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Author's Dedication

This book is dedicated with love and gratitude to my parents: To my father, for the letter and the law. To my mother, for the wonder and the word.

Dedication on this book must also go out to the many who fought and died in the Middle East during its writing: With love, and the enduring hope that your sacrifices may at least help pave the way for lasting peace.

Special Thanks

I would be remiss if I did not give credit here where it is certainly due. First and foremost, very special thanks to my friend and mentor, Harry Heckel, who has given me more than he'll ever know — most of which lies outside the scope of this project. And the most sincere of thanks to my two patron saints, Justin Achilli and James Estes Looking Eagle, without whose patience and support I never would have rounded the bend on this labor of love. To all the rest of you who have helped me along the way: You are not forgotten here, you are simply too many in number to mention by name.

But I thank you.



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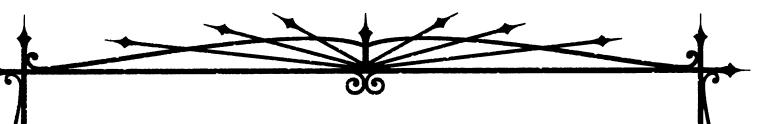
This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. This book contains mature content. Reader discretion is advised.

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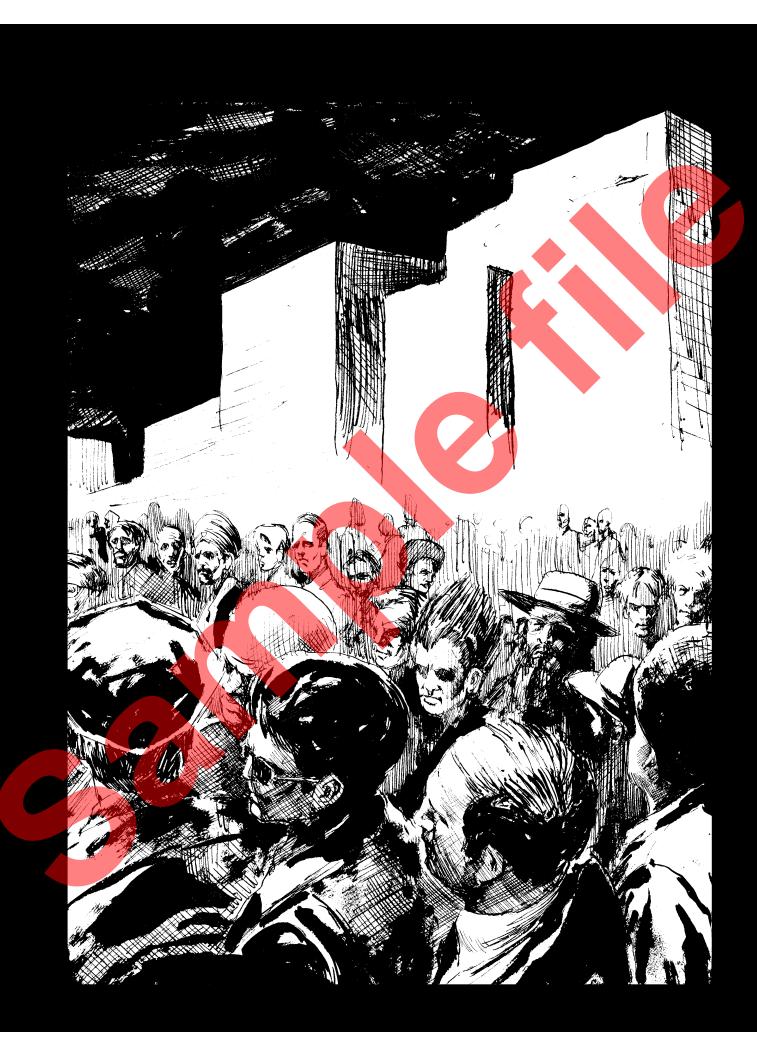
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How shall I go in peace and without sorrow? Nay, not without a wound in the spirit shall I leave this city; long were the days of pain I have spent within its walls, and long were the nights of aloneness, and who can depart from his pain and his aloneness without regret?

—Kahlil Gibran, "The Prophet"

Older than time itself, Cairo sits as a gleaming gem amid the Egyptian sands. But is its glitter a beacon of hope or the harbinger of something more terrible?