RICK E. NORRIS
ANGELIC WARS SHORT STORY SERIES
ANGEL IN DISTRESS

An Angel in Distress

Angelic Wars Short Story Musical Novel Series

By Rick E. Norris

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PREAMBLE

The *Angelic Wars Short Story Musical Novel Series* is a collection of short stories which complement the *Angelic Wars Musical Novels*. These short stories add to the complexity of the original novels by inserting or developing current scenes with a different point of view. Some of these stories may include music from the original books with the attempt to show the emotion of one who is singing or the impression of another who may be hearing them.

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An Angel in Distress

The smoke choked the angel Squatinidale, his lips trembling, the towering walls of the Pergamum Bibliotheca spinning around him. The little stout angel flew in circles, music assaulting him like daggers into his ears, eroding what little he had of his self-esteem.

The Pergamum Bibliotheca stood as a citadel in Heaven to those angels who struggled with doubt, searching for a better connection with God. Squatinidale certainly doubted; his faith had crumbled since he visited the rebellious Great Cherub's assembly with his friend, Abaddon.

Abaddon's leader had turned the hearts of at least a million angels against our Lord proclaiming that God had hidden an important gift from them—free will. Abaddon told Squatinidale that by exercising his free will, Squatinidale would be able to be like a god. All Squatinidale had to do was follow this great angel cherub, or "The Great One" known by his followers.

Fortunately, Squatinidale had realized his mistake and escaped from the traitorous assembly. God's all-knowing, all-present Holy Spirit must have been watching him digress. He thought that was why the Spirit had brought him to the

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Bibliotheca—to reconnect with God. However, instead of connecting with God, the Great Cherub appeared to him in a book as the face of a fiery lion.

How did this rebellious angel know he was here?

Someone must have informed him.

This evil host commanded a scary allegiance of over a million of his fellow angels—maybe some even invaded the Bibliotheca.

Yes, that must be it. Someone here informed that menace.

Squatinidale whined, a high-pitched squeaking sound, echoing throughout the vaulted, smokey ceiling.

The Great Cherub's followers most certainly would be alerted by now.

Never mind the two angels who came to him questioning his screams. They said they couldn't see smoke or hear the ear-shattering music.

Of course not. The Great Cherub probably sent them to confuse him.

He had to escape before they recaptured him.

Squatinidale looked up and bolted for the open windows above the towering bookshelves.

He escaped.

He must not leave only the Bibliotheca, but all of Pergamum. If this Great Cherub could attack him in a sacristy like the Bibliotheca, then his followers must

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have infiltrated this whole heavenly district. He had to fly somewhere in Heaven where he felt safe.

Squatinidale called out to God's Holy Spirit. "You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.[1] Please rescue me! I long to know that you are listening."

The stout little angel spread his wings wider, absorbing speed from the Holy Spirit's energy, its presence casting him through Heaven.

Glancing over his shoulder, he exhaled. The Great Cherub's believers were not following him. In fact, he couldn't see any of Heaven's billion angels.

Squatinidale smiled a little, feeling the peace of the Holy Spirit.

He could still be in danger. He must fly to the far side of Heaven.

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After some time, he peered into the distance at the Ephesus District and its famous Odeum Theater. Angels filled with God's Spirit attended there from all over Heaven to sing and recite in front of audiences. The presentations always inspired Squatinidale. He would feel safer once he was mingling in the theater's crowd.

[1] Psalm 139:1-3

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Squatinidale landed in the field, just short of the ascending path into the great structure.

He walked gingerly, passing through tall amborlite stalks. These spiritual plantings reached their stems up to God and parted as angels walked or flew through their fields. Their heavenly golden flowerets carpeted large meadows of Heaven waving in unison with God's Holy Spirit.

Squatinidale stopped. Beautiful angels filed up the path far in front of him, oblivious to his existence. He stroked his doubled chin, his fingers pressing his jowls into his jawbone. Why didn't God make him attractive and glorious like these other angels? Even his friend, Abaddon, stood tall and radiant. He remembered Abaddon commanding the presence of thousands of angels from Ephesus' stage with a speech using his gift of reason.

Squatinidale could never do that. This arena wasn't made for performances by "likes of him." Nobody would care or notice, even God.

On the other hand, God had been loyal to him by delivering him out of the clutches of Abaddon and his minions. This happened after Squatinidale had realized his mistake of attending the Great Cherub's gathering and bolted into the desert. Abaddon and his little army pursued him, probably to prevent him from revealing the insurrection to loyal angels. God saved Squatinidale by sending seven angels—just seven, but what a seven they were.

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They called themselves the *Angels Septemviri*, God's response to the Great Cherub's rebellious angels. They were able to confront Abaddon and his attackers and rescue Squatinidale. How did God do so much with so little?

One of these Septemviri members was Michael. Now that angel had presence. Tall, broad and a commanding voice. Just his charisma made other angels gasp. He was so strong that he lifted Abaddon up with one hand!

Squatinidale's mind returned to the present. He flattened his lips. Maybe he shouldn't go up the path. What was he going to do in the Theater? Sing?

He chuckled.

Whenever he sang before, others had ignored him. No, it wasn't a conscious act by them since all angels loved each other in agape (unconditional) love. The spurning had more to do with their relative brilliance. All other angels radiated more than he did, so that they just outshined him.

Squatinidale's mind wavered again, this time to another of the Septemviri's angels—Gabriel. He had the largest wings, making him the fastest messenger of Heaven surpassed only by the gift of a gregarious personality. He seemed to have it all together. Speed, beauty, personality and—and presence.

Why did Squatinidale always come back to the word *presence*? Glorious angels, (not Squatinidale of course), possessed this quality, but in different ways.

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Squatinidale frowned as his focus swung back to his former friend, Abaddon. Abaddon had always dominated conversations with him. That was how he got Squatinidale to attend the Great Cherub's gathering. Abaddon, too, had a gift that Squatinidale yearned to own—*presence*.

Squatinidale sat down in the field, his mouth limp with sadness. He watched the amborlite move with the Lord's Spirit, dancing in short intervals, a casual pirouette here and there. He wished he had that kind of joyful heart, but he just didn't.

A red glimmer caught his eye up the pathway towards the Odeum. Maybe just a reflection of a passing angel, high above, performing a mission for God.

Oh, how he missed doing that. He enjoyed executing God's missions.

The red light twinkled again, this time twice.

Squatinidale rose.

He hoped this wasn't from a rebellious angel who followed him here.

He walked towards it.

The amborlite parted to the left and right until he reached the one stalk that remained upright. A red sparkle glistened on top of it. He slowed, choosing his steps carefully.

On top of the amborlite stalk hung a little red star. Every time the amborlite shifted, the star flickered. The star had five points and a flowing, fluid center.

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Another sparkling amborlite attracted Squatinidale a little farther along, but this one had a few more stars.

Curiosity dogged him.

Upon arriving at those stars, Squatinidale could see other stars forming a staggard line towards the Odeum, their numbers increasing as they got closer to the amphitheater. Was this from the Lord, or another evil angel seduction? He had to test it. He knew that messages from God required testing to determine if they were from Him or not. [2]

Squatinidale walked forward, other angels on the path oblivious to his quest. The closer Squatinidale got to the theater entrance, the stronger the Holy Spirit headwinds blew. Other angels laughed as they walked ten steps up the path and then gave up two steps as the playful Spirit headwind played with them. They giggled, but not Squatinidale. He trudged forward through the gusts, following the line of red stars that seemed to stop on the left, opposite the theater's rugged entrance.

Squatinidale turned and walked through thick trees and amborlite, now studded with sparkling stars. They led to a kneeling angel, her long red hair hanging past her shoulders. The red stars flowed off her back and onto the surface. Squatinidale had never seen anyone like her.

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[2] 1 John 4:1

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She seemed shorter than even Squatinidale. The stranger wore a yellowish scarf, that appeared to wrap around her torso, its end tucking under a thick belt.

She spoke without turning. “I know who you are, Squatinidale. God told me that you seek His help.”

Squatinidale bit his lip. Who was this?

After a moment of silence, he edged a little closer and whispered. “Yes, I need God’s help. I betrayed God and am no longer worthy to be called an angel of the Lord.”

“Nonsense!” She said, her tone a bit angry. “As long as we have free will, we will make bad decisions.”

Squatinidale shrunk back a bit but stiffened his jaw. “I attended a large gathering of rebellious angels,” murmured Squatinidale.

“Do you feel remorse for that decision?

“Yes, I do!”

“Squatinidale, do you believe in the Word of God, the second person of the Most High?

“Yes, yes! He woos me and sooths me.”

“What do you want from God?”

“I just need him to hold me and fill me with the Holy Spirit, so I know He loves me.”

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Tears filled his eyes. “I seek His love,” he said with a shaky voice.

The mysterious angel pointed. “Then go on to the stage and sing to God what you just told me in front of your fellow angels.”

“I don’t know how to. I have never really performed for anyone. There may be thousands of angels in the seats.”

The stranger lowered her head and inhaled deeply. “Just sing from your heart. Tell God how your feel about Him and ask Him whatever you want. The Holy Spirit will give you the words and your song will touch hearts throughout the ages—many who you will never know.”

A sense of euphoria engulfed Squatinidale. *Touch many throughout the ages? Me?*

“As you sing the song, Squatinidale, God’s Spirit will fill you and excite you more and more.”

He smiled and jumped to his feet. He turned and ran between the jagged pillars that frame the backstage entrance, rough steps leading the glowing atmosphere within the theater. He stopped within the entrance casing, gazing into the luminescence of a stage that had just cleared from the last performance, the house band fiddling with their instruments. He craned his head through the doorway at the audience who had remained in their seats, engaging in a montage of conversations.

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Maybe he should leave. He wasn't the kind of angel to sing like this. God didn't give him the gift of singing in front of others.

Squatinidale lowered his head and turned towards the exit.

A flicker caught his eye as a red sparkling star blew towards him, landing in at his feet, spinning on one of its points.

Squatinidale turned to the back of the stage and looked up. Seven large steles stood at the back of the stage, towering about a hundred feet above him. The monoliths stood, rigid, their surfaces impervious to any evil spirit. Below them sat the band, each member smiling at him.

Squatinidale cleared his throat and walked up to the musician playing stringed keys. "Will you help me sing a song to God?"

The blonde-haired angel nodded and ginned without opening his mouth.

Squatinidale's heart leaped.

He turned to the audience and the angel of the keys started with a few notes.

(Click to hear Squatinidale sing at the Odeum Theater.)

http://ow.ly/17ET50wD5eV

It is your Word that woos me,

It is your Word that soothes me,[3]

Lord, please hold me.

[3] Psalm 18:30

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I seek your love

With a bad choice

I lose you

With my free choice

I choose you

Lord, please hold me.

I seek your love

And I know that God works for the good of those who love Him

Who've been called within His Plan[4]

Help me, Lord… smother my weariness,[5]

Pour your grace into my soul,

Drown my pride that takes control.

Help me, Lord…dry up my tearfulness,

Speak into my heart with fire

Burn away my false desire

Who am I without you,

[4] Romans 8:28
[5] Matthew 14:30

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Self-defining “I” concerns you

Lord, please hold me.

I seek your love

Your touch is soft and mighty,

A love that’s steadfast, not flighty

Lord, please hold me.

I seek your love

And I know that God works for the good of those who love Him

Who’ve been called within His Plan

Help me, Lord… smother my weariness,

Pour your grace into my soul,

Drown my pride that takes control.

Help me, Lord…dry up my tearfulness,

Speak into my heart with fire

Burn away my false desire

Help me, Lord… smother my weariness,

Pour your grace into my soul,

Drown my pride that takes control.

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Help me, Lord…dry up my tearfulness,

Speak into my heart with fire

Burn away my false desire

Squatinidale had never felt like this before. He truly felt that God loved him even though he was a stout little angel without musical talent. Squatinidale wanted to dance. God truly did send the Holy Spirit to him; He forgave and loved him.

He turned and ran out the theater to the red-haired angel. She was gone, her red stars trailing up through another entrance to the stage. He wanted to thank her, but she must have started her own performance. He felt like bursting with joy. He had to tell someone.

How about the seven Septemviri? Yes, he will tell them he had rediscovered that God loves him despite his faults and imperfections.

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