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Agua: A Cycle Of Ruin (Excerpt)

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AGUA: A CYCLE OF RUIN (EXCERPT)

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A capstone project submitted for Graduation with University Honors

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University Honors  
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## ABSTRACT

Current world issues like climate change, social inequity, and extreme poverty make me wonder about the final destination of the Earth. Where will humanity and our planet end up in the end? Is there an end? Research on these topics allowed me to explore how religion and urbanism were, and still are, being used as tools by global agitators for complete domination and control of society as a whole. The method I used to express my findings is the creation of a novella that follows an allegorical empire. What was once a fortified city, lacking nothing has suddenly become ruins of greed and a thirst for power. The novella follows a fictional version of Los Angeles, later reinvented as Hollywood, which is now the capital of the empire. Heather, the main character, must trust her intuition to follow an ancient deity that claims to be the only way to revive this post-collapsed apocalyptic society that once served as a global epicenter of support to the nations. Through this project, I hope to inspire people to activate their global citizenship and ask the driving questions that will implore world leaders to address the root causes of social malaise.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

As someone who grew up in a low socioeconomic status family, I have struggled with mental health issues, identity, self-worth, purpose, and witnessed a lack of resources and opportunity due to systemic oppression. As a result, I looked to Christianity for answers. What sparked my interest in this topic and where I began my research for this project was the Holy Bible. I examined biblical principles and applied them to personal and world issues. As a result of this application, I noticed a positive change in my personal life and a better understanding of how to implement change in my community. In addition, I studied the work of multiple theological scholars including George T. Montague who is a Catholic priest and professor of theology at St. Mary's University. As well as W.R. Inge, who was a professor of divinity at Cambridge.

In order to address these types of issues I had to gain a better understanding of what causes them. I analyzed the root causes from a broader scope using anthropological methods.

One of the methods I used was Classical Cultural Evolutionism. Classical Cultural Evolutionism is one of the earliest theories known in the field of Anthropology. It's the idea that just like biology, culture evolves over time (Erickson and Murphy 26). Some of the major figures of this theory were E.B. Tylor, Herbert Spencer, and Lewis Henry Morgan (Erickson and Murphy 27). This method was conceived to study different cultural aspects of societies as opposed to the biological aspects. Early anthropologists wanted to focus more on institutions like marriage, family, and sociopolitical organizations. One aspect of Classical Cultural Evolutionism, conceived by E.B. Tylor, was that culture does not degenerate as Christian theology suggests, but rather it progresses (Erickson and Murphy 30). What I found is that even though culture has evolved over time and made some remarkable progress, it has also demonstrated a decline as well. The decline could be due to a collective abandonment of faith-

based beliefs and morals. In addition, the Bible has been known to have a prophetic tone and these world issues could be a prophetic revelation. It appears that the point of the scriptures is to admonish people about the cataclysm that awaits when you abandon morals and faith-based beliefs.

Some of these cultural declinations include capitalism, imperialism, and utilitarianism. It is my hypothesis that there is an underlying motive of greed and thirst for power and control from some of the elite world leaders. This in turn has led to a failing economy and a system of oppression that effects the lives of millions of people. According to George Montague, humans live in a two-dimensional reality. One that is incarnational and one that is eschatological. This means that a person must be aware of things taking places in the physical realm as well as the spiritual realm where they will dwell eternally (Montague 54). In addition to possessing this mentality, Montague argues that a person should have a relaxed grip on their possessions in this physical realm and should be ready at any time to release them when God calls or when the need arises (Montague 55). It is the grappling for power and resources and the tight grip on them that has caused a chain reaction of economic injustice and global inequity.

Charity is a common motif in the Bible, and it is essential for the well-beings of others. Taking a look at the early stages of the church, almsgiving was required of those who practiced faith. Those who were in charge of the possessions of the Temple had the responsibility of helping others. As well as anyone who owned land. For example, in Leviticus 23:22, it reads, “When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. Leave it for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the LORD your God” (New Living Translation Lev. 23:22). This system of almsgiving was to ensure that everyone was taken care of and treated with dignity. The care for

the wellbeing of all citizens is where equity can be administered. In my project, I aim to exhibit what happens when a society abandons core moral values and treats citizens with contempt.

Once I gathered my data, I was able to create a fictional empire that displayed characteristics of the societal issues we face today. I wanted the story to create a deeper understanding of how cities collapsed by providing a glimpse of the events that occur right before it. In the story, a group of individuals are desperate for a better life and are met with a chance to start over. In the beginning, everything seems to be prosperous. Over time, greed and deceit begin to creep into the hearts of those with authority and suddenly the cycle of ruin has repeated itself.

The point of this project is to hold a mirror up to the face of the United States and other nations alike, to shed light on the social and economic injustices that citizens face today.

The city I created for my project has characteristics of capitalism, utilitarianism, and imperialism. During my research, I found that these three behaviors are the core causes of the previous mentioned societal decline. To analyze the decline of socioeconomic culture throughout history, I applied the theory of Political Economy. Political Economy considers how a local community is being affected and influenced by global capitalism. In this case, I chose to uncover how utilitarianism and imperialism are embedded within global capitalism. Within the story, the city faces collapse because of imperialistic tendencies by its leaders. On the surface, utilitarianism is being used as a way to distract the citizens from the secret plots to expand territory and begin to oppress citizens.

I also used these characteristics to show how the Christian God addresses these types of issues and provides sanctuary without forcing people into bondage. This has been an issue within Christianity. Some people may not want to explore the Christian God and His behaviors because of pretenses imposed on His character of being a dissociate God. In my project, I used anecdotes

that are based on scripture to highlight the Christian God's role in restoration and destruction of a city. It is important for the audience to have a clear view of what is considered detrimental and beneficial to a society according to scripture.

Another objective of this project is to dive deeper into a specific mental framework under Classical Cultural Evolutionism suggested by Anthropologist James Frazer. Frazer suggested that the use of magic was practiced before Christianity and when magic failed, magicians would rely on monotheistic practices to pray to a supreme god that could interfere with nature on their behalf (Erickson and Murphy 32). This framework may be true for Christianity, but I would argue that theology came before magic and magic was secondary only when monotheistic or polytheistic practices fell short. In the story I discuss the use of a grimoire, which is a magic spell book. I wanted to include the practice of divination and New Age beliefs in the story to shed light on their origins. The use of magic and astrology has become widely used in popular culture. Unfortunately, most people do not know the original intent of these practices or the true effects they can have on one's spirituality.

My goal for this project is to show how Catholic and Judeo-Christian beliefs have been the foundation of the new World. Most of these civilizations have begun and may most likely end with these same beliefs. I hope to create relevant connections between all of these beliefs and highlight a system of solutions to end the dichotomy and hold leaders accountable for their actions.

In the end, I have learned that one cannot make an analysis that challenges the beliefs or practices of another without exhibiting even the slightest amount of ethnocentrism. I would argue that it may be necessary in some cases to carry an ethnocentric approach when the situation involves local and global oppression. Through creating this project, I realized that being a



Christian is about holding true to your beliefs in a society that rejects them, and for this reason, Christian culture could appear to be ethnocentric in many cases. However, the reason that Christian theology and the Bible remain relevant even today could be due to the motif of love that is interwoven throughout scripture. If we consider what the Bible defines as love, we can see that these characteristics are strong enough to combat opposing forces such as deception, greed, control, and indifference in society. I hope to receive constructive feedback about my novella from Christians and non-Christians to see what they liked and didn't like about the story, as well as see if the story resonated with them by answering any questions they have about Christianity, or if the story enticed them to want to learn more.

“This claim of the world to judge the Church, instead of the Church the world, seems arrogant and intolerable. My own belief in the Incarnation and in the abiding presence of the Spirit of Christ in the world makes me share this feeling. I have no confidence that the spirit of this age is wiser than the spirit of past ages.” -W.R. Inge

## Before the Desolation

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The twenty- four elders had just returned back to their thrones after casting their crowns at the feet of the Shining One. His Royal Heir was found worthy among the nations of the Earth and in the Heavens. Thick smoke filled the air of the throne room from the prayers of His people. The prayers that brought salvation had been answered and released to set the plan in motion. It was time for the Desolation to begin—the ushering in of the Seven.

The Seven stood before the Throne of The Shining One patiently, in service to Him. Ready for His signal to go forth on the Earth to bring justice to the oppressed and suffering to the oppressors. There were seven events that occurred before the Seven were deployed.

The First Event brought forth a rider on a white horse carrying a bow. His arrows came from the Shining One. All of the power and victory came from Him. The rider already had the victory over the principalities before he went forth seeking to devour. He declared war on the

principalities of Emerald City. He brought with him a scroll that had all of the deeds done by the Dark Ones. On it contained the names of those killed for their light, the places that were used to gather to devise evil plans against humanity, and their operations for mobilization against the Royal Heir. Checking off his list, he visited every location where the Sprites had a domain and destroyed their kingdoms. The Sprites were the army of darkness under the principality of the Dark Ones.

The Second Event brought forth a rider on a red horse. He had a sword with him that was large and sharp to the touch. He was to bring chaos to the world and its inhabitants. Peace would no longer remain with anyone who had the power of the Dark Ones within them. This caused numerous wars to engage. Slaughter and murder increased more than ever before. It was the fate of the Earth.

The Third Event brought forth a rider on a black horse. He represented a blackout on the Earth that would expose people for who they really were. Food was now rationed and became more expensive. The wealthy were still able to survive and the poor had to join labor camps just to receive their meals. The Fourth Event brought forth a rider on a pale green horse. He came to bring death to the Earth. He was Death itself. With him, he brought the Underworld. Those he brought death to, would be sent to the Underworld to await judgment. The number of people that would be taken by Death was one-quarter of the world's population.

The Fifth Event revealed those who belong to the Shining One that had lost their lives while speaking the truth about Him. Their clothes were pure white and they desperately wanted those who murdered them to receive their revenge. But it was not time for them to receive their revenge. There were more people to add to the number of those who had been killed. There were still more of their brothers and sisters to speak the truth about *Agua*, the Living Water (Rev. 6).

*Agua* has many names but the way He revealed Himself to the people during the time of the Occidental Oppression had been as the Living Water, *Agua Viva*. But the people simply called Him *Agua*. The living water flows from the depths of His innermost being. Anyone who drinks this living water shall never thirst again. Not in the physical sense alone, but their spirit will be like a spring gushing forth inside of them. The power that lies within the water is that of eternity. This infinite power can only be harnessed by those who are found worthy to carry it. Still, it is sought after by some of the most powerful beings in the universe, but available to the lowliest of men.

There had been a war in the Heavens for the power of *Agua Viva*. Legions of Sprites mobilized under the direction of the Dark Ones to overthrow *Agua's* throne and possess His power. But it was to no avail. The leader of the Dark Ones had been sentenced to live the rest of his days on Earth, and his army followed. Chaos quickly ensued over humanity as the Dark Ones began working to gain control over the Earth. They knew that the power of the Living Water was available to humanity and did not want them to possess it. Conquering nation after nation, the Dark Ones and the Sprites had been unstoppable.

The Dark Rule quickly expanded throughout the Earth and reached the people of the West. They had conquered Asia and Europe and had their sights on the Western people. The Sprites had been in collusion with the governing officials of the Western region to weaken their unity and power. The Dark Ones deceived the people into thinking that the spirits of Olympia would help them innovate a path toward a better future. But, the spirits were really a part of the Dark Rule, and instead, ruin awaited them.

The Olympic spirits made the people believe they could live any way they wanted without consequences. People did whatever pleased them even if it negatively affected others. Officials and secretaries were making secret deals with the Olympic spirit named Hermes for the expansion of territory and trade. An alliance was formed between the West and the European Union. Banks were established and royal edicts were set in motion for the embargo on other regions. They began stealing from each other and lying to cover it up. Fighting started to break out among citizens which often ended in death. The worship of these false gods had led them to a desolate place.

The state of this Western society was rapidly deteriorating. As greed for power and resources swept over the city, people began to put their hope in more gods. Moloch was the god the people chose to trust during the city's decline. They were in great need of shelter and sustenance. Each harvest produced dead crops and their food supply was dwindling. Government officials were claiming the property of the citizens for "official use only" and putting people out on the street. This led to the beginning of child sacrifice in order to appease Moloch. The cries of the innocent filled their town.

A group of citizens initiated secret meetings near a river bed in the forest to plot their escape. There were about one hundred of them that consisted of men, women, and children. When they first started meeting, they would all cry and mourn for their city. Many of them had lost family members and homes. The hurt and pain they felt were like heavy bricks stacking on top of them, smothering the life from their bodies. Loud sobbing filled the forest and sent vibrations through the trees. These vibrations touched the birds who nested in the woods and they flew toward the sky carrying a song of mourning to Heaven. The people were desperate for the restoration of their city and held deep angst within their hearts.

One day, they were all gathering to meet for a final time before fleeing the city. They were putting together all they had left of food and resources to plan their survival. The clanking of pots and knives being thrown in a communal circle was the only sound heard. A few of the women were walking toward the river to gather water for the trip. An unexpected gurgling sound from the river startled them. It sounded like the river was boiling. The women looked at each other in confusion and persisted toward the river. Suddenly, the water from the river was glowing. It appeared to be an electric blue hue that was glowing like a bioluminescent phenomenon.

The women's eyes grew large as they approached the glow. They continued walking toward it slowly, stopping before they got too close. One woman was brave enough to step close enough to peer down into the river to see if she could find the cause of the luminescent glow. She stood there watching as another one of the women called out to her, "What is it?" The woman didn't reply and stood there silently watching the water. "What do you see?" the woman called out again. The water was churning in a vortex motion like a whirlpool. Bits of shiny objects were dancing around like diamonds that were dropped on the ground. Splash! The woman jumped into the river.

A loud gasp came from the other women accompanying her. One woman screamed at the top of her lungs. The people back at the meeting camp turned their heads in concern when they heard the loud scream. Some of the others ran to where the women were. Upon approaching them, they all noticed the blue glow coming from the river. Stunned, they moved slowly toward the river with their mouths open. "What is going on?" Someone asked. One of the women that had been there tried to explain. W-w-we came to get some water from the river for our trip and we noticed it was glowing! She stuttered. "Anna, sh-she jumped in!" The woman continued.

Anna's husband overheard the woman explaining that she jumped into the river and became furious. "What do you mean she jumped in!?" He asked while running toward the blue glow. "Anna! He yelled ripping off his shirt and preparing to dive in.

He dove in after Anna but she was nowhere to be found. He swam as far down as he could aching to find her. He popped up to the surface gasping for air several times over the course of thirty minutes. The others stood and watched anticipating her return. Each time he surfaced, there was no Anna. The man got out of the river and lay next to it with his feet dangling in the water. He covered his face with his hands and began to weep. "Anna." He said softly. The night was approaching and the others were beckoning Anna's husband to return to camp. "We're gonna find her", someone assured him. Anna's husband took a deep breath and wiped his face. As he started to get up to go back to camp they all heard another big splash. It was Anna! She slammed both of her arms on the soil gasping for air. "Anna!" Her husband hollered. He sprinted toward the river and pulled her out of the water. The others looked at each other in amazement.

"Honey, I'm glad you're alright." Anna's husband proclaimed. "How were you under there for so long? I went in after you but I couldn't find you." Attempting to catch her breath, Anna tried explaining. "I heard a voice calling to me. It was coming from the water." "A voice?" Her husband inquired. "Yes, He was calling my name and I knew I had to jump in to see what He wanted. "He?" Her husband asked skeptically. "He told me His name is *Agua Viva*." Anna added.

"After I jumped in, I had a feeling of joy and peace wash over me. I wasn't worried about drowning. I didn't even think twice about breathing. It was like, there was nothing to worry about. Then, I heard the same voice that called my name before I jumped in speak to me again.

He told me that His name is *Agua Viva* and that He was going to rescue our people.” Anna continued, “ *Agua Viva* said that the cries of our families had reached the Heavens, and He was going to set us apart from the chaos and destruction of this land.” All of Anna’s peers stared at her in disbelief and confusion. Someone spoke out and said, “*Agua Viva*? That’s the old native language of our ancestors. What does it mean?” Another person answered him, “It means *Living Water*.” “Okay...” He replied. “Who is this ‘*Agua Viva*’, and how is He supposed to save us?” Anna chimed in, “This is what He said, ‘Yo soy el Río de *Agua Viva* para la salvación del mundo’ (“Traductor”).

Everyone looked around at each other in amazement. “Only the High priest and the Emperor speak Spanish. Could this be one of their gods?” One of the women asked. Nodding her head no, Anna replied, “That’s just it, He said He was not like the other gods that our people worship. He told me that He is the only true God and that the others are deceiving the people.” Anna concluded. “And what makes you believe Him?” Someone asked. Pondering the question Anna responded, “That feeling I had when I was in the water. I have never experienced that before. I feel it in my heart that He’s different.” “Fine, let’s say He is the only true God. How does He plan on rescuing us from here?” Another person asked. “He said for all of us to walk up the river and that there would be a cave for us to go inside. After we’re all safely inside the cave, He is going to send an army from a far-off land that we’ve never heard of to come and destroy everything in the Western region.” “Everything?!” A few people asked simultaneously. “Everything,” Anna announced. “After the city is destroyed, we are to return and reestablish a new city under the precept of *Agua Viva*. She added. Everyone sat around in silence for a while processing what they just heard. Moments later, Anna’s husband broke the ponderous silence and said, “What do we have to lose?”



The energy of the crowd began to liven up after he said that. Echos of voices in agreement began to swell amongst the group. “Yeah, we were already plotting an escape. At least this gives us somewhere to go.” Someone in the crowd presented. “We need to leave as soon as possible. Gather all of our belongings and let’s start heading upriver!” Anna directed. The group gathered what they could carry and began to head upstream. Men, women, and children followed alongside one another toward the cave. They had been walking for at least ten miles when someone blurted out, “How much longer? I’m tired of walking.” The voice was ignored and everyone continued on. Another mile passed, “How much longer?” Someone asked again. “I’m getting tired!” They complained. “Me too, are you sure we’re heading in the right direction?” Another person uttered. Anna spoke up. “I’m sure we will get there soon! *Agua Viva* didn’t say how long the journey would be, but I don’t believe He would send us out in the middle of nowhere.” The group carried on for another nine miles. Straight away, someone noticed a huge structure ahead. “Look over there!” They shouted in excitement. The group gasps and looked around at one another. “It’s the cave!” Anna cheered.

Everyone in the group raced toward the cave as fast as they could. As they approached, they saw that the river formed a pond in front of the cave. The cave was beautiful. It was made of white dolomite stone with shiny specs of metal mixed in. Along the outside of the entrance, there was a carving of a flock of birds. It was all the way around the rim of the entrance of the cave. The water was clear and the sand under it was also white. They all stopped in front of the cave in awe. Each one of them panting from the run. Anna made a declaration, “We made it you guys. We’re here! *Agua Viva* guided us here and provided shelter for us from our enemies! Let us never forget what He has done for us today.” They all agreed with Anna’s words and headed into the cave.

Back in the city, at the Emperor's temple, the General of the army had an urgent message to deliver. "Long Live Emperor Junipero!" The General proclaimed. "What is it General?" The Emperor inquired. "I've just received word that there are twenty unknown ships headed for our borders. They have artillery quite like nothing I've ever seen before. I've sent out two of our best ships with one hundred men on each to see who is approaching" The General explained. The Emperor stared down at the marble floor under his feet in deep thought. He rested his chin on his left hand, rubbing his index finger against his thumb. "How long until we hear something?" The Emperor asked. "The ships are not far off, maybe a few hours Sir." The General answered. "Set up posts around the city in case of ambush." The Emperor ordered. "Right away." The General confirmed exiting the Emperor's royal court.

Hours later, loud voices were heard on the General's radio. Static. "Mayday Mayday! General Mateo! This is First Commander Silva! We have been ambushed! The Falcon ship has been sunk and our ship has just been compromised! We need help!" "Commander! What is your location?" General Mateo shouted in response. More static. "I'm sending you our coordinates right now. There are five of us in the bridge of the ship as we speak. We are planning to deploy the raft and get back to shore! "Commander, I'm sending five units out to you stat! Hang tight." General Mateo assured the Commander. The strange army had taken down both ships using heavy machine guns mounted to their ships. It took thirty minutes for them to defeat General Mateo's two ships, the Falcon and Seahorse. They continued to head toward the city.

All twenty ships were painted matte black with blood-red trimming. None of the ships had a name written on them. General Mateo's army had no clue as to where this strange army came from. One after the other, the ships plunged into the shoreline. Hundreds of foot soldiers began scurrying off of the ships and headed straight into the city. They carried fully automatic

machine guns. Behind them followed cannons. The sound of boots marching through the city was the only sound heard. Large booms occurred shortly after from the numerous cannons being launched. The invading army sent units to the temple and all of the worship sites in the city. General Mateo's men were posted all around the city waiting to counter their attacks.

One by one the altars of worship began crumbling to the ground. Bronze and gold statues of Moloch were impaled by cannons and dismantled. Everyone worshipping at the altars was killed by the rubble of the structures falling on them or they were shot to death. Some people were in the middle of sacrificing their children when they were killed. The children that were still alive when the soldiers arrived were taken back to the ships. The soldiers made their way to the temple, and Emperor notified his High priests. The priests were in the temple conjuring dark spirits to help them fight off the army. "I call upon the Dark One, oh great and powerful!" The High priest chanted. Thirty other priests stood in a circle around him chanting mantras and moving their hands in a way as to bring forth this principality.

The priests were standing on an enormous pentacle on the floor of the temple. It had four circles and each had the names of the Dark Rulers. In the center of the pentacle was a six-pointed star. Beams of light flashed and wind gusts swirled through the dark room as the priests continued their ritual. Swiftly rising from the ground, a large cosmic creature appeared. All of the priests dropped their hands to their sides. "Why have you summoned me?" The cosmic beast clamored. The High priest responded, "We need your help! We are being sieged by an unknown army!" "I cannot assist you with this." The beast retorted. "I have been warned not to interfere in the capturing of your city." "Capturing of my city? What is the meaning of this?" The High Priest asked. "The powers of the Light have ordered us to stand down. This siege is meant to take

place.” The High Priest turned his head in anguish. He was in utter disbelief at what he just heard. The beast quickly dissipated back into the floor from whence he came.

The High Priest rushed to the palace where Emperor Junipero was hiding. Cannonballs rushed overhead and people wailed all over the city. The High priest covered his ears to avoid the sound of the rapid fire of machine gun rounds. A unit of soldiers from the unknown army was right on his heels. He approached the golden gates of the palace and ran straight through the courtyard to see the Emperor. “Hundreds of General Mateo’s men stood guard outside of the Emperor’s royal court. They saw the High priest running down the halls to see him and they opened the double golden doors quickly for his entrance. “Emperor Junipero!” The High priest said out of breath. “We’re in trouble. I summoned a Dark Ruler for help with this invasion and he informed me that he could be of no assistance to us! He said that he was ordered by the Light to stand down and not interfere with the capture of our city.” Emperor Junipero looked back at the High priest horrified. “Take this and guard it with your life.” The High priest told the Emperor while pulling out a large grimoire from his robe. The Emperor stared at the big white leather book and ran his hand over the gold emblems attached to the cover. “Get somewhere safely now!” The High priest exhorted.

Emperor Junipero began heading for his underground tunnel hidden under a panel in his room. He removed the panel and heard gunfire in the foyer of his royal court. Soldiers were yelling and chaos sounded loudly. “Go!” The High priest demanded once more. Emperor Junipero made his way into the tunnel and placed the panel back over the opening. He jumped down and ran for his life wielding the grimoire. He made it to the end of the tunnel and opened the latch of the metal lid and climbed up to the surface. The sunlight beamed down on him and white sand fell on his head. He was relieved to have made it out. He stepped on the sand and

closed the metal lid and exhaled loudly. Anna and the others watched him from the cave as he climbed out of the tunnel. “Junipero?” A woman said to herself unsure if it was him. “Is that the Emperor?” Anna asked astonished. The Emperor looked around and saw the cave and the others standing outside and headed over abruptly. “Junipero!” The woman yelled waving her arms and running toward him. As the two got closer to each other, Junipero realized he knew her. “Evelyn!” He yelled, running faster toward her.

Suddenly, a loud cracking sound echoed in the air and the Emperor hit the ground. Evelyn screamed. Stopping in her tracks she slid to the ground stunned. She jumped up and continued running toward him. She could see his blood gathering around him like a crimson puddle. He was shot in the back. He clenched the large white leather grimoire to his chest. “Junipero!” Evelyn said gently kneeling down to grasp him in her arms. Junipero coughed as blood filled his lungs. “The city has been sieged” He muttered. “This is all that’s left.” He motioned to the grimoire. “I’m pregnant!” Evelyn interrupted. Junipero’s eyes lit up for a brief moment when he heard those words. He ordered Evelyn to take the grimoire and keep it safe. “Please! Stay with me!” Evelyn pleaded. Junipero’s eyes slowly shut and his grasp on Evelyn’s hand began to weaken. He blew his last breath.

Tears filled Evelyn’s eyes as she gazed at the Emperor mournfully. Anna placed her hand on Evelyn’s shoulder startling her. She looked up at Anna and sobbed violently. Anna knelt down and consoled her. “Is he the father of your baby?” Anna asked kindly. Evelyn nodded her head yes with shame on her face. Anna grabbed Evelyn’s cheeks. “Everything is going to be okay. I will help you raise your baby. We are all here for you.” Anna assured Evelyn. Anna stood up and reached her hand out to Evelyn. Evelyn grabbed her hand and balanced herself on her feet. The

two of them headed back to the cave together. Two men from the cave came running toward them to retrieve the Emperor's body and give him a proper burial.

When they got back to the cave, everyone was silent staring at Anna and Evelyn waiting to hear what happened. Anna spoke up. "Gather around everyone. I have some news to share." She was quickly interrupted by the sound of marching soldiers and a loud voice. Everyone ran to the entrance of the cave to see what was going on. There were fifty men dressed in black with assault rifles at their sides pointed at the ground. They marched straight into the cave startling the others. The commander of the unit spoke up. "We have an order from King Ximeno of Guatemala. He told us we are to go to a far-off land in the mountainous region of the North West. We were ordered to take siege of the city, only leaving children as survivors. We were informed of this cave on the outskirts of the city up the river with an engraving of a flock of birds. We were instructed not to hurt anyone inside of the cave but assist them back into the city so they may rebuild. Our king told us to share his revelation with those in the cave. He told us that he had received a revelation in a dream of a raging waterfall. There was a voice calling to him from the water. As he approached, the voice revealed Himself to the king as *Agua Viva*." A collective gasp from the people bounced around the walls of the cave. They couldn't believe what they just heard.

The commander continued, "The king said that *Agua Viva* said, 'Yo soy el Río de *Agua Viva* para la salvación del mundo' ("Traductor"). He instructed the king that he was to send his army here and release His people from their oppression. He gave us clear instructions on how we were to carry out our mission." The commander ended his monologue. Anna put both of her hands over her mouth. She smiled really big and said, "This is incredible! I also had an encounter with *Agua Viva*! He told me the same thing. That He was going to rescue us from oppression and

stay in this cave. We had no idea this would end up happening!” Everyone was in shock and awe at the news. “We have discovered some very evil things being done in this city. The Emperor was planning on selling citizens as slaves to pay for some bad debts he possessed. Now that he and his officials are dead you all can begin to rebuild. It is my understanding that *Agua Viva* has entrusted you to reestablish this city under his decree.” The commander added. “Shall we head back?”

“Yes, I guess we should,” Anna responded. “Is everyone ready to go?” “Yeah, we’re all ready,” the group replied. The group gathered all of their belongings and exited the cave. Anna stopped in front of everyone before they started on their way to make a quick announcement. “I just want to say that we are all extremely fortunate to have had an encounter with *Agua Viva*. This cave He provided us for shelter should be a dedicated place of remembrance for us.” Everyone agreed with Anna. The group collectively decided that the site be called *Agitando Aguas, Stirring Waters*.

As they all headed back toward the city, they saw large shadows flying overhead. Huge, winged creatures were flying rapidly toward the city. One creature looked like a lion with wings. Another looked like an ox with wings. The other looked like a man with wings and the last one was an eagle (Rev. 4:6-8). Everyone was frightened by what they saw. Shortly after the creatures flew by, the sound of an explosion rang in their ears. Puffs of smoke slowly rose above the city and flames of fire began consuming what was left. “Is this your army’s doing commander?” Anna asked. “No, my men only knocked down the structures and opened gunfire in all of the places of worship. But we detained all of the children on our ships before doing so.” “It must be those creatures!” Someone in the group added. “Hurry let’s go find out what’s going on!”

The group rushed back into the city only to find rubble and little fires burning here and there. “The city’s been destroyed. The temple is even reduced to rubble” said Evelyn. “Let’s not waste time mourning over the city.” The commander said abruptly. “The king has sent letters to surrounding regions requesting all the materials needed for you to rebuild. Wood, gold, silver, silk, polished stones, as well as specialized craftsman and laborers. The ships should be arriving shortly.” “Wow, I don’t know what to say. Thank you so much, commander. And please thank King Ximeno for all of us as well.” Anna said with gratitude.

The ships arrived with all of the building materials and laborers the next day. They also brought blueprints of how the city should be rebuilt. They established a city for themselves and named it Los Angeles. They called themselves Angelinos because of the name of the city. Los Angeles was given its name because of the many Angels that roamed the land. The Angels were a Heavenly army that was mobilized by *Agua*. Every Angel had their post and their own territory of the city to look after and protect the citizens from the army of Sprites. The Dark Ones tried desperately to take down Los Angeles, but *Agua* was the only deity that was worshipped in the city.

Because of this, they were blessed in every aspect of their lives. The urban area of their land was prolific and thriving. People had specialized careers they were passionate about and were able to help others in the community. Some career fields were engineering and architecture, and craftsmanship for goods such as pottery and textiles. Other jobs outside of the city were agriculture and landscaping. The country hillside where the crops grew was abundantly fruitful. Their crops included sugar beets, pistachios, wheat, barley, oranges, potatoes, and tomatoes. The produce of the land was so plentiful that the Angelinos were able to export goods to neighboring



regions as commodities. Whatever was not exported and consumed was stored in several storehouses located throughout the city.

They ruled the West and as a result, the people were able to live in peace and protection. They built the Temple for *Agua* to dwell in. The temple was square-shaped and had three main structures. The Courtyard, the Holy Place, and the Secret Holy Place. These represented the three stages of worship of *Agua*. The Courtyard represented the city that was established under *Agua*'s decree. Anyone was welcomed as long as they agreed to live in peace and acknowledge *Agua* as God. The Holy Place represented a deeper connection with *Agua* for those who spent more time worshipping Him and learning His ways. The Secret Holy Place was only for the priests of the temple that carried out *Agua*'s commands.

After the Temple was built, the Angelinos were able to live harmoniously. They implemented laws that would keep the structure and peace of their community.

These laws included:

Do not take what doesn't belong to you.

Do not commit murder.

Do not want what others have.

Do not engage in extramarital affairs.

Do not use the name of *Agua* for selfish gain.

Dedicate one day of the week for rest from all work.

Do not make any statues or figurines to represent *Agua*.

Do not lie to others or speak about others falsely.

Show honor and respect to your parents.

Above all else, do not replace *Agua* with any other deities (Exd. 20:2-17).

Murder and crime were at an all-time low. If there was a disagreement or event that took place where someone was wronged, a wise council would be appointed to settle the matter. The morale of the Angelinos was thriving and their society was affluent. The Angelinos were starting to become famous throughout the Earth. They were mostly known for their ability to maintain peace in their city and provide help to neighboring regions without seeking something in return. Most foreigners came to see the Agitando Aguas. Once every month, an Angel of *Agua* would stir up the water there and it would light up. He did this so that whoever should get into the water would be healed of any disease, illness, or sickness (John 5:4). Once the water was stirred and glowing, hundreds of people would dive in and be healed. People from all over the world streamed to Los Angeles to see Agitando Aguas. Kings and queens from faraway lands frequented Los Angeles to be healed, learn the way of *Agua*, and renovate their own societies. They were curious about *Agua* and wanted to know more about how He managed to bring total peace and provide for Los Angeles.

Nearby communities began to intermingle with the Angelinos and *Agua* welcomed them. They were expected to treat foreigners as if they were not. They welcomed them into their land as long as they agreed to live by their laws and customs and do away with their previous beliefs. It was to ensure that no one would lead the Angelinos astray and start doing things outside of what *Agua* had taught them. Some people may have thought this was an attribute of tyranny but it had a purpose. This was to keep the peace and prosperity. But some of the foreigners were not honest about their intentions and were really full of darkness. This invited chaos and disorder into the city and the people began to argue and stir up trouble. Wise men began to fall and live in

confusion. People were stealing and fighting one another. There were fewer and fewer people upholding their morals and standards for living in harmony. No one was consulting *Agua* for His help and guidance and foreigners began to bring in their foreign gods. Again.

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