



A Dream of Ice: Book 2 of The EarthEnd Saga

By Gillian Anderson, Jeff Rovin

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From Gillian Anderson, star of the *X-Files*, and *New York Times* bestselling coauthor Jeff Rovin comes the second book in the thrilling paranormal series Earthend Saga that began with *A Vision of Fire*, which *Marie Claire* called “addictive!”

After uncovering a mystical link to the ancient civilization of Galderkhaan, child psychologist Caitlin O’Hara is left with strange new powers. Suddenly she can heal her young patients with her mind and see things from other places and other times. But as she learns more about her powers, she also realizes that someone is watching her, perhaps hunting her—and using her son to do it.

Meanwhile Mikel Jasso, a field agent for a mysterious research organization, is searching for Galderkhaani ruins in Antarctica. After falling down a crevasse, he discovers the entire city has been preserved under ice and that the mysterious stone artifacts he’s been collecting are not as primitive as he thought. As Mikel and Caitlin work to uncover the mysteries of the Galderkhaani, they realize that the person hunting Caitlin and the stones may be connected in ways they never knew possible.

“Fans of Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child will find a lot to like” (*Publishers Weekly*) in the Earthend Saga, and this latest adventure is sure to leave you gasping for breath as Caitlin races against time to save what’s dearest to her heart.

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Editorial Review

Review

"In New York City, psychiatrist Caitlin O'Hara has visions of the civilization of Galderkhaan, 'a world of strange sights, strange beings, and strange philosophies.' Her access to those images coincides with a series of unusual phenomena that fans of Anderson's performance in TV's *X-Files* will appreciate...The conclusion sets up the next book nicely." (*Publishers Weekly*)

"This series is certainly shaping up to be something that should be very familiar ground for fans of *The X-Files*." (*Kirkus*)

About the Author

Gillian Anderson is an award-winning film, television, and theater actor and producer, writer, and activist. She currently lives in London with her daughter and two sons.

Jeff Rovin is the author of more than 100 books, fiction and nonfiction, both under his own name, under various pseudonyms, or as a ghostwriter, including numerous *New York Times* bestsellers. He has written over a dozen Op-Center novels for the late Tom Clancy. Rovin has also written for television and has had numerous celebrity interviews published in magazines under his byline. He is a member of the Author's Guild, the Science Fiction Writers of America, and the Horror Writers of America, among others.

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A Dream of Ice

CHAPTER 1

Caitlin O'Hara was lying in bed with her hands folded across her ribs. It was just after five a.m. and a weak, dark gray light was leaching into the black room through a crack in the curtains.

Predawn has always been undervalued as a witching hour, she thought. Midnight, in prose and poem, had gotten all the glory. At this hour, though, people had to gather their lonely, enervated willpower and make the first choices of the day. For that you needed raw courage. Or crayons, she thought with a smile.

Occasionally, when she was sitting in her office surrounded by diplomas, international accolades, and personal photographs from a life of world travel, Caitlin sharpened crayons. It was more than just mindless activity; her teenage clients frequently needed more than words to describe what they were feeling. Though new clients were often puzzled when she brought out the sketch pad and a sixty-four-pack of Crayolas from her desk, they quickly succumbed to the freedom of nonverbal expression, to the idea of reverting to childhood, to the comforting smell of the open box.

Right now, Caitlin was contemplating what she would draw if asked. Reluctantly, she stopped thinking and just imagined—a freedom she had been loath to give herself since the occurrences of a week ago because Maanik's trances, her own seemingly out-of-body experiences, the still-inexplicable visions, pained her. But for the first time since the night at the United Nations, like a child pushing off from the edge of the pool, she let her imagination roam.

She would draw herself in cerulean blue, turned to her right, and leaning into a small garden, smelling flowers. To her left, curving toward and over her, would be—nothing. A massive emptiness. There was no way to draw the muscular void she was imagining; she'd actually have to cut the paper into that curve.

Nearly half a lifetime ago, in her early twenties, she'd perceived a vacuum of any kind as an enemy. Blanks were a waste of time and elicited a deep unrest in her. Life seemed too short. Then, when she was pregnant, Caitlin had been expecting a tidal wave of hormonal upheaval, so she began working with a new therapist, Barbara Melchior. What she received when she left those sessions was internal silence, the deepest yet, and it scared her. There was too much information to process, too many threads to connect. Her brain, albeit NYU-trained, shut down.

Thankfully, Barbara had helped her see that silence didn't mean a void or failure. Silence was a symbol of something not yet understood, a placeholder until one's mind caught up to and embraced the new information.

When Caitlin's son, Jacob, was born deaf, Barbara had tentatively probed her about whether she felt a sense of irony.

"Absolutely not," Caitlin had said. "Irony is cheap. The universe—" She had hesitated, not sure where she was going with the idea. "The universe doesn't editorialize."

At the time, she wasn't even sure what she meant by that. It just came out. But it applied to her life now. Witnessing the strangely possessed teenagers in Haiti, in Iran, here in New York . . . her visions of the civilization of Galderkhaan . . . the universe had given those experiences to her without footnotes or context. They had just happened.

With Jacob, time allowed her to see his beauty, just as it did with each of her patients, one-on-one.

But this? she wondered, returning to the emptiness she was imagining. A world of strange sights, strange beings, and stranger philosophies. Where could she even begin to look for the connective tissue between the "real world" and this strange place called Galderkhaan? Her brain certainly wasn't providing answers.

So . . . crayons of the mind.

She lay still and breathed, feeling her joints and limbs slowly waking up. Her mind drifted to the imaginary crayon outline of herself within the chaos of flowers and color. It was as if her body was the garden . . .

A gentle tap-tap-tapping came at her door. When Jacob didn't immediately come in, she knew he was already wearing his hearing aid.

"I'm up, honey," she said.

He opened the door and scooted to her side, said, "Wakey, wakey," and put a finger in her ear. She jerked and squealed. This was a long-standing routine she wished would end but whenever she considered telling him she didn't like it, she realized that in the long run she'd miss it. It would end soon enough.

He placed a hand on her eyelids and said, "Don't look, Mommy, I'm going to walk you to the living room."

"Okay, not looking," she said as Jacob put his hands on her shoulders and tugged her upright out of bed.

Grinning nervously and keeping her eyes closed, she allowed him to push at her back to direct her out of her bedroom. Caitlin immediately walked into the edge of the open door.

“Oof!”

“Sorry, Mommy. Okay, we’re in the hall, go right.”

“I know where the living room is,” she said, laughing, and then suddenly stopped. One bare foot had landed in something slimy.

“Ew!”

Her eyelids barely fluttered open before Jacob ran his hands over them again. “Don’t look!”

“There’s something gross—”

“Don’t look! Arfa threw up.”

“Is that the surprise?”

“No! Don’t move. I’ll get paper towels.”

Caitlin stood blindly in the hall on one foot. She listened to the sound of Jacob’s feet retreating and paper towels ripping off the roll. He was talking to himself, muttering something about cat puke. He chuckled. The smell of coffee wafted toward her from the kitchen. She didn’t think Jacob knew how to make coffee. Then she felt him wiping off her foot with the paper towels.

“Is it safe for me to stand yet?”

“One second, I’m getting the floor.”

She could hear him rubbing the puke into the carpet.

“Okay. You can walk now.”

Propelled again by her son, Caitlin put one foot in front of the other until she could tell by the blast of sunlight through her eyelids that they had reached the living room. Jacob positioned himself in front of her and said, “Open!”

Caitlin opened her eyes and saw, standing before her, her mother leaning over the dining room table with the coffeepot. A homemade chocolate Bundt cake was waving four candles at her, and crepe paper twirled from the chairs to the ceiling light to make a green and yellow tepee.

“Surprise!” they chorused. Jacob was so excited he started jumping, then stood on a chair near the cake, still yelling, “Surprise! Gotcha!”

“Hey, Jake,” his grandmother piped over him as she poured fresh coffee into two mugs. “Derriere in the chair.”

"I don't understand French!" he answered back.

"You understand Irish?" she demanded with a touch of brogue, pointing at the wooden seat.

He stopped hopping around and obediently went to where the no-nonsense finger was pointing.

"Were you surprised, Mommy?" he asked in a tone that was both giddy and sheepish.

"Well, I'm surprised I'm forty," she said, hugging her mother around the shoulders. "What the heck time did you leave home?"

"As soon as the bread rose," Nancy replied, patting Caitlin's hands. "Your father would have been here too but we had a no-show at the bakery so he had to fill in."

"I'll call him later," Caitlin said, sitting in the seat of honor. Quickly she glanced around for Arfa. The tabby cat was snoozing in sphinx position on an arm of the couch, obviously no worse for wear.

"Mommy, Mommy, Mommy," Jacob chanted, bopping up and down in his seat. "Make your wish!"

"All right," she said, though it was Nancy's stern gaze that quieted him.

Caitlin looked at the candles, thinking about being forty, about Jacob's having recently turned ten—

About Atash setting himself on fire, the flames leaping over his clothes . . .

My god, she thought, and quickly blew out the candles.

She vaguely noticed that Jacob was still leaning forward with expectation. An instant later the candles relit themselves. Jacob shrieked with laughter but Caitlin heard only screaming. She saw the man who burst into flame in the courtyard in Galderkhaan when she'd shared Atash's vision. Shaking, she blew out the candles again and of course the trick flames came back, now with all the souls of Galderkhaan burning and screaming and dying. Caitlin tried to keep it together, covering her nose and mouth with one hand, but she was visibly shaking. Jacob, unaware, was laughing and clapping.

Nancy O'Hara, who noticed everything, said to Jacob, "Now you get to put them out, the way I showed you."

Gleefully, he dipped his fingers in a small dish of water hidden under a napkin. He pinched each candle out with a ssst, the smoke wafting upward in tendrils.

Nancy occupied Jacob with helping her pull out the candles and then cut the cake into slices while keeping an eye on her daughter. Caitlin was breathing slowly, purposefully, through her nose, with her hands clasped in front of her face. She closed her eyes, checked her hands to see if they had stopped trembling, and took a few more shallow breaths.

Gradually, Caitlin normalized, nodded thanks to her mother, and sank a fork into a proffered slice of cake. With Jacob safely occupied by his own slice, Nancy murmured to Caitlin, "You're not done with that previous case?"

Caitlin didn't answer, and that was answer enough.

"But you're not going to be traveling anytime soon." It was pointedly a statement from Nancy, not a question.

"I—I don't know," Caitlin said quietly. "I never know."

"Don't do something dangerous and make me play the mother card with you, Caitlin. Grandparenting is enough."

"Mom, you didn't want me going to Thailand after the tsunami. What if I had listened to you? I wouldn't have met Jacob's dad, and you wouldn't be a grandmother."

"I was worried about your safety. You knew it was a dangerous situation and went anyway. And after your recent experiences, I am still concerned."

Caitlin sighed wearily. "Mom, you run a bakery—"

"Meaning what, exactly?" the older woman asked. "That I shouldn't have an opinion about how my daughter conducts her life?"

"No, I meant that our worlds are different."

"Caitlin, I meet more people every day than you do in a week—"

"I know. And you should be proud, Mom. I am, of you and Dad. I just mean that—"

"You think you know what's best for you, I know. I've heard it before," Nancy continued. "But here's my take. You're world renowned. You've 'made it.' What I'm saying, with a mother's pride, is, why can't you stop fighting so hard and enjoy that?"

"Enjoy? Mom, that's a word I apply to stepping in cat vomit because it makes my son laugh. Beyond that? I need to understand things, not just fix them. Sometimes that means going where the challenges are. Knowledge is worth the risk for me. Sometimes, like a week ago, things end without being tidied up or understood. Am I satisfied? A bit, sometimes. But I get no real peace or enjoyment. Don't take this the wrong way, but I can't run my practice like a bakery."

Nancy raised one eyebrow, took another bite of cake, and for a second everyone just chewed. Then she said to Jacob, "Don't forget the other surprise, kid."

"Oh, I almost did!" he exclaimed, crumbs flying from his overstuffed mouth.

Jacob leaped toward the silverware drawer and pulled out a tiny gift with an enormous pink bow and more tape than wrapping paper. As Caitlin struggled to open it—enjoying the moment, and proving it to her mother with a genuine smile—Jacob stood next to her with his hand on her shoulder, jiggling up and down. At last she got it open and found a key chain with a thin brass circle. There was a maze etched into the brass.

"It's a labyrinth," Jacob said, saying the word like he owned it. He pulled it from her hands and brought it close to her eyes. "It's medieval, Grandpa said. There's only one path." His pointer finger traced around the

whorls of the maze. “See? You can’t get lost. Whichever way you go, it gets you to the middle!”

She flashed back to the design she had seen in Galderkhaan, the swirls and crescents that left the center isolated, mysterious. She gave him a big hug and kiss and sent him to her bag to get her keys. She let him work on putting the keys on the new ring while she quietly apologized to her mother.

“Look, I didn’t mean to come down so hard on you,” Caitlin began.

Nancy hushed her. “I’m going to give you some advice from your grandmother, a miner’s daughter. She once warned me that if you go too deep into something, you can lose your way or get buried. I resented the metaphor. Life wasn’t a coal mine. But you know something? She was right. A person should have—a person needs—a full and diverse life. So,” she continued, “when I hear your father say that he can’t even start a conversation with you about your choice to go to Iran, it occurs to me that you need a piece of advice: if no one can even tell you no, if you can’t even consider it, you’re in a very dangerous place.”

Caitlin thought a long time before answering, twisting ribbons of chocolate icing onto her fork. Finally, she said, “What did Great-Grandpa do each morning when the coal cart came to him, big and dark and very, very insistent?”

Nancy smiled. “He got in. But—and this is important, dear—not blindly and not alone. That’s why he became a labor organizer, and maybe you’ve got his rebellious blood.” Nancy’s smile warmed. “How about a compromise?” she said. “Find yourself someone who you will trust now and then. Someone who can tell you the truth if you need to hear it, in a way you can take it.”

“I’ve got this one.” Caitlin thumbed at Jacob, grinning.

He held up the key chain, jangling the keys like bells and pursing his lips as if he were blowing a trumpet.

“I’m serious,” Nancy said as she cleared the plates.

“I know,” Caitlin replied, “and thank you. I will consider it. I promise.” Then she immersed herself in another hug from Jacob and a comment about his wizardly key-chain ways.

It was soon time for Jacob to get ready for school and Nancy announced she would take him today; her birthday present to Caitlin was time for a long, hot bubble bath. They hugged warmly as they said good-bye.

And then Caitlin was alone in the apartment. She sat down again at the dining table, gazing at the cat and thinking about her mother. People didn’t have to be the same. They didn’t have to agree with each other. But they didn’t have to judge each other either, simply support each other’s choices.

Arfa twitched, stretched, and jumped down from the couch. He ambled to the table, rubbed his muzzle across her ankles, then sat back on his haunches with his eyes mostly closed, purring. Caitlin regarded him and realized that the tips of his whiskers were moving. Although it was hard to see, she was sure that all the fur on his face was blowing backward as if he were facing into a breeze.

She looked toward the window, which was shut against the fall chill. There was no breeze, no vent, no fan—nothing. Then Arfa stood up, walked around behind her, arched his back, and rubbed his side against empty space, as if it were someone’s leg.

In the still, airless room Caitlin felt a sudden cooling in the small of her back, as if icy breath had been blown down her spine and pooled there. Simultaneously the cat turned to her, hissed silently, and hurried away.

Caitlin didn't blame her.

Something was here.

Something that didn't belong.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carol Sage:

Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a walk, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or even read a book entitled A Dream of Ice: Book 2 of The EarthEnd Saga? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You understand beside you can spend your time with the favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have some other opinion?

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Michael Kautz:

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