

The Chase

A Christian Psychological Thriller

by Charles Besondy

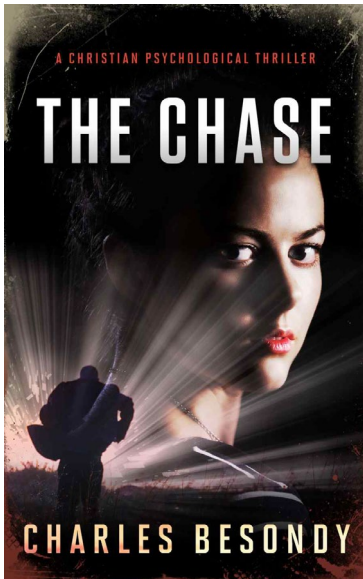
“Pretty bird, is that you?”

Book Blurb

An ordinary girl becomes an extraordinary woman just one step from ruin.

What Sheryl remembered most about her life up to now was the cycle of chaos – brief moments of happiness soon snuffed out by misery – again and again and again.

Now married, she thought those days were finally behind her. She had strong faith, a wonderful husband, and a baby in her womb. So, why were dark thoughts flooding her mind? Why was she walking to the cliff in the dead of night? Why was a tall, lanky stranger intensely studying her from the darkness?



This epic thriller in The Lighthouse series follows the twisting journey of Sheryl Landing as she struggles to rebound from an oppressed childhood in search of herself and love.

Along the way she meets Yawl, a beautiful bird with golden eyes who opens her heart to God.

But even as she begins to let the hand of God guide her, an evil power delights in planning her ruin. During her journey Sheryl stumbles, regains her way, falls again, and ultimately, is brought to the brink of destruction.

Set in modern-day Washington State, “The Chase” draws the reader close to its characters, paints vivid scenes, uplifts with faith, and thrills with suspense. Due to some mature subject matter, this book may not be suitable for children.

This novel by Charles Besondy is Book Two in The Lighthouse series, best read before or after the multi-literary award winner, “The Hidden Saboteur.”

“The Chase” answers the question: To what length will God go to protect us from evil? And to what extent will the Deceiver go to lure us away from the Light?

Book Facts

- Silver Medal for Christian Mystery/Thrillers, Illumination Book Awards, 2020-2021. Finalist for Religious Fiction in the 2021 American Book Fest Best Book Awards. Silver Award for Mystery/Thriller in 2021-2022 Reviewer's Choice Awards. Regional Award Winner, Western Pacific, Reviewer's Choice Awards, 2021-2022.
- Written between October 2019 and December 2020
- Published by Besondy Publishing, LLC in eBook format on January 13, 2021. The audiobook version was released in April 2021 on Audible, Amazon, and iTunes. Whitney Dykhouse narrated the novel.
- Cover design concept by Charles and Sofia Besondy. Design by James at GoOnWrite.
- "The Chase" is the fourth title written in The Lighthouse series. It is best enjoyed when read #2 or #1.
- The Lighthouse series consists of three novels, a novella, and a short story.
 - "The Hidden Saboteur," Book One, three-time award winner for Christian fiction
 - "The Chase," Book Two, four-time award winner for Christian fiction
 - "The Snare," Book Three
 - "All for Clay", Prequel to the Lighthouse Series, a sidebar Novella
 - "Painting for a Stranger," a sidebar short story to The Lighthouse Series
- Besondy's books can be found on Amazon

Author Facts

- Charles Besondy and his wife, Sofia, live in Lakeway, Texas.
- Charles spent the first 23 years of his life in Oregon, followed by 26 years in Seattle, Washington before moving to Austin, Texas in 2000.
- Charles graduated from the University of Oregon before starting his career in Marketing.
- He was baptized in 2007, the same year he met Sofia.
- He self-published his first non-fiction book in 2008.

About Charles Besondy (in his own words)

It all began as I sat uneasily in a high-back chair while 14 men in a semi-circle studied me intensely through dim candlelight rippled by rising smoke from white sage incense.

I was attending my first Christian men's retreat. It was May 2015 a few days before my 65th birthday, and it was my turn to *be in The Chair*.

After long moments of silent prayer, each man, in turn, told me what the Holy Spirit was telling them to say as they studied me. I was not to respond – just listen and be present to their words.



Today, I can't recall most of what was said to me in that room. What I do remember, because it struck such a powerful chord in me that night, was three of the men had said, "I see you as a tall shining beacon."

I can assure you, up to that moment I didn't see myself as anything close to a tall shining beacon – quite the contrary – but from that moment on I gradually began to see me as God intended. Something else happened that night in the cabin on the San Saba River in central Texas. Without me knowing it, the Holy Spirit had planted a seed that three years later would become my first novel, "The Hidden Saboteur."

The seed began to sprout a single leaf the following year. At this time in my life, through the patient coaching of my wife and Bible study, I recognized how I was allowing my past to control who I was being. I had been believing a self-perceived lie that I wasn't good enough for love, happiness, and success. I certainly wasn't created that way by God – not good enough – so why was I believing it? Once I realized the deception of that perception, it opened my eyes to how nearly everyone's life is limited by similar lies – the "not good enough," the "not worthy," the "never can do it right." I wondered what can I do to free people of the chains and limitations of the deception? That was the first leaf of the budding seed.

The second leaf sprung suddenly into my head one day while working in the yard. Three words, "the hidden saboteur," summarized for me how Satan works inside each of us planting deceptive thoughts and beliefs that limit who we were created to be.

Weeks later, another leaf of the seed appeared. This time in the shape of a vision. I saw a tall lighthouse with its lantern shining brightly out to sea.

Awareness of self-limiting deception, three words out the blue, and an image of a lighthouse – three ways the Holy Spirit grabbed my attention. And then I understood – I had to write a book.

Eighteen months later, "The Hidden Saboteur," was released to encouraging reviews, and better yet, more story ideas were coming into my head. By January 2021 I had written four books in what had become the Clay Austin series of Christian fiction.

Readers comment that my books draw them close to the complex characters, thrill them with unexpected twists, and take them into vivid scenes. Many reviewers have noted their appreciation that Christian themes are apparent, but not over-bearing.

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Sheryl stood and then stepped up onto the bench. From the bench she took a step up and out. The top of the wobbly fence greeted her right foot. Quickly she brought up her left foot until she was standing awkwardly, swaying on the fence's top rail as if competing in the balance beam event at a gymnastics contest. It was difficult to stay balanced and would have been impossible if the usual wind were blowing. For the first time she glanced down. Waves crashed seventy-five feet below her, leaving luminescent white foam on the

jagged rocks. It was so utterly beautiful, the ocean beckoned. A brilliant light suddenly filled the night behind her. She stepped forward off the fence and dropped from sight into the darkness below.

Why did it have to be so hard? Why couldn't his plans just unfold unopposed? Instead, he had to be constantly vigilant over every project, and the work was exhausting. Now, in this region alone he had to process thousands of new projects every day, creating a plan for each's destruction, recording it in his journal. That should be enough, and it would be enough if it wasn't for Him, the Adversary.

He was so weary – had been weary for as long as he could remember – but there was no time for rest. He was in danger of losing S-41.

The Figure in Gray, finding cover from the rain beneath a tree, carefully removed a journal from his coat pocket and scrawled a few notes on the pages before quickly replacing it. The plan for S-41 had been amended. He wasn't going to lose this one. He lurched away from the tree and strode up the street, cursing the rain that repeatedly extinguished his cigar.

Ironically, inspiration for the piece had come from the balloon and lighthouse painting Dr. Shildstein had given Clay, the same one he had hidden beneath his bed earlier today in a fit of rage before kicking Sheryl out of the house. That painting had moved her to paint the same lighthouse, but not as a typical landscape. No, she wanted to recapture the sensation, as a little girl, of lying in the grass looking up at the tower.

The abstract she was looking at before her practically vibrated with energy and movement. On a dark blue background, a tower of white reached up and up. One could almost get dizzy looking at it, so strong was the perspective. It matched the sensation Sheryl could remember from childhood, but looking at it now, she was beginning to see the painting differently. Why hadn't she noticed before? One minute she saw a tower reach into the sky as if she was lying at its foundation looking up. But blink once and she saw, not a tower going up, but rather a beam of light coming down from a point high in the sky.

Sheryl's heart raced. Not since *Cliff Face*, bartered to Connor Bainsworth for a ride on his jet, had a painting of hers possessed such transformative visual power – to be two subjects simultaneously. She squeezed a dab of acrylic paint on a palette, selected a brush from the dozen standing in a jar, and began to paint – forgetting all about the carving knife lying on the bed.