

LIGHT HORSE
DARK HORSE

BOOK ONE

The
Miraculous Birth



LAVAY BYRD

The Miraculous Birth

Book 1 of the Light Horse, Dark Horse series

Lavay Byrd

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Dedication & Acknowledgements

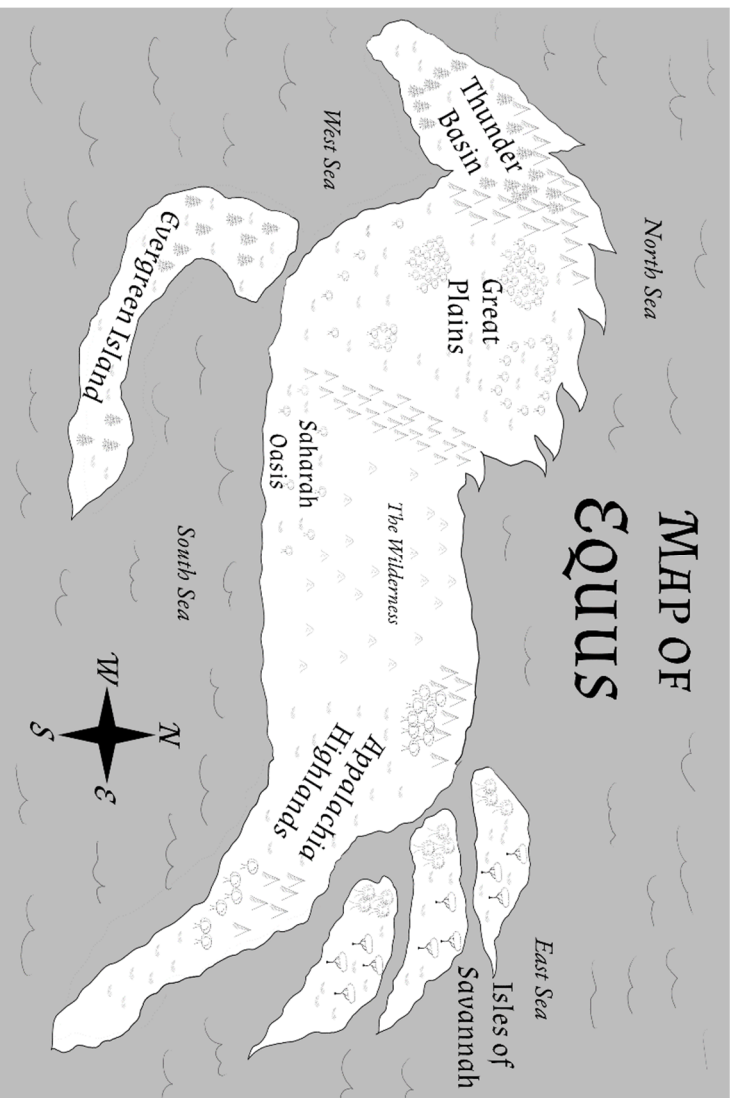
Thank You, Papa God, for giving me the passion for horses and the gift of writing. Because this is my first book I have ever written, I am fully dedicating it to
You.

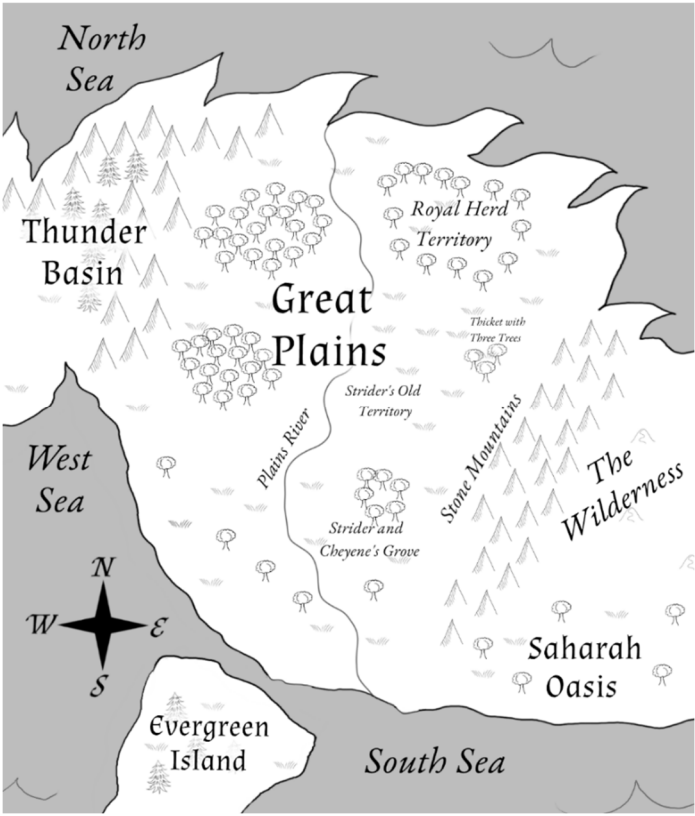
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Thank you all so much, and God bless you!

MAP OF EQUUS







PROLOGUE

One cool night, a herd of horses were quietly grazing beneath the stars. The herd's lead stallion, a handsome buckskin, stood on a hill, taking one last lookout for danger. When he felt it was safe, he turned... and found six foals standing at the bottom of the hill, all staring up at him with wide, pleading eyes. One odd little filly stood out from all the rest, with a golden coat with black patches and white mane.

The lead stallion sighed. “All right, little ones. I’ll tell you the story.”

“YAY!” squealed the foals as they all settled in the grass.

The lead stallion stepped down the hill, cleared his throat, and began: “In the beginning... long before *time* itself even existed: there was the Great Horse, the Light Horse, and the Cloud Horse. Together, we call them the Divine Ones, who ruled from the Celestial Realm, a land far beyond our world.

“The Great Horse created the universe... and made our world called Equus. They filled the world with all sorts of plants, the four seas, the skies, and many creatures. Then He made two horses...” The lead stallion paused. “What were their names?”

“Stallion and Mare!” the foals answered.

The lead stallion smiled. “That’s right! Stallion and Mare were our first ancestors— the father and mother— of all the equines: the horses, the ponies, the donkeys, and the zebras. These equines lived together in one great herd, led by Stallion and Mare. Out of all the creatures in Equus, Stallion and Mare’s herd were the only ones who shared a special bond with The Great Horse. And all was very good...”

The lead stallion paused again, this time lowering his voice in a dramatic effect. “But there was someone who hated everything that was good... especially the Divine Ones. That was the Dark Horse, the evil lord of the Underworld.”

Several foals squirmed. Others shuddered.

The lead stallion continued. “The Dark Horse disguised himself and went to Stallion and Mare’s herd. He told vicious lies about the Divine Ones, calling them selfish tyrants who only want the creations as their slaves. But then he told them that he will give the equines everything they wanted... if they reject the Divine Ones and make him their *one and only ruler*.”

“Now,” the lead stallion continued, “the Great Horse had warned Stallion and Mare that if they break their bond with their Creator, a terrible curse will fall on the land and the entire equine race. But... the equines became greedy... and listened to the Dark Horse, breaking their bond.

“As a result, they became instantly cursed. The pure world was now tainted with wickedness and death. And worse, the souls of the equines were doomed to become slaves to the Dark Horse. This is known as the Curse of Evil...”

The lead stallion paused just to see several horrified faces among the foals, and he smiled. “But that’s not the end of the story, little ones. The Great Horse gave the herd a prophecy: a savior will come and redeem the equines from their fate, defeat the Dark Horse, and rule as the King of all Equus. That Savior is the Light Horse.”

Many of the foals sighed in relief.

The lead stallion chuckled. “Now, who remembers what the prophecy says?”

One young grullo colt stood on his hooves.

“Good, Shadow. Tell it.”

The colt took a deep breath and said the words:

Born from a filly, raised by a stallion, the Light Horse will come.

By his light, the lost will be found, and the broken will be healed.

By his voice, truth will be spoken, and wisdom will be taught.

By his life, the guilty will be forgiven, and the enslaved will be freed.

By his cost, the Curse will end, and the enemy will be defeated.

On the third day, the Light Horse will rise and be king forever.

The lead stallion nodded. "Good, Shadow. Very good. Now... bedtime."

The foals all groaned, but they all got to their hooves and left to find their parents. All except for the unusually colored filly.

The lead stallion smiled at the filly. "Come along, Sierra. Let's find your mother."

They walked together for a moment, and the filly spoke up.

"Daddy?" she said.

"Yes, my dear?"

"Will the prophecy come true?"

The lead stallion looked down at her and smiled. "Of course. Even though thousands and thousands of years has passed... it will come true."

"When?"

The lead stallion paused. "Soon."



Chapter One

SIERRA

In the glorious Celestial Realm, the golden sky was filled with heavenly voices of Winged Horses, celestial creatures of many sorts. Soaring high above was the Great Horse, the all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present Divine One of all creations, his enormous, multicolored

wings and surrounding light presenting his radiance and power.

With a mighty flap of his wings, He landed on a tall emerald-grassy hill, standing before a massive lake of clearest crystal water. He lifted a hoof, and the reflection of the lake shimmered and changed. An image of a single planet hovering in the stars appeared, with a large single continent shaped like a galloping horse surrounded by water. The planet Equus.

The Great Horse studied the planet for a moment, then turned his head behind him. "Hillel," he spoke in a soft, but powerful-commanding voice.

At once, a violet Winged Horse with snow white mane, tail, and wings flew in and landed at the hooves of The Great Horse, Who towered above him like a mountain.

Hillel, one of the three Princes of the Winged Horses, bowed low, spreading his wings. "Yes, my Lord?"

The Great Horse turned back to the mirror-lake. "The time has come for the Prophecy to begin."

Hillel's eyes grew wide. "The Prophecy of the Light Horse, Your Majesty?"

"Yes. I have chosen a mare and a stallion to raise My Son. They, and many others, will witness My Son's Birth

as a sign of Our undying love and the hope for eternal life.” The Great Horse’s eyes glowed, and the mirror changed again.

This time, the mirror revealed a small, dun-pinto mustang filly grazing beside a herd. Her coat was golden and covered in large black patches on her face, neck, back, and legs, while her mane was snow white.

The Great Horse smiled. “This is Sierra, a mustang of The Great Plains. She shall give birth and raise My Son, the Light Horse.”

Hillel nodded. “What is Your command, Great One?”

“Send for Azaziah.”

Hillel bowed and flew away.



On Equus, in a vast country called Great Plains—one of the largest in the Western Regions—roamed many herds of Mustangs. One such herd, the largest of them all, was the Royal Herd, belonging to the powerful ruler of the mustangs, King Argon. Living in this herd is the young filly Sierra.

She was born in another herd, led by her father, a buckskin named Strider, and her mother, a black-and-white pinto name Cheyene. She was born quite small, and

with a birth-defect that caused her pinto patches to be black instead of white against her golden coat. And yet, she was well loved by her parents and everyone in her father's herd.

But that changed when King Argon— her father's older brother and Sierra's uncle— not only stole Strider's herd, but also banished Strider and Cheyene far away from their territory. Sierra, who was only a few weeks old at the time— too young to be weaned—, and everyone in her herd were forced to live in King Argon's territory.

Though King Argon never cared for her, a kind mare named Raven (a former member of Strider's herd) raised Sierra as her own. Now, a three-year-old filly, Sierra had grown independent... but life was still lonely for her.

One warm afternoon, Sierra was grazing quietly a little ways from the herd near the edge of the territory. Suddenly a flash of light erupted in front of her. She leaped back with a squeal, but the light faded. Standing before her was a tall, golden Winged Horse, nothing she had ever seen before in her life.

“Greetings, Sierra,” the Winged Horse greeted with a smile, “Daughter of Strider and Cheyenne.”

Sierra's mouth hung open. *How did he know my name?*

“Do not be afraid, Sierra. I am Azaziah, Prince of the Winged Horses. I have a message for you... from Your Creator.”

Sierra slowly relaxed. She heard stories about Winged Horses, but never thought she'd see one.

“My Creator,” she nickered softly, “You mean The Great Horse?”

“Indeed.”

Sierra frowned. “Why... would The Great Horse... send *me* a message? I'm... no one special...”

Azaziah lowered his head, blue eyes shining gently. “You are more special than you believe, Sierra. The Great Horse has great plans for you.” He lifted his head and spread open his golden wings, shining almost as bright as the sun. “You will give birth to a Colt and you will name Him *Soter*. He is the Light Horse, Son of The Great Horse. He will one day rule all of Equus, and any who truly accepts Him as their Lord will live forever in His Kingdom.”

Sierra stared, stunned. Then she remembered the stories her father had told her when she was little— of how the first equines rejected the Divine Ones and brought upon themselves the Curse of Evil. And the Prophecy of the Light Horse:

Born from a filly, raised by a stallion, the Light Horse will come.

By his light, the lost will be found, and the broken will be healed.

By his voice, truth will be spoken, and wisdom will be taught.

By his life, the guilty will be forgiven, and the enslaved will be freed.

By his cost, the Curse will end, and the enemy will be defeated.

On the third day, the Light Horse will rise and be king forever.

For a moment, Sierra grew ecstatic. *The Prophecy... it's finally happening!* Then she froze. "Did you say... *I'll* give birth to a Colt? The Light Horse?!"

Azaziah nodded.

She stared at the Winged Horse as if he had a hundred heads. "*Me?! I'm only a filly! How can I give birth to a foal? This all seems impossible.*"

“Nothing is impossible for the Great Horse. If You choose to accept, The Cloud Horse of the Divine Ones will come to you, and through His power, the Light Horse will be born from you.”

Light exploded from his form. Sierra backed away and shut her eyes. As the light faded, she opened her eyes. Azaziah was gone.



Meanwhile in The Celestial Realm, The Great Horse watched the entire exchange between Azaziah and Sierra through His mirror-lake. Standing beside Him was the Third Divine One, the Cloud Horse, surrounded by light blue misty clouds.

“Azaziah has delivered the message,” the Cloud Horse said. “Now Sierra must choose to accept her call.”

The Great Horse nodded. “It will not be an easy task. Abaddon the Dark Horse will soon learn of the coming of the Light Horse. He will stop at nothing to ensure that the Birth will not come to pass. It will be up to Sierra to resist, for she must be strong and faithful for herself... and for Us.”



Chapter Two

THE CHOICE

Not long after Azaziah had vanished, Sierra stood frozen in utter shock. Her mind reeled over everything that had happened.

Was... that all a dream? She thought. I must've been dreaming... but it all felt so real.

Then she remembered what Azaziah the Winged Horse had said. *"You will give birth to a Colt and you will*

name Him Soter. He is the Light Horse, the Son of The Great Horse. He will one day rule all of Equus. All who truly accept Him as their Lord will live forever His Kingdom."

She shook her head in disbelief. "Why me?!" she said out loud. "I'm no one special! I'm as small as a donkey! I don't even have a mate! Why would The Great Horse choose me?!"

At once, a memory grew in her mind. When she was very little, she was once bullied by a couple of colts who teased her because she looked different. She went to her mother to cry, and her mother and father comforted her... and encouraged her.

"You are very special to us and to your Creator," her mother Cheyenne had said to her, "He created you just as you are, and He loves you."

Her father Strider had added: *"He made you for a purpose. One day, you will find that purpose... and it will be beautiful."*

As she stood mulling over her thoughts, she didn't notice four mares approaching her from behind, staring at her quizzically. One of them was the black mare Raven, who raised Sierra when she was little.

"Sierra?" Raven spoke.

Startled, Sierra spun around, facing the four mares. She laughed. “Oh, hello! I didn’t see you all there.”

Raven cocked her head. “We saw you standing here staring out into space as if you got your head in the clouds. We even heard you talking to yourself. Is everything all right, dear?”

Sierra glanced back behind her, and blushed. They probably didn’t see Azaziah... and must think she must’ve lost her mind.

“Something... happened earlier,” she said. “You probably won’t believe me. It might even sound... crazy.”

Raven grinned. “Why don’t you try us?”

The three other mares nodded.

Sierra sighed. “All right. First, do you all remember the Prophecy of the Light Horse?”

Raven and the other mares paused thoughtfully.

“Vaguely...” Raven said. “Why do you ask?”

Taking a breath, Sierra then told them the story her father told her about the Creation and the Curse of Evil, and then the Prophecy. Then, sheepishly, she went on to tell them what had happened moments ago with the Winged Horse name Azaziah.

However, a bay blanket-appaloosa stallion name Mateo—— King Argon’s deputy and leader of the royal

guard stallions — was standing nearby the group when he overheard their conversation. He frowned when he heard Sierra mention to the mares about the Light Horse becoming the Ruler of Equus. He snorted, shaking his mane, and cantered off to bring word to King Argon.



King Argon, a powerful gray stallion, was very greatly feared among his herd... as well as all other herds in Great Plains, and for good reason. No stallion would dare challenge the king for his herd ... especially after hearing how he had nearly beaten his own brother for both his territory and herd. Most of all, everyone feared his severe temper. One wrong move would set him off. Sometimes to the point of violence. Otherwise, he was often paranoid and possessive over his position as king. There were even rumors that he even killed his own son, Wildfire, just to keep his title.

Today was an extremely rare day when he was relaxed as he grazed at a secluded spot a little way from the herd. At that moment, his deputy Mateo came trotting to his side.

“What is it, Mateo?” King Argon nickered through a mouthful of grass.

“It’s your niece Sierra, sire.”

Argon snorted in annoyance. “And? She is not my problem. Let one of the mares deal with that filly.”

Mateo didn't hesitate. “This is serious, King Argon. She is stirring up trouble.”

Argon lifted his head. “What is she doing?”



Sierra was still talking to the mares when a loud, roaring neigh shattered the stillness of the air, startling the herd. Sierra and the mares turned to see Argon galloping straight towards them, his ears flat and teeth bared. Raven and the mares scattered and collided into each other, trying to get out of the angry stallion's way. Sierra froze, her eyes wide with fear, as the big gray Mustang approached her, snorting with rage.

“You dare defy my authority, filly?!?” he snarled, “No horse shall take away my position, for I am the strongest of all horses and I am king of this land!”

Sierra didn't say anything but lowered her head, cringing in fright.

Snorting with disgust, Argon turned to his herd. “Let this be a lesson to you: if I hear one word about some Horse that will one day rule over us, you will be banished from this herd and be food for the wolves!”

Everyone bowed their heads.

Argon turned back to Sierra, cold hatred burning in his eyes. “As for you, you will be banished as well if you continue this rumor!” He trotted away, snorting and muttering angrily.

Leaving poor Sierra alone.



The next day, King Argon led his herd further across his expansive territory. He had calmed down after his explosive fit, but kept a sharp eye on his herd, especially his niece. Sierra, still frightened of her uncle, kept her distance... and her mouth shut.

Later that night, as the herd was resting, Sierra fell into a deep sleep... with a nightmare.

In her trance, she was standing in darkness, surrounded by roaring flames. Above the flames two huge red eyes appeared before her. Then, a dark, horse-headed dragon materialized into view, his massive bat-like wings spread. Cold fear froze Sierra’s veins, realizing the creature as none other than the evil Dark Horse, the one who tricked her ancestors into bringing the Curse of Evil on all the equines. She wanted to escape, but could not move, her hooves frozen on the invisible ground.

The Dark Horse (named Abaddon) gave a wicked smile, revealing his long fangs and razor sharp teeth.

“Hello, Sierra,” he said in a low, growling voice. “Do you really believe that The Great Horse would choose a puny little horse to give birth to the Light Horse?” His sinister laugh echoed above the flames. “Look at you! You’re not even *tall* enough to be a mustang! You are not *worthy* of the Great Horse’s time.” He paused. “Even if you *do* become pregnant, no one will believe you. Besides, if King Argon were to find out... you’ll most likely end up crushed under his hooves.”

Sierra remembered King Argon’s raged face. She shut her eyes, whimpering in fear. Suddenly, the flames vanished. Only the Dark Horse stood towering above her.

He drew closer, his glowing red eyes directly in front of Sierra. “However, my dear, there is an alternative.” His voice had changed to a strange alluring tone. “Not only will I help you avoid this terrible fate, but I can do so much more.” He glanced ahead.

Sierra turned, staring at her own reflection through a mirror (an object no horse has ever heard of). Before she could ask, her reflection transformed into the most beautiful horse she had ever seen. The mare in the mirror was taller, adorned with a golden coat covered in snow-white patches. Her silvery mane and tail were so long that they fell past her hooves.

Is... that... me? She thought.

Abadon stood beside her, now tall as a thoroughbred, and grinning slyly.

“Oh yes, my sweet,” he purred into her ear, “This can be your true future. As the most beautiful horse in all Equus, you can give birth to foals worthy to rule Great Plains. All you have to do is to reject The Great Horse’s call. Heed my guidance, and you shall have what your heart desires. The choice is yours, Sierra.”



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