

## Chapter 1:

### The Angel of Peace

“Come on, Lucia; hurry up! The sheep just won’t stay any longer.”

“Sorry; I just had to get my shawl,” said Lucia.

“I hope we don’t get too wet,” said Jacinta.

“It’s only drizzling, though it could get worse. We can go in the cave if it does,” said Francisco.

Just then, the drizzling rain turned to a massive down-pour!

“Hurry! Into the cave!” shouted Lucia.

The three blindly stumbled down to the cave.

Jacinta panted as they came to entrance.

“We should say our Rosary now,” said Lucia.

“Ok.” replied Francisco.

They had hardly started when a big bright light appeared!

Jacinta screamed! Lucia froze! Francisco took a few steps back.

Suddenly, a man, or he looked like a man, appeared right in the centre of the light.

“Fear not!” he said, “I am the Angel of Peace!”

Then, he knelt down.

“Pray with me” he said.

The children knelt down too.

**“My God, I believe in Thee!  
I adore Thee! I hope in Thee,  
And I love Thee! I ask pardon  
For those who do not believe,  
Do not adore, do not hope,  
And do not love Thee.”**

The angel repeated the prayer two more times.

“Pray thus,” he then said. “The hearts of Jesus and Mary will hear your petitions!”

Then he disappeared, just as suddenly as he had come.

He did not come again for about five months.

“What are you doing?” he asked. “Pray, pray a great deal! The hearts of Jesus and Mary have merciful designs on you!” he said.

“How do we make sacrifices?” asked Lucia.

“Make everything you can a sacrifice and offer it to God as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and as a petition for the conversion of sinners. Bring peace to your country in this way.”

*“How can little children convert sinners?”* thought Jacinta in wonder.

*“How can we end the war?”* pondered Francisco.

*“How can we do so many sacrifices?”* wondered Lucia.

“I am the Guardian Angel of Portugal,” he said. “Above all, accept and bear with submission the sufferings which the Lord will send you.”

Then, he once again left the children.

“Why didn’t he tell us more about making sacrifices?” asked Jacinta.

“Maybe he will come back?” said Francisco hopefully. “Then he may tell us more.”

The Angel did come again, in Autumn. But, this time, he had a beautiful chalice in one hand, and a Host in the other.

“Look!” exclaimed Jacinta “Drops of blood are falling from the chalice!”

Lucia nodded.

Then, the Angel left both chalice and Host suspended in mid-air, and knelt, saying:

**Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy**

**Ghost, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious body, blood, soul, and divinity of**

**Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the**

**World, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges,  
And indifference by which He is offended. And  
Through the infinite merits of His Most Sacred  
Heart, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg  
of Thee the conversion of poor sinners.**

As he had the last time, The Angel repeated the prayer three times. Then, he took the Host in his hands and motioned to Lucia.

“Francisco, look!” exclaimed Jacinta. “Maybe we will get to receive it too!”

“Maybe, Jacinta. I hope!” replied Fransisco.

The Angel walked closer to Lucia.

Jacinta and Fransisco’s hearts beat so loudly that they could hear it.

*“I wish I had finished my First Holy Communion class like Lucia!”* thought Fransisco.

Suddenly, the Angel look at them over Lucia’s bowed head.

He picked up (or down) the chalice, which was still in the air, and signalled to them to come as well.

The two little shepherds stared. Surely the Angel didn’t mean...

“Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men. Repair their crimes

and console your God.” Then, he respectfully gave the contents of the chalice to Jacinta and Fransisco to drink, then the Host to Lucia, knelt on the floor, and repeated three times the prayer:

Most Holy Trinity...

Then he disappeared.

## **Chapter 2:**

### **The Lady**

In the next few weeks, the three children often thought about the Angel of Peace, and his wonderful message. The prayers he had taught them stayed fresh in their minds, and they recited them very often.

But though they hoped and prayed, he never came again. But, on May the thirteenth, 1917, a little more than a year after the Angel’s first visit, something else happened.

The children were pasturing the sheep as always. They were in a large hollow, called Cova da Iria, about a mile from their homes in Fatima.

They had eaten their lunch, and said the Rosary, and Fransisco was about to build a house from stones.

Just as they were running across the field, lightning flashed through the sky.

*“Lightning!”* thought Lucia *“There isn’t one single cloud in the sky!”*

“I think we should gather the sheep, and go home,” sighed Fransisco.

Even as the children were running to shelter, another lightning bolt struck.

The children looked around fearfully. What if they would get struck? Suddenly, they saw a light on the topmost branches of a tree. But...the light was in the shape of a lady, a beautiful lady. She was like the angel, but far, far more beautiful! She wore a long white dress, and the mantle which covered her head and shoulders were edged with gold! Her hands were joined, and in them was a pair of white Rosary beads.

“Who are you, and what do you want of us?” asked Lucia.

“I come from Heaven. I have come to ask you to come here every day at this hour on the thirteenth of every month until October. Later, I will tell you who I am, and what I want, and afterwards, I will come a seventh time.” said The Lady

“You come from Heaven...will I go there?”

“Yes, you will.”

“And Jacinta?”

“She will go too!”

“And Fransisco?”

“Yes, but first he must say many Rosaries”.

Then, Lucia suddenly recalled two little girls who had died recently: Maria, and Amelia. She asked The Lady about them.

“Yes, Maria is in Heaven, but Amelia will be in Purgatory until the end of the world.” said The Lady.

There was a short pause. Then The Lady asked if they were willing to do sacrifices for the conversion of sinners.

“Yes, of course!” replied Lucia.

“Then you will have much to suffer, but God will strengthen you!”

Then, The Lady urged them to pray the Rosary, for peace of the world, and the end of the war.

Then, she left.

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As they started talking about her, Lucia was the first to realise that she was the only one of the three who had talked with the Lady. Jacinta and Fransisco had been silent the whole time!

Then, they realised something else: that though Jacinta and Lucia had seen and heard the Lady, Fransisco had only seen her!

“Please tell me what she said, *please!*” begged Fransisco.

Lucia did so, but she was very puzzled. Why didn’t the Lady want Fransisco to hear her? Maybe she would tell on her next visit.

“We’d better not tell anyone about the Lady,” said Lucia.

Francisco agreed. “My parents wouldn’t believe me,” he said.

“They’d say I was lying, and I’d get into big trouble,” said Jacinta.

But, that night, Jacinta just *couldn't* keep it a secret any longer. She began to tell the whole story to her parents and siblings.

“What nonsense is this?” said their mother.

“It’s not nonsense, Mother. It’s true; ask Francisco and Lucia. They were with us”.

“Francisco? You’re honest. Tell me Jacinta’s lying.”

“Well...no, it’s true.”

“**WHAT?**”

### **Chapter 3**

#### **The Lady Comes Again**

The next morning, when their mother talked to Lucia, of course, her answer was the same.

“Well, Lucia, say what you like, but I’m telling your mother.”

“Don’t tell me stupid lies”.

“But it’s *not a lie!*” sobbed Lucia.

“Then what’s her name, and if she’s so beautiful, why does she spend her time in sheep pastures?”

“She said she would tell us her name in October...and I don’t know why she came, she...she just *did!*” replied Lucia.

“*She’s more stubborn than I thought. I will take her to Father Ferreira*” thought her Mother.

“That’s a good idea. I’ll send Fransisco and Jacinta”, said their mother.

So, Lucia was sent to the parish priest, alone at first, then with the others, but the story remained the same.

The priest smiled when he heard their story. He did not think they were lying, but he thought they had imagined it all.

On June the 13<sup>th</sup>, it was St, Anthony’s feast day. On it, there was a big carnival to celebrate him. So, nobody thought the children would go to the Cova.

But they did!

The Lady came again, and she had a message.

“Continue to say the Rosary well, and after each Glory Be, say this prayer:

*O my, Jesus, forgive us our sins, and save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to heaven, especially those who most need thy mercy.”*

Then, Lucia asked if The Lady could take her and the others to Heaven, *now!*

“I will take Jacinta and Fransisco soon, but you must stay for a while longer”, said The Lady.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Next Visit**

On July the 13<sup>th</sup>, more than five thousand people were there at the Cova da Iria, The news had spread fast!

After the children said a whole Rosary, there was a flash of lightning, and the Lady came. She stretched out her hands, and bright rays of light shone down from her fingertips onto the ground.

It opened up, and Lucia, Jacinta, and Fransisco peered down into it.

Jacinta screamed, Fransisco gasped, and Lucia covered her mouth with her hands.

Because, what they were seeing was Hell! Fire and lava were everywhere, and souls were screaming in terror and pain!

And from time to time, a devil, big and ugly, and a red-brown colour would come up to the souls, and torment them, making them scream more than ever!

The whole thing was a disgusting sight. But then, as quickly as it had come, the vision melted away!

The children, frightened and shaking, looked up at the Lady.

“You have seen Hell.” She said “That is the place where all go whom nobody prays for. You must pray and make sacrifices for them.”

“Oh, yes” said Lucia ‘we will”.

Then, the Lady told them a special secret, then left.

“What happened?” jeered a mocking voice. “Did your precious lady come and talk to you?”

“Of course she came!” said a woman “Didn’t you see the shining dust around the tree and the children?”

Certainly, there were more believers now.

## **Chapter 5**

### **An Unexpected Drive**

The Fatima apparitions became well known; so well known, in fact, that the Mayor of Ourem (Ourem being a town near Fatima) came to know of it.

“What! And people *believe* in this rubbish? The three liars will become so proud and conceited, nobody will know what do with them.” He said when he heard. “Someone must stop them”

And so, the mayor came up with a ghastly plan!

August 13<sup>th</sup> dawned bright and sunny. The children were just setting out to go to the Cova when a car drove up. Lucia looked up in surprise. It was the mayor!

“Do you children want to come in my car with me to the Cova?” he asked “It will be much faster than walking”.

“I will ask our parents,” said Lucia

After permission had been granted, the three hopped into the car, happy and carefree!

As the Mayor drove past Cova da Iria, a sly grin crept over his face.

Jacinta looked uneasily at Lucia, who tried her best to smile back.

“Sir, this isn’t the way; you missed the turn!” cried Fransisco.

“Oh, I know, but I wanted to take you to visit the parish priest in Ourem. He’s very nice, I’m sure you’ll like him,” replied the mayor.

“But, Sir, we’ll never get there in time!” exclaimed Jacinta.

“My goodness, child; don’t you know anything about automobiles? We could see the priest and still be back in plenty of time for your Lady.”

The three sighed with relief.

Soon, the church was in sight, and the parish priest’s house, but the mayor whizzed right past them!

“Sir, this isn’t the church!” cried Lucia.

“No? Where is it, then?”

“It...it’s *your* house!”

“That’s right, you idiots!” answered the mayor.

He dragged them into the house and sat them each on a seat before him.

“Now, no lies, fools! Tell me the truth, the whole truth, and nothing *but* the truth about your Lady, NOW!”

“The Lady is real, That’s all there is to it!” said Lucia.

“Then into jail you go!”

They got thrown into jail, with robbers, and pickpockets, and other bad men.

“Since when does the mayor send us babies?” asked a certain thief.

“Wait, no I’ve seen these children before, their pickpockets, and good ones”

“No, no we aren’t pickpockets, or any other kind of thief. I’ll tell you why we’re here” said Jacinta

As she told her story, (Which nearly everyone belived) Lucia reminded them that they hadn’t said their Rosary yet.

Lucia took a medal from her neck.

“Please hang this up where we can see it.” She asked someone. He did so.

The children knelt down, and began saying the Rosary. A few of the men joined in.

“Well? Everyone else is saying it” said the last few men who weren’t saying it.

So, when the mayor came in, because he thought he heard a noise in the prisons, he found everyone devout fully saying the Rosary! He sent the children to another prison, this time on their own.

But, a couple of days, The Mayor came in, and dragged them out.

“I’ve had enough of this! Hearing you fools say your Rosary every single day, and talk endlessly of your Lady, Now, tell me she’s a LIE!”

## **Chapter 6**

### **The pot!**

“S-sir, she’s not!” said Lucia.

“I give you all ONE LAST CHANCE! If you don’t confess, I will throw you into a pot of boiling oil!” exclaimed the mayor, now boiling himself with rage!

“We have already told you our answer!” shouted Lucia.

“Whatever you do, it will remain the same!”

“Fine then! I will go and get the pot ready!” screamed the mayor, and slammed the door.

Soon the pot was ready, and the mayor grabbed Fransisco.

“Tell me your Lady is a lie!” he demanded.

“No,” said Fransisco.

“Fine then!” said the mayor.

Jacinta and Lucia waited to hear Fransisco's screams of pain as he entered the pot, but they heard nothing.

Suddenly, the Mayor burst through the door.

"Right, that's one child." He said, "Who's next?"

Jacinta was chosen, and as she gave one last look at Lucia, she offered a prayer to help her stay faithful to the Lady.

The door slammed, leaving Lucia scared and hopeful that she would die like her cousins... without a sound!

Soon the door opened, and the mayor looked in.

"Come on!" he shouted roughly "Hurry up!"

Lucia scrambled up and walked to the door. But as she opened it, she got a shock, for right before her very eyes were Fransisco and Jacinta, near the mayor's wife.

"Lucia, Lucia, it was all a trick, to try and make us tell a lie!" cried Fransisco.

"But we wouldn't do it!" shouted Jacinta.

"Oh!" said Lucia.

After keeping them for several days, the mayor decided to let the children go and dropped them off at the church.

"Find your own way home, you stubborn mules!" he yelled, and slammed the door and drove off!

"He's gone!" cried Jacinta.

"He'll never hurt us again!" exclaimed Fransisco.

“How happy I am!” said Lucia.

They ran all the way home!

“Children, what happened?” asked their parents when they came back.

“Oh, Mother, we were kidnapped by the mayor!”

“And he said he would throw us in a pot of boiling oil!”

“Yes, to make us deny the Lady!”

“But it didn’t work!”

“We wouldn’t deny her for anything!”

“I would rather die a thousand deaths!”

Soon, the children found out what had happened for the few days that they had been gone.

“Even though you were gone, the Lady must still have come,” said their father. “There was lightning, and a cloud came on top of the holm-oak tree, with a shimmering light around it. I think many more people believed because of that!”

## **Chapter 7:**

### **Two More Visits, and the Last One**

One day, as the children were watching the sheep, The Lady came again. She told them that she was very displeased with the mayor, and now the miracle that she had promised on October 13<sup>th</sup> would be of a much smaller scale.

She also asked that a chapel be built in honour of the Lady of the Rosary.

On September 13<sup>th</sup>, there were over 30,000 people at the Cova. The children prayed the Rosary with the Lady as usual. Then, after the visit, flower petals were seen floating down from Heaven. There was a mad scramble to catch the petals, but they melted away, just out of everybody's reach.

Some of the unbelievers said that this was only a trick, but many thought that the flowers really were from Heaven.

"The Lady's been here, even if we didn't see her!" one person told another.

The next month, about 70,000 people showed up, waiting anxiously for noon, the time when the Lady always came. Noon came, and so did the Lady.

"I am The Lady of the Rosary." She said. "I have come to ask the faithful to change their lives, and to ask pardon for their sins. They must not continue to offend Our Lord, already so deeply offended. And, they must say the Rosary."

Then, Lucia realised what a great prayer the Rosary was, and how many graces one gets from saying it. Then, she looked up at the sky, stared in amazement, and pointed, saying: "Look at the sky!"

Seventy thousand people looked up, and saw the promised miracle!

The sun was whirling about the sky like a huge ball of fire, its rays shooting out in colours of red, yellow, violet, orange, all the colours of the rainbow, and many others too.

And while all this was happening, the children were resting their eyes on a beautiful vision of the Holy Family!

## **THE END**

Francisco and Jacinta died a few years later of influenza.

Francisco died on April 4, 1919, two months away from his 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. Jacinta died on February 20, 1920.

Lucia was very lonely without them.

When she grew up, she became a sister of the Carmelite order, Sister Mary Lucia of the Dolors.

Celeste

Age 10.