

FREE READER SAMPLE

PROLOGUE + CHAPTER ONE

THE LAST DAWN



MICHAEL D. YOUNG

A LAST ARCHANGEL SERIES SAMPLE

A NOVEL

PROLOGUE

The Achillian ducked through the dim archway into the throne room and whispered into the darkness. "Master, you have a visitor."

Master Mahan straightened himself on his throne and looked towards the Achillian who brought the news. "Oh?" growled Cain, "I was not expecting anyone. I wish to be left alone."

The messenger cowered, averting his gaze. "I am sorry, Master...I would not insist if I did not think the visit important."

Cain rose, his eyes blazing, "Who is it?" he demanded. "Send him away!"

The messenger shook violently, "It is the Prince, master. The Prince of Darkness is here."

Cain lowered his hand, which he raised to strike his servant. His eyes dimmed and his brows narrowed. "Send him in."

His head bowed, the messenger scurried away, leaving the darkened chamber through the same archway at the far end of the throne room.

Cain resumed his position on his throne, straightening

himself and adopting his most imperious expression. In only moments, a figure stepped into the archway, bringing with him a slight chill in the air.

"Cain," the Prince boomed, his arms outstretched. "It has been too long. I have to admit, I don't really like what you've done with the place."

Cain sneered and dismissed the comment with a wave. "What do you want? If you're here to cry about Ridnax, I have no regrets. Dangerous things happen when you give a five-year-old that much power. My only regret is that I left his brother alive."

The Prince laughed, the sound echoing eerily off the smooth walls of the chamber. "Ridnax?" he said as his laughter subsided, "I wouldn't shed a tear for him, even if I did have tears left to shed. He set the stage nicely for what I have in mind...the first act if you will."

Cain narrowed his eyes and folded his arms tightly across his chest. "Then what are you here for? If you're crawling back to salvage an alliance, you can save your strength. I am more than powerful enough to seize power without dealing with the devil."

A brilliant nimbus of light blossomed around the Prince, filling every corner of the usually gloomy throne room. The Prince's gnarled face turned suddenly radiant, more handsome and striking than any mortal man. With a sly grin, the Prince extended both hands, his palms facing upwards. "Master Mahan, worship me."

The Giant gazed in wide-eyed reverence at the resplendent figure in front of him, unable to get his tongue to function.

The light around the Prince flared even brighter and his face rose like the rushing of white waters. "Cain, son of Adam, worship me!"

Cain remained silent and upright, though his knees shook slightly.

At last, the glow around the Prince flared into a blaze to rival the uncovered sun. "I am the Son of the Morning! Worship me!"

The call echoed through the throne room, rocking every stone of the cavern to the brink of tumbling.

Cain fell to his knees, hitting hard. His face, however, remained defiant, his eyes blazing with hatred. Mustering all of his willpower, Cain reared back and spit full into the Prince's face.

The light exploded from around the Prince, accompanied with a deafening howl of rage. The light turned into flames, which wrapped around Cain in an infernal cocoon.

Even as the flames wrapped around Cain, the mark on his forehead burst with its own intense light, competing with the glow around the Prince and growing in intensity every second.

"Here's the thing, maggots," growled the Prince. "If I am to stage my conquest of earth, I need to do so in a vessel. Though the years, you have proven the only one vile enough for me to feel right at home in your flesh and blood. You can either let me in of your own accord or I can kick down the door."

Cain shook his head violently, his entire body writhing against the dark powers that surrounded him.

The Prince sneered, his face quickly losing its beauty. "What's that? You're waiting for your power of Sevenfold Revenge to kick in, are you? Don't hold your breath."

The Prince leaned in closer, fixing his dark eyes with Cain's. "You see, I was part of that bargain too, and with every power the Almighty bestows, he allows a check to exist. And you know what?"

CHAPTER ONE: ON TOP OF OLYMPUS

Olympus Mons, 2020 A.D.

Xandir paced the Olympian fields, lazily swinging his sword from side to side.

All these years as a destroying angel, and I've been reducing to destroying grass.

Seconds after the grass fell to the ground, the top regrew, providing him with an endless supply of lawn to mow. He found himself being grateful that he wasn't actually employed to mow this lawn.

A rustling sounded behind him in the grass, but Xandir ignored it. There was only one person who made such a racket when traveling. "If you're trying to sneak up on me, Yeahrti, you're doing a miserable job."

The large creature laughed heartily, tramping through the grass to join Xandir. "Sneak up? I wouldn't dream of it. In fact, I don't think I can claim to have snuck up on anyone during my entire existence."

Xandir stopped his grass chopping. "I suppose if you were walking on really thick snow and held your breath for a few seconds. Then again, your smell would probably give you

away.”

Yeahrti snorted and settled to the ground. “You should be glad that I’m not as abominable as some people claim. The reason I don’t sneak up on my prey, is that I don’t need to.” He cocked his head to the side and held it there. “What are you doing out here?”

Xandir shrugged. “I suppose I’m just tired of combing through the treasury. You can only look at old stuff so long before your eyes start to cross.”

“And I don’t fit through most of the doorways anyway,” said Yeahrti with a low growl. “I only wish that I shared Judy’s enthusiasm for those things.”

They fell into silence and Xandir began to swipe his sword from side to side again. “I first thought it was strange that there was so little to do here, but then I remembered that it is supposed to be a prison.”

“But not for you, Xandir. It’s a sanctuary. You know how dangerous things have gotten out there. We only need to bide our time a little longer.”

Xandir cut an angry swath of the regenerating grass. “How much longer, Yeahrti? Until we all turn gray and have to hobble out into battle with a cane? The world is falling to pieces and we are millions of miles away frolicking around in a stupid field and rummaging through the universe’s largest thrift store.”

Yeahrti cleared his throat and plucked a few grass stalks of his own. “With all that remembering you did a few years back, you would think you’d still know the old adage about patience.”

“Patience?” Xandir scoffed. “Not a virtue in my book. Patience is what lazy people have while they are lounging about waiting for something to happen instead of going out and making something happen.”

Shaking his head, Yeahrti pawed at the dirt. "Don't be ridiculous, Xandir. It will not be long now."

"That's not good enough, Yeahrti. I still have Daniel's Armor, and I still have our team. What's stopping us from knocking on Cain's door?"

"Perhaps your memory isn't as good as you claim. We still don't have a way to combat Cain's Mark, and until we do, anything we throw at him will just fly back in our faces. What good will that do?"

Xandir grunted, folding his arms across his chest. "I still think there is something else we could help."

Yeahrti stretched, giving a massive yawn as only he could do. "Well, if you can come up with a serious suggestion that does not involve kicking down doors, I'd be willing to consider it."

Xandir jammed his sword into the ground, knelt and leaned on it. A light breeze stirred the grass as Xandir descended deep into thought.

A mere minute later, a slim smile rose up Xandir's face, a long-absent gleam returning to his eyes.

"I know that look. What have you got brewing in that brain of yours?"

Xandir turned and looked at Yeahrti. "One word: London."

"London?" said Yeahrti. "Surely you don't mean—"

"The Celestial Vault? Well, I'm definitely not talking about Big Ben, or whatever it's called now."

Yeahrti waved a massive hand. "What makes you think we'll find it any better this time than last time? It wasn't in the Tower of London or Westminster Abbey. We might as well go looking for the man on the moon."

"Hey, I know him," said Xandir, with a wry smile. "I've had hundreds of years of experience since then, and the heightened senses that Daniel's Armor can give me. If we

were looking with a flashlight before, we're looking with a searchlight now."

Running his hand through his gnarled hair and let out a breath that pressed down the grass forcibly in front of him. "I don't know, Xandir. I'm not really sure it exists, and that is coming from a person whom most people don't believe in."

Xandir stood, looking up at his furry friend. "My source was air-tight. I know it exists—it's just a matter of digging deep enough."

Yeahrti looked from side to side, making sure that their conversation was not being overheard. "You are completely certain?" he said, lowering his voice. "If your source is right, you know what we have to do."

"A deep freeze? It has been a few years since the last one, right? That should be enough time to recharge your batteries."

I'm getting old, Xandir. I don't recharge as quickly as I used to, especially not in the old days. You should have seen me then, though I doubt you would have recognized me then. If I tried really hard, I could cause a Freeze for three days, maybe four. Not exactly time enough for a thorough search."

Xandir fluttered into the air, meeting Yeahrti's eyes. "But think of the repercussions. The relics there would be more than enough to turn the tide."

"Aren't the Gifts of the Magi supposed to be in there?"

"And the Staff of Moses," said Xandir, raising his eyebrows. "And those are just the appetizers. The full meal has many courses."

Xandir could see the gears running in Yeahrti's head, and Xandir adopted an innocent expression he had seen on a cherub once.

The snowman rolled his eyes. "Xandir, no one who knows

you would ever be fooled by that expression. It's also your fault that I can't use the expression "when Hell freezes over" anymore."

"Hey, you had a hand in that too," said Xandir with a smirk. "What will it be, snowman? Olympus Mons or Buckingham Palace? You can have dibs on all the chocolate we find. How long has it been since you've had some Cadbury?"

Yeahrti's defenses crumpled. "All right, Xandir. It will only be for a few days anyway. I only have one condition."

Xandir snatched his sword out of the ground, twirling it before sliding it back into its sheath. "And that is?"

"Fish and chips every night."

"Deal," said Xandir, "but no double-decker buses. You know what happened last time."

"Fine," growled Yeahrti, the smile not leaving his face. "The only question that remains is what to tell the others."

Xandir shrugged. "Tell them? Did I say anything about telling them?"

Yeahrti shook his head. "Your daughter will never forgive you, not to mention, what do you call him? Lil' Halo?"

"He's officially 'Big Halo,' now. We can leave them a message. I've been dying to try out that urn that lets you paint messages in the air with flames."

"I'm not sure that's something a mortal should use."

Xandir shot Yeahrti an incredulous look. "Says the man with a permanent fur coat."

They snuck back to the hall of treasures and located the urn in question. Wearing the Chest and Arms of Silver from Daniel's armor, Xandir painted a message in the air in white flames. "Having tea with her Majesty. Back in a few days. X and Y".

Their message left, they managed to slip into the portal that led back to earth without being noticed. As they

passed the angel at the front desk, they saw him with his feet up on the desk, leaning back in his chair with a magazine draped over his face. A faint snoring came from underneath, rustling the pages with every breath. They tiptoed past, shutting the door quietly behind them. When they were far out of earshot, they both burst into a round of raucous laughter.

"I didn't think angels needed sleep," said Yeahrti, dabbing at the eyes with the back of his arm.

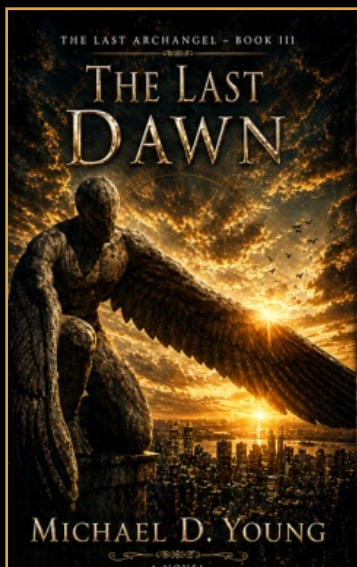
"They don't, but that doesn't stop the lazy ones. I was known to sleep for weeks at a time back in the day."

Yeahrti looked up and suddenly his smile faded. "Xandir," he whispered.

The landscape below smoldered in a blanket of smoke and flame for as far as they could see.

READY FOR THE REST?

The Last Dawn



The world is burning, Cain's new order is spreading, and Xandir is finished waiting on Olympus. The Last Dawn carries the Last Archangel conflict toward its final reckoning.

Continue the complete novel and see what waits beyond the smoke and flame at the end of Chapter One.

FIND THE LAST DAWN ON AMAZON



Scan to find the book
on Amazon

Or visit the official series page
authormichaelyoung.com

Michael D. Young

COMPLETE THE LAST ARCHANGEL SAGA

Apocalyptic fantasy • fallen angels • redemption



READING ORDER

1. Age of Archangels - Prequel
2. The Last Archangel
3. The Last Kingdom
4. The Last Dawn



EXPLORE THE SERIES



AUTHOR WEBSITE



READER NEWSLETTER

www.authormichaelyoung.com

Join the Reader Newsletter for release news, project updates,
behind-the-scenes notes, and future free stories.