

Ren Lexander

HELL DEMONS OF L.A.



HOLLYWOOD

Battle One of HellDemons

HellDemons of L.A.

Battle One of HellDemons

Ren Alexander

© Copyright Ren Alexander 2015

The Eight Battles of HellDemons

HellDemons of L.A.

HellDemons of New York

HellDemons of Las Vegas

HellDemons of Washington

HellDemons of New Orleans

HellDemons of Bangkok

HellDemons of Rome

HellDemons of Jerusalem

www.helldemons.net

Translator's note

This is not the place to add to the controversy surrounding “The HellDemon Chronicles” – as the pages recovered in Jerusalem have been dubbed by the world press.

After last year's sensational events at the Dome of the Rock, I was one of the team of experts flown in by the Israeli government to analyze the handwritten pages recovered at the site.

It was immediately obvious to me that the style of the Sanskrit was archaic both in structure and vocabulary. What was more remarkable is that the style changed and evolved in the course of the document.

The attempts which the writer made to adapt ancient Sanskrit to describe the current world were both clumsy and, on many occasions, strangely charming. As were his attempts to transliterate modern English words into ancient Sanskrit

When I was commissioned to do the English translation of this first section of the Chronicles, I faced head-on the significant challenge of rendering this unique Sanskrit document into modern English. Early on, I made the decision to be true to the overall sense and tone which frequently meant having to be less strict in the rendering of vocabulary and structure.

It would be remiss of me not to thank my friend and comrade in the exploration of ancient religions and languages, Andrew West. The work we did in the early days

together on the Chronicles constitute the most inspiring period in my professional life.

I must also acknowledge my great debt to Professor Ashna Mahjumdar of the University of Mumbai who vetted the various stages of the translation. She was unfailingly generous with her time and deep expertise.

- Dr Ren Lexander, Ph.D.

HellDemons of L.A.

Salutations Kuperan,

As promised, the daily log of my mission.

Should I fall, little brother, it is likely you who will be called upon to take up the remains of my mission. Should this come to pass, I trust this log will aid you in learning from my tactical or execution errors and, should the stars be with me, learning from my victories.

In addition, it is my privilege to honor your request to know more about world of earth-walkers as it now is.

Whether I fall or prevail, I trust that my observations will prove of value to you.

If you read this after I have fallen, I embrace you in spirit.

Do better than I.

DAY ONE

Long is it since I wore the cloak of man and walked among them as one of their own.

I enter their level at the selected time and place.

At first, I am discomforted that one of the earth-walkers will point at me. One of their number will surely perceive that I am a stranger in an unknown land, that I am clinging to imitated normality.

But no earth-walker points at me. They walk with their eyes averted, seemingly determined not to notice others

It is well after sunrise in the Town of the Queen of the Angels.

Immediately I am stung by a smell to rival that of oily rotting rats. The stink is both slight and piercing. It fogs my brain and wrinkles my human face. But no earth-walker seems to notice. The stink is not quite like anything I have smelt before. It is

everywhere. Walking away, it follows me. Walking further still, the odor does not fade. I look up. The sky is stained. The stinging stench is in the sky itself.

The odor is greatest when close to the metal carriages that the earth-walkers now sit in to transport themselves. The earth-walkers seem not to notice the oily odor. They are like stablehands who can no longer detect the stink of horse droppings.

It is my good fortune that my nose also begins to adjust and the pervasive stink starts to fade into the background of twilight odors.

I position myself in a protected location so I can survey the street.

On the hoofbeats of the stench comes the slap of noise. The metal carriages create noises like the beating of many tiny hammers. Some make noises like a giant horse farting endlessly. Some bleat randomly like the loudest and most discordant of sheep. Great is the number of such carriages, greater than the mustering of chariots before a war.

The purpose of these metal carriages is to move sitting earth-walkers as slowly as possible. They move in measured, erratic slowness, in the manner of a king in a procession.

Are they likewise moving in stately lethargy so the occupants can be noticed?

Rarely do the carriages go faster than a trotting horse.

These metal carriages are honored by earth-walkers. Almost all the street is dedicated to them. Those earth-walkers without carriages are confined to walking in narrow strips on the side of the street.

All the earth-walkers defer to metal stakes which hold up boxes of three enclosed colored lanterns. They slow and stop for these metal stakes and go when the colored lanterns indicate permission.

When earth-walkers hurry past me, I capture the waft of their scent. I know this will sound strange to you, Kuperan, but all seem to have found ways to mask or decrease their earth-walker odor.

Evenso, the cheese smell of earth-walker quietly blankets the street. The demon has hidden wisely. In a village I could detect his scent but here the mass of earth-walkers is too great. If the demon left a scent, it would be swept away like a leaf on a river after rain.

What can I tell you, trusted Kuperan, to give you the flavor of these new times?

Giant towering buildings. Streets without grass, without dirt, without dogs, without horses, without pigs. Overrun with earth-walkers. Few plants. Few birds.

Straight lines. Straight streets. Straight buildings.

Everything is rock hard.

So many things are gray.

If there was a fence around this street, I would think it was a prison. It seems designed to be a prison. Most of the earth-walkers act as if it was a prison. They are suspicious of the other inmates, worried about being approached by others, worried about being bothered by them. They do not meet each other's eyes. They do not seem to know the other inhabitants of their town.

Sometimes it seems like a prison for the mentally fallen. Many earth-walkers talk not to other earth-walkers but instead talk to themselves.

As I observe more carefully, I realize that they are talking to metal rectangles. It reminds me of monks chanting to sacred objects. They touch the rectangles gently and gaze at them often. They must be central to the main religion of this town.

But I am newly arrived in a new land and cannot claim understanding.

What I can say with certainty is this: there are no spiritual buildings. Not that I can see. When we were last on the earth, the highest building in any town was always the one built to honor the spiritual... the temple, the stupa, the shrine reaching up towards the sky. Now there are impossibly tall buildings which breach the sky but none of them are temples. The tallest of tall buildings seem to be the place where the earth-walkers come to day work. It must be that now the earth-walkers worship work or what it is they receive from working.

Is this why the demon has come here and now?

Because there is no spiritual awareness here?

No knowledge of demons?

And so no defense against one?

A smattering of earth-walkers place cylinders in and out of their mouths. The cylinders glow red at the end. They breathe in only when the cylinders are in their mouths. I can understand the wisdom of these cylinders. I too would like a device to filter out the rancid air of this town. But when such earth-walkers get close to me, they smell like the ash of burnt insects. This makes me unsure that these cylinders filter the air and perhaps have a different purpose.

I must trust that the stars have guided me to the right spot. The one I seek will stand out. That one will be different. Look different. Smell different. Act differently.

Occasionally I glance an earth-walker who seems different... they smile... they are present... but in an instant that smile is gone and they return to the twilight steps of prisoners in an open land.

I realize a thought... Around me are many buildings where the front can be seen through... the front wall is like a thin sheet of hard water.... Not white like ice. But clear.

So I begin to hunt, looking through the clear sheets of hard water.

Sometimes an earth-walker looks back at me from within and frowns. Another one smiles but quickly looks away.

I move on to the next building and the next and the next. I come to one and inside there is someone who is different. She smiles. She gives drinks and food to other earth-walkers. She helps. She gives them the gift of her smile and sometimes the other earth-walkers smile back. She seems happy to help. She is like a fire beacon guiding a ship to safe harbor.

Others pay attention to her and talk to her. They hand things to her. Paper. Circles of metal. Her smile does not fade. Like glistening white marble in black marble skin.

Earth-walkers come out of this building carrying paper drinking cups. The fragrance is bitter, tangy, sharp.

I look again inside. Still this young female, slender and dark, helps others.

It is an inn. It serves drinks and food. This female earth-walker and two other women wear identical clothes to show that they are different from all others, a special class, a spiritually superior class, the class of helpers.

I walk in and survey the room. The bitter, tangy smell is everywhere in here. A man stands up from a small table so I sit where he sat. From this position I can survey the inn. The helper comes over to me. "Ciao bello. What would you like?"

"The stilts... the pointy sandals. Women are forced to wear them to prevent them from running away from men. Yes?"

The helper looks around at women whose feet are bound in strange, sloped footwear. The flicker of a fleeting smile. "Actually they are to make men run towards

you. Also useful for maxing out credit cards and making gay designers rich. What can I get you, bello?"

She is close enough now so that I can smell her. Sweet. Bitter. Sunlight. It tells me that I am in the right place.

"You have to order something. You can't just sit there."

"The black water."

"Coffee? What sort of coffee? Bello, I don't want to push you but it is the morning rush."

"Up to you."

"Cappuccino it is. Do you want biscotti with that?"

"Yes?"

"Cappuccino and biscotti it is." She writes English letters down on a piece of paper. She has skills and education. Very impressive.

She uses a tiny writing cylinder to make the marks. I vow to one day acquire a machine with that power. It is the most profound thing I have so far seen.

She turns from me. The odor of doubt layers over her sunlight fragrance. She goes and passes my order onto the male cook who goes to great trouble and effort in preparing black water. She serves other earth-walkers. And smiles. She helps an old woman with a walking cage to sit down at a table and she returns to me. "One cappuccino and biscotti." It is placed in front of me. The cappuccino is white. The

topping seems to have been made from bovine milk. It has a pattern etched into it.

The leaf from a tree.

I have another question for my helper. "The purpose of these metal carriages is to slow humans down. Yes?"

She looks out through the solid sheet of water. "Yes, it is. Definitely. Absolutely. They're doing their job particularly well today, aren't they?" She gestures at the cup. "Enjoy."

"Thank you."

"Prego."

She turns away from me, the smell of doubt even stronger on her. This helper is the first to spot me as an outlier in the averaged world. I have to become better at wearing the cloak.

She moves on to help others. A man speaks to her. He is white of hair and broad of smile. He sits with other older men. They speak simultaneously at each other in Italian. The other men address him as Giorgio. He speaks with a big personality. I believe him to be the owner. He speaks in the way of friendly authority to my helper, using the term "Brandi". Perhaps she is a slave and has been branded.

But soon I realize it is her calling name.

I do not like the black water. It is dank. But I become inured to the taste and I realize it is sending fire around my brain. Brandi, my helper, returns to me. "Ciao, bello. Can I get you anything else?"

"This coffee this cappuccino I like this coffee cappuccino very much and I would like another one very much and I thought its purpose was to slow you down because everyone stops to drink slowly but now I know it actually makes you very fast and I feel like I could outrun a lion."

"So... I am thinking... decaf."

The coffee cappuccino is giving me many new ideas. "Those rectangles held up to faces and touched all the time are toys for adults so that they don't have to talk to each other or look at each other, yes?"

The Brandi helper looks away from me. "The cellphones? Yes... Yes, their purpose is to prevent you having to actually talk to real live people. Definitely. Absolutely. Very important to talk to other people as little as possible."

"What is decaf is decaf the same as cappuccino I like cappuccino I feel that I could wrestle three lions right now."

"Decaf, it is."

The time passes. The sun moves higher in the sky. There are fewer earth-walkers in the inn now. Some of the Italian-speakers have left. The world has slowed. Fewer earth-walkers on the street. Fewer metal carriages. The coffee cappuccino has

started to slow in my veins. Brandi approaches me. "Would you like some more black water?" Her smell is glorious. I smell and I smile. "Okay, I think we're done here... That will be \$13.50. Cash or credit?"

"The credit is the little rectangles and the cash is the paper and round metal."

"I have a bad feeling where this conversation is going... What, pray tell, do they use to pay for black water on the planet you come from?"

"Gold?"

"Son of a bitch... Don't you make me call the boss over. These Italians may seem all very friendly but they invented the mafia you know. The Sicilian Godfather mafia. He'll be coming over here and he'll be waving his arms around like a pigeon on speed." I take the plain gold chain from around my neck and offer it as barter. "What are you doing? Son of a bitch. Okay... okay... okay.... You telling me this is gold, right? You want me to believe this is gold, right?"

"Gold."

"Gold-plated maybe."

"Gold."

"Son of a bitch... Oh, he'll blame me for not spotting that you were a loony. I can't even see any pockets in that weird outfit. Why does God hate me?" I cannot stop myself sniffing the air. Glorious. "Why do you keep doing that!?"

"Your soul smells like lemons."

Brandi raises her index finger, breathing in as if she is about to say something. She changes her mind and puts forward her palm as if to indicate that I should stop forward motion. She shakes her head and then takes the gold chain out of my hand. "Okay... This is what's going to happen. I am going to take this supposed gold necklace and I am going to pay your goddamn bill out of my own goddamn pocket. Even if it's gold-plated junk it's probably worth more than two cappuccinos and a biscotti. I am going to hock or sell this 'gold'. You come back tomorrow. In the afternoon. When I'm on afternoon shift. If there's any change from selling this junk, I'll give you the difference minus a very large tip. If there is a shortfall, I will go Hannibal Lecter on your butt, and rip out your liver and fry it up for customers. Are we clear on this?"

I cannot help but smile at her. Even though I do not fit in with the world of earth-walkers and so have caused her problems, she still sets out to help me.

"Do not ever tell my boss I did this because he will kick my butt." All I can do is smile at the Brandi helper. "This would be where you get your ass out of my cafe."

I am about to tell her that I did not ride in on a donkey but stop myself because I think it is perhaps a new earth-walker expression which means that I should leave. I stand and, as I turn to leave, her voice is without smile.

"Ciao bello."