

The Brook of Tears

Charlene Lassig

Edited by Judy Mobile
Cover illustration by Joshua Frazer—www.jkfrazer.com
Medical advisor James Toniolo, MD

“The Brook of Tears,” by Charlene Lassig. ISBN: 978-1-60264-609-4 (Softcover); ISBN: 978-1-60264-615-5 (Hardcover).

Published 2011 by Virtualbookworm.com Publishing Inc., P.O. Box 9949, College Station, TX 77842, US. ©2011, Charlene Lassig. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Charlene Lassig.

Manufactured in the United States of America

Also by Charlene Lassig
The Scroll of Deuel
www.charlenelassig.com

Dedication

In memory of the Angels God called home.

Leah Page Kiley
June 4, 1991 – December 12, 2009
Kyle Vincent Ippoliti
February 11, 1989 – May 22, 2010
Ruhim Abdella
October 22, 1979 – May 22, 2010
Bradley Allen Dower
September 30, 1987 – September 29, 2009

I did not know during the course of writing *The Scroll of Deuel* and *The Brook of Tears*, that your lives would be taken from us so unexpectedly. Your shining stars beckon us to remember the good times and strive to carry your torches. There is nothing in the world that can fill the emptiness left by your passing, but we will take comfort in knowing someday we will be together again.

I pray God's peace and blessings will be upon your families and friends.

Charlene

Contents

1. Wavering Thoughts.....	11
2. Dirty Deeds Remembered.....	16
3. Starting Over.....	24
4. Silver Lake.....	33
5. Espérer.....	45
6. Forgotten Memories.....	53
7. Dweller by the Brook.....	72
8. Guardian Secrets.....	87
9. Honor and Dreams.....	98
10. Second Encounter.....	113
11. The Council.....	126
12. Can Time Heal.....	146
13. When the Loss Is Less than the Win.....	158
14. It is Done.....	178
15. The Tracker.....	182
16. The Petition.....	187
17. Stone of Fayruz.....	201
18. Forbidden Love.....	222
19. Observatory.....	234
20. Demon Foe.....	261
21. Hemet.....	269

22. Nightmares	280
23. In the Darkness	311
24. Consequences.....	325
25. The Plan	335
26. Life in Death	342
27. Gypse Vanner.....	361
28. Puzzle Pieces	384
29. Waiting.....	390
30. The Reunion	398
31. Let it be So	414
32. Ignorance or Truth.....	431
33. Dreams	455
34. Search and Destroy.....	465
35. Answered Hope.....	497
36. Last Request	533
37. Choices.....	550
Acknowledgments	567

I have heard your prayer,

I have seen your tears;

surely I will heal you.

II Kings 20:5

Preface

I fear I will drift away in the darkness, only you can bring the light. I see you in the stars, your eyes shining bright. I feel you in the wind, your essence is near. I knew you before, it is all quite clear.

I felt your breath; I have heard your sigh. Tell me the truth from loneliness did I die? I know you are there, from me you cannot hide. I can feel your presence, your essence, and my soul are tied.

It is all too familiar, the things I know. I can't hold out any longer, you are all I was meant to hold. Don't turn away from me; I must feel your caress. You complete my life, my soul, and all the rest.

Your kiss still lingers on my lips, your hands upon my face. Your arms secured around my waist, hold me tightly in your embrace.

My mind is never clear when you are gone; my heart, it fails to beat. I can't stand the emptiness when we are apart, I lay my dreams at your feet.

Are you here with me forever now, within these castle walls to stay? Has Heaven answered my prayers, or will you leave me again, one day? Believe what you may, or call it what you must. I know what brings us together is fate; in this I put my trust.

Like a flower that withers away, without you, nothing is right. Light the torches to point the way, our love is worth the fight. The realms of Heaven and its majestic Angels proclaim. He has made us one in unity, in His holiness God reigns.

1. Wavering Thoughts

Guardian Realm—unmeasured time

Today was a calm day, whose beauty seemed enhanced by the singing of sparrows and the elegant patter of butterfly wings. The mellow breeze blew through the window of Mataya's chamber, filling her room with the aroma of roses. Her visions had not surfaced in several days, leaving her mind filled with memories of darkness. A void had developed in her mind because of the life stolen from her since the arrest of her brother Mateo. How strange it was to find her mind empty and feeling so alone in his absence. The evil workings of a fallen Guardian compromised her brother's mind, and Mateo's actions would be felt for many years to come.

She imagined that this is how the Head Elder must feel with the loss of his *Esprit de corps*. Mataya would find some reprieve should she choose a mate, there was no

escape for Josiah, because his mind would never know the thoughts of another.

Why me? She thought to herself daily, fighting to find some sanity in it all. *Why must I endure such pain and emptiness?*

Lost in the emotions of self-pity, she ignored the unnatural signs forming around her. At that moment, a strong wind blew the chiffon curtain across her cheek. Her body became cold, and she gasped impulsively, recalling the responses of the humans she became so fond of observing. There was no way to stop what was about to happen. Mataya could only hope that her thoughts were not carried out, bringing a form of destruction to her people and her world. Too many times Mataya had jeopardized what she and Beck had started out to do. She prayed that this was just a memory and not a vision full of fear. Mataya closed her eyes, subject to whatever the next few moments brought her through.

A vivid memory played in her mind. She saw herself standing in the Abilene Chamber on Callisto with her brother. Before her the Head Elder knelt on one knee with his head bowed, holding the Scroll of Deuel in his hands. The chamber filled with the beautiful sounds of the scroll's music. Then a sense of discord washed over her.

Josiah's presence was replaced by that of his father and best friend, Jaleel. Her brother was inches away, but his mind wasn't with hers. Jon leaned over the Scroll of Deuel that was spread across the table. A light born of energy radiated from Mateo's fingers toward the piece of parchment. She watched the scroll flutter in the energy's force. The music of the scroll didn't fill the room with peace, for it was silenced by the anger emanating from her brother's essence. She heard Jon's words of request to

decipher the scroll, and she wanted to comply. Nevertheless, the meaning now remained void to her understanding as panic and uncertainty filled her mind. There was something peculiar happening that had brought this once confident Great Elder to a plane of desolation.

Before she could clarify what she was experiencing in the chamber, another vision flashed in her mind. This time she stood by a rippling brook watching a brown-haired man swishing his hand in the silky blue colored water. She sensed a unique power emanating from around her. It grew more intense the longer she stood there. A strange tingling sensation traveled through her hands and then up both of her arms. The power appeared to consume her every thought, blocking her mind from assessing that of the knelt stranger. Then in the stillness of unmeasured time, the energy consumed Mataya pulling her essence into its center. She felt both nervous and safe at the same time. Her previous visions had taken Mataya to unfamiliar places, taunting her mind to think the unthinkable. Today she visited a place her mind could never have imagined existed.

Mataya heard faint whispers flowing from the stranger's beautifully proportioned lips. His eyes met hers, projecting a calmness that diminished her nervousness. She questioned if the man was aware of her presence, or if this too was part of the hallucination. Scenes of a time past and of days to come flashed in her mind. Mataya didn't need the visions explained to her by words; her keen mind gladly absorbed their companionship.

She watched as the figure leaned closer toward the water, extracting an object from the brook. It was a silver heart-shaped box secured by a golden chain. As the chain dangled in the air, it caught Sol's rays and shined magnificently. The peaceful stranger removed the chain

from around the heart-shaped box and opened it. Then he picked up two stones that lay along the brook's edge putting them into his pocket. He removed a stone from his other robe pocket dropping that stone into the silver box. Then reaching inside the box, he removed a brown piece of parchment tucking it under his arm. In a graceful motion he placed the chain back around the box so swiftly that Mataya's keen eyesight nearly missed it. Before she knew it, the box was back in the water.

With great care, he began to unroll the parchment holding it tightly so that it didn't blow away in the wind. The tall Guardian began to read from the parchment in a language Mataya had known well. When he finished he looked at Mataya and motioned for her to approach him. She complied, advancing without hesitance, and she took the parchment that the Guardian held out for her. As she touched it, a burning sensation rippled through her essence. The fogging affects that incapacitated her twin and hindered her own actions disappeared. In that moment, her mind found the clarity it had missed for so long. The meaning of the Scroll of Deuel once again intertwined with her thoughts. The intents of Mateo were exposed and a hidden secret revealed. Her next course of action became very clear.

The Guardian took back the scroll, placing it in his robe pocket that contained the stones. He nodded his head, glancing back and forth from Mataya to the Brook of Tears. Without saying a word, the man faded from her sight and was gone. Mataya too, found herself back in the chamber executing the plan that had filled her mind by the peaceful brook. Again, the wretched stare of her brother's twisted essence called to her to help him. His eyes begged her to release him, but she knew the consequences if she had. Mataya reassured herself that her actions were

The Brook of Tears

accurate and continued forcing her subduing strength upon her brother. Even when several Keepers of the Courts personal arrived to take Mateo into custody, she couldn't immediately release him. A power she didn't understand cried out to her, demanding that she give retribution for her brother's vile actions.

2. Dirty Deeds Remembered

Earth Realm—1926

The wind whipped violently on this cold December night. The foul entity approached slowly, stopping at the tree line to remain hidden. The falling snow glistened from the moon, lighting up the woods around him. The glowing aura of his essence added to the night's beautiful radiance.

He hated being on Earth. Even the serene view couldn't make him second-guess his assessment of Earth and its inhabitants. This place reminded him of how vile his life had become. All for the sake of power he would soon learn, he didn't have.

The wicked Minion concentrated on what he needed most, to look human. In disgust, he willed his essence to create an image mimicking a human form. It resembled that of a well-known resident of the small community of Silver Lake, Wisconsin. If he were seen in this form

strolling through the woods—many would question his appearance, and more would run. His essence was strong, but tonight's dirty deed weighed heavily on his conscience. He laughed to himself trying to shake a new feeling of guilt, a human emotion he didn't bargain on experiencing. A hate crime is what humans called it. No matter what the title, murder is what this fallen Guardian was willing to commit.

The snow crunched below his human feet that were bare from lack of ingenuity. The cold didn't bother his exposed skin. Unlike the shell the Head Elder Josiah created, there was no connection between his essence, and the counterfeit body moving undercover of the night.

This time, his cursed actions would conclude its deed much quicker than on the tiny plane he sunk in the future. He didn't have to wait at the scene of the crime to see the outcome. Tonight his human hands would finish what he started. There would be no mistakes afforded during this second chance, and no witness left alive. Just two innocent souls were to perish this night, unlike the ten who called for redemption from their deaths in Good Hart, Michigan.

The Minion didn't count the lost essences from his earlier battle. The foolish Watcher, who attempted to deceive him by disguising himself in a human form, meant nothing to him. Although he appeared normal and resembled the human Clement perfectly, destroying him came easily. The struggle on the platform was over before it began. The weak Watcher couldn't convert back to his natural state before the attack.

No regrets plagued the fallen stranger then, and his choices to take the living now, were made without doubts. At least this is what he told himself, while he shrugged off the guilt that bore through his evil exterior.

He briefly dismissed the thought of who his next victim

would be. His Master Tarik, an evil Demon from a distant world, was very adamant about how the Guardian of the future was to die. This pawn in the Demon's game would be the only challenge left to face after tonight's deed—but he knew the death of that Guardian wouldn't go unnoticed. Surely, the Minion who secretly walked through the woods would have to be very cunning to avoid capture.

As he neared the dimly lit cabin at the edge of the woods, he saw her standing by the window. He knew she remained there, faithful like a dog. She still wore the long floral dress from the dreaded afternoon at the icehouse. Her posture showed her defeat and loneliness fed by her grieving.

The Minion laughed again, realizing this was going to be easier than he predicted. Swiftly and silently, he could overtake her without a struggle. No more power from his essence would have to be wasted than actually needed to fulfill his vile plan. He glanced around to ensure he was alone, and then he approached the cabin quietly. Naomi met him at the door summoned by his light knock. Her eyes red from crying, lit up at his welcoming smile.

The moonlight shone brightly through Naomi's cottage window. The light didn't wake her, for she had not slept this night or the two nights before. She moved about her home like the *undead* during the last few days. Naomi functioned with barely just enough strength to care for her little precious two-month old baby girl. Rebekah is the tiny angel who stole her father's heart the day she was born. Clement's love for his wife and baby girl showed strongly in his expression. He wore a smile too beautiful for words to describe.

New to the community of Silver Lake, Naomi had no other family besides her daughter and husband Clement. The frail teenager had left her parents behind in Arizona

The Brook of Tears

the previous spring. She moved from Arizona to start a new life with the man she vowed to love for the rest of her life. A vow she promised to honor until death would make them part. Four days ago right before her very eyes ... death called, and Naomi saw the man she loved die.

Silver Lake had become a large venue for the ice business. Trains arrived regularly to export the harvested ice to Chicago. After Clement and Naomi arrived early in the fall, he took a job at the start of winter working at the icehouse as a stocker. When the men completed the grueling task of chiseling the chunks of ice from the lake, they formed the ice into blocks. Then the blocks of ice were loaded onto the shipping trains for delivery.

The temperature was below zero that morning, and the dock was very slippery from the previous day's warmer weather. The temperature had reached 40 degrees melting the thin layers of ice on the docking platform. The welcomed warmth made working conditions dangerous.

Tragically, Clement slipped off the docking platform after loading a block of ice onto a boxcar. The crews made sure the planks were secure, but the platform was just too slippery. Clement lost his footing and then slid off the dock helplessly, landing under the boxcar that a work crew was busy hitching up for shipping.

The memory of the accident haunted Naomi. She pleaded with God, begging him for answers. She had to know how this could happen to the man who was her whole world. Her grieving heart replayed the events in her mind torturing her very being. He was several feet away from the edge of the dock, smiling at her, and waving as she approached him. Naomi was sure his back faced the train as he walked toward her. Then all of a sudden, Clement disappeared.

She clutched her baby tightly in her arms, as she ran to the edge of the dock. She felt the wood planks bounce and

shift beneath her feet. With hazel eyes full of fear, Naomi searched frantically until she found Clement. He was lying beneath the rail car with his body across the cold iron railroad tracks.

Her fears were answered by his horrifyingly twisted expression. Clement's dark pupils screamed of terror as his eyes seemed frozen in a fierce glassy stare. Naomi nearly fainted while watching his body convulse and jerk violently. His arms thrashed wildly at his sides making deep impressions into the snow.

Two work hands that saw him fall to the ground came to his rescue and jumped down from the platform to get him off the tracks. The ground was covered with ice, and the work hands slipped while trying to reach Clement. Then without any warning, the train lurched forward crushing him as it rolled over his torso. The two work hands leaped out of the path of the rolling train, narrowly escaping with minor injuries. Injuries that would mar their dreams forever, forcing this event to haunt them until God called them home.

The heavy steel wheels cut Clement clean through, pressing his sheared spine deep into his deathbed. Clement's blood flowed from his body staining the crystal-white snow a deathly dark red. Naomi didn't remember screaming or letting go of little Rebekah. Even as her husband's best friend ran to her side to console her, the scene faded from her mind. She didn't comprehend that reality; the new one surrounding her at this moment was much more pleasant.

"Naomi?" Clement beckoned her to join him at the doorway. He had whispered her name so tenderly, that even the saddest memories no longer mattered or inflicted her grieving soul. His eyes were not as loving as she

remembered, but his smile welcomed her discouraged mind.

He held out his arms to embrace her. The air passing between her lungs reminded him of how fragile a human body really was. He thought about what a waste of the Creator's resources it was for her to use the precious oxygen the trees produced. Yet, the waste went beyond the air consumed by humans. It expanded far past the planet they called home and the space this sphere occupied in the outer realm of Heaven.

"Clement, my sweet Clement," she spoke softly under her sobs. "I knew you would come back to me. I knew they were wrong, my love."

Tears began to fall from her eyes and the warm salty water splashed onto his wrist. He almost imagined the tears of sorrow burning into his essence, branding him for all eternity as a murderer.

Clement loved to take walks, and tonight the cold wouldn't hold them back. "My beloved, come for a walk with me," he asked so tenderly, "and enjoy the beauty that this place has given us."

"Yes, my love. I will gladly take a stroll with you this evening. It has been too long, and I miss them so badly."

"I have also missed them, my beloved."

Naomi joyfully turned to grab her wool shawl from the coat hook. In the bassinet, little Rebekah whimpered. Did the sound of her daddy's voice awaken her, or had she perceived the discord about to be brought down upon her and her mother?

Clement reached in removing the child from her warm bed. The eyes of his adoring wife followed his every move, as if she feared he would leave her again. He sensed her eyes following him and laughed to himself. What a devoted little puppet this woman proved to be.

With a mischievous grin, he clutched his daughter in one arm and his wife in the other. He led them blindly from the warm cabin into the blustery weather. They began their peaceful stroll down the winding path off to the left of the empty cottage.

“Oh, Clement, the night is so lovely.”

“Yes, indeed it is,” he agreed falsely.

“Please, tell me that you will never leave again?”

“I promise you, Naomi, that as long as your heart is beating, I will never leave you.”

Naomi smiled, never sensing the danger around her. Her mind felt only the love her heart so dearly missed. “I believe you with all my soul, my love.”

“Did I not pledge my allegiance in our vows? Did I not promise you, until death do us part?”

“Yes, you did, my love.” The blustery wind muffled her voice, but the cold didn’t bother Naomi, for she was warm with her husband at her side.

Rebekah fussed as the cold penetrated her blankets. The vindictive imposter silenced the child with his essence. Her mother believed it to be the special bond Clement had with his daughter that calmed the cooing in the night.

No kerosene lantern was needed to guide the family down the snow-filled path. The Guardian knew it well and lit their way with his essence. Naomi didn’t question the lack of a lantern or abundance of unexplainable light—her mind just processed what his essence would allow. He found the lake without difficulty or resistance from his prey. Both victims existed void of understanding because of his mind control.

Even in the clearing as the snow danced off the glassy sheet formed above the lake, her admiring smile stayed fixed upon Clement’s dark expression. Naomi’s smile never left her face, even as the ice shifted and pinned her

The Brook of Tears

beneath its layers. Neither she nor the baby struggled, facing their death like sheep led to slaughter.

The deed was done now, and his Master would be pleased. In triumph, the Minion began to convert his form back to normal. As he turned to leave he felt a strong presence surround him. Behind him, an aura appeared shattering through the outer surface of the icy lake. Before he could react to its appearance, an apparition floated from the frozen grave, and the baby's body disappeared. He squinted, trying to focus through mystical lights and flying debris. All he had seen was the dead woman staring at him. Her skin was ashen while her lips were blue and lifeless. He didn't hear her heartbeat, but he swore her voice called out for vengeance.

"You promised, my love. Until death do we part?"

Caught in the middle of his essence's conversion he reacted too slowly to her appearance. The remnants of her human influences hindered his celestial mind, and he was not able to discern the spirit that crept up on him. Trying to sense the location of the surviving baby became impossible for him to determine. He left Earth in a hurry, cautious that more entities would come, or perhaps the Keeper of the Courts would arrest him. Deimos was never to see the likes of him or absorb his essence.