversive senators,” Alex said. “Do not ask how I know this. My organization is here to help.”

“Hmm, and what do you know about our goals?” Fishborne asked. His mind raced for an answer. *Who IS this guy? And what does he know? Perhaps sent by some senator I messed with! Trying to frame me,* he thought.

“We can offer you a wider vision than just changing your government, Senator,” Alex said. “We can offer you a share in the world.”

“A share—in the world? That’s preposterous,” Fishborne replied. “We just want to assemble a new and more effective government, not become another Nazi Germany or Alexander the Great that will rule the world,” he caught his breath. “And I’m supposed to believe you? How do you propose to do this?”

Alevras smiled. “The leader of our organization has sent me to ask you to visit us, to discuss this matter outside your country.”

“I’m still in shock. Okay, let’s say I believe what you’re telling me. When and where?” Fishborne asked. “How do I even know I can trust you? And just what is this organization? I am a United States Senator. I can’t just leave in the middle of a session,” he lied.

“You are on a break, Senator,” Alex answered. “I would highly recommend that you agree to visit us. If you refuse, your secret anarchist meetings might somehow come to the attention of the FBI.”

“Now hold on just a minute! Are you blackmailing me?” Fishborne said. He was indignant. *How dare you threaten me in my house*, he thought.

“Yes, Senator, I am,” Alex replied. “You have no choice in this matter. A private jet will wait for you at Ronald Reagan National Airport. I will send a driver for you in two days’ time. I promise you will be back home before the break is over.”

Alex stood up, offering his hand, but Fishborne just stared at it.

“As you wish, Senator,” Alex said. “I know the way out.”

“Wait,” Fishborne said. “I need to know the name of your organization first. And what’s my destination?”

“You will be briefed on our organization when you arrive in the United Kingdom next week,” Alex said. “Someone will contact you when you arrive at Heathrow Airport.”

“You can’t expect me to agree to all of this without knowing who you’re working for,” the senator replied, letting his anger show.

“Senator, that is the way we do things — the only way we do things, in secret, with as little forewarning as possible. You will receive further details about your flight soon.” In moments, he was gone, vanishing into the dark of the night.

\*\*\*

Now, a week later, Senator Fishborne sat nervously in the ancient castle.

“Senator,” Helena said. “Be at ease, we are all friends here.”

“You wouldn’t believe how many times I’ve heard that from my opposition,” Fishborne said. “You brought me here under duress, Helena. What do you want from me?”

“No, Senator, hardly under duress. Maybe you were coerced just a little, but you agreed to this visit. In actuality, we brought you here because we need your help,” Helena said.

“Your man, there,” he said, pointing to Alex, “told me last week your organization could help me. So what’s the actual story here?”

“Well, let us say that our organizations and your council can help each other immensely,” Helena replied in a soothing voice. She nodded to Alex, who stood up and walked towards the senator.

“I am so thrilled you came, Senator,” Alex said. He smiled as he placed an ominous black folder before the uneasy man.

“Here are the goals of our organization, Senator,” Helena said.

Fishborne opened the folder. The first page was titled “The Hellfire Organization”.

“Interesting name,” Fishborne said gruffly. “I would have gone with something a bit more subtle.”

“This was not a title of our choosing, Senator,” Helena replied. “This organization or club, as it was known in the past, has existed for three hundred years.”

“I’ve never heard of it,” Fishborne said.

“Exactly,” Helena said. “A strict code of secrecy has enabled it to survive into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Hellfire Club was for high society rakes, as you might refer to them. I call them for what they were—libertines. It was established in Britain and Ireland in the 18th century and hidden behind the name of the Order of the Friars of St.

Francis of Wycombe. Now *that* is what you call an interesting title, is it not? To get to the point, these clubs were rumored to be the meeting places of persons of quality. Do you understand what that means?

“Not exactly,” he replied.

“In short, this club offered locations where people of high social rank could take part in immoral acts. The members were often very involved in politics,” Helena explained.

“That’s nothing new, it happens today,” he said.

“It was rumored that some of your founding fathers belonged to the Hellfire Club, most notably Benjamin Franklin.”

“I’ve never heard of Benjamin Franklin being associated with that kind of club,” the senator answered.

“No, of course you have not. His association is part of history that is not propagated to the public. But, perhaps then, you have heard of the 13<sup>th</sup> Cohort?” Helena asked.

“You’re part of that organization?”

“The same,” Helena said. “Does that bother you, Senator?”

“I despise what they stood for,” the senator replied. “I made that very clear in the Senate after that organization's demise. Is that why I’m here?”

“Senator, why do you lie to me?” Helena said. “Your grandfather’s last name was Von Sliedricht, a White Russian and Nazi sympathizer during World War II.”

“What? How?” he stammered.

“I realize you have gone to great lengths to cover up your Nazi affiliations,” Helena said. “But there is nothing in your past that is not known to me. So, I suggest you dispense with fighting what is inevitable, and work for me.”

“You’re crazy!” Fishborne said. “Why would I want to work for you? I demand to know who gave you this information!” the senator blurted out. “Whoever it was will be held accountable.”

The futile attempt at bravado failed to scare Helena.

“Why would I even consider telling you?!” Helena shouted back at him, rage welling up in her. “You are nothing but a bug to be crushed if I will it!”

“Because I am a United States senator,” Fishborne replied. “I demand to know who told you about me.”

His voice cracked a bit. A palpable taste of terror rose in his throat.

Helena went from being close to manic to being very calm, almost sweet sounding. “As far as record keeping goes, we are the best besides the Mormons. So, I would avoid any indiscretions with the FBI,” Helena reiterated.



“Blackmail again?” Fishborne asked. “Can we dispense with the threats?”

“We can, Senator,” Helena replied. “I repeat, I believe my organization could benefit you as well.”

“Just what does this Hellfire organization do?” Fishborne asked. “I can’t imagine you invited me here to talk politics, least of all take part in immoral acts.” He laughed nervously, realizing this conversation was making him very uneasy.

“You are correct in your assumption,” Helena said. “You are here to help us establish a new world order.”

“I had been preaching change for some time now,” Fishborne said. “I’m an outcast in our political system. What good could I do for you?”

“You will be our mole inside your government,” Helena said. “But do not worry, you will be well compensated.”

“What makes you think—” he said, but he remembered the threats. He chewed on his lower lip, trying to think of a way out of this situation. He didn’t like this at all—feeling cornered with nowhere to run. He would go along with these people until he could get back to the states. *Then*, he thought, *I can always make a deal with the FBI, and somehow get out of this by exposing these nuts.*

“You really have no choice, Senator,” Helena said, almost as if she read his thoughts. “You will cooperate, or we will be forced to expose your secret council.”

“All right, you’ve got me,” Fishborne answered. “What do you want from me?”

“I am glad to hear that, Senator,” Helena replied. “We will talk shop, as you Americans say. But first, Somers will show you to the quarters we have arranged for you.”

\*\*\*

The same evening of the senator’s arrival, the seven remaining members of the 13<sup>th</sup> Cohort arrived together at the ancient castle. They entered the conference room and saw Helena seated at the head of the large wooden table. She stood up when they entered.

“What is this place?” Jan Wolff asked immediately without greeting her. “Why have you summoned the council here, Helena?”

“It is our new home,” Helena replied. “In the heart of the enemy camp.”

“That is unique,” Jan said.

“My apologies for the emergency call to meet,” Helena said to the gathered counsel. “I have dinner waiting for us in the dining room. I will explain then. Please join me.”

None of the council dared question Helena further. They knew better. She was a charming and beautiful woman, considered by many to be a shining example of a

true Aryan and it was lost on no one that she was the rightful leader of the 13<sup>th</sup> Cohort. Her predecessor, Garcia, had been appointed to lead the Cohort out of fear by the ruthlessness he showed to those not loyal to him. Now, with Garcia dead, Helena had stepped into the role as their unopposed leader.

“This way, please,” Helena announced, motioning to the seven Cohort members.

They followed her into the dining room, where a large table was lavishly set. Nods and comments of approval came from the members as they took their appointed seats, finding their name cards placed on Meissen dinner plates.

They waited until Helena was seated. Servants brought in trays of *hors d'oeuvres*, placing them between the massive bouquets of fresh flowers that adorned the middle of the table. Vintage lead crystal glasses filled with wine were placed in front of each cohort member.

“A toast!” Helena said, picking up her wine glass.

“I hope the lead does not kill us,” one member joked, taking a healthy gulp of his wine.

The rest chuckled at his joke, all of them toasting to his health.

The man who made the joke stood up suddenly and clawed at his chest as the cyanide stopped his heart. The rest of the Cohort members did the same. Two collapsed into their seats, their wine glasses bouncing on the table.

Jan Wolff stood up from his chair, spitting out his wine, staring at the six former Cohort members, grotesquely sprawled around the dining room table.

“What have you done?!” he shouted, dumping out his wine on the floor and throwing his crystal goblet onto the table as if it had bitten him.

“Do not worry, Jan,” Helena said. “Your wine is not tainted.”

Jan’s hands were shaking from the sudden shock of witnessing his colleagues die in front of him. “Why did you poison them?” Jan finally asked. “They were completely loyal to you.”

“They failed me, Jan,” Helena replied. “The 13<sup>th</sup> Cohort failed us.”

“Failed *us*, Helena? Are you including me with you? Tell me, why was I spared?” Jan asked.

“*Ja*, you are included because you were the only one who stood up against Garcia with me,” Helena said. “All of them voted for him, but not you.”

Helena stood up, setting her glass on the table. She moved over to a china hutch and picked up a small bell. She rang it and several men in black attire entered and silently removed the bodies from the dining room.

“Come with me, Jan,” Helena said. “There is someone I want you to meet.”

They left the dining room when Helena stopped abruptly and looked back.

“And that was my best tablecloth, too,” she observed.

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Senator Fishborne sat in an austere room somewhere deep within the castle. He felt sick to his stomach. *Why did I come here? I could have denied any allegations these people would have made. Helena could be bluffing.*

The senator’s thoughts were interrupted by a knock on his door.

“Come on in,” he said.

Helena and Jan entered.

“Senator Fishborne, I would like you to meet my colleague Jan Wolff,” she said.

Jan gave her a sudden shocked look. He was unaware Helena had reached out to a member of the United States Senate.

“Do not worry, Jan,” Helena said. “The senator has the same convictions we do. That is the reason he is here.”

Jan held out his hand. All the while, he was trying to piece together the strategy Helena might have planned. The senator momentarily hesitated, and then quickly reminded himself he had to play along.

“Nice to meet you, Jan,” Fishborne said. He shook Jan’s hand with all the charm of a politician trying to garner votes from his constituents.

“Senator, please come with us,” Helena said. “I have something to show you of importance.”

They walked down several hallways and down a nearby corridor, passing the conference and dining room. Helena glanced inside the dining room. She was pleased to see it was back in order.

“Ah, the dining room has been tidied up,” Helena observed, turning to Jan. “Senator, would you like a glass of wine before we continue the tour?”

“That sounds wonderful,” Fishborne said. “I thought you’d never ask. I’m parched.”

Walking into the room, Helena approached the wine bar with her back to her guest, and covertly slipped a vial of powder from her pocket while Jan conversed with the senator. She stirred the powder into the goblet filled with wine that she intended for the senator. Helena then handed a goblet to Jan and the other to her guest.

Jan nodded to Helena. He now knew from experience the fate that awaited the senator.

“I propose a toast to our future alliance!” Helena said, raising her own wine-filled goblet. “*Zum Wohl!* To your health, Senator!”

They all raised their glasses and drank the crimson nectar.

“Now, shall we continue?” she said.

Jan gave her a questioning look. Helena responded with a wink.

They made their way down the corridor towards a steel door at its end.

The senator wiped sweat from his brow. *Strange, it's not hot here, so why am I sweating?*

They continued to walk down the corridor. Fishborne suddenly stopped, unable to continue. He braced his hand against the wall. “Sorry. Must be the wine combined with jet lag,” he said.

At that moment, his eyes rolled back in his head and his body fell forward. Helena, with unexpected strength, caught hold of the senator by the back of his suit and propped him against the wall.

“You should have let him fall,” Jan said.

“No, I want him in perfect health,” Helena replied.

“For what purpose?” Jan asked. “Just because he honors the same ideals, does not entitle you to reveal our secrets to him as you apparently have already done. Just kill him and be done with it. Whatever you have planned, Helena, this senator is an enormous risk. The U.S. Government will come looking for him. He is an elected

official! But despite this, we have the resources to make his body disappear without a trace.”

“We can only hope,” Helena said, with a calm as cold as ice.

“I don’t understand,” Jan said. “Do you want the local authorities to find the senator somehow? What is going on here?”

“Follow me,” Helena said. “I will show you. Take the senator now.”

After Jan placed his arm around the senator’s limp body and could hold him upright, they walked a short distance back down the corridor. Helena stopped in front of a steel door and approached a keypad. She entered a four-digit code, and the door popped open. Jan, half holding, half dragging the senator, followed her inside. The interior of the room had a set of fold out seats against one wall to the left of the door. The room was partitioned in two, with one half walled by thick glass. Jan saw a similar door there, with a keypad inserted between both halves. Helena opened that second door as well.

“Jan, place the senator inside the room,” she said.

“What is this place?” Jan asked, carrying the senator into the glass enclosure.

“An experiment of sorts,” she replied.



Helena followed Jan into the room, helping him place the senator down on the floor of the room. She bent down and gently slapped the senator's gray face.

"Wake up, please," she whispered to the prone figure.

"Senator, wake up," she said, in a louder voice, slapping him harder this time.

The senator gradually stirred. His eyes fluttered open, and he groggily tried to sit up.

"What happened?" he asked Helena. But it was too late for him. The couple had already stepped out of the room and locked the door.

"Hello? What's going on here?" Fishborne asked, finally able to sit up.

Helena walked over to an intercom on the wall opposite the door and pushed the speaker button. Jan heard her say, "Proceed, Alex."

A vapor filled the room.

The senator got to his feet, holding out his hand as a light mist turned to liquid at his touch. He sniffled, wiping his nose. His eyes began to tear abundantly.

"What's happening?! Let me out of here!!!" the senator screamed at Helena, banging on the glass in front of her.

She watched calmly, not saying a word.

"I demand that you let me out!" the senator yelled.

He started gasping for air, turning his head every which way. He vomited on the shiny floor. The senator held his stomach as pain tore through him. Blisters formed on his skin, and he screamed as his eyes burned with searing pain. Falling to the floor, he convulsed uncontrollably. Jan and Helena silently watched the senator until his convulsions stopped and he was still. He stared out blankly at them.

“It is finished,” Helena said.

“What was that vapor?” Jan asked.

“Tabun,” Helena replied. “The modern-day name for it is VX nerve agent.”

“Where did you get it?” Jan asked. “And what do you intend to do with it?”

“Come with me, I will explain everything,” she replied.

“Is this why you brought me here, Helena?” Jan said. “To watch him die? For what purpose did you do this?”

“For revenge, Jan,” Helena replied. “Oh, and world domination.”

“Stop joking. This is serious business,” Jan shot back.

“I am not joking,” Helena said. “Come with me to the conference room. I have prepared some very interesting information for you.”

Helena and Jan were joined by Alex in the briefing room.

“Jan, this is Alex, Chief of Security,” Helena said. “Alex, Jan worked with me in Germany. He is a trusted agent of mine.”

The two men nodded to each other.

“Shall we get started?” she said.

Reaching for a remote, she turned on an overhead projector. A map of Germany on which a red circle was drawn came into focus.

“This red circle shows a pilot plant built in 1939, which was set up at Munster-Lager, near the German Army proving grounds at Raubkammer. It was designed to test an early form of nerve agent known as Tabun,” Helena stated.

She hit a button and the next bullet point appeared.

“By early 1940, construction began on a secret plant, code named Hochwerk, for the production of Tabun on the Oder River in Silesia. The plant was large and was completely self-contained, synthesizing all intermediates and the final product, Tabun,” Helena said. She paused and then continued, “The factory had an underground plant for filling munitions, which were stored in Upper Silesia. It was operated by Anorgana GmbH, a subsidiary of IG Farben, as were all other chemical weapon agent production plants in Germany. Because of the plant’s deep secrecy and the difficult nature of the production process, it took from January 1940 until June 1942 for the plant to become fully operational.” Helena looked at

Jan, giving him time to register the information she had divulged. Then she went on.

“Many of Tabun’s chemical precursors were so corrosive that reaction chambers not lined with quartz or silver soon became useless. Tabun itself was so hazardous that the ending processes had to be performed while enclosed in double glass-lined chambers with a stream of pressurized air circulating between the walls. The plant produced between 10,000 and 30,000 tons of Tabun before its capture by the Soviet Army.”

Helena waited a moment before resuming. “Now we will move onto discussing sarin. In 1940, the German Army Weapons Office ordered the mass production of this gas for wartime use. Several pilot plants were built, and a high-production facility was still under construction at the end of World War II. Estimates for total sarin production by Nazi Germany range from 500 kg to 10 tons. Do you have questions so far, Jan,” Helena asked?

“None, I am amazed at the scope of this activity,” Jan replied.

“Yes, it is fascinating. But there is much more,” Helena answered. “During the war, our Führer, Adolf Hitler, wanted to use Tabun, but he received news that the allies could produce it as well, and that they probably could produce this gas in much larger quantities. Upon receiving this discouraging report, the Führer abruptly ordered that nerve gases not be used for the time being at

least, although it would continue to be produced and tested.”

Helena turned off the projector and pushed a button to turn the lights back on.

“Why are you telling me these historical details, Helena?” Jan asked.

“This is the history that our enemies believe to be true,” Helena replied.

“I take it you have found these gases,” Jan said. “The senator was the guinea pig?”

“You are correct in your assumption, Jan,” Helena said. “The corporation run by the 13<sup>th</sup> Cohort discovered a small amount of Tabun and sarin gas in its plant in Silesia. A larger amount is rumored to be buried near the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp in Austria. We are going to find it and use it.”

“How do you intend to use it, other than kill off senators from America,” Jan said half-jokingly.

“Now, who is joking? I will forgive your sarcasm, Jan,” Helena said. “We intend to force the established governments to their knees through blackmail. Once those governments understand what could happen to their population, they will kneel before us.”

“I am sorry, Helena,” Jan said. “But all I see here is you, I and Alex. How do you propose the three of us take over the world?”

Helena stood up, walking over to a map canister hung on the opposite wall of the projector screen wall. Helena pulled a string that hung down from the canister this time to reveal a map with several red circles drawn at various parts of the world.

“We have many allies, my friend,” Helena answered. “Each red circle on the map represents a target for the Tabun.”

“Do we really intend to destroy Paris, London, and Moscow?” Jan asked. His eyes gazed over to the American continent. “Washington too?”

“Do not question my methods, Jan,” Helena replied. “I have worked long and hard to establish secret agents in those capitals. We will succeed. Our revenge for their hand in our defeat in World War II will be absolute.”

“What about the senator?” Jan asked.

“With the senator’s death, we have started the process,” Helena said.

“How is his death related?” Jan asked.

Helena looked to Alex, “Have the senator, and the room decontaminated according to the instructions on the bureau next to the door. See that the instructions are

strictly followed. Afterwards, place his body where it will be found in the nearby hamlet.”

Alex stood up. “It will be done, Helena.”

Jan gave Helena a quizzical look as Alex left the room.

“You *want* the senator to be found?” he asked.

“Yes, Jan,” Helena replied. “How else would we get the Turners to investigate? And wield my revenge.”

“Jack and Emily Turner?” Jan asked. “Why would you want them to find us?”

“To do away with them, of course,” Helena answered. “They alone are responsible for the failure of the 13<sup>th</sup> Cohort’s bid at reclaiming Germany and establishing the Fourth Reich.”

“How will you lure them here?” Jan asked.

“The senator gave us the means to set a trap. For you see, the United States Government will want to keep the senator’s disappearance quiet, otherwise panic at government levels would escalate too soon.”

“What if they send the CIA in?” Jan said. “There is no guarantee that the Turners will show up to investigate this senator’s death. How do you propose to get them specifically?”

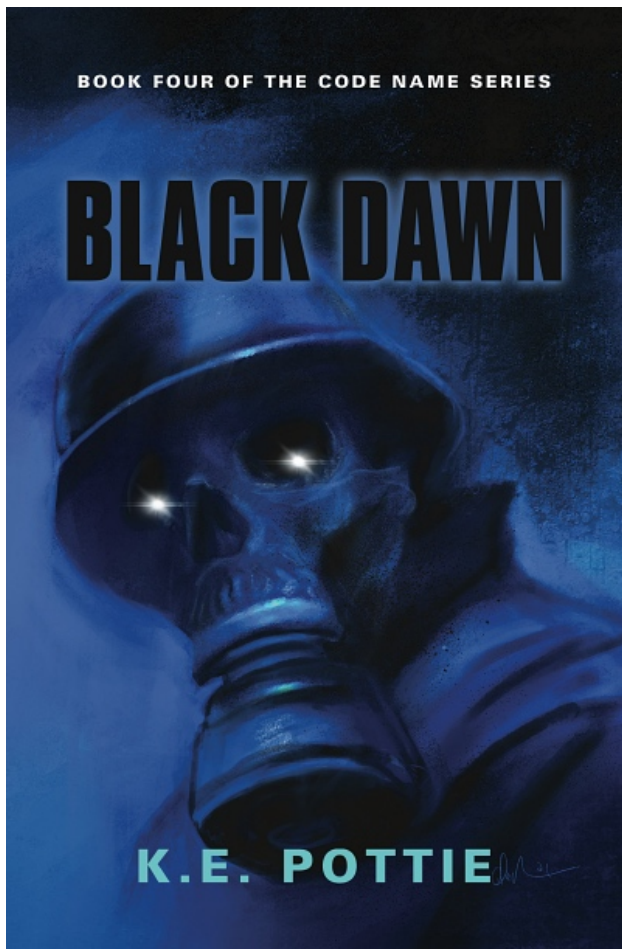
“Alex has been instructed to place a note on the senator’s body,” Helena said. “The Turners are sure to be sent.”

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“What does it say?” Jan asked.

*“Garcia sends his regards.”*





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