

# *Shadow Lands*

*of the*

*gods*

*By Bill Kuykendall*

*Copyright 2014*

*All Rights Reserved*

## Prologue

It was midnight in the city, but it looked more like High Noon – and not just because the sun was so bright. This strange turn of events had begun months earlier when a new star became visible in the sky to the northeast early in the evening, tracking across the night sky with all the usual stars. It soon became apparent that it was growing brighter each night.

Apocalyptic preachers had begun to appear shortly thereafter. These latter day Prophets of Doom belonged to a religious sect that had a reputation for being annoying – condemning all who did not believe as they did to an Eternity in Hell. Oddly enough, these followers were actually very nice, sincere and intelligent people if one took the time to engage them. Few did, however, as it was impossible to engage them on any subject other than Eternity.

The message they now brought to the street was that the new star was a “sign in the heavens” of God's judgment on the wicked people of this planet. Their message had become even more fervent (if that was possible) to anyone and everyone who would listen, and those who tried to ignore them as well. “Fall upon your knees,” they entreated. “Worship the One True God and repent of your sins, lest this judgment destroy you, and every living thing on this planet.”

They had mostly been ignored at first, but when the star became visible even in the daytime, people became nervous and began to convert to the sect in larger numbers – with many of the newbies standing on street corners crying things like, “Get saved today! Tomorrow may be too late!”

They began to speak of eyewitnesses that had seen hundreds of people dissolve into glittering trails that had shot up into the clouds, touting that as evidence that the judgment of the Almighty was imminent. The fear in the city had become palpable and hundreds of people flocked to the rallies that the sect organized in parks featuring their fire and brimstone preachers. What had begun as a few radicals on the fringe of society appeared to be rapidly

blossoming into a full-blown religious revival.

And still the star grew brighter at an alarming rate, until at last it began to turn the night into day. There had been no darkness for over a week, and on this night, the star appeared larger than the daytime sun itself, and the moon was nowhere to be seen.

Throng of terrified people crowded the streets on this night, milling around and talking about this remarkable event and the religious furor surrounding it. The only thing all of those people could have agreed on (had they been agreeable to anything) was that they were all afraid. Even those who had converted in order to be saved were clearly nervous.

The ground began to shake. High-rise buildings swayed to and fro as shock waves rippled up their structures, and several great cracks opened up in the ground. Molten rock and steam that smelled like burning sulfur began to ooze through the cracks. The panic that ensued left many people trampled to death in the first minutes of the disaster. The shaking continued to grow more violent.

One by one, tall buildings began to crumble and come down, crushing dozens of people in the process. Then all of the remaining buildings seemed to explode at once. Those who were not killed by falling debris soon found themselves trapped between competing lava flows as huge fountains of molten rock exploded into the sky. Within minutes the entire city was dead. In fact, it was as if there had never been a city there.

And not one single street preacher had been spared, despite the fact that many of them died on their knees in prayer.

“Who were these people?” you may ask. Unfortunately, this book is not about any of these hapless souls, but it would be wrong not to mention them at all.

## Introduction

In all the vast Universe of Galaxies filled with stars and planets, there are many strange societies of beings. Some of them are very much like us, and yet, very different. It is the end of one of these worlds that this book is about.

This is the story of three races, none of them terribly unlike us, that share a planet and are faced with its impending destruction.

The first thing that you will notice as we zoom in on their planet is that it shimmers in the light of its star. As we get closer, the reason for this becomes evident – the sunlight is reflecting off of the beautiful rings that encircle it.

The sky is blue as we dive through the clouds toward a continent in the hemisphere facing us to meet the first of the three races in this tale. Here we find many Kingdoms of relatively primitive humanoids laboring beneath a sky that is dominated by the light reflecting from and refracting through the ice crystals of the rings.

###

At slightly more than 300 pages, the full novel “Shadow Lands of the Gods” is too lengthy to post in its entirety here. It is available in print and electronic formats at <http://www.shadowlandsofthegods.com>.

