

the Event,
twenty years after the collapse

BABEL VOICES

EDITOR'S NOTE

It has been two decades since the day of the collapse - the day when Babel fell and we were covered in dust from the rubble. Yet, it has been two decades since The Authority rebuilt our society.

In this celebratory memoir, we collect the heartfelt stories as remembered by those who lived the before, the during and the after.

I

THE BEFORE LAST DAYS OF CONFUSION

You couldn't trust anything. Facts changed daily. You had to think for yourself. We all started fighting about everything. I don't miss it.

Matthew, age 66

II

THE DURING BABEL'S COLLAPSE

We didn't riot. That's the thing. We just... paused. The signs were there for 30 days, we were just too blind to see. That day, all crashed in front of our eyes.

Peter, age 61

III

THE AFTER RESURRECTION

We haven't had a violent crime in 20 years. That's not arbitrary - it's data. Predictive alignment keeps us safe.

Andrea, age 68

Everyone thought it was just noise - glitches, typos, a one-off system failure. But then we stopped trusting each other. Not because we wanted to. Because we couldn't.

Philipa, age 72

I watched my neighbor burn her devices in the courtyard. For brief seconds, I thought she had gone crazy. But no one stopped her. Some joined in. We were hopeless.

Jacinda, age 43

Some people didn't adapt. They... left. I try not to think about it. People ask questions when things go wrong. But nothing's gone wrong in years. So I don't ask.

Thadeus, age 77

I texted my mother I loved her. She read it as a threat. I still don't know what I actually sent.

Bartholomew, age 47

That cursed morning, I woke up to see six different versions of the same alert. I didn't know which one was real.

Thomas, age 55

I don't pretend to understand how it works. But I wake up every day knowing what's expected of me. And that's enough.

Simone, age 81

**THESE VOICES ARE THE FOUNDATION OF
OUR CLARITY. THROUGH THEIR MEMORIES,
WE HONOR THE COURAGE OF NOT FORGETTING.**