



The Messengers

2

# UnCitizen

Outcast for refusing to deny God,  
the struggle to stay alive challenges a new-found faith.

LILLIAN DUNCAN

# Uncitizen

*The Messengers Series, Book 2*

Lillian Duncan

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*The Messengers Series*

Messenger  
UnCitizen  
Exile

## *Dedication*

This and all I do is for God's glory. To my amazing husband, Ronny. God sure knew what he was doing.

Thanks for all your love and support.



# 1

THOUGH I DWELL IN THE DARKNESS, THE  
LORD IS A LIGHT FOR ME. ~ MICAH 7: 8

“Welcome to hell.” The guard smirked as he opened the door.

Magdalena stared at the sea of humanity within the walls. She couldn’t move. Her mind and her body were frozen. She didn’t belong in prison. Her only crime was that she’d discovered the truth about God.

The guard shoved her and grunted. “In. Now.”  
Magdalena stumbled into her new life.

The room was huge, and filled with wall-to-wall people.

The Guardians had eradicated crime, poverty, and discrimination. So who were all these people—and what had they done to get themselves put in here? Surely, they couldn’t all be traitors.

The guard pushed her further into the room. The stench was like nothing she’d ever experienced. Mercy Life Center had its share of foul odors, but it couldn’t compare with this. It made her not want to take another breath. Ever.

A man and woman sat at a small table. The smell didn’t seem to bother them. When they finished with the man in front of her, the woman motioned for her to

come forward. The woman looked down at a sheet of paper. "Prisoner 456ZZ."

When Magdalena didn't move, the guard pushed her forward. She grasped the edge of the table to steady herself. The world turned wavy. She took several deep breaths.

The man finally looked up at her. He spoke in a monotone. "We are your processing team. You have been deemed an Uncitizen due to your traitorous ac—"

"But I'm not—"

"No speaking." The man's voice boomed off the walls.

The woman rolled her eyes. "You've been found guilty. You no longer have any rights. This is your new life as an Uncitizen."

A new life? It sounded reasonable the way the woman said it. Except that it wasn't true. Magdalena was in prison. That meant no life. Not now—not ever.

Mary assured her that God would never forsake her. And yet Magdalena felt completely alone. Where was God? Why wasn't He helping her? Why hadn't He kept her from being put in this awful place? At every step of the way, she could have made a different choice.

She could have refused to go to Mary's room. She could have given The New Testament to the Investigators. She could have told them the truth. She could have...the list went on and on.

The woman's voice brought Magdalena back to the present. "Your transition can be an easy one if you follow the rules."



Magdalena looked at the sea of people stuffed in the room like sardines in a can. There couldn't be anything easy about this place. How many of these people were dangerous? *God, how could You do this to me?*

The man's voice drew her attention back to him. "It's not *if* you follow the rules. You don't have a choice. Either follow the rules or you will be punished. No one wants to be punished more than once. Hold out your arms."

She did as she was told.

The woman poked at the scab on Magdalena's wrist. "I see you took out your LifeChip. And yet, you tried to tell us you're innocent. Nobody ever takes out their LifeChip, except for traitors and criminals."

Magdalena's only crime was to discover that God was real.

How could that be wrong? But there wasn't a point in telling these people that. They didn't care.

"Not that it matters," the woman continued. "We remove it anyway. LifeChips are reserved for citizens. This is what Uncitizens get." The woman held up a band of some sort. "It's a tracker. It lets the guards know where you are at all times. But it's also a punisher."

*A punisher?*

The man smiled. "If you don't follow the rules, you get punished."

The woman nodded. "Each time you're punished, the punishment will get stronger. Follow the rules from the beginning and you won't have to experience

that." The woman put the thick black band on Magdalena's wrist and closed it. Then she put one on Magdalena's other wrist. She looked at the man, and then nodded.

Hot, painful electricity shot through Magdalena's body. She screamed as she clutched the table to keep from falling.

The woman patted her hand. "That's not even punishment level, dear. We just give a small sample to make sure it's working. And so you understand that it's truly best if you follow the rules."

The man looked at her. "Any questions?"

"What are the rules?"

He smiled. "I think this one will do very well. The rules are easy enough. Number one, always do whatever the guards tell you to do. Number two, no violence of any sort is tolerated. Violence against a guard is automatic death." He said the words as if he were ordering a hamburger at a restaurant. Not a shred of emotion. "Take off your clothes."

"Why?"

Jolts of electricity shot through her—worse than before. Magdalena screamed as her knees buckled. She collapsed on the floor. The woman looked down at Magdalena. "We are your guards, dear. The rule is to do whatever we tell you to do. Not to ask why. Do you understand?"

She did now. "Yes."

The man spoke once again. "Take off your clothes."

Magdalena grabbed the edges of the table and

pulled herself back to a standing position. Her fingers trembled as she unbuttoned her shirt.

## 2

"Name?"

"Isabella Lang."

"Service Assignment?"

"I'm a caregiver at Mercy Life Center."

"How do you know Magdalena Denton?"

"We both work at Mercy Life and live in the same apartment building."

Investigator Johnson looked up from his tablet.

"Your relationship is more than that, right?"

"We're friends."

"Yes, we know."

"Where's Magdalena?"

"I'm the one asking the questions."

"I know but—"

"Are you lovers?"

"No. I don't like women. Not in that way."

"Are you involved in the same illegal activities as she was?"

"Was? Did something happen to her? What did you do to her?"

He repeated the question.

"I don't believe she was involved in—"

"Please answer the questions with a yes or a no."

"I can't. I can't just answer yes or no. Because I

don't know what illegal activities you're talking about. And I'm sure she wasn't involved in any and neither am I. Magdalena was...is a loyal citizen."

"Answer the question, please. Yes or no."

"No. No. No. Magdalena wasn't involved in any illegal activities."

"That wasn't the question." He sighed. "Let's start again."

When she was finished, Gnat walked out of the interrogation room. Every chair was filled with people she knew. People who knew Magdalena. Her friends. Her coworkers.

Even Supervisor Garner sat in a chair staring straight ahead. Her facial expression was calm, almost bored. But her twisting hands screamed a different story. Anxiety. Worry. Fear.

*Magdalena. Magdalena. Where are you? What did they do to you?* Weldon knew something but he refused to tell her. He said he'd tell her later—when it was safe for her to know. But she wanted to know now.

She found him in the crowd, but before she took a step Investigator Johnson touched her arm. "You may leave. No talking with anybody else in here."

"That's not—"

"I said you may leave. Now."

Fine. Weldon would have to wait. She walked past Weldon without a glance his way. She was sure the Investigator was watching to see who she would make eye contact with.

Well, she wouldn't give him the satisfaction.

~\*~

"Name."

"Weldon Franks."

"Service Assignment?"

"I'm the Director of the North Life Training Center."

Investigator Johnson shuffled through the papers in front of him. "Director, huh? That's quite an honor."

"It most certainly is. I've worked hard to serve my country."

"I'm sure you have. How do you know Magdalena Denton?"

"We live in the same apartment building. I dated her roommate."

"Name?"

"Weldo—"

"Not your name. The roommate's name."

"Bethany Morgan. She took the S-pill after Magdalena was arrested the first time. I guess she thought it was her fault."

"Magdalena wasn't arrested twice. The first time she was ill."

"That's true, but we didn't know that at the time. We all thought she'd been arrested." He looked at the Investigator and asked a question he already knew the answer to. He'd watched from the alley as she was dragged out to a car and hauled away. "Has she been arrested now?"

Investigator Johnson looked up from his tablet, and stared at him for several moments. "Would it

bother you if she was?"

He'd told Gnat to be honest, without incriminating themselves, when they reported for questioning. He only hoped Gnat had managed to pull it off. That was the reason he hadn't told her what he'd seen last night. He didn't want her more upset than she already was. She needed to be calm and rational during her questioning—and so did he.

Weldon looked directly into the man's eyes. "I thought she might be the one I would mate with. Obviously, I was wrong about that. This whole thing has been...has been very unsettling."

"You two dated?"

Weldon shook his head. "Not exactly We went for a walk a few nights ago. And a good-night kiss. That was it."

"No actual mate-date?"

"No."

"Then why would you think the two of you might mate?"

"Just something about Magdalena. She seemed so sweet. So kind and caring."

Johnson nodded. "She did seem that way, didn't she? She fooled me too. I even expressed interest in dating her myself so I can understand what you're talking about."

Weldon imagined grabbing this man by his shirt and demanding to know what happened to Magdalena. Where was she? Was she OK? But he couldn't do that. He couldn't even express any curiosity about her. "I guess I wasn't the only one she

fooled.”

~\*~

When Gnat finally made it back to the apartment building, she headed straight to Magdalena’s apartment. Not that Magdalena would be there, but she wanted to talk with Trisha. Surely, she would have some information about Magdalena—after all she was a lawyer.

Gnat rang the bell and waited. It took a while, but the door finally opened. Trisha looked a mess. Her eyes were red and swollen and it looked as if she’d forgotten to comb her hair. She was still in her pajamas. “Hey, Gnat.”

“Do you have any idea what’s happening at the Citizen Department? They’re questioning everyone who knows Magdalena, worked with her, and lives here.”

“I didn’t know that, but I figured as much. It’s their modus operandi.” She opened the door wider. “Come on in.”

“Do you know where Magdalena is?” Gnat asked.

“Can’t say that I do.”

“You have to know something. You’re a lawyer. Her lawyer. What’s going on? Where is she?”

“I said I don’t know. They came here in the middle of the night. Magdalena was gone and they didn’t tell me anything.” Trisha plopped down on the sofa. She motioned around the apartment. “They came in and searched the whole place. Not just Magdalena’s space.”



Gnat looked around. The place was a mess. Dishes were all over the counter. The cupboard doors were open. Drawers were open and the contents dumped on the floor.

"Wow. What a mess. But they must have told you something."

"I'm sorry, Gnat. Nobody's told me anything."

"Did they at least tell you if she was arrested?"

Trisha didn't answer but shook her head.

"I don't believe that. You're her roommate and a lawyer. You have to know what happened to her." Gnat sat down beside her.

"But I don't. Nobody's told me anything. But looking at this mess, I'd say something happened. She's probably been taken into custody, but I don't know that for sure."

"Did they find any kind of evidence here?"

"They didn't take anything with them. So whatever they were looking for they didn't find here."

Gnat threw her hands up in the air in frustration. "I'm leaving, but if you hear something, please let me know."

"I will."

Gnat walked toward the door but then turned back. "Why aren't you at the Citizen Department being questioned? Considering you're her roommate, I'd think you'd be one of the first people they talked to."

"I was questioned. For more than two hours. But they did it here. After they searched the apartment again."

"Or maybe, you're in on it. Maybe you're the

reason she was arrested in the first place. That would explain why you aren't down at the Citizen Department with all of Magdalena's other friends. Her real friends."

Trisha shook her head. "It's not like that, Gnat."

"If you say so." Gnat slammed the door on her way out.

### 3

“Where’s Magdalena?”

“What happened to her?”

“Have you seen her or talked to her?”

Gnat was at the Anything Goes Bar with a few others from their Christian circle. Magdalena’s idea to meet at such a place was pretty smart considering how loud the music got. She sighed. Everybody had heard the rumors about Magdalena being arrested and they wanted answers.

So did she, but Weldon seemed to be avoiding her. He’d ignored her calls. She’d had to leave a message about this meeting. The barrage of questions continued.

“Do you think she was arrested, Gnat?”

“Isabella, not Gnat.” She corrected. Magdalena had given her the nickname because of how tiny she was. Now every time she heard it, she wanted to curl into a ball and cry.

Everyone was looking at her. But Weldon was their leader. He needed to take charge.

“Was she arrested? Did she have a trial?”

“Stop badgering Gna...Isabella. She has no idea what’s going on with Magdalena any more than we do. Let her catch her breath. And then maybe she can tell

us what she does know." Marcus Smith looked at the others with those bright blue eyes against his dark complexion. His expression held peace, something they all needed. He was such a genuine nice guy.

Gnat was grateful for his support. "Thanks, Marcus. I don't know for sure if she was arrested, but there's a good chance of it." She took a deep breath, knowing she had to tell them the truth but not wanting to. "I was taken in and questioned by Investigators about Magdalena."

All conversation stopped as everyone stared at her.

"What did they ask you, Gnat?" Marcus's expression and tone were calm. "And what did you tell them about Magdalena? Did they ask about the group?"

She didn't bother to correct his use of her nickname. "They wouldn't tell me anything about Magdalena even though I kept asking. As for me, I told them the truth ...to a point. I told them I was her friend and didn't believe she did anything wrong. All absolutely true."

"What else?"

"They kept asking if I was involved with her illegal activities, but I told them I had no knowledge of her being anything but a loyal citizen. Thanks to Weldon, I think they believed me."

"What do you mean?"

"Weldon came up with the idea of being honest without incriminating. I think it worked. I got emotional and told them the truth. That I didn't believe

Magdalena was a criminal. I guess I got upset enough that they believed I didn't know anything. They finally let me leave and I haven't heard from them since."

Everyone started talking at once.

"Where's Weldon?"

"Yeah, why isn't he here?"

"Because he knows it's too dangerous. That's why. I can't believe I even came tonight."

"Magdalena will tell them about us. We'll all be arrested. Why did you and Weldon invite her? We were never breached before she came. She probably told them where we were meeting that night. She was probably some sort of spy."

"That's impossible." Gnat shook her head.

"Why? Because she's your friend and you don't think she'd do something like that?"

"It's impossible. Magdalena didn't know anything about our little group until I brought her that night. She had no idea where we met or why. I was with her the whole time after I told her. There's no way she informed on us."

"Whatever. That doesn't mean she won't tell them about us now. To save her own skin."

Magdalena wouldn't betray them. Gnat knew it in her bones. "She won't betray us. I trust her. Completely."

"Of course, she will. She'll have no choice."

"Everyone always has a choice. God will give her the strength she needs. And I know Magdalena won't betray us. I'm sure of it." Gnat tried to sound reassuring.