

Leftbeard's Treasure

Book 4 of "A Wonderful Week for a Quest"



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THE FOURTH QUEST SETS SAIL

Leftbeard's Treasure

Book Four by Michael D. Young



**Even villains need a second act.
ELM just needs one without
unicorns.**

After his fall from villainous grace, ELM has lost his minions, his fan mail, and even a decent audience for monologues. Then a rain-soaked magazine points him toward Recovering Villains Anonymous - and perhaps a new path through the Improbable Swamp.

THIS SAMPLE INCLUDES

**Chapter 1
Mail Duty**

New to the quest? Book Four follows Well, Well, Well... with a fresh adventure, familiar villains, suspicious treasure, and footnotes that still refuse to behave.

TURN THE PAGE. MAIL DUTY WAITS FOR NO VILLAIN.

Chapter 1: Mail Duty

No matter how much time passed, ELM still hated getting the mail. It was minion's work. Especially since his fall from villain grace, the endorsement offers and fan mail had nearly dried up, just like the river that had been central to his master plan.

But now his minions had abandoned him, so mail duty fell to him. A light rain fell, and the chill in the air forecasted the imminent arrival of the Trollmas season—yet another reason to be grumpy. “Maybe I could steal everyone’s decorations and presents,” he muttered as he tromped through the mud. He shook his head. It had been done. Now, even his villainous plans were derivative.

At last, he reached his mailbox, a black container shaped like the open mouth of a snaggle tooth deep-sea leviathan. He snatched individual pieces of mail hanging from each of the teeth.

As he shuffled through the pile, he tossed the undesirable pieces back into the mailbox’s maw. “Bill, bill, pleas for mercy, goblin card offer, (Note: Goblins are infamous for extending credit, but equally infamous for nefarious terms of service. In this case, when they mean they will charge you ‘an arm and a leg,’ they are not speaking figuratively.), missing person...”

ELM squinted at the artist’s rendition of the missing person, a creature with a black, scaly face. For a moment, he thought he recognized him.

“Nah,” he said, tossing it back into the rejected pile. He thought he might get through the whole stack without anything good when he got to the final item.

V.I.C.E. Magazine. (Note: Villains Inciting Chaos Everywhere is the official magazine of the villain’s organization V.I.L.E. and comes out whenever there is a blue moon.)

Right above the letters touting “The Seven Deadly Sins of Devil’s Food Cake,” the cover story declared Count Munchausen: Confessions of a Recovering Villain.”

ELM snapped his fingers, and the mailbox's jaws snapped closed, chewing up the junk mail into scraps.

"Recovering?" ELM muttered. "That's news to me. Interesting."

Returning to his lair, he plopped down in his dragonskin chair and opened to the main story. "Count Munchausen has turned away from the nefarious grind and now mentors former villains with his new agency, Recovering Villians Anonymous. We reached out to the count and interviewed him at his new accommodations: a combination orphanage/homeless shelter/soup kitchen. 'Is there life after villainy? Sure! But only if you seize it. You must hitch your wagon to a new creature...a unicorn perhaps...'"

ELM tossed the magazine aside and then rubbed furiously at his eyes. The U word! He had actually used the U word in V.I.C.E. Magazine! Not even this venerable publication was what it used to be. Out of habit, he looked around for a minion to complain to. But he was alone. And there was no hero in sight, so a monologue was out of the question.

For the first time in a while, he thought about visiting his family. But it was even harder these days to relate to them than ever. Though his personal magical protections had shielded him, the rest of his family had been turned into stone people. But the change hadn't only altered their physical makeup. Their personalities and tastes had changed, and he had no desire to be offered magma soup again. (Note: The name is a bit of a misnomer. It's not made of magma but is served at such a high temperature it might as well be.)

After a good hour of moping and wallowing, ELM picked up the magazine from where he had thrown it. As he flipped through it, he found the time and location of the next RVA meeting. Two days hence, in the Improbable Swamp, Slad Manor. "Ah, yes, that affable vegan-vamp with his living statue garden." He snickered gleefully as he had a dark flame moment. (Note: This denotes when someone takes fiendish glee in something. Most villains remember the exact time they had their first 'dark flame' moment.) I should tell my mother. She'll try to set up my sisters with the most eligible statues."

It would be a good walk from his lair, but if he started now, he could get there in time.

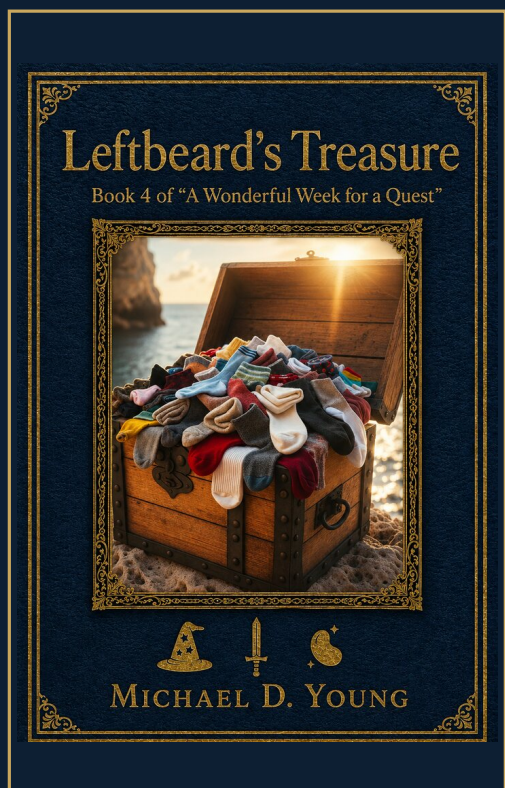
“Maybe it is time for a change,” he muttered. “But no...no...u-corns. (Note: For those loathe to say the entire word, this has become an acceptable abbreviation.) I’ll have to find a less ridiculous creature to hitch my wagon to.”

Grabbing his waterproof cloak, he stuffed the magazine in a pocket and forged out into the rain. “Come on, Grumble...”

He shook his head. Old habits were like the undead. Never really gone. Grumbling, he took the path down the mountain. It was time to see if an old villain could learn new tricks.

THE MAP POINTS BEYOND THE SAMPLE

Ready to claim the rest?



ELM's search for a new path leads to a missing-person mystery, a suspicious little black book, a three-bean circus, and pirate treasure unlike anything he expected.

Continue Book Four - or begin the seven-book quest with Book One.

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Oxen and Morons

BUY ON AMAZON

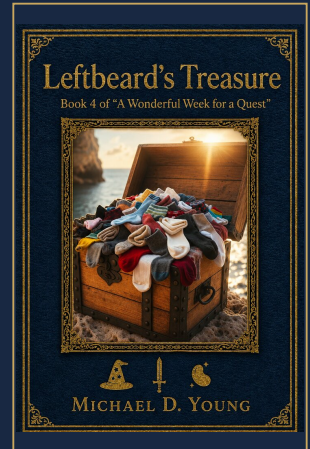
BOOK 3



Well, Well, Well...

BUY ON AMAZON

BOOK 4 - YOU ARE HERE



**Leftbeard's
Treasure**

BUY ON AMAZON

Begin with the mixed-up prophecy, then follow the quest through oxymorons, a troublesome well, and a pirate treasure hunt.

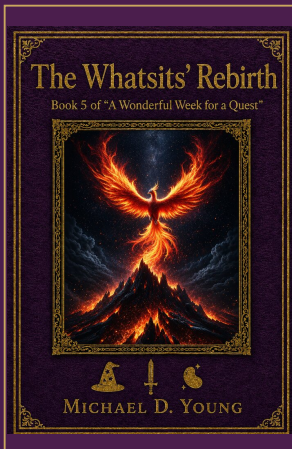
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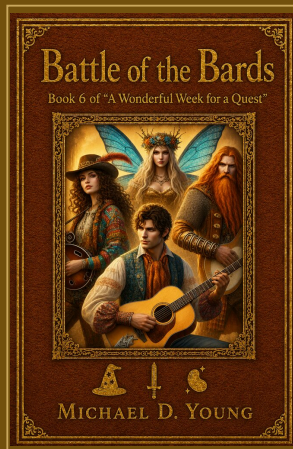
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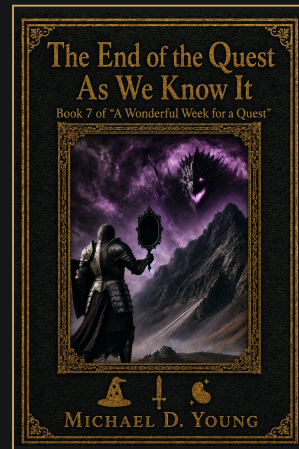
BOOK 6



Battle of the Bards

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BOOK 7



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