

SIDNEY SHELDON

RAGE OF ANGELS



WARNER BOOKS



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**PRAISE FOR *RAGE OF ANGELS*
AND #1 *NEW YORK TIMES*
BESTSELLING AUTHOR
SIDNEY SHELDON**

"Tense, exciting courtroom drama . . . poignant love story . . . and suspense and terror enough to keep the reader eagerly devouring each page until the very end."

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more . . .

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—Seattle Post-Intelligencer

“If you want a novel you simply cannot put down, go to Sheldon.”

—New York Daily News

The Incomparable Sidney Sheldon

Best known today for his exciting blockbuster novels, Sidney Sheldon is the author of *The Sky is Falling*, *Tell Me Your Dreams*, *The Best Laid Plans*, *Morning, Noon & Night*, *Nothing Lasts Forever*, *The Stars Shine Down*, *The Doomsday Conspiracy*, *Memories of Midnight*, *The Sands of Time*, *Windmills of the Gods*, *If Tomorrow Comes*, *Master of the Game*, *Rage of Angels*, *Bloodline*, *A Stranger in the Mirror*, and *The Other Side of Midnight*. Almost all have been number-one international bestsellers. His first book, *The Naked Face*, was acclaimed by the *New York Times* as “the best first mystery of the year” and received an Edgar Award. Most of his novels have become major feature films or TV miniseries, and there are more than 300 million copies of his books in print throughout the world.

Before he became a novelist, Sidney Sheldon had already won a Tony Award for Broadway’s *Redhead* and an Academy Award for *The Bachelor and the Bobby Soxer*. He has written the screenplays for twenty-three motion pictures, including *Easter Parade* (with Judy Garland) and *Annie Get Your Gun*. In addition, he penned six other Broadway hits and created three long-running television series, including *Hart to Hart* and *I Dream of Jeannie*, which he also produced. A writer who has delighted millions with his award-winning plays, movies, novels, and television shows, Sidney Sheldon reigns as one of the most popular storytellers of all time.

To learn more about this book and author, visit www.sidneysheldon.com located on our Web site, www.twbookmark.com.

NOVELS BY SIDNEY SHELDON

Best Laid Plans

Bloodline

The Doomsday Conspiracy

If Tomorrow Comes

Master of the Game

Memories of Midnight

Morning, Noon & Night

The Naked Face

Nothing Lasts Forever

The Other Side of Midnight

Rage of Angels

The Sands of Time

The Sky is Falling

The Stars Shine Down

A Stranger in the Mirror

Tell Me Your Dreams

Windmills of the Gods

*This book is dedicated with love
to Mary
The Eighth Wonder of the World*

The characters and events in this novel are fictional. The background, however, is real, and I am indebted to those who generously helped to fill it in for me. In a few instances I have taken what I believe to be necessary dramatic license. Any legal or factual errors are mine alone.

My deep gratitude for sharing with me their courtroom lives and experiences goes to F. Lee Bailey, Melvin Belli, Paul Caruso, William Hundley, Luke McKissack, Louis Nizer, Jerome Shestack and Peter Taft.

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In New York, I owe special thanks to Phil Leshin, former Assistant Commissioner for Public Affairs of the New York City Department of Correction, for escorting me through Riker's Island; and to Pat Perry, the Assistant Deputy Warden at Riker's Island.

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And finally, a thank you to Catherine Munro, who patiently and cheerfully transcribed and typed what began as a thousand-page manuscript, more than a dozen times over a period of almost three years.

—SIDNEY SHELDON

“ . . . Tell us of the secret hosts of evil, O Cimon.”

“Their names may not be spake aloud
lest they profane mortal lips,
for they came out of unholy darknesses
and attacked the heavens,
but they were driven away by the rage of angels . . .”

—from *Dialogues of Chios*

BOOK

I

1

New York: September 4, 1969

The hunters were closing in for the kill.

Two thousand years ago in Rome, the contest would have been staged at the Circus Neronis or the Colosseum, where voracious lions would have been stalking the victim in an arena of blood and sand, eager to tear him to pieces. But this was the civilized twentieth century, and the circus was being staged in the Criminal Courts Building of downtown Manhattan, Courtroom Number 16.

In place of Suetonius was a court stenographer, to record the event for posterity, and there were dozens of members of the press and visitors attracted by the daily headlines about the murder trial, who queued up outside the courtroom at seven o'clock in the morning to be assured of a seat.

The quarry, Michael Moretti, sat at the defendant's table, a silent, handsome man in his early thirties. He was tall and lean, with a face formed of converging planes that gave him a rugged, feral look. He had fashionably styled black hair, a prominent chin with an unexpected dimple in it and deeply

set olive-black eyes. He wore a tailored gray suit, a light blue shirt with a darker blue silk tie, and polished, custom-made shoes. Except for his eyes, which constantly swept over the courtroom, Michael Moretti was still.

The lion attacking him was Robert Di Silva, the fiery District Attorney for the County of New York, representative of The People. If Michael Moretti radiated stillness, Robert Di Silva radiated dynamic movement; he went through life as though he were five minutes late for an appointment. He was in constant motion, shadowboxing with invisible opponents. He was short and powerfully built, with an unfashionable graying crew cut. Di Silva had been a boxer in his youth and his nose and face bore the scars of it. He had once killed a man in the ring and he had never regretted it. In the years since then, he had yet to learn compassion.

Robert Di Silva was a fiercely ambitious man who had fought his way up to his present position with neither money nor connections to help him. During his climb, he had assumed the veneer of a civilized servant of the people; but underneath, he was a gutter fighter, a man who neither forgot nor forgave.

Under ordinary circumstances, District Attorney Di Silva would not have been in this courtroom on this day. He had a large staff, and any one of his senior assistants was capable of prosecuting this case. But Di Silva had known from the beginning that he was going to handle the Moretti case himself.

Michael Moretti was front-page news, the son-in-law of Antonio Granelli, *capo di capi*, head of the largest of the five eastern Mafia Families. Antonio Granelli was getting old and the street word was that Michael Moretti was being groomed to take his father-in-law's place. Moretti had been involved in dozens of crimes ranging from mayhem to murder, but no district attorney had ever been able to prove anything. There were too many careful layers between Moretti and those