

THE TRUTH CHRONICLES

BOOK III: THE RESCUE

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For Kayla and Judah



PROLOGUE

Dr. Thompson,” said a voice with a thick Spanish accent.

The doctor spun around to see a huge, muscle-bound man entering the room. “This is Juan. He’s the engineer you requested.” He nudged the smaller man next to him. “We’ll be expecting results very soon.”

Dr. Thompson looked Juan over. “I asked for three physical engineers. I need more help.”

Glaring, the man crossed his arms and rested them on his puffed-out chest. “Perhaps I was unclear. This is your help.” He turned and left the room.

Great. I’ll never finish this. With a cursory glance at Juan, Dr. Thompson turned back to his work.

“Dr. Thompson,” Juan said as he held out his hand. It trembled as he turned it over to reveal a tiny object in his palm. “They wanted me to give you this microchip.”

Taking the chip, Dr. Thompson muttered, “Thanks.”

“How long have you been working on this?” Juan asked.

Dr. Thompson spun and faced him. “Why do you care? You work for the group that kidnapped me.”

Juan looked stunned. “I don’t think you understand. I’m a prisoner. Like you.”

Even through his anger, Dr. Thompson saw the pain in Juan’s eyes. “I’m sorry. I didn’t know. Do ... do you have any family?”

Juan’s eyes welled up with tears, and he looked down. “I hope so. I was asleep in my home when they broke in. The last thing I remember was hearing my wife scream. When I woke up this morning, I was here.”

“Do you happen to know where ‘here’ is?”

Juan shook his head. “No, I’m sorry.” After a few moments of silence, he asked, “Have you thought about escaping?”

Dr. Thompson sympathized with Juan’s story but still didn’t trust him. “Of course I’ve thought about it. Every day for the last three years.” He sighed. “But it’s not an option. They’d kill my family if I tried anything.”

“Three years.” Juan said as he wiped his eyes. “But if your family is still alive, then maybe mine is too. I guess we’d better do what they want.” After a few quiet moments, he leaned in close. “So there’s really no way out of here?”

Dr. Thompson’s suspicion grew and he set the microchip down. “No. There’s no way out.”

“That will be enough talk about escape, gentlemen.” The familiar voice of his captor came through the speaker on the wall. “The only way

you will ever be freed is if you give us what we want. Now get to work.”

We'll see about that. Dr. Thompson looked at Juan, who slumped his shoulders and buried his face in his hands. “I'll give you a few minutes before I explain what we're doing.”

Juan sat down in a nearby chair. “Thank you.”

Dr. Thompson walked over to a cluttered worktable. He picked up a small transmitter he had been working on and slid a battery into it. *Please let this work.*

He knew he was taking a risk since he was under constant surveillance, but he had to take the chance. He pushed the small button that would cause the transmitter to send out a signal carrying his old access codes from the Bureau. A small red light blinked for a few seconds before Dr. Thompson pulled the battery and disassembled the device.





ONE

Jax yelled, but the raging current that had pulled him over the top of the waterfall quickly choked out the sound. Time seemed to slow as he fell. He tried to locate JT, who still clung to his hand, but the cascading water made it impossible to see clearly. *Why are we still falling?*

Jax tightened his grip on JT, shut his eyes, and braced for impact.

WHAM! Jax slammed into the turbulence, and every nerve in his body screamed in pain. Everything went black as he twisted and turned under the enormous force pulling him deeper. As he gained a measure of stability, he realized JT was gone. Direction was impossible to determine. Jax paddled and kicked for all he was worth in an effort to get himself free of the turmoil.

A few moments later the water was less chaotic, but the surface was nowhere in sight. His lungs burned, and he continued swimming until his hands hit something hard. *The bottom!* Jax fought the urge to panic. *Think. Get your feet under you. Push!*

A few seconds later, his head broke the surface of the water, and he gasped for air. He half-floated, half-swam toward the nearest bank, all the while looking around for JT. *Where is she? Please, God, help me find her.*

The river grew shallow quickly as he neared the bank, and it wasn't long before he could touch the bottom. He planted his feet and turned around, frantically scanning the river.

"JT! JT!" *C'mon, where are you? "JT!"*

All of a sudden, he saw her arms flailing above the rapids about fifteen feet downstream and closer to the opposite bank. *She's alive!*

Gathering all the strength he had left, he surged back into the river.

He moved quickly as he swam with the current, but when she went under he wasn't sure if he could make it in time. *Hang in there, JT. Just a few more seconds.* Kicking furiously, churning through the water, he managed to reach her just as she went down again. He put his arm under both of her arms and pulled back. "I gotcha. I won't let you go. We're gonna make it." He angled for the nearest shore, allowing the current to do most of the work.

Once he was able to touch bottom again, he stood and used both arms to drag JT along while she coughed and gagged repeatedly. After reaching the shore, he gingerly laid her down on some soft grass.

His arms and legs felt like lead as he fell back against the ground, breathing hard. Jax slowly sat up and noticed that JT had rolled to her stomach and continued to cough and spit up water. He gen-

tly placed his hand on her shoulder as she tried to catch her breath.

“Are you okay?” he asked.

She took a couple of deep breaths then turned slowly to look up at him. “Yeah . . . thanks to you.”

“We need to get going,” Jax said. “We’ve got to find a way back up.” He extended a hand to JT.

She took it and tried to stand. Her knees buckled once, but she caught herself before falling. She gained her balance and said, “Thanks again.”

He smiled and then looked up to the top of the falls to search for his friends. “Izzy! Mick—”

“No,” JT said, grabbing his arm. “We’re on the same side of the river as Al now.”

“Oh, I didn’t even think about that.” He scanned the canyon wall behind them. It was thickly forested and very steep. “Let’s follow the river and see if we can find a place to cross. Then we can worry about finding a way up.”

They walked alongside the river, moving west, away from the waterfall, with clothes and hair dripping. Jax listened carefully for any sign of the allosaurus, but only heard the crashing water and their shoes squeaking.

After several minutes the thunder of the falls quieted. JT rolled her sleeves up past her elbows. “You know, Jesus said that the greatest love a person could show to someone else is if they lay down their life for a friend. He did that for us and showed

how much He loved us, and you just showed that you're willing to do the same."

Jax turned away and blushed at being compared to Jesus. As he gazed at the river he asked, "Remember how you said that you would try to answer any of my questions?"

"Yeah."

"Well, I've got some more for you."

"Really? Like what?"

"When I was bitter toward God, I used to go online and search for problems in the Bible. There were tons of websites that brought up a whole bunch of objections. I guess I wanted to justify my anger or something. Anyway, when I started reading my Bible last week, it reminded me of some of them. For example, one of the problems I saw over and over was about Cain's wife. The Bible says that Adam and Eve had Cain and Abel. Then Cain killed Abel and then went off and had kids. So where did his wife come from?"

JT chuckled slightly.

"What's so funny?"

"Pastor Rich said that was one of the most common questions people have. So here goes ... Cain's wife was ... his sister or niece."

"What? His sister? Are you serious?"

"Yeah, I'm serious. I know it sounds strange for people in our day, but let me explain. First, there wasn't anyone else around to marry. Some people

think that God must have made other people, but the Bible says that Eve was the mother of all the living. It also says that Adam and Eve had sons and daughters. Plus—”

“But doesn’t the Bible say that you can’t marry your brother or sister?”

“It does. But that law wasn’t given until the time of Moses, more than two thousand years later. You see, since Adam and Eve were created perfect, there wouldn’t have been any mutations in their genes. Now, everyone has a bunch of genetic mistakes. That’s the main reason why a guy isn’t allowed to marry his sister—there would be a much higher risk of birth defects since they have many of the same mistakes. But going back, the closer you get to Adam and Eve, the fewer mutations there would have been and the lower the risk.”

Jax considered her words carefully. “I guess I can see that. It’s sort of like making a copy of a copy of a copy. The further you get from the original, the lower the quality.”

“That’s right. And that’s why God gave that law to Moses. At the time, it was fairly common for close relatives to marry, but it would have become a serious problem, so God protected them from it.”

“It still sounds weird, though.”

JT laughed. “Yeah, I wouldn’t marry my brother. But what’s really cool is that since Adam and

Eve were created with all of the genetic information for the human race, their kids could have been farther apart genetically than Micky and me or you and Izzy.”

Jax thought for a few moments about some of his biology lessons on genetics. He soon arrived at the conclusion that what she said made sense. “That is cool. I never thought about it before. You know, that makes a lot more sense than what we were taught. Evolutionists have a problem with everyone coming from two perfect people but will believe that everyone came from one cell.”

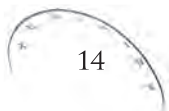
“Yeah, it takes a lot more faith to believe that it all happened by chance than it does to believe that God made everything.”

“You said that Eve was the mother of all the living. Well, if that’s true, then that would mean that we are all related, right?”

“Right.”

Jax shrugged his shoulders. “Then where did the different races come from? I mean, Izzy is African American. Micky’s mom is from India and her dad is Caucasian. But you’re saying that we’re all related.”

JT nodded. “Yeah, if we all come from Adam and Eve, then we would have to be. Besides, like we just talked about, even the evolutionists say that we all go back to a common ancestor, so it’s pretty hypocritical if they attack the Bible on this point.”



“But it’s still a fair question.”

“It is, and the Bible gives us the answer. It says—”

Suddenly a high-pitched whistle echoed through the trees on the other side of the river.

“What was that?” she asked, stopping in her tracks.

Jax stared in the direction of the noise and heard branches snapping and leaves rustling. “I don’t know, but we’d better get out of sight. Come on.”

Izzy pressed himself flat against the ground as his brain registered the scene before him. Darting here and there among terrified villagers, men on horses threw burning torches onto straw roofs. Other horses plunged through the billowing smoke of huts already burning, their riders striking right and left as hapless men, women, and even children came within reach. Izzy gasped and turned his head away.

Micky slowly crawled up the hill to his side. “What did you see?”

He tried to gather his breath and his thoughts before whispering, “There are *people* down there.”

Micky started to climb to her feet. “I wanna see.”

“No.” Izzy grabbed her shoulder and pulled her

back down. “It’s not just people. There’s a small village that’s burning to the ground. It’s under attack. I saw ... I saw—”

“What? What is it?”

He slowly shook his head. “People are dying.”

“What? Izzy, there can’t be people down there. We just saw dinosaurs a couple of hours ago.”

He rolled onto his back and pressed his hands to his head. “I know. I know. *Was it just an illusion?* He looked at Micky. “Maybe my eyes were just playing tricks on me.”

“I’ll check it out,” she said as she crawled toward the top of the hill.

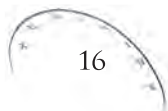
Taking a deep breath, Izzy rolled over and crept after her, barely noticing the sting of the thistle that stabbed his elbow. He kept his head low as he followed her to the top of the hill and gazed through the long grass.

Below, the small village still burned while a few people fled to the south.

A man on horseback held his sword high and yelled. A group of armed men on horses soon gathered around him. With a great shout, they charged after those who had escaped.

“Why would they do that?” Micky asked. Her voice was no more than a whisper.

“I don’t know. It’s awful. Those poor people.” The smell of smoke permeated the air as the wind shifted. Izzy swallowed hard, staring out at



the burning huts below. “There shouldn’t even be people here. It doesn’t make any sense.”