A civilization trembling toward collapse—and the unbreakable love that may bring Atlantis back from the brink



ATLANTIS Writhing

HIGHEST LIGHT
BOOK ONE

JEAN BRANNON

ATLANTIS *Writing*

Highest Light Series

ATLANTIS
Writhing

Jean Brannon

Absolute Love Publishing



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By Jean Brannon

Atlantis Writhing

Dedication

For Gregory Lawrence Hagin

Praise for *Atlantis Writhing*

"A captivating journey rich with visual splendor and anticipation woven into every page. *Atlantis Writhing* induces seeded memories to awaken the potential not only to heal on very deep levels, but to incite a return to natural harmony and inherent wholeness. As you're swept away in an incredible romance, you'll cultivate understanding and love for the sacred relationship with yourself and discover how true love versus mission may not be so different. Book 1 in Jean Brannon's Highest Light Trilogy will leave you yearning for more."
- Tania Marie, Author, Artist, and Reiki Master Teacher

"Journey with cosmic energy beings as they face the challenges of fighting for what they believe. Witness a romantic love affair filled with pure selflessness. Beautifully done."
- Ashley Ebba, Tantric priestess, yoga teacher, and model

ONE



Poseidia. Capital of Atlantis. 11,000 BCE.

My new green eyes startled open when we touched down, though the landing was as seamless as the hull of our starship, the Seraphinite. Somewhere along the 1.3 million light years between Ahlaiele and Atlantis, I must have dozed off. But I couldn't have slept long. We had been told the trip would take half an hour in Earth time. Not bad for covering 10 times the length of the Milky Way in less time than it takes most humans to bathe and dress.

"Elysia? Are you okay?"

At the sound of my Earth name, I smiled at Ava even as I struggled for breath. Stirring my freshly minted humanity, I swung one leg easily enough from the travel pod. The other limb prickled with a thousand pins I couldn't see so I dragged it to its mate. Glancing around, I couldn't help but wonder how my crewmates had mastered movement so quickly. My Ahlaielian companions (who I was still used to seeing as light, color, and vibration) were darting about in stunning, solid forms—bodies that required oxygen in regular, rhythmic doses. Gripping the pod's smooth lip, I willed air into my lungs.

"I ... I'm fine, Ava."

"You know what 'fine' means to the humans, right?" asked the Silver Ray as she gently sat next to me. She leaned closer, as if sharing a secret, her straight black hair falling forward to sweep my shoulder.

Among our crew, Ava was the only one who'd been embodied before. Multiple times through the centuries, in fact, but in an organically androgynous form. Because of the nature of this assignment and the resulting surgeries, this was her first tour of duty as a female and the first since the severing of her mesmerizing powers of persuasion.

"I'm sure it was in the manual." I looked at her sheepishly. "The one I never read."

"Oh, nobody read that thing!"

We giggled. From across the room, Captain Kendrick and his Gold Ray partner, Quenna, sent us curious glances.

Unlike Silvers, who on Ahlaiele are pure peacemakers, Golds are

bold leaders, often called upon to guide civilizations in wise ways of abundance. They're capable of channeling any kingdom's currency, literally out of thin air. Or at least they can unless their souls have been split—as had Kendrick's and Quenna's—for the purpose of taking human form. The thought made my stomach turn.

I knew it shouldn't. We'd been assured wholeness would be restored once the assignment was over. Still, I found it hard to ignore my gut and the angst whispering to me that nothing would ever truly be made right again.

Ava draped an arm around my shoulders. With her shorter and slightly heavier frame, it felt every bit the security blanket she intended for me. "Well, you know how people will say they're fine when they're really anything but fine, right?" she asked.

"Sure. It's part of the vernacular. Or perhaps part of their charm."

"Exactly!" She patted my knee. "I think 'fine' really is an acronym meaning 'fragile, insecure, neurotic, and emotional'."

We snickered again, more softly but still loudly enough to draw stares. Across the room, Will (another of our crewmates) playfully tousled Quenna's hair until he'd teased a grin. Then he turned shiny black eyes upon Ava and me.

"Hey, y'all," he said in a raspy drawl. "I'll be damned if that rocket ride wasn't slicker than snot on a doorknob." Ava and I groaned as his lean frame eased behind the control desk.

"It didn't take him long to develop a way with words." Ava looked amused as Will's spidery fingers skittered across the keyboard.

For all his lightheartedness, Will carried warrior energy. Before the surgeries, he could summon any weapon as an instrument of Highest Light. Now he and Ava were ready to brave the dark regime Poseidia's new king was conjuring—without so much as a pocket knife or bargaining chip between them.

"Not long at all." For some reason, I was near tears. "So I really can mean it, then, when I say I'm fine?" I was feeling weak and nauseous and rather beyond human speech so I sent her a mind-message the old way—telepathically.

Mind-messaging was our only Light Ray gift we were told would even halfway translate into our new bodies. Although that, too, felt like energy moving through molasses. *Thank you for your calming presence, dear friend. It means more than I can say.*

"As long as we're here, I'll think there's something wrong with you if you don't mean it."

In my head I could hear her. Slightly fuzzy, like whispers beyond a door. But there was no mistaking that comforting tone. *I've got your back, my beloved. For as long as we are here. For as long as you need me. And then some.*

Those words had become our mantra once we were chosen for the mission. On Ahlaiele, loyalty and support are a given. But the thickness of Earth's third-dimensional reality creates the illusion of an impenetrable veil, a separation from Oneness for humans, and none of us knew for sure if we'd fall prey to this oppressed type of Lesser-Light thinking once we arrived. So we wanted to be ready to uplift and encourage each other whenever difficulties arose.

I worried that was what was happening to me. Had I somehow slipped behind the mantle already, only to be swathed in its gossamer shroud? I felt isolated, alone, and (as much as I hated to admit it) cloaked in death.

And then some, I messaged back as what felt like electricity surged through my body. I didn't need to turn my head to know who had arrived behind me.

"Ladies," he murmured, and I thought—not for the first time—that hearing his honeyed human voice was every bit as pleasant as his whale-like Ahlaielian tone.

"Hey, Hunter." Ava's grin reflected her happiness at seeing my Purple Ray companion. Purples envelop the energy of what we call "healing and feeling". Within our pairing, I was the psychic feeler (an empath) and Hunter was pure wizard, having performed both magic and miraculous healings. Before the crystal scalpel procedures, anyway. "You know, human doesn't look half bad on you."

"I guess I clean up okay." Hunter shrugged good-naturedly. "You're looking elegant as always, Ava." Skirting the travel pod, he kissed her golden-brown cheek. I watched as that simple action sent tawny bangs tumbling over his forehead, and I couldn't help but gawk. The psychic surgeons in charge of his physicality must have sculpted him from the depths of my most secret appetites, because his very presence quickened my pulse.

Hunter kept chatting with Ava, but I didn't hear a word. I was lost in my own reverie. Ever since I could remember—for countless centuries before being granted this human form—I'd fantasized about the flesh. And all too often I'd caught myself daydreaming about what it might be like to have a physical relationship with Hunter. We'd never discussed it, though. In fact, through all those eons I'd kept my yearnings to myself because the few times I'd felt brave enough to hint around, to see if any of my companion Rays had similar longings, I had discovered I was obviously the only Ahlaielian capable of lust. Of slipping from the virtuous thoughts that were supposed to be the only possible mindset in Ahlaiele's Highest Light frequencies.

Needless to say, I had long ago come to believe there was something wrong with me. Why else would I alone dwell on the vulgar vibrations we missionaries were always helping other worlds rise above? And

with no physical body to boot? No flesh and blood capable of sharing the sensual delights I had all my life thought too much about?

No flesh until lately, anyway. Looking at Hunter, I trembled to think I finally had a physique ready for pleasures like holding hands. Or kissing. Or other desires I didn't dare name. The ones that singed my cheeks and made me crave them all the more. Skin on skin. Unhushed cries. Broken sighs in silky sheets. Hair and hands and lips and legs entangling. Touching and holding. Or writhing and releasing.

As my mind wandered further down that dangerous road, Hunter's gaze met mine. I could see as he crinkled one eye into a wink that he had an idea of where my shameful thoughts had been, and my face flushed. For some reason, the surgical team had made me a redhead. Not a bad thing at all, I'd thought, until I realized redheads seemed to blush more easily than other humans.

"Now, if this one could just get those long legs working," he kidded.

"Oh, uh, I'm fine, Hunter," I sputtered.

Ava burst out laughing, just as I realized what I'd said. I bloomed a deeper shade of rose, then tapped my feet as if to show them how strong I felt. In truth, I thought I might faint if I stood, yet I didn't understand why I was the only one struggling.

"You're not fooling anyone, El," Hunter replied, his voice kind yet firm. "Least of all me." His green eyes, mirrors of my own, surveyed my energy field as his hand hovered six inches from my body. Purple light waves crashed over me, and I found I could no longer sit up. Hunter caught me as I collapsed and helped me lay back in the travel pod.

"What is it, Hunter?" Ava's guarded tone drew Will across the chamber.

"She's too permeable," Hunter muttered as I shut my eyes, trying to still a runaway heartbeat.

"Too permeable?" Will asked.

"Yes," Hunter replied. "Her energetics have always been, shall we say, more sensitive than most. Even on Ahlaiele."

"I think we've all known that," Ava murmured.

"What happened?" Kendrick's commanding voice told me he was now standing to my right, but I dared not look. Keeping my eyes closed seemed to slow the vertigo spinning me around the ship.

"She's leaking energy," Hunter explained. "Too much, too fast. There are holes in her auric field."

"But why?" Quenna demanded.

"She's suffering the effects of being split off from half her essence." I felt Hunter studying me. "I mean, we all are, in our own ways. I know I could look around and tell each of you how your system is still reeling from the separation. But with El, the very sponge-like quality that allows her depth of feeling is being wrung out by Lesser Light.

So now she lacks enough male energy to hold her spirit inside her physical vessel. That's why the vibrations here are having such an easy time with her. Gui is already sucking and stealing. It will happen to all of us eventually, since every one of our natural defenses has been compromised. But it's worse for El."

"We need to move quickly, then, now that we're here on the ground." I could feel Quenna's growing impatience. "Get the balancing frequencies planted and get out. Before we all end up like El."

"Indeed," Kendrick sighed. "What I'd like to know is why we saw no evidence of this issue prior to leaving Ahlaiele."

"Even with all the days we spent in the third-dimension replicator, it wasn't enough," Hunter replied. "Especially since we had no way of duplicating what gui would do once it got its teeth into her."

"So what now, Hunter?" Ava asked.

"I need to take her into the Tranquility Room and see if I can still channel enough of the Purple Ray to seal and heal those gaps."

"All right. Do what you have to do." Kendrick's voice radiated its customary confidence. "Will, I'd like you to take charge of the reporting desk. Ava, I want you to remain on board, in case your assistance is needed. Quenna and I will disembark and deal with the Atlantean High Council. Agreed?"

"Agreed, Captain," they responded in unison.

I heard swift steps and hushed voices. Then Hunter's muscular arms gathered me from the travel pod.

"I've got you, El," he whispered, and I think I sighed as I curled into his chest. I vaguely thought if I died I would go pleasantly enough, cradled in those arms. As he carried me, I felt momentary warmth and vibration, and then I drifted into darkness.