

Chapter 1

“Nash, can we get up now? My butt’s sore,” Faith pleaded, still lying on Nash’s lap on the dining room floor. They had been there for the last thirty minutes or so.

“I’m not ready to let you go,” in a whisper, cradling her in his arms. Nash had come so close to losing her. He wanted to hold Faith forever. “Besides, I want to make sure you’re strong enough before I move you. For everyone’s sake. And I need to tell you something,” he added, placing his hand back on her abdomen.

“Did I thank you for saving our lives, handsome?” Faith smiled. She reached up and directed his lips to hers, kissing him with loving regard. It had not only been her life that he’d saved.

Nash began intensifying their kiss, wanting to judge her current state. He could feel that her strength was returning, much sooner than he’d expected, as she responded with just as much enthusiasm.

While the kiss ensued, Nash couldn’t help but be gratified that he’d asked Faith to marry him before they’d both learned of her pregnancy. Something neither of them had planned. He wouldn’t have wanted her to think he’d proposed out of duty, obligation, or guilt. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The news seemed to be preoccupying his every thought.

Hers, too.

Nash broke their kiss, taking her hand in his, stroking her silky skin. He looked down at her engagement ring, watching the righteous power which twinkled from within the stone.

Faith raised her free hand, caressing his face. Thinking that if she bore him a son, she hoped he’d inherit Nash’s handsome, chiseled features. His skin was cool and moist to the touch.

“Nash, you feel a little clammy. Are you sure you’re okay?” Faith asked with urgency.

“I’m fine now that you are, babe,” smiling down in an attempt to reassure her. “Just tired . . . it’s been a rough day. I don’t want you worrying about a single thing in your condition. Promise?” placing his hand back on her abdomen.

Nash *was* feeling a little shaky, but he wasn’t about to concern Faith with such information. The amount of power he’d used to defeat his evil brother Molech, then having his stab wound healed by the Archangel Michael while saving Faith’s life, had drained him in every way. He, too, was using this short respite to regain his strength.

Faith looked around the dining room, wondering where everyone had gone. A few moments later, their friends returned. Hope and her husband Shawn, Charity, and Grace entered the dining room, having given the couple some private time alone.

Hope was carrying a large tray of food, anticipating Faith would be hungry. And even if she wasn’t, Nash would insist she eat something.

“You two are so cute, it’s sickening,” Shawn commented with a grin, walking over to the dining table, which was still positioned up against the side wall. He moved one end of the large, heavy 12-top back into the center of the room, then the other. Shawn wished Michael had put the table back himself, since he was the one who had moved it in the first place. It had been in the way of Nash and Molech while they’d fought their final battle.

Charity and Grace were putting the chairs back in their places.

“Nash, who’s gonna clean up Molech over there?” Shawn pointing to the bloody chunks on the floor. The only remnants left of Nash’s older brother.

Nash looked at the mess with disdain. “Michael can deal with it.”

Michael had disappeared soon after Nash had healed Faith.

“Where did Michael go, anyway?” Faith wondered, having not paid attention earlier, being too weak to notice much of anything. She had also been preoccupied with the news that she and Nash were going to have a baby. It still didn’t seem real to her, although it did explain why she had been feeling and acting the way she had for the last week or so.

“Someone had to dispose of Jeffery’s rotting corpse,” Nash explained. Jeffery, Nash’s inept replacement as the Antichrist, was one hundred percent human after all. He would have begun to decompose much quicker than Molech, a son of Satan.

“Is Faith strong enough, Nash?” Hope placed the tray on the table now that Charity and Grace had

finished arranging the chairs.

“Yes, better I tell you after the move,” Nash determined.

Faith looked at him with curiosity as he picked her up and carried her, sitting her down at the head of the table.

Nash sat next to Faith and leaned toward her.

Before he could speak, Faith implored, “What’s this about, Nash? Did you sense something wrong with the baby?”

Tears were forming from the fear of why he was being so evasive. Faith gazed into his eyes, trying to read his appearance.

Nash cupped her face and granted her a soft kiss. She could see a hint of a smile before he said, “What did I *just say* about worrying yourself? The babies are doing just fine.”

All their friends looked at each other, stunned – *this* they did not know.

Faith hugged him. “Oh, thank God! Ah . . . wait. Did you say *babies*? Plural?”

Nash pulled back from her hold to see the expression on her face. His was grinning with pride. He was quite impressed with himself. All those years, thinking he was sterile, and now this.

“How many babies?” Faith asked with a quiver to her voice.

“Only two, babe.” Nash’s tone was cool and even. “No need to be anxious. You’re not having a whole litter,” he laughed, wrapping her in his arms.

“Nashua, I am sorry to have to correct you, but she has every reason to be alarmed.” Michael had just materialized in the dining room. “Would you come here, please?”

Nash looked at Michael with concern over his comment, and approached him near the doorway.

It was Faith’s intention to eavesdrop. But Nash and Michael were speaking in that unknown language of theirs. She did hear Nash say in English, “That’s not possible! They’re only one quarter angelic at most, not half!”

Michael shook his head. “And you believed you were incapable of fathering a child. Nashua, have you not learned? Anything is possible. You *do* come from strong genetic stock, do you not?”

“No. I mean yes, but . . . I refuse to believe it. I didn’t see any evidence of that! Oh God, are you sure?” Nash began to pace, frantic about the implications.

“God is sure, Nashua. I have just been informed of this myself.”

Nash stopped cold, staring at Faith’s abdomen to take a look. “Which one is it?”

“Look at the boy,” Michael directed.

Nash squinted his eyes, then decided he needed a closer inspection. He walked over to where Faith was still seated and knelt down in front of her.

“Please don’t worry, babe. Everything’s gonna be okay. I’ll make sure of it,” he whispered, hoping Michael did not hear. Nash held her hips, anticipating his touch would calm her.

“Damn it, Michael! You know full well she’s only about four or five weeks along. There’s no way to tell which is which!” Nash’s frustration was obvious. Despite his feverish attempts, he still could not distinguish which embryo was at issue.

“God can tell, Nashua,” Michael reiterated. “Notice any difference with the one on the right?”

“Her right or my right?” agitated that the Archangel wasn’t being more specific.

“Her right, Nashua,” as Michael shook his head.

Nash directed his attention to the precise child. After about a minute of gazing at it and comparing it to the other, his facial expression changed.

Faith was past irritated with being left in the dark. “Tell me what the hell is going on!”

Nash looked up at her, still frowning, and now there was a look of fear in his eyes. His brows furrowed before he placed his head in her lap, wrapping his arms around each hip.

Michael began to explain before Faith could have a chance to break down. She did not deserve this burden. “One of your fraternal twins is *unique*, dear. What do you know of giants?”

Faith took a deep breath, trying to stay calm, but did not like where this was going. “Fallen angels had found human women irresistible. They began procreating with them, which resulted in giants. That’s all I know.”

“That is a start, dear.” Michael’s voice was filled with despair.

Nash was still clutching Faith, reluctant to face her.

“But there is more to the story,” Michael continued. “The giants gave humans knowledge, most of which everyone has now, but was forbidden back in those days. God did not want too much information shared with the humans, whom were in no way prepared at that time. Giants were also much stronger than humans, giving them an unfair advantage. Altercations developed. There were many deaths. It was then that God decreed that giants were an ab”

“Don’t say it, Michael!” Nash shouted, rising to his feet. “Don’t you *dare* refer to *my son* as an”

“It is what it is, Nashua,” Michael interrupted. “You know God’s stand on the issue. We cannot have another flood, now can we?”

Faith’s friends had stood idle during the entire conversation, but could no longer.

“What do you mean another flood, Michael?” Hope interjected.

This was usually the time when Michael would smile before explaining, but there was no pleasurable expression on his face. Only dismay. “The flood was caused by God’s need to destroy all the giants in one fell swoop, along with the humans that had been misbehaving. He instructed Noah to build an ark”

“Noah’s ark . . . Noah’s freaking ark! Are you kidding me?” This time Charity would interrupt, covering her face. She knew this could not bode well for her best friend.

“I need to see HIM, Michael. I need to see Him NOW!” Nash would not allow his son to be destroyed as an abomination. No matter the cost. He would implore God for mercy. Ask to have an exception made in this case.