

Chapter One:

I Am Born

I came into this world in the usual manner. The first thing I remember upon leaving my mother's womb was a bright white light and a smell that I would later recognize as that hospital smell. How odd that we should come into this world in much the same manner that we should leave it? I only know this because I have been born and died many times. My eyes have seen the greatest horrors mankind has ever inflicted upon itself. I have witnessed murder, genocide, and plagues. I have also seen glory beyond what the human mind or eye could comprehend.

So here I was being brought into this world again. But before my eyes could fully focus on my new surrounding, I was taken by a pair of cold hands and cleaned off. I was then given to the woman that birthed me. She looked nice enough. It's always hard to tell. She had just spent nine hours in labor. She didn't look her greatest. My father seemed to love her. I figured that as long as I had two parents who were in love I would be fine.

Now, if you believe any of that story, I have some land in Florida that I would like to sell you. It's wonderful beach front property. But the truth about my birth is that I was a virgin birth.

In fact, I come from a long line of virgins. Both of my parents were virgin births just like their parents before them. My great-grandparents were born the usual way. I guess I didn't know them enough to care whether or not they ever had sex. The thought of my parents and grandparents having sex makes me sick.

It's not that I don't want them to love each other. I mean, there is love. And then there is sweet, sweet lovin'. It's just disgusting and immoral. It's one thing for me to have those feelings for somebody else. But for my parents to have feeling like that?!

So I will stick by the fact that I was a virgin birth. Actually, I am kind of repulsed by the idea that I came out of my mother's body.

I was delivered by a stork. No, I don't like that idea either. I was created out of the dirt like Adam. I later had plastic surgery to give myself a belly button. I had to make it look like there was nothing out of the ordinary about my birth, or non-birth in this case.

The truth is that I don't remember my birth. This is probably God's greatest gift to mankind. Women forget the pain of childbirth. The child doesn't remember being born. And the man got to have sex (except my parents and grandparents).

I'm hoping that I wasn't breast fed. That would be kind of disgusting, too. Actually, it would be very disgusting. I was bottle fed. I've only ever had baby formula or cow's milk. Human milk is not for drinking. That is why you never see ads for it.

And that is what I remember about my birth. You could ask my mother about it, but all she remembers is that I made her miss her soaps that day. It's nice to know that I was a special event. I can't really blame her, though. I don't even consider my birthday to be my real birth. My true birth came about five months later when Christine Parnelle Robinson was born.

I don't remember that event either. So here is Christine with her own birth story.

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I am writing things here because Jack has promised me that he would not alter what I would write. No matter how long we have known each other and loved each other, there are still a great many secrets that we have not shared with each other. I probably hold more than he does. He is only guilty of holding his heart close to him. The secrets of his heart are easier to reveal when I get him alone. And his secrets are beautiful. Mine are all dirty, little secrets that I usually found out as I was taking care of my mother as she was recovering from a drinking binge.

My parents never got along. My father was a handsome and successful man. He was a playboy and could have any woman that he wanted. My mother was attracted to him. She was a beautiful woman. She was sweet and funny. She may not have been the smartest woman, but she was pure and honest. She had the misfortune of meeting my father at a point in his life when he decided that to be truly successful he needed to settle down and get married.

I am guessing that this had something to do with Jack's dad. He and my father were the greatest of friends. They were nothing alike, but they were the best of friends. I think Jack's dad was always a curiosity to my father. I don't think my father ever understood him or what made him tick. He was successful, smart, and could have anything that he wanted. These are all qualities that my father admires. He possesses most of these.

What separates the two men is that Jack's father had a kindness and moral authority that guided every decision he made. My father is guided by a selfish desire to be the best. If he wants something, he gets it by any means necessary. Jack's father was motivated by the philosophy that he was put on this earth to help other people.

I am guessing that my father wanted to marry my mother because Jack's parents had gotten married. My father saw how happy Jack's mom made his father. My father wanted the same kind of happiness. And that is where my mother stepped into the picture.

She had the misfortune of being near him as he was trying to possess something that was beyond his reach. My father played the part of the love of her life. He fed her all of the lines and did everything that he usually did when he was trying to take over a business. He left her weak and defenseless, and then came in for the kill. With the demolition complete, he consumed what was left.

My mother didn't have to wait long for the demolition to take place. While they were on their honeymoon, my father slept with one of the maids. I am not sure on the exact details. My mom was on several anti-depressants at the time and had a few drinks. What I understood her to say was that the honeymoon had started off romantically. They had sex for the first time that night. It was her first time ever. It was everything that she had always dreamed of. He was soft, sweet, and thought only of her.

Afterward, he went out for a cigarette. An hour later, my mom went looking for him. She found him down the hallway on top of one of the maids in the closet. She ran back to her room crying.

My father did go to see about her, once he had finished his business with the maid. And that is when he consumed what was left of my mother. He told her that if she left him, nobody else would take her. She was damaged goods. What would people say about her getting divorced so soon after getting married? What would her family think about her?

And that was how my parent's marriage was. I wish I could say that there were bright spots, but I doubt that there were any. I can not even say that my birth was a joyous occasion.

I think that my mother wanted me. She had been pregnant once before. It was two years after they had gotten married. She was supposed to be on the pill, but she wanted a child. I think it was more out of loneliness than anything else. A child would give her somebody to talk to and endure the misery with.

When my father learned about this first child, he had it aborted. He didn't want a child. My mother was told that if she forgot to take her pill next time, he would get rid of her and the baby.

And then a miracle happened. Jack's parents became pregnant. My father saw how happy Jack's father was. He then decided that it was time to have a baby. When Jack was born a male, my father had great hopes for me. He was so disappointed that I had been born a girl that he left me and Mom at the hospital. Jack's father was the one that drove us home. I think he is also the one that got my father to let us back into the house. He would never tell me.

And that is why I owe Jack my very existence. If he had never been born, I wouldn't be here.

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As I was growing up, I heard nothing about how I should not be here. My family has always been one to tell me that I have a purpose in life. I have been marked for a destiny.

I was a troubled pregnancy. From what I have heard, my parents tried for many years to have a child. After several miscarriages and eight years of marriage, I was finally conceived. At my mother's first meeting with her doctor, she was told that she would be doing good to deliver me.

I don't think I have a destiny or purpose in life. If I do, I don't know what it is. My father was strangely silent on this topic. He never treated me like I had a destiny, but it was like him to keep things like that to himself. He had

a way of sensing things and knowing things beyond his knowledge. His mother said that he was a *chozeh* and could see into the spiritual realm.

When Christine's parents were getting divorced, I asked him about... my birth, destiny, and Christine. It was a rough time for me. For the first time in my life, Christine was away from me. She had been sent to a boarding school to be away from the whole divorce proceedings. I needed answers and assurances that everything would be okay.

Although I asked him a direct question, he told me a story about the Jewish people. He told me about Joseph being sold into slavery by his brothers and then saving his family and people during a famine. He then told me the story about the Jewish people being in slavery in Egypt and Moses leading them to freedom. He then told me about the Holocaust and the formation of the modern nation of Israel. He then asked me if I understood.

I didn't. All I saw was that something bad happened to the Jews. We were then rescued only to have something bad to happen to us again. My father kind of laughed and then went on to tell me that I Am Who I Am brings about triumph out of tragedy. Where there is evil, there is hope. Where there is hope, there is faith. Where there is faith, there is love.

I knew that there was an important lesson here that I was supposed to learn, but I had no idea what he was talking about. So I asked him again. He then hugged me and told me that when bad things happen not to look at it as the end. It is just the beginning. He then told me that I should not be looking for my purpose in life. My purpose would find me.

When I asked him about Christine, he told me that she probably had a greater destiny than I had. When I looked at him strange, he explained that she had the greater tragedy in life. She had the greater chance to triumph.

When I started to argue that I had been a troubled pregnancy, he cut me off with the fact that my birth led to Christine being born. Maybe I had been born to bring her into the world. Maybe my destiny had already been fulfilled and I should look beyond myself. He then shot me a look as if this was the final word on the subject. I did not fully understand, but I let the subject drop.

And that was all that my father ever said on the subject. He would die shortly after that, but that story remains for another chapter.