



R. SCOTT BOYER

“Action-fueled fantasy read that fans will not be able to get enough of.”

– Hollywood Book Review

TEMPLE
OF
ETERNITY

BOBBY ETHER SERIES BOOK TWO

EARLY PRAISE FOR TEMPLE OF ETERNITY

“One of the great things about this novel is that Bobby keeps learning and growing as the story progresses. He is not a one-sided character, giving the readers the time to grow with him. It is easy to fall in love with the characters within this book. The plot is strong as Boyer seamlessly builds his world and characters. While this book is geared towards young adult readers, fantasy lovers of all ages will enjoy this fast-paced, action-packed book. Bobby Ether has the ability to gain the same popularity as Rick Riordan’s Percy Jackson...Get a copy for your shelf today.”

– **Starred Review, Pacific Book Review (www.pacificbookreview.com)**

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“This is an evenly paced, action-fueled fantasy read that fans will not be able to get enough of. A strong protagonist, powerful settings and a wonderful and growing mythology make this a stand-out read to be sure. Author R. Scott Boyer’s Temple of Eternity is a must-read book that readers will absolutely love getting ensconced in, so be sure to grab your copy today.”

– **Hollywood Book Review (www.hollywoodbookreviews.com)**

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“Think Indiana Jones, but on a level geared to young adult adventure story readers. Add a dash of cultural intrigue, with warrior descendants of the Mayans determined to take action as souls are claimed by evil forces. Mix in a riddle that evokes the Fountain of Youth, yet seems to negate the legend behind it. What results is a fast-paced adventure designed to keep young readers engaged and guessing throughout... It is a highly recommended pick for teens who like their adventure nonstop and their characters interested in bigger-picture thinking.”

– **Midwest Book Review (www.midwestbookreview.com)**

EARLY PRAISE FOR TEMPLE OF ETERNITY

“Boyer expertly evokes the native flavor of Guatemala’s jungles, and the warrior descendants of Mayans add a dash of cultural intrigue. The skillful description of Bobby’s excursion into the ghost realm makes the whole experience utterly compelling. A heartfelt and satisfying ending suggests there are more adventures to come the teenager’s way, making readers anxious for the next installment...This swiftly paced adventure makes for a rollicking good read.”

– **The Prairie Books Review (www.theprairiesbookreview.com)**

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“The story is full of action and adventure...Overall, YA fantasy fans will find Temple of Eternity a page-turning reading experience.”

– **Blue Ink Review (www.blueinkreview.com)**

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“Exotic settings, ancient civilizations, a quest, adventure, danger, magic, a giant, a love triangle, spiritual possessions, good guys, bad guys, secrets, jungle creatures, more danger, even an on-the-fly history lesson or two. What more could any suspense-loving reader want? And want more of? In Temple of Eternity, R. Scott Boyer spins an edge-of-your-seat tale that’s sure to produce rapid page turns and even more rapid heartbeats.”

– **David Patneude, author of Fast Backward**

Temple of Eternity

Bobby Ether Series Book 2

R. Scott Boyer

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*Now and forever,
In loving memory of my big sister,
Michelle Boyer Dykstra*

PROLOGUE

From across the ravaged courtyard of the Jade Academy, the Core agent known as Sandman watched the weathered Navajo and his companions head for the mountain trail leading to the forest below. Sandman ducked into the shadows, remaining there until long after the travelers were gone. Then he turned and jogged back down the trail that led to the garden near the cliffs.

Hidden back amid the rubble, the soldiers under his command stood at attention. “Are we moving out, sir?” asked one of his men. Some of the soldiers rose, checking their weapons and equipment.

“Mission review,” said Sandman. “Neutralize the monks if necessary. The students are not to be harmed.”

“Rules of engagement, sir?” asked another of his soldiers.

“We’re only cleared for non-lethal force. Absolutely no explosives or live fire. Can’t risk the noise.”

The soldiers saluted as one. “Sir, yes sir.”

“Radio silence. I will handle anyone who attempts to engage,” commanded Sandman. “Not a peep. I want a bow on this before they even know we’re here.”

“Sir, yes sir.”

Sandman nodded in approval and returned their salute. “Get some rest. We roll out at zero three hundred.”

Their execution was flawless. In the stillness found only in the dead of night, Sandman and his men crept into the courtyard occupied by the sleeping refugees. The mountain had continued to rumble and shake throughout the night, causing many of the students to have trouble sleeping, especially on the cold hard ground.

Sandman sensed those who were still awake as easily as he would a bonfire ablaze in the dark. With a wisp of anima, he sent each person into a slumber so deep that even being lifted and carried wouldn't rouse them. The children were easy, their minds too poorly trained and undisciplined to shield themselves from his power. Some of the monks were tougher and required several attempts before they succumbed to his hypnotic suggestions.

One monk in particular kept resisting. Sandman picked his way through the mass of sleeping bodies until he located the monk in question.

"You must be their leader," said Sandman. The diminutive monk at his feet twitched, as if he were struggling to break free. He looked like an infant thrashing in a crib, restless with nightmares but unable to wake.

Sandman's soldiers wove through the sleeping crowd. One by one, they picked up the children and carried them down the path to the garden. There, the ropes he and his men had used to scale the cliff were attached to each child to lower them down the mountain.

The process was slow, taking every minute of darkness. *Once the sun comes up, the biological imperative to wake will fight against my control*, thought Sandman as he turned to the nearest soldier and signaled him to quicken the pace.

They lowered the last student shortly before sunrise. Sandman stood in the remaining crowd of sleeping bodies, now nothing but bald, middle-aged men. The baby-faced leader stirred once again, thrashing from side to side.

Sandman sent the tiny monk a deep hypnotic suggestion for at least the tenth time, causing the monk to roll over and resume his slumber in silence. *No nightmares for you. At least, not yet*, thought Sandman. *But don't worry, the nightmare will be real enough when you wake.*

With a final glance around the clearing, Sandman slipped from the circle and headed down the path to the garden. There, he strapped himself to the harness at the edge of the cliff and began his descent.

CHAPTER ONE

Bobby Ether sat at the kitchen table and picked at his breakfast. It had been nearly two months since the seventeen-year-old had returned from the Jade Academy, but it still felt strange. From the worn linoleum with its faded sunflowers, to the Formica countertop with its chipped corners, everything was the same but different. Even the carefully cultivated herb garden outside the bay window wasn't quite as he remembered.

Bobby's parents were another story. After fussing over him for weeks after his arrival, his parents had reverted to their pedestrian and annoyingly normal routines. Bobby's father, Nathan, mumbled to himself as he struggled with his tie. His mother, Grace, wore a smile and a brown dress that complimented her skin as she set about making scrambled eggs. Nathan snuck up behind her and stole a piece of toast along with a kiss. Grace crinkled her nose and giggled.

Crushing a piece of hard crust with his thumb, Bobby wiped one hand on his faded jeans and the other on his plain gray t-shirt. His pale blond hair, cut short during his time at the academy, had grown out in the last few months, revealing hints of ginger to match his freckles.

Bobby kicked at the leg of the table with the tip of his checkered Vans. "Since you guys are in such a good mood," he said, "maybe I could go visit today?"

"We've been over this before," said his mother. "I don't think it's a good idea for you to go anywhere right now."

Indeed, they had been over the topic before—many, many times. Following Bobby’s return, Chief, Grandpa, and Cassandra had sat down with Bobby’s parents and told them the truth about the Jade Academy. They’d explained that the headmistress was Nathan’s long-lost sister and Bobby’s aunt. Chief also told Bobby’s parents about the Core, the secret organization behind the academy that sought to reshape mankind by creating humans with innate metaphysical abilities. He explained how the Core had tested the academy’s students in order to find worthy candidates for their perverse experiments.

After the dead silence that followed, Bobby had told his parents how he and Jinx had foiled the headmistress’s plans, discovered the Spine of the World, and escaped via the secret passage. Upon exiting the mountain, Bobby and Jinx encountered Chief, whom Bobby believed was an assassin. Bobby would have killed Chief, but Grandpa showed up just in time.

Bobby’s escape, as well as everything else that led to the Jade Academy’s collapse, could be traced to Grandpa and his vision the day Bobby was born, which predicted Bobby’s arrival at the academy. Despite having known about Grandpa’s special talents for years, Bobby’s parents had a hard time accepting that their son had been at a secret monastery on the other side of the world. Even now, they acted like he had been away at summer camp.

It had proven to be both a blessing and a curse. At first, seeing his parents alive and recovered from the car accident staged by the headmistress was enough to make Bobby giddy. Lately, however, he’d felt confined, as if the space around him had shrunk while he was away.

Grace made herself a plate and sat across the table, her mousy, shoulder-length hair pulled up in a bun to reveal the delicate features of her slender face. Even from behind her reading glasses, Bobby could see the concern in her dark green eyes.

“Is there something you want to talk about?” she asked softly.

Bobby shrugged, unable to convert his thoughts into words.

“You’ve been acting moody for days,” said Nathan. “What’s going on?”

Grace set her fork down. Bobby kicked the leg of the table.

“Well?” asked his father.

The doorbell rang. Bobby leaped from his seat. “I’ll get it!”

“You will stay right there,” said Nathan with a glare that let Bobby know the conversation was not over.

Tall and handsome, Nathan Ether moved with the grace of a natural athlete except for the slight limp in his right leg where three metal rods had been inserted to repair his shattered femur as a result of the car accident. Answering the front door, he was back a moment later with visitors.

“Jinx!” said Bobby, jumping out of his chair to greet his younger cousin. “You’re back. What did you think?”

His little cousin had also let his hair grow out since leaving the academy. Once short and spiky, it now formed a bird’s nest of russet curls. Jinx’s rosy cheeks pushed up into a huge smile.

“It was almost impossible to believe at first,” Jinx answered. He glanced at Chief, who had driven him here and whose compound, the Eagle’s Nest, he’d been staying at the past month. “The entire place is amazing. I’ve never seen anything like it.” The old Navajo gave Jinx a knowing grin.

“I’m learning so much,” said Jinx. He dropped his eyes to the floor. “I just wish the others were around to see it.”

“You mean Grandpa and Cassandra?” asked Bobby.

Chief shook his head. “Jeremiah and Cassandra have gone to look for your grandmother.”

Bobby grunted. “I know Grandma and Grandpa can’t be together because the connection they share allows the Core to track them,” he said, “but I thought they had a way to communicate.”

“Apparently Melody moved almost a year ago and didn’t leave word for Jeremiah in their usual place—something she’s never done before,” said Chief. “He and Cassandra have been searching for

weeks now, trying to figure out where Melody went. A couple of nights ago, they got a lead pointing towards South America. They said they'll contact me when they know more."

The room fell silent as everyone contemplated the news. Bobby had just gotten his grandfather back in his life and now his grandmother was missing.

Chief broke the silence with a delicate cough. "I'm afraid I have some other news," he said softly. "I didn't want to bother you. You boys were so happy being reunited, and after the terrible accident ..." Bobby had never seen the old Indian so flustered. "I am so sorry again, Mr. and Mrs. Ether, about the situation at the hospital, and rushing off while you were still recovering. We needed to search for Bobby—"

Jinx stepped in front of Chief and threw up his hands. "Lily and the others are missing! All of the students we left back at the academy... they're gone!"

"Wait—what do you mean they're gone?" said Bobby.

"They were taken by the Core!" blurted Jinx.

Bobby turned to Chief. "Is that true?"

Chief nodded. "We believe so, yes."

For a long moment, no one spoke. Bobby sat at the table, head in his hands, trying to make sense of what he'd just heard. Finally, he lifted his chin. "I knew something was wrong," he said, glaring at Chief. "How could you go all this time and not say something?"

"I wanted you to have some time with your parents before—"

"It's been weeks!" yelled Bobby. He turned to Jinx. "You knew too, didn't you?"

Jinx shrank back. "Don't look at me! It's not like we have phone service at the Eagle's Nest. Besides, Chief said we would tell you as soon as we had a lead."

Bobby returned his steely glare to Chief. "And?"

Chief rubbed his weathered jaw. "Like you said, it's been weeks. I decided it was time you knew."

Bobby folded his arms and glared at the old Navajo. “What the hell, man, not cool!”

Grace threw her son a disapproving look, but Chief met Bobby’s gaze. “I did what I thought was best at the time.”

“If you come with us,” said Jinx, “maybe you can help.”

“Come with?” asked Grace. She stood and went to Nathan’s side. “What are you talking about?”

Chief leaned against the counter. “The organization behind the Jade Academy may have been corrupt, but their purpose was not,” he said. “Bobby still needs to learn how to control his abilities. With the proper training, he could be extremely useful.”

“Useful?” asked Nathan Ether. “Are you crazy? My boy just got home. He’s not going anywhere.”

Bobby opened his mouth to protest but Grace pinned him with a look. Setting a hand on her husband’s shoulder, she said, “Maybe we should ask Bobby what he thinks.”

Nathan set his palm on top of hers and took a deep breath. “You’re right, of course.” Turning to his son, he said, “As difficult as it is for us to hear about all of this, I know what you went through at the academy, and what your friends mean to you.”

Grace Ether gave her husband a kiss on the cheek. “It’s your decision,” she said to Bobby. “We will always be here for you.”

With those words, Bobby understood what it was that had been different since his return. “This is still my home, and I love you both,” he said, “but I’ve changed. I’m not the same innocent boy who went to school, played basketball, and hung out with my friends. There are things I’ve seen, things I know exist but haven’t had time to fully comprehend. I need to do this—to go with Chief, to learn what he has to teach me, and to help find my friends.”

His mother put her arms around her husband, wiped her eyes, and gave Bobby a half smile. And just like that, the decision was made.

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