



Genre: Horror / Suspense

Dr. Gabriel Anderson, is a psychiatrist and expert in schizophrenia. At 14 he witnessed the death of his younger brother by a woman intentionally ramming her van into the school bus shelter. Gabriel learned that the woman was positive that God had commanded her to do it. Gabriel was young, but still understood that if that woman had received the medical help she so clearly needed that his brother Billy would still be alive. That realization sets Gabriel on his career path. Then, 7 years after graduation, another event alters his future direction. As part of a 5-doctor review panel, he had agreed that Jacob Long was no longer a threat to the public. Twelve years earlier Long had brutally murdered a family of 4. He said they were possessed by demons and that he was only saving their souls. Medical experts agreed that Long suffered from schizophrenia and he was committed to a psychiatric facility instead of a prison. Long had been a model patient. His attending physician assured the panel that as long as he took his medications, that he was at very little risk of re-offending. Gabriel and the other doctors agreed. But on the very day he was released, Long walked up behind a young woman standing outside of her car and cut her throat. Witnesses had said that just before he killed her he had looked at them and said *"you can't stop me. There's nothing you can do"*. As soon as she hit the ground he started screaming *'get out of my head, get out of my head'* and then cut his own throat. The autopsy showed that Jacob had the correct level of medication in his system. He had clearly fooled the original doctors and the panel Gabriel was on. He clearly wasn't a schizophrenic by rather a vicious sociopath who took great pleasure from his murderous acts. Gabriel takes no solace in the fact he was just one vote among 5. From that moment on Gabriel channels his expertise to be able to discern between those suffering from schizophrenia from people who were sociopaths and psychopaths...people who killed for the sheer joy of it. Over time his added expertise makes Gabriel the 'go to' guy for the San Francisco DA whenever she was faced with some sadistic killer claiming the voices in his head made him do it. In 5 prior trials Gabriel had been able to satisfy the legal system that the defendants absolutely knew right from wrong. But their desire to inflict pain and suffering was greater than their fear of getting caught. Plus, the majority of serial killers simply didn't believe they would get caught. But 4 years earlier, Gabriel had been called in on The Nightingale Murders. The police had their man in custody. Over an 8-year period he had murdered 14 children. But their evidence was circumstantial. Nothing scientific, no DNA, no fingerprints. If they didn't get a confession, there

was a significant possibility he would walk and they knew he would kill again. It didn't take long for Gabriel to see that this killer was brilliant. But Gabriel could sense that he was also wanting to open up to him...to brag. To gain his trust and develop a connection with him, Gabriel made the decision to open up to him about intimate details of his own past. Gabriel knew he would instantly see through a lie. So he told the truth about his tremendous guilt over having not run into that bus shelter and pulled his brother Billy out. About the constant nightmares he had endured about Jacob Long cutting that young woman's throat. And it worked. Soon Gabriel was led through a litany of horrors, facts that made the gruesome autopsy photos come to life...and it was all on tape. But Gabriel bringing up his own past combined with what he had just listened to affected him deeply. Nightmares that had been gone for years returned with a vengeance and soon Gabriel resorted to a couple of drinks each night to quiet them. And that was a slippery slope. His marriage and practice were soon on the rocks. Gabriel finally takes back control over his life and regains his sobriety and his marriage. And he makes a solemn promise to his wife Jennifer and private practice partner Bernie that he is done with dealing with the most depraved people society can produce. And he has stuck by that promise for the past 4 years and life has been good. But all of that is about to change.

For the past 3 years the SFPD have been hunting a serial killer responsible for a string of 11 murders. Each victim had been buried alive with only a small hand-made crucifix and a 40-hour supply of oxygen fed through tubing into their coffin. But at 9pm that night, a random roadside stop had resulted in them having the man they believe responsible for these murders in custody. In the vehicle they had found 3 hand-made wooden crucifixes'...but, of greater importance and added urgency, on the floorboards they found the student ID card of Samantha Anderson. Gabriel and Jennifer's daughter, a 2nd year student at Berkeley. A call to the University confirms that Sam was at her classes that afternoon but that no one had seen her since 4pm. And the man in their custody is Professor Jack Wharton, a professor at Berkeley. The DA is well aware of the promise she made 4 years earlier, but the man in custody is already claiming 'the voice' made him do it and he refuses to say any more. Carolyn knows she has to tell the Anderson's not just because it's their daughter, but also because she needs Gabriel's skills to get inside the man's mind and find where he has buried Sam. The clock is ticking. The DA and Gabriel agree that under no circumstances can Professor Wharton learn of Gabriel's relationship to Sam. Gabriel is a man of science. He has never subscribed to any religious doctrine. He has no way of knowing that he is about to embark on a terrifying journey that will upend his entire belief structure. The story follows the interactions between Gabriel and Wharton during multiple interviews. Gabriel learns about similarities between his own life and that of Wharton's. How he too had been plagued with relentless nightmares. In his dreams he would see his daughter, her husband and their 2 daughters slaughtered in Manson-like style by 7 intruders. How in every one of the nightmares, one of the attackers would seemly look directly at Wharton in his dream-state and say *"you can't stop me. There's nothing you can do."* Gabriel is shocked. How could the wording in Wharton's nightmares be exactly what Long had said in real life? Wharton explains how he had believed he must have a mental disorder and had sought numerous treatments...all with no effect. That was until he met one the killers from his nightmares face-to-face working at his local Home Depot store. At that moment he realized his dreams must be a message from God, an opportunity to save his family. Over a 2-year

period, with God's guidance, he had found and despatched all 7 of the attackers and the nightmares immediately ended. But 3 months later they began again except this time there were 8 intruders. He found and killed that person. Then there were 9 and the pattern continued with Sam being the 12th. Gabriel's own nightmares had returned with a vengeance a few days before Sam's abduction. He had less than 4 hours sleep over the past 3 days and that was before Carolyn's call. And since that call, there was an additional 25 hours without sleep. He loses his composure and attacks Wharton, demanding to know where his daughter is. The secret of his relationship is out. Carolyn and the lead detective are furious and Gabriel is threatened with removal from the case if he doesn't go back to his hotel and get at least a couple of hours rest. Sheer exhaustion overwhelms him and soon he is asleep...only to be startled awake by the foulest smell, like rotting meat. He senses he's not alone. Now bolt-upright, in the far corner of the room, floating in mid-air, surrounded by a grayish soot-like mist, is an apparition. It's eye's pulsating blood-red. It has to be an hallucination. It hisses the words "*I am Beelzebub, Prince of Demons. You can't stop me. There's nothing you can do*", then it instantly vanishes. Gabriel knows he cannot share what has just happened with the DA as he would be immediately removed from their team. A quick on-line search gives him the mythology around Beelzebub. More research leads him to Professor Kettering, one of the world's leading experts on ancient religions; and he teaches at Berkeley. Kettering agrees to meet. Gabriel tells him about his nightmares, about the identical statements of Long, in Wharton's dreams, and in Gabriel's still fresh vision of Beelzebub. Kettering explains that back in 4,000 BCE, in Mesopotamia, that it was believed that into every generation were borne a few of The Chosen. These people were destined for greatness. There was imply no escaping it. But would those individuals use their destinies for good or for evil. Become a Winston Churchill or a Hitler, or the Angel of Death, Dr. Josef Mengele. Kettering added that mythology told of an unbreakable agreement between Heaven and Hell that it was hands-off any of The Chosen. Neither side was allowed to touch them...directly. The most they could do was impact the lives of the people around them. By manipulating those people, expose those of The Chosen to events that would shape their thinking. Kettering believes that Wharton must be one of The Chosen. Kettering concludes that it must be the hand of God that led Gabriel to his office that day, because he had just returned from an archeological dig in Middle East. That for decades he had been searching for the fabled Dagger of Damascus, a weapon that legend said was forged in Heaven and given to man as the only weapon that can kill a demon when it is inhabiting a human body. And he had found it. He gives the dagger to Gabriel. Gabriel rushes back to the police station, convinces the DA he has his emotions in check and soon is back in the room with Wharton. Carolyn, the lead detective and Gabriel's wife Rachel are watching via the one-way glass. They fail to notice Gabriel turning the deadbolt lock as he closes the door to the interview room. Gabriel pleads with Wharton to tell him where Sam is before it is too late. Wharton's eyes turn jet-black and he coldly says "*You can't stop me. There's nothing you can do.*" Gabriel pulls the dagger from his suitcoat and plunges it deep into Wharton's chest. Wharton's eyes immediately return to normal, he whispers, "*thank you for releasing me from this nightmare. Sam is in Lexington Park.*" Gabriel immediately turns to the window where a shocked Carolyn cannot believe what she has just seen. He yells "*Sam's buried in Lexington Park.*" That is when Gabriel hears a low sinister laugh. Suspended in the air directly behind Gabriel is Beelzebub. Gabriel pulls the dagger from Wharton and begins wildly slashing at the apparition screaming

“But I killed you” Beelzebub’s leathery face briefly turns into Professor Kettering’s. “You didn’t think I gave you the real Dagger of Damascus did you? This was never about Wharton. He wasn’t one of The Chosen. You are Gabriel. And what a destiny it was. To be the first person to scientifically prove the existence of demons. Imagine, if people had incontrovertible proof of the existence of Hell, what that knowledge would do to our supply of fresh souls. That’s why at the moment of your birth you were assigned to me. I made the woman run down your brother. I forced Long’s hand across that woman’s throat. And it was my skills that plagued Wharton every night. I put that dagger in your hand. But that’s all I did. The decision to violate the 6th Commandment was yours and yours alone. You will fulfil your destiny Gabriel, but who will listen to the rantings of a madman about demons. They just watched you murder a shackled defenseless man. They watched you stabbing away at thin air and screaming like a madman. I’ve seen your future Gabriel, sitting on the floor in a padded cell; Thorazine-induced drool hanging from your chin.”

By now the police have broken through the locked door and several officers have their guns pointed directly at Gabriel demanding he dropped the dagger, which he does, and is forced to the floor and hand-cuffed. His face is emotionless. His eyes unblinking and staring straight ahead into the void. Carolyn and Rachel enter the room. Both in shock at what they had just witnessed. The gray mist and Beelzebub’s image, invisible to all except Gabriel, are still hanging in the air. The grin on the apparition’s leathery face evidence of his satisfaction that decades of careful planning and manipulation have been successful. His master will indeed be pleased. His work done the apparition begins to float across the room towards the far wall. Its arm brushes against Rachel’s who immediately winces in pain...her reflex cry unheard through the cacophony of voices throughout the room. Their eyes lock and for the briefest moment and Rachel sees what Gabriel has been seeing...and more than that, she sees a telltale look of surprise...and fear in its eyes before it quickly vanishes through the wall. She instinctively knows she cannot say anything about what she has just witnessed lest her sanity be in equal question. The immediate focus had to remain on finding their daughter and getting help for Gabriel.

Samantha’s rescued, but Gabriel falls into a deep catatonic state. Electro-shock therapy, drugs...nothing has helped. The doctors tell Rachel, that all they can do going forward is tend to his physical needs for the rest of his life. But during the last 3-months of his hospitalization Rachel, an archeologist, has looked into her husband’s on-line searches. She has read about Beelzebub and the Dagger of Damascus. How legend has it that Satan captured the weapon, shattered it into a hundred pieces and then hid the shards all around the world...guarded by followers, both human and demonic. She believes that if she can find the pieces that she can re-assemble it, kill Beelzebub and save her husband. **Stay tuned for subsequent Releases under the title “The Chosen Few”**