

MICHAEL D. YOUNG

BOOK #3 OF THE CHESS QUEST SERIES

THE GAME
IS CHANGING.
HE'S NOT
PLAYING BY
THEIR RULES.

ROOK: REVENGE

FOR ONE THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD BOY,
CHECKMATE IS **ALWAYS** A MOVE AWAY.

Chapter 1: The Gray Knight

Rich stood under the Corridor of Keys, holding up his Mickey Mantle baseball card. It was something of his that had been lost and found again, which made it possible for him to enter the strange-looking building that held his father prisoner. The Corridor, which floated above him in the air, looked like it might have had Picasso for its architect, pieced together from many other buildings with architectural styles that ranged from medieval castle to modern skyscraper. Though he thought the outside looked strange, Aaron had told him to expect even stranger things inside.

He only hoped he was ready. Rich took a deep breath and then said the words his mother told him would open the first door. "As a paladin, I request entrance to the Corridor of Keys." Rich jumped back as the floating building stopped moving with a sound like grating stone.

He almost expected the Corridor to split in half like the jaws of an enormous dragon, breathing fire and smoke from its belly. For a few seconds, nothing happened, and Rich wondered if he'd said something wrong.

He was fishing about in his pocket for his mother's letter when he heard a creaking noise, like a door opening on a rusty hinge. He looked up, and he thought he could see the movement of a door swinging open.

An instant later, he found himself in a stone room lit by torches, taken into the corridor by its strange magic. On the far side of the room stood a massive stone archway guarded by a knight in gray armor, standing at attention with both hands on his broadsword.

On seeing him, the knight lifted his visor and leaned in

slightly. "Yes, you are indeed a paladin. Good. Means I don't have to throw you off the Corridor without a parachute. Dreadful business that, though it does give some variety to my otherwise boring job. What's your name? I need it for the log."

Rich didn't move, still a bit dazed by how quickly he had entered the Corridor. "I'm Sir Heinrich Witz."

The guard nodded, his armor creaking slightly as he moved. "Yes, I can see that. Reason for entering the Corridor?"

Rich's eyebrow shot up. This was turning out to be more like a doctor's visit than a knightly quest. "Looking for my father, who was lost here many years ago."

The guardian nodded slowly. "We get plenty of that. Glad to see that a young man like you is risking life and limb for something worthwhile. I just shake my head at those who come for the treasure. If only they knew."

The guardian straightened up with another creak of metal on metal and offered Rich a salute. "Well, Sir Heinrich Witz, I wish you all the best. Before you go in, I'm obligated to ask if you have an escape key, though I'm sure that's not all that likely."

"What would it look like?" Rich asked. The knight held out his gauntleted arms, forming a tiny space between his two hands. "Generally very small, parchment paper, but you just can't scribble one with a quill, you know. Like I said, I doubt you've got one —"

Rich silenced him by holding up the paper key his mother had included in one of her letters. The knight simply stood there for a moment, and Rich thought he heard a low whistle echoing in the man's armor.

"Well, now I've seen everything. So you do have one. Know how it works?"

"No," Rich admitted. "Are you allowed to tell me that? I'm not sure whose side you're on."

A laugh came from within the darkened visor. "I'm on no one's side, Sir Heinrich. Not sure how much you know about our history, but we're from the third and least well-known branch of the family. We come from the line of the daughter, Temperance, and are the Knights Temper. And I already know what you're going to ask, and no, it has nothing to do with the Knights Templar. Big difference. As a branch of the family, we decided not to take sides, and so we are sort of referees, making sure everyone plays fair and that it is all written down for posterity."

Rich nodded, thinking of the time Aaron had disguised himself as a family scribe. That must be someone from this third branch of the family. "All right, then. Just tell me how to use it and I'll be on my way."

The gray knight nodded and held out his hand for the key. "You leave the key with me. And if at any time, you wish to leave, simply hold up your hands and yelled the word 'Escape!' This will activate the key's magic, and I will know to cast it into the flames. You will then end up back here. Of course, it's a one-time thing, so use it wisely."

Rich handed over the key and took a step back, straightening himself up to look brave.

The knight placed the key on the small table next to the door. "Welcome to the Corridor of Keys, Sir Heinrich. I would say, enjoy your stay, but I know that would be wishful thinking."

Rich thanked the knight and walked with steady steps to the stone archway and into the darkness.

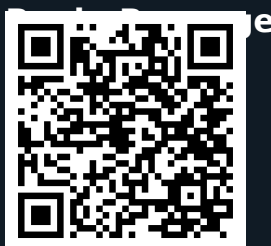
THE NEXT MOVE IS YOURS

End of Sample



Rich has crossed the threshold into the Corridor of Keys. The maze is waiting - and finding his father will take more than one brave first step.

CONTINUE WITH THE COMPLETE NOVEL



SCAN TO FIND IT ON AMAZON

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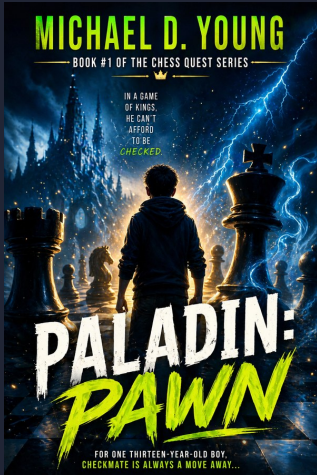
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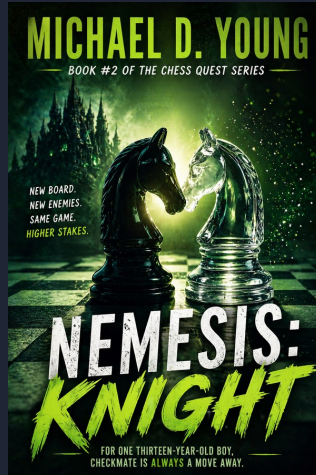
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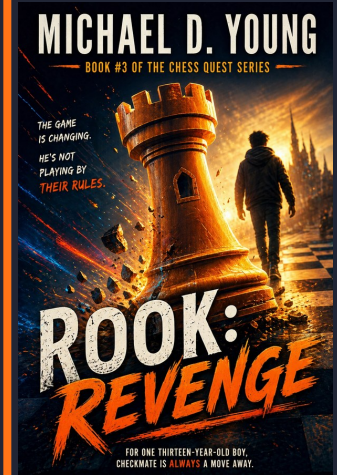
YOU ARE HERE



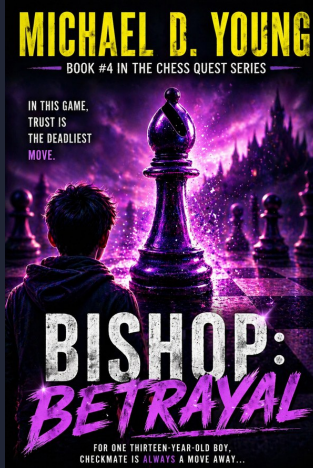
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