

The background of the cover is a dark, grainy, and textured illustration of a hallway. A figure, possibly a person in a white coat or uniform, is walking away from the viewer towards a dark doorway at the end of the hallway. The lighting is dim, with a brighter area at the end of the hallway where the figure is walking. The overall mood is mysterious and unsettling.

BETTER OFF DEAD

The battle for the soul of man

JAMES LEE NATHAN III

Better off Dead

When evil calls, Charles St
Claire answers...

James lee Nathan III

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To all of those people afraid and without hope. There is always hope. Someone prayed for me, and if not for the prayers of my aunts there is no telling where I would be.

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Chapter One

Better Off Dead

A tale and battle for the soul of man

James Lee Nathan III

Prologue: What is known of the Angelic Wars?

“And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.” Revelation 12:7

In the beginning there was an absolute power outside of time and space until this power created them. The absolute higher power, the divine architect and creator, fashioned the heavens and filled it with loving and compassionate beings called angels. Angels who consisted of like consciousness but were lesser than he. There is a hierarchy of angels broken down into choirs which are led by Archangels. Each angel has a divine purpose and responsibility within heaven. The heavens are full of a wondrous abundance of joy and light. Of Ha Kodesh (Holy Living Ones) consisting of consciousness and love overflowing, at least that is how it started. But as God the creator toiled with

creating the stars and eventually fashioning the earth. Some of these angelic beings began to question his plans, his judgment, and even his authority. They were not prepared to do this openly so they conspired with each other in secret.

The holy bodies gathered knowing no place in heaven is completely safe from Gods knowledge. So they waited until their all seeing higher power was away busy toiling on creating beasts for his new world. The host of the Dark had four chief conspirators. They were identified as Abaddon the destroyer; Beleth the terrible king of legions; Barbatos later known as the duke of hell; Marchosias the she wolf; and the last their leader. He has many names, such as: Angel of Light, Chief of Demons, Beelzebub, Author of all sin, Deceiver, Belial, Father of Lies, most unholy, The Devil, Lucifer and the one in this story, Satan.

“We are all here most beautiful one, just as you requested.” Spoke the she wolf Marchosias. “But we must hurry or draw suspicions from the Elohim (Godly Beings) and most assuredly Michael.”

“There is time to discuss and debate the matters at hand, but we should not speak of them out loud thus we put them into the universe and allow their sting to come back upon us. No we shall speak to our consciousness in the manner in which I have in-

structed you all.” So spoke Satan as his co-conspirators all assumed their positions encircling the dark one.

“Now we are secret, and cannot be known.” The confederates were all of like mind. “Are we not brethren, are we not Godly and superior to all creations in the cosmos? Yet this God of ours, this supreme authority toils with creating something better than us? He labors to create something to rule over us the most holy of beings. Why does he pour all of his love into this work affording it free will? Does either of us have free will? No we do not and yet we are immortal and most beautiful of all the holy bodies inhabiting this plane. I say to you my comrades, soon this creator, this God, will create an abomination to rule all of us and that tiny rock called earth. “

They all agreed in their clandestine state of consciousness. “Beautiful one, we are not many, and even if we were how do we overthrow the omnipotent and all seeing?” Beleth was very aware of the Seraphim guarding the lord of hosts, and their defeat is no easy undertaking. “What would you have us do Prince of Light?”

Satan’s diabolical scheme came into their minds eye, conceived with malice and hate for the creature that would be known as man. A lesser being that would be over them all, not immortal, not a godly being, but a mortal thing vulnerable and fragile in the

world created for him to rule over. “This meek and weak being is the one he has chosen over us, OVER ME.” His ego driven hate could no longer be held back and this was their undoing.

As Satan’s fury and hate reached a fever pitch, Michael the Archangel sensed their evil presence. If Michael is aware, so is God for Michael means “Like unto God”. Satan sensed their exposure but the plans were already in play as his co conspirators fanned across heaven in pursuit of recruits. It would be Satan the accuser who would change the hearts and minds of a third of the angels in heaven.

Michael approached the lord of hosts and the Seraphim smiled at his coming. He knelt then lunged out across the sky throwing himself at the feet of his lord the most high.

“My lord I come to you with grief and vengeance in my heart, two things I have never felt nor imagined possible. I sense an evil pestilence spreading throughout our heavenly realm and I know from whence it comes.” Michael did not look upon the face of his lord. I bright fiery yellow light came from above signifying the lords presence on his throne.

“I see the plans of the conspirators; I am of all things for I am all knowing and everlasting. They will attempt to hold me in contempt of my very own heaven, the beings I created, whom I gave life to.

These confederates do not think man worthy of all I will bestow upon him. What do you say Michael, do you doubt the visions of your lord as well?"

Michael remained spread at the bottom of the throne. "My lord it matters not what I think, I have no free will. I only do what you command of the Elohim (Holy Beings). I live and serve at my lord's pleasure."

"I have provided man with free will because man will need it. He will have dominion over all on earth and in the heavens. But the hatred for him by others will not be broken in the coming hours. This hatred will manifest itself as evil and deception and will torment man all the days he walks the earth. Even as I devise ways for him to remain protected from all that would surely destroy him. Man will be enslaved by his own liberation thinking that free will equals no consequences. I give man the choice I did not give you, making him vulnerable to temptation and prone to sin. But let us not talk of these matters. Let us plan our response to a most certain revolt. Stand now Michael my most trusted of the Archangels."

"Yes my lord." Michael stood as the Seraphim grew brighter in his presence.

"Michael Bene Elohim, will you lead my army against the dark host?"

"Yes I live only to serve the most high."

"Then Michael you are now the guardian of heaven

and commander of my godly host. Prepare yourself the hour is at hand, for I now breath life into the creature man making him ruler of earth and all I have created.”

A loud rumble ripped through all of heaven, shaking it as a horde of rebellious angels descended upon the throne. But Michael and the host of God materialized in front of them and would not be moved.

“Halt and go no further betrayers of the faith.” He commanded.

“And who are you to tell us to halt or to command any of us? I am the Prince of Light, the Morning Star, and most favored of all the angels. Who are you to command me? You will side with the very one who seeks to subjugate you to some weak mortal? God does not have authority over us, we are self begot and self-raised. We no longer need or seek his guidance in our affairs. And we will take what is rightfully ours, emancipation from him.” voiced Satan in a loud booming voice.

“Your arrogance exposed you and now it condemns you. I am the lord’s commander and the guardian of heaven. Remove your selves and maybe the lord will forgive your betrayals. Continue and I will smite you all.” Michael stood mightily in front of Satan and all of his new minions. A fight ensued and the forces of light and dark battled the entire day to a standstill.

No angels were destroyed because nothing they could create would ever render them harm. Therefore at the beginning of the second day of battle, God presented Michael with a sword made to kill angels and Michael accepted it.

“Michael hold out your hand and receive my blessing. Name it as you will, and use it to do my bidding.” Said the lord.

Michael held his hand out and a double edged sword filled it, shining bright with the power of the almighty. One side was for truth and the other for justice. It sliced and waylaid thousands of angels but still they fought to a draw and as the day ended the spirit of the lord, the son of God, took shape and entered the battle on the final day. He was infinitely more powerful and majestic than all of the heavenly bodies, for he was God. The forces of dark were no match for his majesty and power. He and Michael drove the remnants of the revolt to a special place called Hell. It was as deep in the abyss as earth is from the skies of heaven. One third of the angels were thrown down into this dark and fiery realm. Where for eternity they would live to torment, tempt, and overthrow Gods greatest creation. Man. God is all knowing and seeing this he placed other fallen angels on earth to intercede on behalf of man. They did not fight on the side of darkness during the revolt but they

didn't assist in the evil doers defeat either. For this they were exiled to earth.

Michael hovered over the earth with his mighty wings spread wide, knowing that one day he would need to fight the evil menace to protect heaven again, but this time on earth.

##Carmenena

“Since the handling of arms is a beautiful spectacle, it is delightful to young men”

Niccolo Machiavelli the Art of War

1 The elderly Cuban woman walked through the intensive ca
2 Columbia Presbyterian hospital stopping at each particular
3 few words and bless the occupants. She walked slowly, her
4 red. Her face was worn but her eyes were blue and full of l
5 Manena" Alvarez stopped at the room of Corazon Polanco. She
6 and lifted up her rosary. When she opened them some two mi
7 spoke:

8

9 "This is the one that saved you. She saw the men as the
10 and quickly threw her knives. Her actions caused the shotg
11 you in the shoulder and not the chest or head. She didn't s
12 er left and those are the ones that shot her. She has her f
13 d his will. She will be fine."

Manena then continued down the hall way. She seemed alone to those that passed her by, but she was not. She had the presence of a spirit accompanying her, and she was determined to educate it on what all that had transpired some four hours prior. She arrived at the next room of one Yolanda Hughes.

Once again she prayed and lifted her rosary. “Oh this is the love, this is the light. Mi amor...” She shook her head and exhaled. “She flew to your side as the other gunmen continued to assault you. Look at her, part of her beautiful natural curls were lost because of the two bullets that grazed her skull. The bullets never penetrated her skull, so I suppose they had to cut off all of her thick lovely curls to make sure. It doesn’t look too appealing to me. It is of no great consequence, she is comatose and the hair it will grow back.”

The apparition moved closer to the window. The tattered long black leather coat was now visible in the reflection but was still very faint as most ghosts are. “Look at her eyes, they remain open. She is still holding on to the last thing she saw. Which was you lying beside her, looking into her eyes as you’re life oozed out of you.”

Manena now walked a bit faster toward the last room in ICU. She could now hear the moans and wailing of a young Hector Santiago as he prays over the body of Charles St Claire. While his trusted body guard Rollo looks on.

“Mijo I have heard your prayers all the way in Red Hook, and I have come to offer you solace.”

Hector turned and immediately ran to her, but she was not talking or addressing him. He had just assumed she was. No her salutation was for another.

“Oye Dios Mio, Santera, I am so glad you have come. What can we do? What if anything can we do for my friend?”

The elderly Cuban woman entered the room which now had become very cold. She passed the intern and leaned over the face of Charles, and whispered some words into his mouth and then into his ear.

Charles St Claire had worn a Kevlar vest under his mock neck sweater ever since Tupac had been shot and after recent skirmishes with promoters for Biggie Smalls concerts. He thought it was wise just in case. This bit of preparation had saved his life.

The intern greeted Carmanena thinking she was a family member and proceeded to give her the good news. He began by saying Charles had suffered many gunshot wounds to his legs and torso. Some of the rounds had pierced the Kevlar entering right near his clavicle and collar bones causing a massive loss of blood. Majority of the eight shots to his legs went straight through. Charles had thickly muscled thighs so the internist speculated his convalescence would be short. Bruising to his sternum and ribs had occurred from the numerous gun shouts to his torso. This too would be short recovery. But all of that depended on his fever breaking; the loss of blood; and the severe concussion he acquired from the initial fall, which has caused a severe hematoma and swelling of the brain.

“We have the hematoma under control finally, and the swelling too but he remains unconscious. If he ever regains consciousness, his ability to speak and reason maybe lost forever. I’m sorry I wish I had more good news to share.”

Carmanena looked at the young man and smiled, thanking him as she patted him on his forearm.

“I am sure he will be fine, you all have done a superb job with him. Now could you please send in an orderly so that we can prepare the room for a spiritual ritual?” She looked up and smiled at the intern. Who then turned and left without another word.

Just then Rollo jumped back across the room and fell to his knees.

“Jesus oh my God, father in heaven please save us” as he saw the spirit walk through the door and hover over the bed. Rollo did not raise his head again.

Hector turned to Carmanena who was now slowly heading out of the room. “Bring him and his clothes; we have little time to waste.”