

# ALPHA OMEGA

LORI STEPHENS



Alpha, Omega  
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## PROLOGUE

*The fate of my soul!!*

Reymann choked back a cry and the acidic glob in his mouth as he dropped. His kneecaps thumped against the carpet, sending shivers of pain through both thighs. As he tipped back against the bed and pulled the burlap satchel into his lap, the object inside it shifted. Opening the bag, he lifted the Librah Vae-ta out and turned it over with quivering fingers.

*I have it in my hands! My salvation! My eternal life!!*

The Abba's voice rippled in his mind—

*There is only one path to Omega . . .*

—phantasmal, like drifting frankincense: *When you attain entrance, Omega will receive you in the same manner as when it brought you into existence, and when your eyes are finally opened, you will see in not seeing, know in not knowing, and you will escape, dispersing into all TRUTH . . .*

The Prayer of Devotion pulsed through him like a monstrous heartbeat. His voice cracked as he whispered: “Abbah way non vash ah parateh, sho day too vashla meed neh-vee von besh garah, mem vahla padarah . . .”

*I won't wait any longer!* He squeezed his eyes shut, intensely aware of the leather pressing against his palms and the pain stabbing at his temples.

*There is only one path to Omega . . .*

One eyelid twitched as he stared at the symbol on the cover:

Ω

Reymann glanced around the bedroom, his eyes flitting to the light fixture overhead, the telephone on a folding table beside a filing cabinet. Were there wiretaps? Cameras secreted in the walls? Would the web of lies and bribes that had allowed him access to the Abba's private office protect him now? He felt even more vulnerable than when he'd grabbed the book, raced into the dark asylum of his car, and gunned the engine.

What would the Abba do? How would the discipleship survive without its holy word?

*Whatever the hell they do, my path is guaranteed. The book is mine! Not the fragments offered to the pathetic sycophants, the entire Word! My immortality!!*

Red and glassy from nights of muttering prayers while the rest of London slept, his eyes now blazed: he had the look of the warrior who bellows into the sky as his foe's bloody head swings from his fist. He anchored his elbows on his knees and held the book up as if delivering a squalling newborn, slippery with blood and meconium, to its mother. *My life has been shackled to the service of the truth, but I will have my reward NOW!*

He pulled on the tab; the snap released with an abrupt pop. A river of ecstasy flooded through him. The devotion, the self-denial, the celibacy would all submerge in shadow as his soul was blessed, as he received what the years of sacrifice had earned him: his immortality. His joining with The Ultimate.

*There is only one path to Omega . . .*

He licked his lips and tasted the bitterness of ammonia.

On the first page, he saw lines of calligraphy: Latin, Greek, and hieroglyphics fused in linear but incoherent constructions. As he blinked at it, trying to match the symbols with the syllables of the prayer language he knew well, an irritating buzz began to whine at the back of his head. His forehead bunched into a frown.

“But . . . these words open the gates of Omega?” he sputtered.

As his eyes darted across the text, Reymann’s heart pumped harder and faster. His lungs hitched, as if he were sucking air through wadded cheesecloth. Dagger-points of pain sliced through his temporal lobes. The pain intensified, and he dropped his head into his hands, groaning. The book cartwheeled to the carpet, landing on its spine with a thump.

Realization struck him like a suicide bomb. *I have just said my last prayer!*

“NO! No, dear God!”

The shout sent electric jolts through his eyes. He staggered to his feet, stumbling against a wheeled chair and sending it spinning in crazy circles. As his hip smacked against the folding table, a framed picture sitting on it toppled: Maura’s long-suffering smile, the smile that had stiffened like arthritis as their accounts emptied. Hugged next to her, Geoff, then a sturdy adolescent in his football uniform, his expression of *Just fuck off and die—that’s what you want, isn’t it?*

*My job, my money and possessions, my friends—my wife! My child!* Rage filled his throat. “I’ve given everything! Everything!”

A drop welled and splattered onto the page, but it was not the clear wetness of tears.

Blood.

The Abba’s face rose before him, a specter of onyx eyes and lips moving in slow motion.

*There is only one path to Omega . . .*

Reymann felt himself dripping from every pore, every cell; crimson beads fell onto the Berber carpeting and across his legs. Blood rushed to his hands and feet, swelling each digit. An iron-rich taste filled his mouth. He tried to swallow the metallic saliva, but his throat had locked. Cramps exploded through his stomach, doubling him over. With a bellow of

agony, he clapped his hands to his sides, staggered toward the hallway, stretched one quivering hand toward the house alarm panel, and toppled.

Each throb that sucked the blood out of his collapsing veins sent excruciating blasts through his head. He was swimming in fire, drowning in acid. Something demonic howled through his organs and up into his lungs, across his larynx and tongue, thrashing against his teeth. He heard himself screaming, screaming as the infidel on the rack, screaming at the burning stake of faith, screaming at the idolatry of the discipleship, screaming at the assassins of religion, screaming that was now a liquid gurgle, screaming into the inferno of hell, screaming as all hope entered darkness.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



LORI STEPHENS' editorial career spans 20 years and the full spectrum of content development, copywriting, editing, and publication management. She has edited over 80 published trade titles on topics from Neurolinguistic Programming to law to cutting-edge technology.

In 2005, she founded Verbatim Editorial, an agency that helps writers to develop books on deep personal change.

Ms. Stephens holds a Bachelor of Arts in English/Creative Writing from the University of Oregon, and she is certified as an NLP Practitioner. A resident of Seattle, one of the nation's greenest cities (literally), she works as a gadfly for social change and otherwise stirs up trouble. She is kept in line by two uppity Basenjis, Ziggy and Zhara.