

KNIGHT'S

JD Couch

This story is dedicated to my wife Colleen thank you my love.

JD Couch

(Prologue)

The year 1534, was a time when Knight's served the kingdom, by order of the King himself. One of these Knights in particular was the greatest knight in the Kingdom; until his death four years ago. With his trusted sword he had defeated dragons, wizards, but his downfall was the treacherous and evil black Knight from the dark Kingdom. A Demon of sorts that still plagued the land; water, and soil, people were getting sick, and dying from the filth that the Black Knight had bestowed upon the land.

But four young boys with revenge in their hearts will somehow overcome his evil and will rise from the Barron waste lands. Sir John Bryn, Prince Jake Fairchild, Sir Michael Collins, and Sir Luke Barnum, all the age of twelve will become the greatest Knights the World has ever known, all of them having this in common; they all four lost their family due to a vile fever sent by the evil Black Knight. They don't know each other, but all of them will meet on the trail to the Kingdom of Marah; they must first learn to work together as a team to overcome the obstacles the black Knight sends their way.

By the age of fourteen they will get the armor of the golden Knights and rid the kingdom of any vile creature that brings danger to the

Kingdom of Marah, named after the Queen, who has searched the entire country side; for any man she could have trained for foot soldiers. She is in a race against time; the evil Black Knight will stop at nothing to destroy her entire Kingdom. She needs all the able bodied young men she can find to help her and her husband fight the black Knight, and his evil minions, and rid the world of his evil; before it spreads like a wild fire out of control.

The odds will soon turn to her favor, when John Bryn and three allies will do everything in their power to protect the people of Marah; John Bryn will be sent by his dying Father on a journey to find the Sorcerer of the Golden Forest, and he will ask him to teach him the ways of the Golden Knights. He tells them that they all have been chosen to wear the armor of the Golden Knights they're the only ones who can put a stop to the evil black Knight, and his legion of followers. Will the Sorcerer of the golden Forest help them with their dilemma? Read on, and I hope you enjoy the enchantment of Knights. Thanks JD Couch.

(6-28-2005)

Chapter (ONE)

(Sir John Bryn)

It's a dark and dreary day in the kingdom of Marah. Twelve year old John Bryn was just getting up from a long nights sleep. He's had a bad time as of late, he'd lost his Mother and his older brother Seth, due to a mysterious sickness that was plaguing the land; a lot of people have lost their lives in the last few months. With his Father sick and his Mother, and brother dead, he knew that it wouldn't be long before he would be alone, or maybe dead himself.

But the strange thing was he felt fine; maybe the sickness has somehow past me by he thought. Maybe he wasn't immune to its vile coughing or the strange fever; which left the human body covered in sores, and oozing with some sort of green substance.

John Bryn is tall and well built for his age; he has blonde hair that hangs just below his shoulders, he has blue eyes, and stands five foot-one-inches tall.

He walks in to his parent's bedroom and sees his father lying in the bed; his head propped on a pillow, filled with corn husks.

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“John, come over here and stand beside me?” His father whispers. John does as he’s told, he walked up and his father reaches a shaky hand toward his son, and takes his hand.

“I must send you on a journey my son; you will travel three days north to the kingdom of Marah. There you will go to the Castle of King Gillian where you’ll meet both him and the Queen of Marah. You’ll tell them that the evil Black Knight is gathering legions of souls to come and destroy the whole Kingdom. You’ll tell her that you need the map to the Golden Forest. Tell her you are seeking the Sorcerer of the golden Forest which you’ll go and ask for the power of the Golden Knights of the forest, and you will be the strongest most noble Knight in the entire world; you’ll go into training my son and be the most powerful knight the world has ever seen.” “Can you accomplish this task?” His father asked.

“Yes father,” I won’t let you down; that’s my word of honor.” He said with a bow.

“Then you my son are worthy of this task.” You’ll tell the Sorcerer; that you’re my son, tell him that Sir William Bryn sends them his heir: Sir John Bryn.” “Tell him that I’m very proud of you; tell him I said that

you will make a great Knight.” Tell him that it was set before you, even before you were born.”

JD Couch

“Yes Sir Father.” William looked at his son one last time and gently rolled his head to the left when John heard his father say with his last breath.

“I love you--my son.”

John held his father in his arms and cried; he gently laid him back down on the bed. He went into the next room and was making preparations for his burial.

John carried his Father out to the edge of the yard and buried him in the garden beside his Mother Loraina and his younger brother Seth; he picked up his Father and carried him into the garden to be buried; he said a fair well prayer, and when he finally finished burying him he walked back to his log-cabin, and cleaned himself a spot to have a seat on the steps; he has two things on his mind, one being he knew he was left alone in this world to fend for himself. The other thing on his mind was the evil black Knight, John Bryn is going to kill him if he gets the chance or he hopes so anyway. The third thing on his mind is; getting to the land of Marah as quickly as he could. John walked into the stable and began saddling his horse; the one his father let him name Dancer. He was a solid red horse with a bright white star between his eyes; he had a black mien and tail and stood twelve hands high; John gave his

horse this name when he was no more than a young Colt; scurrying about trying to catch up with his mother.

John rode for almost six hours across the low lying peaks about twenty-miles from his old homestead; it dawned on him, that he may never see his home again.

He rode another two hours when he decided it was time to take a break. He led his horse down to the river and let him drink all the water he could hold. He took the saddle off of his back and let him graze for forty five minutes.

When John finished his lunch he was on his way once again to the Kingdom of Marah.

Chapter (TWO)

(Prince Jake Fairchild)

It was a sad day for Prince Jake Fairchild, A boy of twelve years old he stands only five feet tall and has long brown hair and cat green eyes. He awakes from a restless sleep; he keeps hearing a voice calling his name as if carried by a great wind. They tell him he must save his Kingdom or the Black Knight will destroy everyone. The Kingdom of Wind Creek; a knock came to his door he stumbled out of bed and when the door opened there stood one of the forty servants she said.

“Good morning sire.” I have a message from the King. He needs to see you in his chambers immediately; he says it’s urgent.”

“Thank you Madeline.” I’ll be there as soon as I get dressed.”

“Yes Sire.” She said with a bow. When she closed the door he couldn’t help but wonder what his Father the King needed to talk with him about; he got himself dressed and began to think about his Mother, and he couldn’t get her last image out of his mind. She died with a mysterious fever that over took her so suddenly, and made her whole body break out in sores; once the fever reached its course his mother died a horrible death. They had also lost two or three servants in the last two weeks. What was going on, could it be that the legend of the Evil Black Knight is true? He had no answers. He walked in to his Fathers

chambers five minutes later, and saw his Father lying on the bed he knew by the way he looked; this would be the last time he would see him alive. His father looked up and said.

“Jake my son...” Come and stand before me.” Jake walked over and said.

“You needed to see me Father?” Jake asked with a bow.

“Yes.” I am sending you on a journey; you must travel to the Kingdom of Marah, and you will ask to see the Queen, and tell her you need a map to the Kingdom of the Golden Knights.” Tell her that you are Prince Jake Fairchild that you are the Son of King Charles Fairchild from the Kingdom of Wind Creek; you seek the help of the Golden Knights of the Forest.” “You will then become one of the most powerful Knights in the Land.” “Can you do this task my son?”

“Yes, Father.” I will not let you down.”

“Then you my son are worthy of this task.” His Father took hold of his sons hand and said.

“I’m very proud of you my son.” After he said those words his head rolled to the right; Jake heard him say as he drew his last breath be strong.

Jake walked in to his room and summoned his servants; he told them that his Father had died. One of the servants spoke up and said.

“Then you must become King.”

“Not just yet,” I must do what my Father asked me to do.” “And go to the Kingdom of Marah, as I promised him.”

“But Sire by the laws of Wind Creek you are acting King.” The servant reminded

“Who will rule the Kingdom while you are away?” They asked.

“Send the head Chancellor to my Chambers.” Jake said.

“Yes.” Your highness; right away...” The maid left the room and was gone for ten minutes. When she walked back into the room the head Chancellor was following close behind.

“You sent for me sire?” The Chancellor asked with a bow.

“Yes Chancellor Brindle; I am appointing you as active King until my return, when ever that may be.” I will then take my Fathers place on his throne.” “Will you accept this great responsibility?” Prince Fairchild asked. Chancellor Brindle knelt to one knee and said.

“Yes your Majesty, I will accept your offer, and I must say I am honored that you trust me.” Chancellor Brindle said with a bow.

“Then so be it.” Prince Jake Fairchild said. He looked at his servants and said.

“Saddle my horse, and pack my supplies.” The three of them bowed and walked out to the stables.

Twenty minutes later he walked in to the stables, mounted his horse and began his journey to the Kingdom of Marah, not knowing he would meet three very influential people; on the same quest as he.

Chapter (THREE)

(Sir Michael Collins)

It was a sad day for twelve year old Michael Collins, his mother and younger sister had died from the mysterious fever that was plaguing the land; his father lay sick and dying, and could barely get out of bed and those long coughing spells he would go into; oh how long they would last.

Michael was only twelve years old and has blonde hair and blue eyes and was very strong for his age; he and his father were farmers in the Village of Lad. A small community west of Marah; the village was a place where the less fortunate would come to, and make their home; there was only two ways to survive; one being, raising crops and trying to sell them, in the Village square, the other was to steal, although most people who stole they would only steal to feed their families, but still anyway you look at it stealing was still stealing, and the offender if he got caught would be put to death, or lose a limb or two; depending on the nature of the crime. Michael's family was fortunate enough to belong to the farmer side. Was his family rich? By no means; but his father made sure that his family was well taken care of. They had food on the table and a roof over their heads. But now with his Father sick and maybe dying he had no idea what he would do; his only alternative was to live

on the street and do what he has to do to survive. Michael sat there his eyes spilling tears when he heard a weak voice say.

“Michael?”

“Yes Father.” He called.

“Will you come here for a minute?” His Father asked. Michael got up and walked into his Fathers bedroom; when he looked at him the horror almost overwhelmed him.

“Don’t be afraid my son.” His Father said. Michael’s Father had huge blisters wailing up all over his forehead and on his chest; two of them burst open and was spewing some kind of green substance. His Father looked at him and said.

“It’s time you know the truth my son.”

“The truth, about what..?” Michael asked sounding shocked.

“I’m not your father.” Your Father was a great man; he was the only man I know of that has killed thirty-three Dragons in a single season. Until his life ended in a Joust match four years ago.”

“You’re not my father?” Michael said feeling both angry and sad.
“Why didn’t you tell me this long ago?”

“King Gillian,” thought it would be better; if I took you and raised you as my own.” “That was the only way, too keep you safe.”

“You have heard the legend of the Evil Black Knight haven’t you?” His father asked.

“Yes Sir.” I have.”

“Your Father made a deal with him four years ago he challenged him to a Jousting match.” He said to the Black knight.” “If I defeat you in a Jousting match; you must leave my Kingdom and never return.” The Black Knight accepted his challenge and when the jousting match was over your Father lay dead with a large gaping hole where his right eye used to be.” “The Black Knight has plagued the land since the day of your father’s untimely death.” “Your Father was also one of King Gillian’s most trusted Knight’s.” “Which makes you Sir Michael Collins the second; first born son of Sir Michael Collins the first.” Go into the barn and look under the last bale of hay and there you will find your Fathers Sword; one of the finest swords ever crafted.” “When you see it; you’ll know why its one of the finest swords ever made.” It’s deadly accurate.” “I must send you on a long journey my son; I need for you to take his sword and go to the kingdom of Marah.” Tell them your name is Sir Michael Collins the second, if you have any trouble at all use your sword, and it will protect you.” His Father said. “Can you do this my son?”

“Yes Father.” I will not let you down.” Michael said.

“You are worthy of this task,” you have the willpower of your Father with in you; you also have his abilities as a Knight, you will ask Queen Marah to give you the map to the Kingdom of the Golden Knights. You will speak to the great and Powerful Wizard known as Malachi; he will begin your training in swordsmanship. You will be one of the greatest Knights the world has ever known.” His Father said. Sir Michael

Collins could only sat there and watch as the only Father he ever known died and agonizing death.

He walked out to the barn as instructed; when he moved the bale of hay he saw it lying there almost glowing in the bright morning sun.

It was a seventeen inch sword with solid brass handles with two stones on each handle that were hazy green with dark slits reaching from one end to the other.

He picked it up and hung it on his side and walked out of the barn and was on his way to the Kingdom of Marah, as he promised the only father he had ever known.

Chapter (Four)

(Sir Luke Barnum)

Luke Barnum had just awakened from a very scary night. He could hear both his Mother and Father in the next room coughing and gasping for breath. He knew that it wouldn't be long before both of his parents would be dead. He got out of bed and walked into the next room. Luke Barnum is also twelve years old; he has long curly black hair and green eyes. He stands five foot three inches tall. He sat down on the sofa; when he heard his Mother say.

"Luke." Can you come in here please?"

"Yes ma'am." Luke called. He got up out of his chair, and walked into his Mother and Father's room when he saw his Mother laying there with all of the blisters on most of her body and her face drawn to one side where the fever distorted her features.

"You wanted to see me Mother?" He looked at his Father and knew right away that he was dead. His Mother looked at him and said.

"Your father died sometime during the night due to the fever."

"Yes ma'am, I know." He looked at his father once more and he didn't look the same; he was almost a skeleton it looked as if most of his skin melted from the bones. I must send you on a long journey to the Kingdom of Marah to speak to King Gillian. He and the Queen have in

there possession the map to the magical Kingdom of the Golden Knights you will seek out a Wizard named Malachi he will teach you the way of the Sword and he will teach you how to defend yourself. You will be the most powerful Knight in the entire World. Can you accomplish this task?" His mother asked.

"How can I be a Knight?" I have no royalty in my blood." Luke said honestly.

"That my son is where you're wrong; your father was third in command to King Gillian, and he was only one of the greatest Knights in the Kingdom of Marah. You will go to King Gillian you will tell him your name is Sir Luke Barnum and that you are the only son of Commander James Barnum, and King Gillian will accept you into his castle once there you will speak to the Queen; you will tell them that it's a matter of great urgency. You will tell them that the Evil Black Knight has taken the life of your Mother and your Father. And soon he'll destroy everyone in the entire World if he isn't stopped. Can you do that my son?" She asked.

"Yes Mother I won't let you down." Luke promised. His Mother took hold of his hand she looked up at him and said.

"You are a brave young Boy, I love y..." Her head turned to the right and Luke heard her take her last breath.

Luke sat there and held his mother in his arms and cried. He thought. What can a twelve year old boy do; how can he fight to save the world when he has never had a sword in his hand.

Jake felt as if he was alone in this world, with both of his parents gone he had no idea how he would survive. But he knew deep in his heart he had to survive; simply because he had no choice; so he would go to the Kingdom of Marah. Taking with him; all the memories of his Mother and Father.

Chapter (FIVE)

(Their journey begins.)

John Bryn rode his horse all day that day; every fifteen miles he would stop and let his horse drink some water and graze in the open fields that were on each side of the little trail that led to the Kingdom of Marah.

He decided he would make camp so he could get an earlier start by morning. He walked into the woods and found enough wood to build a fire; he walked over and dug himself a small hole in the ground and got his fire going he had himself fresh deer meat and beans for dinner. Ten minutes later he lies down on the ground and falls into a deep sleep; about ten minutes later he began to dream.

He dreamed he walked into his house and both of his parents were sitting on the floor but when they looked at him their faces were nothing but bones; their eyes were glowing a bright fiery red they had fangs like that of a dog but a lot longer John in his dream state screamed as loud as he could a bright light flashed and an image of the Black Knight appeared and said.

Sir John Bryn this is your only warning go back the way you came or you will die. The Black Knight sneered. Then John saw the Black

Knight's face plate lift when it was all the way open all John saw was darkness that seemed to go into eternity; then he saw a strange blue light appear. When suddenly it flew out with lightning speed, and right before it hit John he woke up screaming. When he saw that it was only a dream he let out a long sigh of relief.

“Evil Black Knight I hope you hear me and hear me well; you have taken my whole family from me; I will have my revenge, and there's not one thing you can do about it.” But what John didn't know was' there were three young boys his same age with the same thing on their minds: revenge. He also didn't know that he and Prince Jake Fairchild will meet each other on the road to the Kingdom of Marah.

Chapter (SIX)

John Bryn woke up as soon as the morning sun rose above the Mountain; turning the sky to a bright crimson red. He saddled his horse and hung his sword by his side; when he repacked his supplies, he was on his way once again, to the Kingdom of Marah. He rode for six or seven miles before he decided he needed a break.

“Whoa Dancer, he said to his horse pulling back on the reins. The horse stopped, he threw his right leg over the horses back and stepped down; he took the bridle off of the horse and let him graze in a field of clover. He sat there, and wondered about his dream; he wondered about the black Knight, and some how knew the black Knight was scared of him. Why is the Black Knight scared of me? John thought does he know something I don’t? He wondered. He could see something off in the distance; it looked like a horse coming his way; I wonder who that could be? He thought. He sat there and waited for the mysterious rider to get closer; a few minutes later he could see the person who sat on the horse it looked like a boy his same age he looked both sad and tired.

“Hello.” John called sounding friendly. The boy stopped and looked at him, and said.

“Is this the road to the Kingdom of Marah?”

“Yes.” May I ask the name of the one who is asking?”

“Yes.” My name is Prince Jake Fairchild. I’m going to Marah to speak to King Gillian and the Queen.”

“We can ride together then.” John replied. “I’m on my way to speak to them myself; would you mind riding with Sir John Bryn?” He asked.

“I would consider it an honor.” Said Prince Jake Fairchild...”

“Would you care for something to eat or drink your highness?”

John asked.

“No thank you, and please; just call me Jake.” He said.

“No problem.” John returned. When John finished his water both he and Jake were on their way to the Kingdom of Marah. What lay ahead, neither of them knew.

Chapter (SEVEN)

John told Jake what his Father had told him, and to his surprise; Jake had the same experience with his parents. Jake told him how he lost his mother and Father the King to the same vile fever that had been bestowed upon the land by the Black Knight, and how his father had sent him to receive the map to the Golden Forest.

John told him that they both were on the same quest.

“We must stick together,” and let nothing stop us from receiving the map.” John said.

Jake quickly agreed with his newly found friend; John saying that the black Knights reign of terror will not last much longer.

They rode for another five miles when they saw a black horse riding up behind them both John and Jake pulled their swords, and quickly backed their horses into the woods. John hid on the left side of the forest and Jake the other; just as there Fathers had taught them. A few minutes later they both saw a boy riding up the road he had blond hair and looked sad and distraught.

“Who goes there?” Jake called. The boy quickly pulled his sword, and suddenly felt the cold steel blade of John Bryn’s sword against his neck.

“I wouldn’t go for that sword if I were you.” John said sounding persistent. “Who are you?” John asked.

“Sir Michael Collins from the Village of Lad; I lost my family due to the sickness. Jake walked out of the Forest, and John slowly withdrew his sword.

“Have you been sent to see King Gillian and the Queen?” Jake asked.

“Yes Sir.” But how did you know?” Michael asked.

“Because,” we are on the same journey as you my friend; we too are on our way to see them.” “We have been sent to get a map that the Queen of Marah has in her possession.” We too,” are seeking the Wizard of the Golden Forest.” Michael could only look at them in shock.

“I too, have been sent to ask for the map.” Did you lose your family because of the fever?”

“Yes.” The fever was set upon the land by the evil Black Knight he is the reason all three of us lost our families.” “We have been sent on this quest at the request of our dying fathers.” Meeting like this on the trail tells me one thing.” “It is destiny that we have met here.

“My Mother is the reason I’m making this long journey.” Michael said honestly. “My Father died first and left my mother with instructions on what I should do next.”

“You can ride with us if you like. John said.

“I would consider it an honor to ride with two gentlemen of your caliber. Michael said honestly. The three of them were all on their way to the Kingdom of Marah with only one thing on their minds stopping the Black Knight from destroying the World. What would happen next they had no idea?

Chapter (EIGHT)

The three boys rode seven more miles toward the Kingdom of Marah; all of them tired from the long and tiresome ride. When suddenly a boy probably there same age jumped out of the woods with his sword drawn.

“Stop where you are.” He ordered. John and the others dropped their hands to their swords.

“Who are you?” The boy asked. “Why have you been following me?”

“My name is Sir John Bryn.” This is Prince Jake Fairchild, and the other young gentleman is Sir Michael Collins; from the Village of Lad.”
Who might you be?” John asked.

“Why should I tell you my name?” The boy asked. Jake looked at him and said. “You are on your way to the Kingdom of Marah are you not?”

“How did you know?” He asked.

“Because we are all on the same quest as you...” Jake returned.

“My name is Sir Luke Barnum.” My family died due to a plague the black Knight has released on the land; I was sent to the Kingdom of Marah to talk to the Queen about a map she has in her possession.” “It will lead me...”

“To the Golden Forest,” I know I know.” John returned. “We are all on the same quest.” Would you like to join us?” he asked.

“You would let me ride with you?” After what I just done?” Luke asked.

“What did you do,” other than protect yourself?” “You didn’t know who we were until we told you.” John said honestly.

“It will be an honor riding with you gentlemen; at least I wouldn’t be alone.” How many more miles do we have to go?” Luke asked.

“My Father told me it would take three Days.” Jake assured.

“Mine told me the same thing.” John replied. “We will ride until night fall; then we will set up camp.” We will gather enough wood to keep the fire going all night; we will each take shifts in keeping guard over our camp site, and our supplies.” “Do we all agree?” John asked. They all agreed and Jake said.

“We will stand guard every two hours.” I’ll be glad to stand the first watch.”

“I’ll take the second.” John said.

“I’ll stand third.” Michael said.

“I’ll stand the final watch.” Luke said. “We each have a weapon?” I hope.” “They all agreed that they did.” Once their supplies were loaded; they all were on their way once again to the Kingdom of Marah.

They rode their horses for over nine-hours that day; before they found a good place to setup camp. They took their gear off of the horses and let them graze in the open field of a giant meadow they would begin crossing at first light of morning. They each setup a tent and lay their bedroll on the ground where each of them would sleep.

When John finished digging a pit to start a fire; he saw Prince Jake Fairchild staring blankly across the Meadow. John walked over and said.

“Is something troubling you Prince Jake?” John asked. “I’m just thinking about my Mother and Father.” He said honestly. “Why would the black Knight want to destroy our families?” he asked tears streaking down his cheeks.

“I don’t know.” Said John, but one thing is certain the answers we seek will soon be revealed.” “I can’t speak for the rest of you,” but my Father told me, that I was chosen to go to the golden Forest; to be trained to become one of the Golden Knights of the Forest.”

“Mine told me the same thing.” That is why I am here.” “Do you think it was fate that we met?”

“It’s indeed possible.” John returned. “I believe that all things, no matter how small; happen for a reason.” All though we don’t always know exactly what that reason may be.” Why don’t you take last watch?” “We will ask Sir Luke to stand first watch; I can tell you need to rest.” I can tell that you haven’t had much sleep lately.”

“I will, and thanks.” You are and honorable gentlemen Sir John Bryn.”

“Thanks.” John returned. “Now let’s go check and see if Luke will stand first watch?” John asked walking toward Luke’s tent.

They found Luke Making his bed.

“Hello Luke,” would you mind taking first watch?” John asked.

“Yes sir,” no one will get in here; with out us knowing it.” Luke kept a close watch, as he patrolled their campsite carefully. He kept his right hand on his Sword, and made sure everything was secure. He would kill anybody that walked into the Camp.

A few minutes later, John walked up and said,

“I’ll take over for two hours,” you go get some sleep; I’ll wake Michael when it is his turn.” John Promised.

“John, I have been thinking,” do you think its fate?” “That we meet on the same mission or do you think we were chosen for the map that

the Queen of Marah has in her possession?” Not to mention being trained by; the Golden Knights of the Forest.” Luke said.

“I believe,” all things happen for a reason and I can say for all of us here; I believe like you, that this may very well be our destiny.” John returned. I already feel connected to each of you and I know I would die for any of you.” John returned honestly.

“Do you really mean that?” Luke asked sounding shocked.

“Every word my friend,” John said. Walking into the edge of the Forest; beginning to patrol the parameter.

Luke walked into his tent, with a smile on his face; I can’t believe it, we all feel the same way. He thought. He lay down and was asleep as soon as his head hit the pillow.

John walked back, just far enough to see the entire campsite. He walked around the place three or four times. He began to think about his Mother and Father; he remembered their horrible death thanks to the evil black Knight. But it won’t belong and we will challenge him to a duel. We the Young Knights of the Kingdom of Marah; servants to King Gillian the great: we will protect the World from the evil Black Knight. Even if we die; we will fall to our death fighting with honor; but if God be with us. He will surely fall by our Sword.

John walked around the campsite that night thinking about a lot of things; he missed his mother and father badly: he wished his father was there with him guiding him through every step of his journey; but there is no way that will happen. Thanks to the Black Knight.

When he heard a ghostly voice in the wind say; but I am with you my son, and I will always be in your heart: Fight with honor, and truth won't let you down.

"Dad," John whispered. He heard his Father's voice no more.

John walked around the site four more times. He walked over to where Sir Michael Collins was sleeping peacefully.

Sir Michael, It is time for you to stand guard." John said. Michael pulled himself up on his elbows, and pushed himself into a sitting position.

"When do I wake Prince Fairchild so he can stand watch?" He moaned.

"In two hours from now go wake him up." You just tell him the same thing I told you." John returned. "Don't lie down until he is up and making his rounds."

"I will Sir John." Michael replied. He got up and made sure he had his sword and as an added bonus he took his crossbow, and his arrows

and made his way around the campsite; keeping a watchful eye for anything that came their way.

Michael like John couldn't get the image of how his parents died; out of his mind. The pain they both felt; right before the end was so over bearing. He couldn't believe how fast their bodies decomposed, almost immediately.

But Michael knew when they go to see the Golden Knights of the Forest they will train for two years; in Swordsmen ship, and combat training. Then they will meet the evil Black Knight on the field of battle. Where he hopes to defeat him; he also knew that it would take a team effort to accomplish this task. They would battle him in the name of their Parents and the entire Kingdom of Marah.

Michael made his rounds once more keeping a watchful eye over the other three young men; he walked by Jakes tent, when he thought he heard a noise he pulled an arrow out of his pouch and carefully loaded his Crossbow. He walked a bit closer; when he saw Jake walk out of his tent and start walking toward the edge of the Forest;

"Sir Michael." He whispered

Michael walked up behind him and said.

"I'm right here you're Majesty." What can I do for you?"

“I would like to take over from here,” if you don’t mind?” he asked politely.

“Sure your Majesty,” I would like to ask you a question if you don’t mind.”

“What might that be? Jake asked wonderingly.

“Do you think that we were supposed to meet up like we did?” And if so, do you think it could be our destiny to save the Kingdom from the evil black Knight?”

“I don’t know,” but I agree with Sir John Bryn that all things happen for a reason; this is our destiny of that much I am sure.” Jake said honestly. “How it will end remains unseen.” Michael went in his hut, and fixed his bed; he lay down and soon decided he couldn’t sleep. He sat up, and took a letter out of his back-pack; it read.

Hello my son Michael, I hope this letter finds you well and on your way to see the Queen of Marah; beware of the black Knights magic, and his path of destruction. He will leave a trail of death where ever he goes; of that you can be sure, no one will be safe. You are one of the chosen four each of you having Royalty in your blood; each of you has an undiscovered ability no one not even your Fathers knew you had these abilities; all of you have had these abilities since the day you were born. Given to you by the great Wizard of light; known as Longbow. He foresaw this in each of your futures. I wish all of you the best of luck, and I hope

you all the best that the Golden Knights of the Forest have to offer. May God be with you all? Signed Your Father...

Michael folded the piece of paper and wept.

The black Knight sat on his throne, staring out across acres of darkness, and the bones of past Warriors littered his path; his Kingdom a Cavern under the Kai Mountains, a dark and mysterious place for either living or dead. He held out his right hand a ball of fire blazed furiously. He said.

“Magic ball of Fire, show me the future?” he snarled. Then a small light appeared, and a voice said sounding as if it was carried by the wind.

“Gaze into the Magic ball of Fire, and witness your fate.” The black Knight leaned closer to the fire when he saw four boys; they seemed to be going to Marah to speak with the King and Queen. Then suddenly the scenery changed. It changed to the white Wizard of the Forest. He looked at the black Knight and said,

“Take a long look at your destroyers,” they will soon wear the Armor of the Golden Knights; the most powerful Knights on Earth.”

“Then I must stop them,” before they get to the Kingdom of Marah.

“You can try,” said the white Wizard; but I don’t think they will let anything stand in their way.”

“We will see about that,” the black Knight huffed. He snapped his fingers, and the ball of fire was gone.

John and the others were up at day break; all of them loading their supplies. John figured they would walk until almost dark before they would setup camp once again their journey to the Kingdom of Marah would soon be over.

Both Jake and John shared the same thought; they would be in the Kingdom of Marah by no later than tomorrow afternoon. They all had mixed emotions about the second part of this journey; the golden Forest, and the training they would endure; to gain the Armor of the Golden Knights. They were all frightened, because of the stories they had been told of the Golden Forest; for most of their young lives. But still nothing would stand in their way. When John got his saddle bags loaded he saddled his horse and they were on their way; getting one day closer to the Kingdom of Marah.

They rode four hours before they decided to take a break. John took his horse down to a slow running brook he took his gear off of the beautiful steed and let him go to the brook and drink all the water he could hold; when he finished he let him graze in a field that was filled

with all kinds of fresh green vegetation. He walked over to where the other three boys were setting and said.

“We will rest here for an hour,” before we begin our journey once again.” They all agreed, and ten minutes later; they had a fire burning and were preparing their lunch. Jake looked at John and said.

“We should be at the Castle of King Gillian by tomorrow afternoon shouldn’t we?”

“Yes,” we should be; if everything goes well.” John returned. “We should be arriving on the outskirts of Marah sometime tomorrow afternoon.”

“I’ll be glad to finally meet the King and Queen.” Jake said with a sigh.

They had a strong hot fire burning in a small pit they dug into the soft ground.

John made up a pan of bread and sat it on the hot fire.

A few minutes later, Michael and Luke walked out of the Forest carrying a Rabbit and a small Pheasant.

“These will make a good lunch and dinner,” Luke said.

“Good job.” Jake said with a smile.

“We will clean them, and cook them soon.” John promised. He looked in his saddlebags, and found his two sharpest knives; he handed one of them to Michael and handed the other to Luke.

“You killed it; you clean it.” John said half kidding, half serious.

“Sure,” Luke said. Walking off to find a creek where he could clean his prey. He took a small pot to get water to wash the Rabbit and the Pheasant in; he walked into the Forest for twenty minutes. When he came upon a creek that looked like it ran down the side of the mountain for miles. The water was as crystal clear as it was cold. He cleaned the Rabbit and took a small pot and filled it with the ice cold water; he placed the Rabbit in it, and began plucking feathers from the Pheasant. When all of the feathers were plucked; he placed it in the same pot with the Rabbit he took a small jar out of his pack and filled it with water and began to make his way back to the others.

When he walked back to where the others were hard at work. He saw John preparing a good hot fire to cook their lunch with. Luke took a pot out of his saddlebag; he put the metal looking jug of water, in the hot coals.

He looked around and saw the others cleaning their weapons; he wondered if they had the same thing on their minds that he did. He wondered if they wanted to get to the Kingdom of Marah; as badly as he did. He knew one thing for sure; nothing was going to stop him from getting to Marah, to see the King and Queen.

John noticed that Luke had a lot on his mind; he walked over and called his name.

“Luke, are you okay?” You seem to have something on your mind.” He said honestly.

“I was just setting here thinking,” that nothing was going to stop me from getting to the Kingdom of Marah.”

“We all feel the same way as you.” John assured. “You just remember one thing; we are all in this together.” When the time is right we will defeat the black Knight,” and send him back to the lowest depths of the under World.” “Where he will spend the rest of eternity; then the World will once again be free of his evil.”

When the four friends finished their lunch; it was almost one-thirty. They collected their horses, and once their supplies were loaded; they were once again on their way to the Kingdom of Marah. What the out come of their journey would be they had no idea.

They rode seven more miles when their horses reared to a stop. Standing in the middle of the narrow road was a creature; that looked like a rattle Snake but it stood upright like a man.

“Do you see that?” John asked.

“Yes but what do we do now?” Jake asked.

“There is only one thing we can do.” Michael said. “We must destroy it before it destroys us.” They were all quick to agree. John pulled

his Sword and dismounted. The others also pulled their swords and dismounted.

They began to make their way slowly toward the snake like creature. The closer they got the more uneasy they became; all of them ready to do what they have to do, to complete their journey.

The Black Knight sat in his domain deep within the Cavern. Looking through a ball of fire outlined in a coal black frame watching the four friends, as they made their way to the Kingdom of Marah. He knew where their journey would end; they wouldn't stop until they reached the Castle of King Gillian, and Queen Rebecca.

She will be persuaded to give them the map to the Golden Forest, to inherit the power of the golden Knights.

I must stop them from getting to Marah, or everything I stand for will be ruined. He thought. Evil will be gone, and I won't stand for that. When he heard the voice of the red Wizard say...

"You won't stop them; their bravery is stronger than anything you send their way."

"We will just have to see about that." The black Knight said, his eyes blazing fire. The black Knight called his two strongest Warriors and told them to stop the four young people from getting to the Kingdom of Marah.

“They must not see the Queen,” now go, and don’t fail me or you will all be destroyed.” But what he didn’t know was John, Jake, Michael and Luke will destroy them all.

John and the others all pulled their weapons, and was waiting on the snake like creature to make its move when out walked another beast; that looked like a dog but it also stood upright like a man.

John and the others were riding their horses toward the Kingdom of Marah; the road growing longer, and the day growing shorter. They were getting closer and closer to seeing the King and Queen. John figured they had at least two more days of riding ahead of them.

Suddenly a green glowing light appeared in the center of the road making their horses rear to a stop.

“What is that?” Prince Jake Fairchild asked.

“I don’t know.” John returned. “But, I have a feeling we are about to fin...”

“I am the red Wizard prisoner of the black Knight; I have come here in neon form; to deliver the chosen ones a warning.” The black Knight has every intention of making sure you don’t complete your journey to

the Kingdom of Marah; he has every intention of stopping you. Even if he has to destroy you all, he will do what ever he must, to stop you.”

“He won’t stop either of us from our destiny; he has destroyed everyone in our family we will kill anyone or anything he sends our way, and you can tell him that.”

“I am not allowed to speak to this evil Knight. He will rip away my powers and combined them with his own; making him almost invincible.”

“But I can tell you this legend says that four young boys will come from the north, south, east, and west, and they will inherit the power of the golden Knights, the most powerful force in the Universe.” They will defeat the evil black Knight, and send him to the under world for all times but they will do it in another place in time; where is unknown to the human mind. But they will prevail and save the entire Universe.” But I caution you be prepared for anything; if you will ride your horses two more miles up this long dusty road you will see a trail follow that trail and it will lead you to a very powerful weapon.”

“How do we know you are not leading us into a trap?”

“Good question.” They all said.

“Because I have been a prisoner of the black Knight for two centuries it is time for me to be free.” Remember go two miles up this long dusty road until you see a trail leading into the woods follow it and you will get a very powerful weapon that will help you on your way; it will keep you alive.” And when you meet the Wizard of the golden Forest you

will tell him Jared the great red Wizard gave you this weapon, and you tell him that you four are the chosen ones; that you are the only ones worthy to wear the armor of the Golden Knights.”

“Is this why our fathers sent us on this long journey?” John asked.

“Yes your parents knew that these days would come that is why you have been trained by your fathers before you; they all knew that you were the chosen ones.” You four will destroy the black Knight.”

“Thank you for everything you have told us, and we will retrieve this weapon you spoke of you have my word.” John said the others were quick to agree.

“I will be watching you, and guiding you when I can; good luck for now, and may your journey be successful. The green light grew smaller, and seemed to just snap out like a candle in the wind, and they heard the great red Wizard no more.

Chapter (NINE)

John and the others rode for what seemed like two miles when he looked to his left; he saw the trail just as the great red Wizard had said. John stopped, and got off of his horse. When the others walked up behind him he looked at Prince Jake and said.

“The great red Wizard was right; because there’s the trail.”

“What should we do?” Asked Sir Michael Collins...

“We go, I believe he really is trying to help us, and if what he’s saying is true; we will have one of the most powerful weapons in existence.” Prince Jake Fairchild said.

“I agree, John said, what other choice do we have, and besides we need a powerful weapon; if the black Knight has plans on stopping us from making it to Marah.” “He will have to kill us first.” We all will soon have our revenge then our parents can finally rest in peace.” They were all quick to agree; reluctant to follow their leader Sir John Bryn and Prince Jake Fairchild.

John mounted his horse and began to make his way into the forest; just as the great red Wizard had instructed. None of them knowing what dangers may lay ahead; but they all knew without a doubt; that they would be ready for anything.

John led the way, and the further they went the darker the Forest became. The darkness was making all of them feel uneasy. But still, John rode his horse slowly into the dark Forest; his since to survive kicking in: he kept his eyes focused on anything that moved.

It felt like they rode through the Forest for an hour; when John saw a dim light somewhere deep in the Forest. He knew right away that was where he had to go; he didn't know how he knew, but somehow he felt it in his heart. That is where he was sure they would find this weapon.

They rode toward this light for forty-five minutes before they finally saw a long white staff with a brightly lit crystal ball incased in what looked like a golden hawk's claw. John looked at in awe as he slowly dismounted his horse and made his way to claim one of the most powerful weapons in the Universe.

“John,” Jake called wait my friend I will go with you.” John walked as if he was in a daze. Jake had to run almost at top speed to catch up with John; he took hold of his left arm and said.

“We need to do this together, as a two man team; I left the others standing guard.”

“That is fine by me.” John assured. “Are you sure you want to do this?”

“Yes, I am sure.” Jake returned. The two friends kept walking toward the white glowing staff. The crystal ball glowing ever so brightly; almost a hauntingly bright glow but some how, both John and Jake felt at ease as if the staff had its own hidden agenda, buried deep within its self.

They walked another twenty-five feet or so; before they were close enough to get the staff. John stepped forward and took the staff in his hand and pulled it toward him, and he could feel the sudden surge of power as it went racing through every part of his body. The Staff kept inching toward them ever so slowly. When John reached out and took it, a clap of thunder rolled across the sky; almost deafening both of them. When suddenly, a bolt of lightning flashed from the sky; striking a giant tree, catching it on fire. A solid white light appeared deep with in the inferno. What John and Jake saw next they couldn’t believe; a tall figure appeared. He was tall, and looked as if he was wearing a long white robe;

he wore on his head, a tall cone shaped hat that looked as though it were on fire. He said.

“I am, the Wizard of The Shadow World held captive by the evil black Knight.”

“We will try to set you free.” John offered.

“No it is my destiny to ensure your safe passage to the Golden Forest; you will see many wondrous things on your way to the Golden Forest