

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Seed of Evil**

Something rustled in the stillness of the dark night. The moons glowed like a dim candle, casting a grim reddish light over the meadow. The grasses swayed vigorously as a gentle breeze suddenly became a roaring tempest. It was a tiny windstorm, just about the size of a car. It spun wildly and twisted the grasses and shrubs, ripping them out by the roots and throwing them into its spiral. An electrical charge snapped in the vortex, and then more charges appeared. The shocks of electricity multiplied into a ball of energy.

The ball expanded to cover several square feet of ground. A form appeared in the middle, and the lightning charges began to subside. The ball of energy suddenly vanished, and the wind dissipated, throwing the grasses into the field. It left a concave circle of burnt soil, with flames still licking at its edges. There was a man kneeling in the center.

The man stood up. He was a tall, thin, pure white man with a flattened nose. He reached up to feel his completely bald head and the breeze picked up a little. Upon feeling it, he opened his eyes as if startled, and looked down.

“Where the fuck is my cloak?” Voldemort screamed. He looked around. A couple of fat, round buffalo-type creatures stood chewing their cud a dozen yards away. They looked back at him with total disinterest. Except for them, there was no other object around. No wand and no cloak.

Voldemort could barely make out the mountains against the dim sky. Far away in the valley, a high waterfall glowed in the darkness. He was in a broad meadow, where the knee-high grass appeared to be a brilliant green laced with white flowers. At least it looked that way in the dark. In the distance, lights glowed at the bottom of the hill. Voldemort looked down once more, and trudged off toward the lights wearing only a scowl.

He approached a small village that looked like it belonged in the medieval era. He saw no people. Behind one of the little mud and straw huts, Voldemort saw laundry hanging on a line. The only item large enough to be a cloak was a brightly-colored flowery silk robe. He grabbed it and put it on.

Voldemort was furious. There were many different ways to travel through time, but he needed to cover space as well. A lot of the methods had flaws. The contraption from H.G. Wells’ Time Machine stayed in one place. The Stargate stayed in one time. The Time-Turner used by Harry Potter was too inexact. Apparation could never cover the distance. The phone booth in Bill and Ted’s Excellent Adventure was not airtight.

Various other methods involved a starship, a wormhole, or a Vulcan, none of which Voldemort had.

It was Bellatrix who recommended the method from the Terminator films. Voldemort had not seen them. He boycotted Arnold Schwarzenegger since the Conan series, which was so imprecise about magic that it approached blasphemy.

But Bellatrix had left out the little detail about clothes. He imagined her and the rest of the death-eaters laughing their asses off back on Earth.

Voldemort had to find out where he was, and when. The plan was simple, really. Bellatrix had said this form of time-travel was a one-way trip, so Voldemort had a true challenge in front of him. The goal was to start from nothing and take over the Empire, and then he could figure out how to get back to Earth.

It was exactly what he wanted; No death-eaters, no technology, and no help. He looked down at his flowery cloak. Nothing. He had covered one base already.

Next, he needed a wand. Now that he didn't need to deal with Potter, anything would do. Voldemort peered through a window into the little hut. A pudgy man sat at a table, writing with a brightly-colored quill. A woman sat next to him, reading from a parchment or something, shaped more like a large leaf.

The quill would work for now. Voldemort kicked in the small front door and ducked through the opening. It was a foot shorter than he was. He could barely stand up in the tiny house.

The woman screamed and ran toward the back door. "Who are you?" yelled the man, standing up.

"Hello," Voldemort said, grinning broadly like he was there to sell vacuum cleaners. He raised a hand and drew it across the air like he was petting an invisible cat. The man lifted the quill. "Yes, I will take that, thank you" said the Dark Lord as he pulled the quill from the man's hand.

"Ovie, what are you doing?!" yelled the woman.

"I always wondered if that would work," Voldemort said, looking at his hands.

The man trembled, but he stood firm. "Please, we are peaceful. Take what you need, friend, and go," he said.

Voldemort felt his blood surge at the man's insolence. Friend? It took great effort to maintain a smile.

"I just wanted to thank you, Ovie," Voldemort said. "And I need to know if this is the Galactic Empire."

"Empire? What?" Suddenly, the man's eyes shifted downward, behind Voldemort. The Dark Lord turned around. A small boy of maybe seven years old stood in a doorway.

"Who's this?" Voldemort asked.

"Palpie, no!" the woman screamed.

Voldemort looked at her calmly. "Why don't you shut the hell up?" Voldemort said as he drew his hand through the air again. The woman tightened her lips.

"I'll bet you wish you could do that, Ovie," Voldemort said to the man, wagging the quill like a hectoring nun.

"Friend-" said the man, and Voldemort drew his hand once more. The man stopped.

The boy hid behind the wall. "Oh, no, don't run." said the Dark Lord. "I want you to see this, boy. I am going to kill both your parents, but I will leave you alive. In gratitude for these generous gifts." He gestured to the colorful pink, lime, and purple robe and the bright yellow and orange quill.

Ovie and his wife stirred at the words. Voldemort stood as straight as he could, raised the quill and yelled “Avada Kedavra!” the curse filled the room, and the both of them immediately froze and dropped to the floor.

The boy’s face contorted into a silent scream, and then he began to bawl loudly.

“Yes, yes, let it out boy,” Voldemort cooed, patting the boy on the head. “You’ll remember this for the rest of your life.”

Something moved outside the house. Voldemort looked through the broken doorway. A light had turned on in another house across the way.

“This is fun, isn’t it?” said the Dark Lord to the boy. “But I have to be on my way. There’s an awful lot to do. A lot of awful to do.”

He stepped out through the doorway, and disappeared into the darkness, leaving the screeching child.

The boy’s wailing was like music to him. For the past few years on Earth, he had missed the din of people screaming in pain. It was nice to hear people cry again. He looked up at the sky, and noticed the stars for the first time. There were so many of them. Soon enough, they would all belong to him.

He looked at the colorful quill in his hands. It worked well enough. It was a little weak, but quick. He liked that. Voldemort walked on, thinking that this was what life was all about. He was exploring an ancient frontier, with little more than a dream and a great deal of dark magic on his side.

When daylight came, Voldemort had walked for many miles. He had entered a new realm that was much more populous. Far away he could see a major city. It wasn’t urban, somehow, but he could tell it was a capital or something. Huge reddish walls rose from a great lake, and waterfalls flowed from everywhere, seemingly with no beginning or end, like an M.C. Escher drawing.

There was magic here, but not the kind Voldemort liked. The landscape was covered with colorful trees and grasses. He passed grand lakes of deep blue, and meadows dotted with brilliant flowers and those huge bovine beasts that waddled and chewed their way through them. Birds and butterflies buzzed about him as he walked, and he occasionally swatted at them or blasted them to bits with a curse.

The Dark Lord finally entered the city in broad daylight. At first, he wondered if he would attract attention dressed the way he was, barefoot, with a pink flowery silken robe and brightly-colored quill. But most of the people walking around wore even more outrageous garb. They barely noticed him. The city was filled with gleaming, columned buildings and temples. Sleek spaceships flew overhead, in bright red, yellow, and silver. Voldemort had never seen so many rich colors in one place, and it made his blood boil.

He ascended a grand stairway, with the intention of entering a government building and taking a starship. From the movies, Voldemort knew exactly where he was; he was on Naboo. The plan had worked, at least partially. When he had

arrived was still an open question. He did not know if the death-eaters knew what they were doing when they conjured the time-travel apparatus from the Terminator flicks.

As he got to the top of the stairway, black curtains suddenly unfurled from the top of each entrance between the columns. Matching black banners dropped from the poles around the central square he had walked through. A horn blew somewhere in the distance, and everyone around him suddenly dropped to their knees and bent with their faces to the ground.

“What’s going on?” Voldemort demanded. A man near him was crouched over, and seemed like he was crying.

“The senator has been found dead. Last night,” said the man between sobs.

“What senator?” Voldemort hissed.

“Senator Ovaltine, and his wife, killed in their house. Their son witnessed the whole thing. Tragic.”

“Yes. Tragic.”

Voldemort looked around. He could hear a chorus of quiet sobbing from all around the city. It wasn’t like the pleasing anguished cries of the Earthlings. This was purely sympathetic and poignant. Voldemort didn’t like it at all.

“What is the son’s name?” he asked.

“Palpatine. Just a young boy. He will be senator now.”

Voldemort silently shook his head. He had his answer. He had arrived early by maybe 50 years, and the empire didn’t exist yet. The plan had changed. He reached up and tore down one of the massive black banners. He was going to need it.