

the GREEN
LAMA
UNBOUND

Adam Lance Garcia

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The Green Lama Unbound
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PRELUDE

Sorrows in Jade

The year is 1939.

War is on the horizon.

Thirteen years ago, millionaire playboy Jethro Dumont left for Tibet to study Buddhism. Upon returning to New York City ten years later he witnessed a terrible murder. When justice was denied, Jethro became the costumed adventurer the Green Lama. Since then he has been aided in his quest by a variety of individuals, including the mysterious woman known only as **Magga**.

Three years ago, Jethro, along with his fellow lama, **Geshe Tsarong**, returned to Tibet to stop the crazed Nazi mystic **Adaulfo Kellen** from capturing the source of the Lama's powers—the mysterious six-color braided ring known as the **Jade Tablet**.

Recently, Jethro, along with his associates: actress **Jean Farrell**, matinee idol **Ken Clayton** and New York City police detective **Lieutenant John Caraway**, fought and defeated a clay monster known as a *golem* powered by a *second* Jade Tablet made of stone. Little did they know that the *golem* was created by **Rabbi Chaim Brickman** and the Jewish undercover agent, **Nazi Colonel Heinrich Gan** in hopes of preventing Hitler's war against the Jews. Realizing his error, the Green Lama swore to defeat the Nazis at all costs.

Both Jethro and Jean were fundamentally changed by their encounter with the *golem* in ways they have yet to discover.

Our story begins several months after the Green Lama's encounter with the Studio Specter in Los Angeles.

the
**GREEN
LAMA
Unbound**

PART 1
The Madness from the Sea

CHAPTER 1

Far & Away

“Why are you here?” the Tulku whispered, his accent heavy, the long white wisps of his beard flowing down over his green robes, his bald head gleaming.

“The King Regent, sent me here—I came... searching for—for... purpose,” the young American boy said, his teeth chattering. He shivered on the temple floor, his lips blue and his furs still coated with snow.

The boy was so young, the Tulku thought, but then again, despite appearances to the contrary, the Tulku had grown quite old over the last few centuries. He tilted his head as he regarded the young man in the golden light of a thousand candles. “Purpose? I have come to understand that Americans do not have want of such things.”

The young man bowed his head. “I have no want of money, fame or excess. But of purpose, I am impoverished. My father had only one vision: wealth. He wanted me to work towards that end, to fulfill the destiny he had prescribed for me. But I want more... More than money could ever give me... I want purpose. I want to know my destiny.”

“Destiny?” The Tulku raised an eyebrow, toying with the six-color braided ring on his right middle finger. “We are servants of the Lord Buddha, yassa n’atthi upamā kvaci, in search of enlightenment... of Nibbana. Om! Sri Rama Jaya Rama, Jaya, Jaya Rama. We are not here to

simply hand out destinies to wayward Americans.”

The young man nodded in sober understanding. A clump of melting snow fell off his head onto the temple floor. “Please, Tulku, I have traveled so far and endured so much...”

The Tulku stood, pulled his green robes closer around his body and walked over to the kneeling American, past the other lamas, silent in mediation. “What is your name, young one?”

“Jethro. Jethro Dumont.”

The Tulku raised his chin. “Son of John Pierre Dumont, yes?”

Dumont nodded. “Yes, Tulku.”

The Tulku nodded in consideration, pulling at his beard. “I am Geshe Tsarong, Abhisambuddha of the Clouded Temple. Mr. Dumont, I do not doubt your intent, but we must meditate on your admission. Come back in three days time and we will tell you our decision,” he said as he turned away.

Tears began to pool in Dumont’s eyes as Abhisambuddha Tsarong walked away. Desperate, Dumont reached out and grabbed at the Tulku’s right hand. “Please, Tulku...”

Suddenly, the Tulku’s rainbow colored ring unraveled into a thin string of hair, shot through the air, and reformed around the young man’s finger.

“Om! Ma-ni pad-me Hum!” the Tulku exclaimed, falling backwards, his eyes wide. The other lamas jumped to their feet, murmuring mantras as they watched in amazement.

“Oh God! Oh God! What—What is happening?” Jethro shouted, staring at the ring in horror as it wound itself around his finger, glowing green.

“It seems, Mr. Dumont...” Tsarong breathed, “that Destiny has found you.”

Tsarong raced down the hall, ignoring the throbbing arthritic pain that radiated from his joints. The moon was high, sending streams of blue light through the windows, pooling on the floor. Despite the chill of the night, sweat dripped down his forehead and into his eyes. He had seen and experienced terrible things in his many years that even Jethro Dumont, the Green Lama, could never begin to fathom. But now, for the first time, he was truly scared. He had prayed that this day would never come, but since he had first met Jethro in the Clouded Temple he knew the prophecies were true.

The sunken city was rising.

Rounding a corner he made his way into the apartment’s massive study, he found Jethro still awake at his desk, half-hidden by a mountain of books. It had been weeks since Jethro had slept, or so it seemed. Deep pockets had formed beneath his friend’s eyes and his skin had grown increasingly pale. Since they had returned from their adventure with the Studio Specter,

Tsarong had watched helplessly as Jethro worked without pause in an effort to translate the Second Jade Tablet. So far, his efforts had been for naught. Tsarong wanted to believe Jethro's obsessive behavior was due solely to his desire to understand more about the artifact, but Tsarong knew his friend better than that. Jethro wasn't trying to learn—he was trying to forget, to ignore the absence of the woman named Jean Farrell.

However, all that was about to change.

“*Tulku*,” Tsarong said, breathing heavily.

Jethro, sensing Tsarong's urgency, pulled himself away from his books, his eyes bloodshot and glassy.

Tsarong hesitated, shocked by his friend's deterioration. “The Tablet,” he said finally. “*Tulku*... Something's happening.”

Jethro threw open the doors to one of many hidden rooms in his sprawling Park Avenue apartment. Every cell in his body, already pushed beyond the limits of exhaustion, shook with anticipation. He could feel it even now, the Jade Tablet had been activated somehow, its power radiating out like a cold energy. At the back of the room atop a small column, sat the Second Jade Tablet. Covered in ancient, almost *alien* hieroglyphics, the tablet might appear to be, at most, an insignificant archeological item, the sort one would find in a poorly lit corner of the Natural History Museum. But beneath that simple, carved exterior laid power that Jethro was only now beginning to understand.

As he and Tsarong approached, he noticed that the stone was glowing a terrifying green and emitting a low thrumming noise, as if it were about to explode from within.

“I heard the sound only moments ago,” Tsarong said. “I thought it might have been a trapped bird, until I saw—”

“Something triggered it,” Jethro said quietly.

Tsarong nodded in agreement. “What is happening, *Tulku*?”

Jethro glanced over at Tsarong and shook his head. “I don't know.”

Whereas the original Tablet—the ring of rainbow-colored hair Jethro wore on his right middle finger—had only given him the ingredients to his radioactive salts, this new Tablet had not only breathed life into the inert, but had also mysteriously granted its previous owner a horrifying glimpse of the future. But until now, this second Jade Tablet had refused to reveal any of its powers to Jethro.

Extending his hand forward, Jethro let it be engulfed by the emerald light. The hairs on his arm stood on end and he could feel the air crackle with electricity, flowing through his skin and into his veins, as intoxicating as it was painful. He found himself drawn forward, closing his eyes as he was completely illuminated by the light. For an instant, he felt as though he was underwater, floating away with the tide.

And then it all came rushing down upon him.

“*Tayata om muni muni maha munaye soha,*” he whispered as his eyes shot open, glowing a deadly green.

Blurry and muddled visions flew past him. The past, present and future, he saw it all at once but could not discern one from the other; weapons beyond measure, creatures of unimaginable horror, incalculable death. He saw the heavens ripped asunder, old enemies reborn, and a lost world recovered.

He saw Jean, the only woman to ever come close to holding his heart.

He heard the gunshot, like thunder.

He felt the bullet rip through her leg as if it was his own.

He screamed, as she had not.

He whispered: “*Nyarlathotep klaatu barada nikto. Ph’nglui mglw’nafh Cthulhu R’lyeh wgah’nagl fhtagn!*”

Jethro shut his eyes and crumpled to ground, the light from the Tablet suddenly diminished, the world once again in silence. Smoke wafted off his shoulders, his head pounding.

Tsarong ran up beside him. “*Tulku!*” the old lama cried.

His eyes still shut, Jethro gripped Tsarong’s sleeve.

“*Om! Namah Shivaya!*” Jethro rasped, his voice hoarse. “Jean... *Om tare ture tuttare ture soha...* Jean’s in trouble.”

Jean Farrell was on the run.

Mud caked her high boots and khakis, her fiery red hair hung wet and limp across her face. Shivering in the shadows of a dilapidated house, she clutched her shiv like a crucifix. She could hear the dogs in the distance, knowing without a doubt that she was their quarry. Lightning shattered the sky, an instant of daylight. Thunder rolled and the downpour grew heavier, bullets of water shooting from the sky.

She had been in Greece only three days before everything had gone straight to hell. *Murder*. How in the blue blazes could she have been accused of murder? She wasn’t even certain why she had traveled all the way here in the first place. She had told Ken she needed time away from the States after their experience with the *golem* and that whole mess in Hollywood, but even she knew she was lying. It was a calling, like a buzzing in the back of her head, drawing her here, to the small port town of Kamariotissa on the island of Samothrace. Of course, had she known that she would be framed of killing the mayor with an axe to the head, she would have ignored the feeling outright and gone somewhere less dangerous... like a mob den.

Lord, how she missed the Green Lama.

A warm hand pressed against her shoulder, startling her. She bit back a

scream, but couldn't stop herself from swinging her shiv at her apparent assailant.

"Easy there," Aias Prometeo breathed as he easily caught Jean's arm. "It is just me." A full head taller than her, he was bigger than even Lieutenant Caraway. His accent was slight, but noticeable, though Jean couldn't place it. He wasn't American, but despite the name she could tell he definitely wasn't Greek. Like Jean, he was completely soaked, his matted black hair bunched into wet clumps. His unshaven visage was brutish, but handsome, as if he would be equally at home on a farm or a battlefield. His eyes were the deepest set of black, constantly moving, never focusing on anything in front of him. Jean doubted she could trust him, but had it not been for him, she would still be in jail, condemned to the gallows.

"Don't ever sneak up on me," she whispered, pulling her arm free, but refusing to let go of the blade she had fashioned during her short stint in jail cell. "I could have killed you."

Aias chuckled silently. "Unlikely."

"There's confidence. Don't forget that I am accused of killing your mayor with an axe to the noggin'."

"Even if that were the case, that," he said, indicating the shiv, "is no axe. I think I might have found a place we can hide for the night. There is an abandoned station house over the hill there. It does not look like anyone has been there for a long time."

"This place isn't up to snuff?" she asked harshly, indicating the ramshackle building beside them.

Aias shook his head. "There is barely a roof. We will probably drown in there with all the rain. Plus, you said you needed to get in touch with your friends back in New York, yes? They might have a phone, or at least a telegraph."

Jean sucked her teeth. He had a point, things had gone belly up and the sooner she could get touch with the Green Lama or at minimum, that rich playboy Jethro Dumont, the better. But something about this plan didn't sit right with her. "And what about our four-legged friends and their buddies with the guns. They'll definitely catch a glimpse of us running off into the horizon."

"You *really* think they are going to keep searching in this?" he waved his hand to the sky. "They can barely see two steps in front them. *I* can barely see two steps in front of me. Come on," he said, turning to leave.

"Remind me again why I should trust you?"

He looked back and shrugged. "You shouldn't, but then again... You have not been caught yet, now have you?" he asked, before disappearing back into the rain.

Jean hesitated before following. *What had Aias been in jail for?* she

wondered. If he had any special plans when they got to the station house, he had another thing coming, she thought, tightening her grip on the shiv.

As Jean stepped forward, there was a sudden crack of thunder and she felt a sharp pain in her right leg. Glancing down she saw blood seeping out of a small wound in her calf, mixing with the rain.

Oh, God, she thought, collapsing to the muddy ground. Beneath the din of the pouring rain, she heard a dog's bark and a policeman shouting in Greek as they ran towards her, their footfalls splashing against the muck.

She reached down at the wound, her leg throbbing. The bullet had gone straight through the muscle and out the other side, missing the bone. But that didn't stop the pain, or the blood.

"Aïas!" she shouted, as she began to rip off the edge of her sleeve to fashion an impromptu tourniquet, no longer concerned that the police would hear her—they already knew where she was. "Dammit! Aïas!"

Click!

Jean looked up behind her to find a pistol barrel staring down at her. "Βάλτε τα χέρια σας στο κεφάλι σας!" the Greek policeman yelled, while the leashed dog growled ferociously.

"Aw, hell," she said through gritted teeth, quickly slipping the shiv beneath her sleeve.

"Βάλτε τα χέρια σας στο κεφάλι σας!" the policeman shouted, pontificating each word with a thrust of his pistol.

"I can't understand a lick of what you're saying buddy, but I can probably guess."

The policeman grabbed her by the collar and harshly pulled her off the ground, yelling, "Ηλίθια αμερικανική πόρνη!"

"Yeah, yeah. Like I said..." she began and then, with subtle grace she grabbed the policeman's arm, squeezing down and quickly twisting the gun away while she stabbed him in the shoulder with her handcrafted blade. The officer hollered in pain, releasing Jean and falling back as he tried to remove the shiv, dragging the dog with him. Despite her injury, Jean dove to the ground, grabbed the pistol and smacked it across the officer's head, knocking him unconscious. "I can't understand you."

"Jean!" Aïas shouted as he ran back over to her. "I heard a gunshot, are you—" his eyes went wide at the scene before him, "okay?"

"Yeah, fine. Thanks for the help," she added sardonically.

"You're bleeding."

"This? Buddy, I killed a monster recently. This—this is nothing..." she trailed off as she fainted to the ground.

Lieutenant John Caraway awoke to a ringing phone and a splitting headache. *Too much wine*, he thought, gripping his temples. *Way too much wine*.

Francesca shifted beside him. After so many months apart, he was still unaccustomed to waking and finding her lying next to him, but he wasn't complaining. After his run in with the—what was it the Green Lama called it?—*golem*, Caraway had given his consistently “soon-to-be-ex-wife” a call. Things had moved quickly from there.

She pulled the blanket over her head and grumbled: “If that’s the office, tell them it’s your anniversary and your wife is going to kill you. And I *will* too.”

Caraway glanced at the clock as he climbed out of bed, the phone continuing to ring incessantly. “Technically, sweetheart, our anniversary was months ago. You remember, Fifteenth of June 1930? You wore a white dress as a joke.” Moving out of bed, he groaned as his lower back popped. Even though the Green Lama had miraculously healed him of almost all his injuries several months ago, he had done nothing to cure Caraway’s stiff joints. But then again, beggars couldn’t be choosers.

Refusing to open her eyes, Francesca pressed a pillow against her ear. Her voice muffled, she said: “Just answer the damn phone!”

Rubbing his eyes, he picked up the receiver and muttered: “Caraway. This better be good.”

“*Om! Ma-ni pad-me Hum!*” the strong, yet soft-spoken voice came through the phone line.

Caraway sighed. “Do you sleep, Lama? I mean, at all? Ever?” Normally, he wouldn’t mind hearing from the Green Lama, but then again, Francesca wasn’t normally sleeping in his bed and he wasn’t normally *this* hung over. “And how in the hell did you get my home number?”

“I beg your pardon for waking you, Lieutenant, but your assistance is needed.”

“Who is it?” Francesca murmured through the pillow.

“Just the Green Lama, sweetness. Go back to sleep,” Caraway said to Francesca. “You’re gonna get me killed here, Lama.”

“Again, my apologies,” the Lama said, sounding less than sincere, “but time is of the essence, Lieutenant.”

“What is it this time? Did someone take out the *Italian* consulate?”

“Please meet me at 350 Fifth Avenue, hundred-and-second floor, in one hour. I would recommend bringing some travel clothes,” the Lama said without responding to Caraway’s question.

“Three fifty, Fifth Avenue,” Caraway said as he jotted down the address on a piece of scrap paper. It wasn’t until he read it over that he realized where he was going. “Wait. You want me to go where and bring what?”

The Lama’s reply was the audible *click* of the phone disengaging.

Caraway took another sip of coffee, watching the numbers increase as

he rode the elevator up to the 102nd floor of the Empire State Building. His arm was still smarting from the bruise Francesca had given him as he left the apartment. She didn't scream at him. Hell, she didn't even speak. Just socked him in the shoulder and gave him the "you're-in-trouble" look, which he found more frightening than he had the *golem*.

The elevator bell rang and the doors slid open. Shifting the small duffel over his shoulder, he walked out onto the 102nd floor, the wind howling and dawn light hinting morning on the horizon.

This is where they killed that rampaging ape, he reminded himself. He still remembered hearing the actress's warbling screams echo down from the top of the tower. There was a small bullet hole in the wall, a physical reminder of the four Curtiss Helldiver biplanes that had taken the massive primate down.

What a day that had been.

He found the observation deck empty save for a young man, who Caraway guessed to be in his late 20s. He recognized his face but he couldn't place the name. The young man was also nursing a cup of coffee; from the look of it, he hadn't slept at all and Caraway could smell the alcohol on him. Wherever this guy had come from, it had been a lot of fun.

The man turned glanced at Caraway as he approached. "Let me guess," he said, his words slightly slurred, "Green Lama?"

Caraway nodded. "Green Lama. He call you up here too?"

"Something like that," the man shrugged. "I was at this amazing party until I found a little note at the bottom of my drink telling me to get here," he said, swirling his finger over the cardboard cup. "Told me to pack a bag too, but I... uh... I forgot." He gave Caraway a goofy smile. "I'm not even sure how the hell he did that, putting the note at the bottom of my drink. How do you think he did that?"

Caraway sighed. "Wish I knew, buddy. I've known the guy a few years now... Well, as best as one can know a 'masked vigilante' and I'm not sure how he does half the crap I've seen him do."

"Radioactive salts," the young man said matter-of-factly, topping it off with an affirmative nod. He held one hand over his cup, moving his fingers as if he was sprinkling sugar into his coffee. "He puts it in his water and drinks it. Makes him strong. He's even got a special batch that can make him fly."

"Heal people too," Caraway added, tapping his chest with the knuckle of his thumb.

The young man eyed Caraway for a moment. "You're Lieutenant John Caraway, right? I think I saw you in the newsreels, back when you arrested Congressman Zenner for that whole Murder Corporation fiasco and the Crimson Hand business a few years back."

Caraway chuckled. "Can't really say I did those on my own. It was more of: *Lama Ex Machina*."

The young man gave Caraway a slightly befuddled look. Caraway figured he was either confused by the term or still considerably intoxicated. Or both.

"Yeah, *Tulku* told me about you," the young man said eventually.

Caraway furrowed his eyebrows. "Who are you again?"

"Ken," he said, with noticeable bravado. "Ken Clayton."

"The actor?" Caraway asked incredulously, finally remembering where he had seen his face: Francesca idolized him. "No offense or nothing, but why does the Green Lama have an actor working with him?"

Ken shrugged. "Hell if I know. Jean and I met the guy on a ship from Los Angeles and for whatever reason we just jumped at the chance to help him. Hell, the first time I ever spoke to him, he was hiding in a baggage room. Who in their right mind would listen to a guy hiding in a baggage room?" Ken sighed as he rubbed his eyes. "What time is it?"

Caraway checked his watch. "Five minutes to five in the morning."

"Lord in heaven!" he exclaimed, massaging his eyes. "I wonder if Gary Brown and Evangl Stewart ever had to deal with this sort of crap too."

"*Om! Ma-ni pad-me Hum!*"

"Speak of the devil," Caraway murmured as they turned around to find the Green Lama standing solemnly behind them with his hands behind his back. For all they knew he could have been there for several minutes, listening to their whole conversation.

"Lieutenant Caraway, Mr. Clayton," the Lama said in greeting. His voice seemed strained and hoarse. Caraway couldn't help but notice the Lama's face, though shadowed by his large hood, appeared almost Native American, noticeably different from his more Caucasian appearance several weeks prior, which itself was a change from the Asian man he had seen a few days before that. He also noticed the deep pockets underneath the Lama's blazing eyes.

Ken raised his coffee in a mock toast. "Lama."

"Thank you both for coming here on such short notice and at such an early hour."

"Look, Lama, no offense, but could we get right to the point?" Caraway said testily. "I've got a wife at my apartment seriously considering a return to her single life, so can we get this over with quickly?"

The Green Lama gave him a terse nod in acknowledgment. "Mr. Clayton, you will recall that at the conclusion of our most recent exploits with the *golem* the discovery of a Second Jade Tablet."

"How could I forget?" Ken sighed.

"As of two hours ago, the Tablet, just as it did for Rabbi Brickman, has

at last revealed to me a glimpse of the future. And while these visions were unclear,” the Lama grimaced. He closed his eyes, as if he were trying to replay the visions in his mind. “I believe that the delicate order of this world has indeed been thrown off-balance and that we are at the forefront of a great upheaval, somehow tied directly to the entity known as *Cthulhu*.”

“Aw, great,” Caraway grumbled. “You’re getting us involved some Apocalypse type business aren’t you?”

The Green Lama tilted his head and considered Caraway. “No,” he said after a moment. “Not if we stop it.”

Ken took a sip of his coffee. “There’s a non-committal answer if I ever heard one.”

Caraway ran his hand over his face. “If you were another man, Lama, I would tell you to shove it where the sun don’t shine.”

The Lama gave him a small nod and smiled. “Thank you, Lieutenant.”

“And where will this apocalypse be going down? New Jersey?” Caraway asked.

The Green Lama hesitated before simply saying: “Greece.”

As if on cue, Caraway heard the roar of a propeller engine approaching. Looking out towards the cityscape he saw a massive dirigible heading towards the Empire State Building. It had been years since anyone attempted to use the building as mooring mast, but leave it to the Green Lama to disregard safety and logic.

“I have arranged transport for you,” the Lama said over the wind and motors. “Mr. Masters is an excellent pilot and he will ensure you arrive quickly and safely.”

“You’re not goin’ with us?” Caraway hollered as a mechanized gangway extended from the dirigible.

“I have business to attend to here before I can make the journey. My associate Jethro Dumont will accompany you in my stead.”

Caraway spun around to face the Lama, shocked to hear his friend’s name. “You roped *Jethro* into this? Shouldn’t he been sipping cocktails at the Stork Club?”

“You’ve got to be kidding me!” Ken shouted, exasperated. “You know, I am *still* the lead in *On Your Toes*, and while I can’t speak for the Lieutenant here, I can’t just go gallivanting around country-to-country like some whip-cracking pulp hero! I helped you out during that whole to-do with the *golem* ‘cause of Jean and only ‘cause of her. Go halfway across the world on your own time, *Tulku*. I’m sitting this one *out*.”

The Green Lama locked eyes with Ken. “This *is* because of Jean.”

Ken rolled his eyes. “Aw, great. What has she gotten herself into *now*?”

“Wait,” Caraway exclaimed in disbelief. “This about some girl?”