#1

ORDO ORIGIN

BEFORE THE MYTH



OSIRIS VANCE — BEFORE THE MASK, BEFORE THE NAME THAT KINGS FEAR.

IT IS ABOUT A BOY. A BOY WITH A TICKING MIND. AND HOW THE WORLD TAUGHT HIM TO STOP SMILING.

EVERYTHING I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU — DIES IN THIS ROOM. SWEAR IT.

WE SWEAR.

GOOD. BECAUSE THE MAN YOU'RE ASKING ABOUT... ISN'T A MAN AT ALL.



THE WITCHES' COURT HAD DONE THE MATH. SOMEWHERE IN THE SCHOOL THE KING HIMSELF HAD BUILT, THE BOY WHO WOULD ONE DAY KILL HIM WAS LEARNING HIS LETTERS.

SO THEY SENT THE KING TO LOOK THE BOY IN THE EYE.

THE EXHIBITION TOOK THE BRIGHTEST YOUNG MINDS IN THE COUNTRY. THAT YEAR, ONE OF THEM WAS NINE YEARS OLD.


KING MALIC DID NOT COME FOR THE INVENTIONS.

OSIRIS VANCE. NINE YEARS OLD. FIRST PRIZE.

IT KEEPS TIME —
PERFECTLY. FOREVER.

SOMETHING IS VERY DARK IN THAT BOY. I FEEL IT. HE NEEDS TO BE DISPOSED OF QUIETLY.

THE MACHINE CLICKED. AND ON THE WALL BEHIND THE BOY, HIS SHADOW... DISAGREED WITH HIM.



A BOOK OF MYTHS. FOR THE BOY WHO READS THE ENDING FIRST.

MYTHS ARE THE TRUEST THING THERE IS, BABY. THEY'RE WHAT THE TRUTH LOOKS LIKE AFTER EVERYBODY'S DONE LYING ABOUT IT.

STILL BEING WRITTEN. THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL WHO HOLDS THE PEN.

THEN I KNOW HOW IT COMES OUT.

THEN WHAT'S MY MYTH?

YOU'VE GOT MORE OF ME IN YOU THAN THIS WORLD HAS ROOM FOR, BABY. WHEN IT STARTS ASKING FOR ROOM — YOU REMEMBER WHOSE SON YOU ARE.

THAT WINTER, HIS MOTHER WALKED HIM HOME DOWN MAIN STREET, AND FOR ONE EVENING, THE FUTURE COULD WAIT.

YOUR FATHER SAYS THE WHOLE TOWN'S TALKING ABOUT YOUR ENGINE.


HATS · MILLINERY
DRUGS · PHARMACY
BOOKS
THEN THE EVENING ENDED.
POP.

THEY BURIED HER IN THE RAIN. THE BOY DID NOT CRY WHERE ANYONE COULD SEE.

SOMEONE ELSE WAS WATCHING FROM THE RAIN. SHE HAD NO NAME ANYONE DARED TO SAY.

THAT NIGHT THE HOUSE HAD THREE ROOMS OF GRIEF IN IT, AND ONLY TWO PEOPLE LEFT TO FILL THEM.



EASY. IT'LL FIGHT YOU AT THE END OF THE WIND. EVERYTHING WORTH KEEPING FIGHTS AT THE END.

WHAT IF I WIND IT WRONG?

THEN IT RUNS WRONG, AND YOU OPEN IT UP AND YOU LEARN IT. THAT'S ALL KNOWING ANYTHING IS.

BUILD A THING RIGHT, SON, AND IT RUNS LONG AFTER YOU'RE GONE. IT STOPS NEEDING YOU. THAT'S NOT SAD. THAT'S THE WHOLE TRICK.

YOU KNEW HER A WHOLE HOUR AND I MISS HER.

KEEP GOING.

SO DID HE. THAT'S THE ENGINE OF THE REST OF IT, I'M AFRAID.

MONTHS LATER, HIS FATHER TOOK HIS HAND AND WALKED HIM BACK INTO THE LIGHT.

YOUR MOTHER WOULD WANT YOU BUILDING, SON. NOT GRIEVING.

AND THE LIGHT WENT OUT AGAIN.

POP.

HIS EYES CAUGHT FIRE. RED. FOR THE FIRST TIME.

TWELVE YEARS OLD. BOTH PARENTS GONE. THE ORPHANAGE WAS SENDING A CARRIAGE IN THE MORNING.


HOUSES KEEP WHAT FAMILIES CAN'T.
THAT NIGHT, THE WARDROBE BREATHED IN.


THEN THE WARDROBE STARTED GLOWING.

HIS GREAT-GRANDMOTHER'S BOOK. THE ONE THE FAMILY NEVER TALKED ABOUT.

IT HAD BEEN WAITING FOR HIM.

SORCERY... BOOK.

HE PACKED HIS CLOTHES. HIS SCIENCE BOOK. AND THE GLOWING ONE.

HE DID NOT LOOK BACK.

HE DIDN'T RUN FROM ANYTHING. THAT'S WHAT MADE IT RUNNING.

NO ONE CAME AFTER HIM. NO ONE KNEW TO.

MERIDIAN CITY LET HIM GO. IT WOULD SPEND YEARS BEING SORRY.

WAIT — WHAT?

THAT'S... THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.

OH, IT'S POSSIBLE, DARLING. YOU JUST WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO KNOW.

TO BE CONTINUED...

