

Light Horse Dark Horse

Book 4

The Final Battle

Authored & Illustrated by

Lavay Byrd

The Final Battle

Book 4 of the Light Horse, Dark Horse series

Lavay Byrd

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The “Light Horse Dark Horse” Series

Book 1: *The Miraculous Birth*

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Prologue



In a bright flash of light, Jehoash, the powerful red Warrior Prince of the Winged Horses, appeared above the sky. With a mighty flap of his large, flaming wings, Jehoash dove, then glided above the meadows of Evergreen Island, homeland of the donkeys. After an hour of flying, he came across a high hill, where he landed swiftly on all four hooves.

Stretching his neck forward, he peered down on several herds of donkeys gathering in a meadow. They were surrounding a mysterious horse. But what Jehoash saw made him narrow his glowing blue eyes.

“So he’s here,” a voice murmured behind him.

Jehoash turned his head to find a golden Winged Horse walking to his side. His eternal-long friend and fellow Winged Horse prince, Azaziah.

Jehoash turned back to the gathering donkeys. “It’s confirmed.” He flattened his ears and nodded in gesture. “And *they* have been on Equus ever since.”

Azaziah looked to where Jehoash was indicating. In the distance, a large swarm of dark creatures fluttered about in the air like wasps, while some others were lurking beside the unsuspecting donkeys. The Goblins, the Dark Horse’s minions.

Azaziah frowned as he lowered his eyes to the mysterious horse in the center of the gathering.

“What *is* he planning?”

“Nothing good, as always,” Jehoash muttered. “Only The Great Horse knows.”

The golden Winged Horse paused. “What of the Light Horse’s followers? Are they aware of his presence?”

Jehoash raised his noble head, the sword on his head gleaming. “Not yet.” He paused. “Not until... the final days.”

Azaziah was quiet for a moment. “So, we wait.”

Jehoash nodded. “For now.”

Chapter 1 - Hope



One cool, winter-late afternoon in the Mustang region of Great Plains, all was quiet as mists drifted in the air. Aurora, a young dun-pinto Mustang mare, stood alone nearby a small water hole, a sad look in her eyes.

Two days ago, Lightning, her adopted older brother, had died in his sleep. Aurora, her mate Midnight and their family zebra friend Kenya, had just arrived to visit Lightning's herd when they learned the sad news from Starlight, Lightning's deputy. Yesterday, the horses held a funeral for Lightning, mourning their loss—yet no one was more severely heartbroken than Aurora.

Aurora could not understand why Lightning had to die. He had just entered his prime at eleven years of age. Yet it happened.

Hearing sounds of hooves, Aurora turned her head to her mate Midnight, a handsome, black-and-white Paint, walking towards her.

“You all right?” he nickered gently.

Aurora smiled through her tears as she nuzzled him. “Lightning lived a life dedicated to Soter. Now he's with Thunder, Stone and the others of the Seven... and Mother and Father in The Paradise...” She halted, trying not to cry.

Midnight laid his neck across hers, and nuzzled her shoulder. For a long time, Aurora stood in silence, tears falling down her face, as she thought about her adopted brother, the last of Soter's Seven—the founders of the Soter Herd.

Besides Soter, Lightning was the second-best brother Aurora could ever have. Ever since her parents, Shadow and Sierra, went to The Paradise five years ago, Lightning was there to comfort her and encourage her, even while leading the new herd Shadow had given him in their new home, Appalachia Highland, one of the Western Regions of Equus.

One year after Shadow and Sierra left, Lightning decided to return to their birthplace, Great Plains. Aurora, who had grown old enough to leave the herd, chose to stay with Midnight. It was a hard decision to make, but Aurora promised that she will visit her adopted brother. Little did she know that the day she said goodbye to Lightning was the last she would see him alive.

"I know you miss him," Midnight whispered, breaking her thoughts again. "But we'll see him again. Just like Shadow and Sierra."

Aurora remembered what Soter had said to her the day He personally escorted her mother and father to The Paradise. "*Do not be sad forever, Aurora. One day, we will all be together again.*"

Taking comfort in those words, Aurora sighed, moving her head away from Midnight's chest to peer behind him. Just up ahead was the second largest herd of Mustangs in Great Plains (the first being the Royal Herd). There were many new young stallions and mares, yet Aurora recognized a few older horses that lived since Shadow was band stallion, including the herd's new leader, the leopard appaloosa stallion, Starlight, who was Shadow's deputy.

Aurora then glanced towards Kenya standing near the herd. It wasn't difficult to spot the mare, for she was the *only* zebra among horses. Standing beside Kenya were Aurora and Midnight's twin weanling foals, Sol and Luna. Sol was a palomino colt with white patches on his body, while Luna was black and white like her father, only her mane and tail were snow white. Being a few months old, Sol and Luna never met Lightning, and Aurora had planned to introduced them to their uncle. But now, they may never have the chance. At least not in Equus.

After studying her foals for a moment, Aurora took a deep breath and strolled towards them, and Midnight followed close by. As their parents approached, Sol and Luna trotted forward to nuzzle their mother.

"Are you okay, Mommy?" Luna nickered in a small voice, gazing at Aurora with her hazel eyes.

Aurora smiled gently. “Yes, sweetie. I’ll be fine.”

Truthfully, she was still grieving not only Lightning but her parents as well. Though it had been a few years, the pain of loss stung even worse with Lightning’s death. Still, Aurora shook her mane as if to calm herself.

Turing to the zebra mare, she said: “Thank you, Kenya, for watching over the foals for me.”

Kenya had gone completely deaf, but she understood what Aurora was saying by “reading” her lips. She nodded with a smile. “You’re welcome.”

Like Aurora, she, too, was severely heartbroken over Lightning’s death. After all, she wouldn’t have become a member of the Soter Herd if Lightning hadn’t miraculously shown up in the Isles of Savannah when she was a filly.

Deciding to cheer her friend up a little, Kenya smiled and said to the twins, “Who wants to play in the water hole?”

At that notion, Sol and Luna both neighed in unison: “ME!”

Kenya shook her stiff, stripped mane and snorted. “I’ll race you!”

But the foals were already dashing towards the small water hole.

“Hey!” Kenya thundered after them.

Aurora and Midnight laughed as they watched the three splash in the water, and Aurora started to feel a little better.

“Who are they?” she heard Midnight say.

Glancing to where her mate was looking, she noticed Starlight at the front of the herd, appearing to be talking with three strange equines: a tall, palomino stallion, a beautiful, black Arabian mare, and a brown donkey jack.

To both Aurora and Midnight’s surprise, the Arabian and the donkey each had a Seal of the Light Horse— a glowing, star-shaped marking— on their foreheads. Only those who have become members of the Soter Herd, followers of the Light Horse, has this seal.

As for the palomino, Midnight became a little uneasy for a couple of reasons. First, the stallion didn’t have the Seal of the Light Horse. What made it even more unsettling was that he was clearly much older than Midnight and more experienced, bearing a few scars on his coat. Midnight feared that the older stallion might want to prove his dominance in a duel.

They watched Starlight and the visitors continue to talk with each other. Starlight said something, and the visitors stared in shock. The Arabian mare burst into tears, while the donkey had a look of disbelief on his face. The palomino looked stunned, but nuzzled the Arabian mare

A few minutes later, Starlight then started to lead the three visitors towards Midnight and Aurora. It was then that Kenya and the twins decided to join Aurora and Midnight, watching the equines curiously.

“What a funny-looking horse!” Luna nickered to Sol, indicating the donkey.

“He’s a donkey, Luna,” Aurora scolded. “Be respectful.”

Presently, Starlight approached them. “Aurora, Midnight, these are old friends of Lightning. They would come and visit from time to time.” He nodded to each of them in gesture, starting with the palomino. “This is Orion, his mate Leila, and their friend Rocky.”

Before he could continue, the black Arabian name Leila looked at Aurora with interest. “You are Lightning’s sister Aurora.”

Aurora blinked in surprise. “Yes, I am...”

Orion, the palomino, spoke in a deep voice as he nodded. “We are sorry for your loss.”

Aurora returned the gesture, struggling not to cry again.

Midnight replied, “Thank you. Time will heal. After all, at least he’s in The Paradise.”

Orion didn’t answer but merely tilted his ears back with a sidelong glance, slightly uncomfortable.

Leila lowered her head towards Sol and Luan, a look of surprise on her face. “He never said you had foals!”

Aurora glanced at the twins. “He... didn’t know...”

Rocky, the donkey had a very odd look on his face as he was staring behind Midnight.

“He didn’t say that his zebra friend was so pretty...” he murmured.

Kenya drew back a little, disturbed by the silly way the donkey was staring at her.

Not noticing the exchange, Aurora craned her neck to her foals. “These are Sol and Luna.”

The twins wiggled their tails and smiled widely. “Hi!”

“Oh, they are beautiful!” Leila commented, and then her smile faded in sadness.

Orion also looked at the foals, but a strange look of unease flashed in his eyes. Pawing the ground, he turned his body to leave. “Well... we won’t take up more of your time...”

“Why don’t you stay with us?” Starlight asked. “It’s getting rather late. You are welcome to have dinner with us. You can even spend the night.”

Orion looked at Leila and Rocky, who nodded in agreement. “We would gladly accept your invitation,” he said finally.

As everyone made their way back to the herd, Leila came close to Aurora to say, “Lightning told us all about you. He even said that he missed you.” She paused, lowering her ears in sadness. “I do wish there was something I could do to make you feel better.”

The young Mustang mare smiled at the Arabian. “Thank you, Leila. I’m glad Lightning made some new friends... and fellow members of the Soter Herd,” she added, noticing the Seal that seemed to glow on the black mare’s head.

Leila twitched her ears with a grin. “Yes. At least Lightning is now at peace. He even spoke of how we will one day be together... when the Light Horse returns as King.”

Aurora remembered the day when Soter came back to life three days after his death. He had promised them that He will return, and everyone who accepts and believes in Him will live forever in His kingdom. Aurora hoped that that day would come quickly.