

# POSEIDON'S CHILD

A TALE FROM THE BOOK OF ATLANTIS

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*Fennin Books*™

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Stories in The Book of Atlantis™ series

*Serpent's Teeth*  
*Poseidon's Child*

Poseidon's Child

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## CHAPTER 1

“I want my money.”

“You’ll have it after the funeral.”

“That wasn’t the deal! You said half beforehand, then half afterwards when I hand over her book.”

“Do you have the book?” The voice on the phone was soft as velvet—and more frightening because of it.

“Of course, and it’s in a safe place.” Smitton involuntarily looked up at the ceiling tile where he’d hidden the item in question. He didn’t see his daughter Kirin watching him from the entrance to the kitchen. The sound of her father on the phone had brought her out of her room to see what was going on. He was drunk, as usual, and had turned up the phone to full volume. It was easy for Kirin to hear everything that was said.

“Okay, I’ll bring the money to the funeral parlor tomorrow. Bring the book, or the deal’s off.”

“Dammit! You’re not giving me a lot of choice, are you? Look, I don’t need trouble; don’t bring any of your enforcer buddies with you.”

“Of course not! See you tomorrow.”

After the man on the phone hung up, Smitton jerked the fridge open and took out a long neck. Taking a deep pull, he walked out of the house to sit on the front porch.

As soon as he was gone, Kirin slid a chair underneath the ceiling tile her dad had looked at, and she climbed up. She was tall for an eight-year-old, but it was still a bit of a

stretch to reach the ceiling. Getting up on her tiptoes, she pushed up on the ceiling tile and felt around the edges. She found what she expected right away and pulled it down from its hiding spot. Then she put the tile back in place.

Brushing the dust off the object, she ran back to her room and slipped out the window, her actions screened by a large bush that stood in front of the glass. Lying down so that her father wouldn't see her, she squirmed across the lawn and hid in some overgrown shrubs that nestled close to one of the neighbor's houses. After catching her breath, she looked around to make sure nobody had seen her, but it was dusk and everybody was in their houses with the air conditioners running at full blast. Late September in Phoenix still saw hundred-degree heat.

She shifted to sit cross-legged with her prize in her lap. It was a black onyx box roughly the size of a hard-cover book from a library. It had a gold trident worked into a pattern of silver leaves on the top and a keyhole on one side. Otherwise, it was featureless with not even a seam showing how it could be opened.

Reaching into a pocket of her jeans, Kirin took out a small bronze key and fit it into the keyhole of the box. Then she stopped to cry for a bit. Her mom had slipped the key to her just two nights ago, being careful not to let her dad see it. An hour after that, her mom was dead.

Shaking her head to clear her eyes, Kirin carefully worked the key in the lock the way her mother had shown her months ago, and then pressed down on three hidden depressions in the decorations on the top of the box. There was a faint click, and then the lid of the box opened of its own accord, accompanied by a sigh of relief from Kirin. She remembered her mom explaining to her how a poison needle would shoot out if the box wasn't opened correctly.

The book was still there. Kirin checked to make sure it hadn't been damaged, then locked it back inside of its protective box.

She remembered what her mom had said; the book was hers, and she was never to show it to anyone else.

Especially her dad. It was filled with stories and songs about people from long ago. Kirin felt her throat tighten as she remembered her mom reading to her from the book and how they would sing the songs together.

Kirin thought for a few minutes and then slipped under a broken section of chain link fence into another neighbor's yard. They'd had some workmen out earlier in the day, and Kirin found a shovel that the men had left at the job site. She also grabbed a garbage bag and a roll of duct tape from a box next to the workmen's dumpster. Climbing into the next yard over, Kirin picked a hidden spot behind a shrub, set the box down and began digging. It was hard work, and her hair stuck to her face with sweat. When the hole was knee-deep, she taped the key to the box, stuffed the box into the hefty bag, and then put the bag in the ground. After she covered the hole up, she scattered some dirt and gravel over the spot so that nobody would notice it. Then she ran back to her house, returning the shovel to its owner on the way.

She was just changing into her PJs when her dad came in.

"What have you been up to?" he demanded.

"Nothing, Sir."

"Right. I heard the chair in the kitchen. Did you get a snack from the fridge?"

"No Sir."

"Liar! You know the consequences for lying to your father, don't you?"

"Yes Sir."

"Well, you should have thought about that before you did."

Drunk and in a bad mood from not getting his money, Smitton took out his frustration on his daughter. When his arm got tired, he quit and got himself another beer, then settled down in front of the TV to drink himself to sleep.