

Sorcerer Michael

Daniel Prior

To Pilar, for teaching me the importance of being a versatile person in this interconnected world.

Foreword

“I'm just saying that God can exist, can be the creator of the Universe and our father. But “God”, like this, in quotation marks, is nothing other than the epitome of cynicism; it is not even cognitive matter, but a mere pragmatic and deceitful mechanism... As if one caveman had hesitated another and things had gotten out of hand”.

Chapter I

They were almost done. The drinks Michael had had earlier at the bar only made time go by faster and things more enjoyable than usual. Despite his fifty years, alcohol did not prevent him from meeting Iryna.

He lay over her on the bed in her room, lunging at her again and again and marveling that he could make a woman thirty years younger enjoy her. He knew she wasn't faking it.

He finally stopped caring so much about her and got out of her. He sat on the edge of the bed and she knelt beside him. They both knew what was going to happen. Iryna took off the condom and began to eat him. She knew from past experience that Michael would have no intention of letting her know when he was done, so she was warned. She swallowed the result of the act and Michael stroked her hair lovingly.

He started to get dressed. He started with his boxer shorts and socks, then put on his brown chinos and darker brown shoes. To put on his shirt he stood in front of the mirror.

The room was spinning a little more than usual. He looked at himself in the mirror, bending down a bit to see her face since she was five feet seven and it was low. He had grayish—white hair, which was usually combed back and slightly to the side, somewhat disheveled, but within acceptable limits. The white beard helped to give him a somewhat more dressed image. As he buttoned his shirt he felt vanity for looking slim and fit, and for having aged better even than he could wish for.

—Aren't you forgetting anything, Dave?— said Iryna, who had waited patiently, half—naked, for Michael to finish dressing.

—I don't know what happens to you whores lately that you only think about money. The ticket is next to the pillow, —he answered dryly.

She did not answer. He grabbed his thick black pea coat and his black leather tote bag and headed for the bedroom door.

—Happy New Year, Iryna,— Michael continued, turning his back on her. Send my regards to your relatives back in the Ukraine. Or well, you may have a difficult time ...

While Iryna knew Michael as Dave, which was his official whoremonger's nickname throughout Madrid and some parts of Spain, he had gotten her to confess her real name some time ago, which he only used to try to hurt her. occasionally.

Judging by the string of words the woman was blurting out to Michael in her vernacular, he had gotten it this time.

He walked out the door without bothering to look at her face.

Already at the bar of that whorehouse on a street near Madrid's *Gran Vía*, Michael went directly to the waiter. His first idea was to order a drink, but as the barman approached he changed his mind realizing that he had no patience. He ordered two shots of Black Label and paid with a 10 euro bill, without waiting for change. He drank them down in two gulps.

He went out into the street. So far that night he had already had six drinks and about four shots and had been happy with Iryna. He reached into his jacket for his pack of cigarettes, took out a cigarette and lit it, thinking of his next destination.

He thought if it would not be a good idea to go to another club. He knew that physically he was perfectly capable. Most people ignore it, some even literally, but the center of Madrid is an established whorehouse.

After all, it was already four in the morning on the first day of 2018. Of course, Michael hadn't needed anyone to celebrate a party for a long time.

Finally, he decided to return to his house on the Delicias Parade. There was a way, but he stopped from time to time to drink a little more alcohol, or to sit down and smoke.

He arrived at his house staggering, but woke up remembering everything and with no more than the inevitable hangover.

Chapter II

The alarm clock rang at 7 am on Monday, January 8. It was back to reality and routine. Michael made himself breakfast—strong coffee and a couple of scones—smoked, cleaned up, and went to work.

Michael ran an electronic components store on Atocha Round, near his home, as a freelancer. At least this was his official job.

In the middle of the morning, a middle—aged Latina woman walked through the door:

—Hello, do you fix computers here?— These words were enough for Michael to figure out that she was Colombian.

—Of course ma'am, do you take it there?— Michael asked, pointing to the shoulder bag the woman

was wearing. She was otherwise dressed in pale pink pants and a blouse from an expensive brand under an even more expensive gray coat. She was on the short side, somewhat stocky, and dyed brown despite being completely dark. She was also noticeable by the color of her skin that she was not mestizo.

—Yes, look, it's just... Let's see, I don't know where to start. —She giggled and laughed even more stupidly.

—Why doesn't you start by telling me your name?—

—What? Oh, yes, of course, my name is Mary, and you?

—Michael, delighted. Now that we know each other, why don't you tell me what's wrong with her computer?

—Actually, it's not even mine.— You see, the son of a friend started college and says that he needs a better one and he lent it to me at a good price, because we get along very well and...

—Fine, but what's wrong with that computer?— Michael cut her off, smiling.

—Well, sometimes it doesn't do what I ask.

—I do not understand.

—Yes, look, for example, I'm going to watch a video and it won't let me, or I'm listening to music and it stops, I don't know. It's just that I don't know anything about these things, as you can see.

—Don't you worry, that's why we're here. I think it's best to format and reinstall the operating system. So that you understand me, leave it as new.

—Oh, but isn't that very expensive?

—Well, it's 120 euros. 100 for Windows and 20 for labor... I've liked you, so I can leave it at 110,
— Michael said, winking at her.

—Okay, shall I pay you now?

—That would be fine. Out of curiosity, how much did this computer cost you?

—Seven hundred euros,— she answered quickly. Why do you want to know?

—Just to get an idea of its condition, it doesn't matter.

The woman made a gesture that implied that she did not understand the matter very well. She paid with two €50 bills and one €20 bill. Michael gave her change and kicked her out, giving her a week to repair her. It was a one-year-old laptop worth over €1,000, so Michael did some special checking.

Most people don't know it, but when a file is deleted from a hard drive, it's usually not permanently deleted. It can almost always be recovered with forensic tools. Michael wasn't from the scientific police, but he did have an Ubuntu installation DVD in his wallet.

He put it in the computer and set about recovering everything recoverable, surprised that the student the woman mentioned would want to get rid of such a good computer. It wasn't what he expected, but he found that someone had tried to delete some very interesting files. Michael recovered what he could and loaded it onto a Micro SD card, which he then taped to the back of his ID, where he used to hide the unit worth of hashish when he was young.

Then he did the usual procedure: place a pirated copy of Windows 10, crack the license and leave a path open to access the computer at any given time.

He took out of his handbag one of his most precious possessions: a notebook given to him at a Book Fair more than twenty years ago, and in which he kept a record of the people he considered interesting.

He opened a new page. He wrote "Mary, Colombian", and started his record.

Chapter III

The cell phone rang on the afternoon of Friday the 12th, since Michael only worked from eight in the morning to two in the afternoon. The name of the contact, "Lucia 9":

—Hello Michael.

—Hello Lucia, I'm glad to talk to you, how are you? —Michael said, adopting a serious tone.

—Well, I think I need to see you.

—Tomorrow, you mean, I imagine.

—No please! Can't it be today?

—Lucia, you know I'm a very busy man...— Michael said, scratching his left testicle and then his right eye.

—I can pay you more, seriously, but it has to be today.

—Okay, drop by at eight.

—Thank you!

Michael pulled his prized notebook out of his tote bag and turned to the page.

. Lucia, April 5, 1967

Her children hate her.

—The husband does not love her, he mistreats her.

—Her parents neglected her.

—2 brothers, one dead; any sister. Concrete:

—She usually dreams of driving, although she does not drive.

—In a dream, her dead brother told her that she should take care of her family.

Beliefs:

—God.

—Tarot.

—Homeopathy.

—Karma, energies and shit like that.

9.

Michael mixed himself a glass of whiskey that was actually half a regular pint glass of dry JB and began to flip through the page and smoke calmly. He got ready a few minutes before eight o'clock, since he expected punctuality from his client.

At eight o'clock, Lucia was knocking on the door.

Michael greeted her dressed, as usual, in chinos, shoes, and a shirt.

—It's a good thing you were able to receive me,— she said.

—It hasn't been easy, but I've made room for you, although I've had to sacrifice another plan.

—I'm so sorry, but it's important.

—Well, let's sit down, if you like.

Michael sat her down at the living room table, a rectangular wooden table with two sides slightly longer than the others, on which he had conveniently placed a purple tablecloth and, next to it, a deck of tarot cards.

—What is it, Lucy?

—I just don't know what to do with my kids.

—What happened?

—The eldest has started drinking and the little one doesn't do anything at all at school. The older one doesn't study either, of course, and the father, as always, plays fool on all of this.

—Would you like to ask the cards any questions?

—Yes, I would like to know how to get my children on the right track.— Michael began to shuffle and felt a slight retch. He laid out a spread of seven cards.

—The Arcane of Death comes out. This means that your life and that of your loved ones is going through changes.

—But how can I help them?

—That's what I was going for. You can not. The card is reversed. Therefore, the changes are not only negative but you can not intervene.

—Nothing can be done? Lucia asked, truly anguished.

—Let's see, it's just...

—No, tell me.

—One solution is for you to regain control of your life, which is what you really want. Although that, of course, involves disregarding your family a bit, even if it's to their detriment. In short, you have to worry more about yourself and less about them, even if you harm them that way.

—I can't do that, Michael. They are my children, they need me. I would do anything for them, even if it hurt me.

—Let's see, then one thing can be done, but it would waste a lot of my energy, and I'm already tired of it. Remember we weren't even going to see each other today.

—Please, whatever, I'll make it up to you.

—Fine,— Michael said, gathering whatever rennet was available into his being. I am going to cast a spell calling on the spirits of light to guide your children.

—I have to do something?

—Just close your eyes and focus on what you want.

She did it.

—Oh, powerful spirits, guide the children of Lucia on the path of light and separate them from

darkness.

Michael repeated this ten times, checking with his wristwatch that he wasn't too slouch or too dramatic.

—You can open your eyes now.

Lucia, almost in tears, handed Michael a €50 bill. He kicked her out and then put the bill in the cabinet where he kept the liquor. Long with another €16,000, approximately.

Chapter IV

Social life is important. And Michael only had one friend left in this life. This was Salvador, an old colleague with whom he studied TC. He lived in the neighborhood of Vallecas, in which he grew up, but they used to meet in a bar that they called “one of those worth it” that was near Atocha, and, therefore, closer to where Michael lived.

Salvador was Michael's friend almost since they met. He was a quirky guy, smart yet clumsy in some ways. Physically, he was taller than Michael and very corpulent, something with which they both used to joke, just as they did with his progressive baldness. He used to dress much the same as when Michael met him, with jeans and whatever he caught on top. He had married and had started a family with his wife and his beautiful daughter, of whom there was only a monthly pension left.

In any case, he was the only person with whom Michael felt he could gain mutual benefit. For a reason their friendship had lasted since they were young.

They met on Saturday at about six in the afternoon at the door of his bar. They greeted each other effusively; they didn't see each other very often. It was night and it was cold, but the whole country was in a drought and they were both smokers. The terrace was set up, so they sat on it without having to talk about it first.

They started with beer.

—And what have you been doing?— Salvador asked.

—Well, the usual, laptop here, console there, a bit of abracadabra over there.

They both laughed, Salvador knew exactly what his friend was referring to. Maybe he just didn't know that he was the only person he talked to openly about his little underground business.

—Abracadabra, no, bastard? Haha. You have to be making a killing.

—Don't think so, it's enough for tobacco and little else. They laughed again.

—How are you doing, Salva?

—Well, cursing my boss.

—You should have thought of that before becoming a taxi driver.

—Or before I dropped out from electronics.

They continued with the mixed drinks until half past eight. They didn't need any particular topic of conversation, just each other.

—We could do a “Retiro”,— Salvador proposed, already buoyed up by the alcohol.

—You know I haven't hit it for a long time, but if you want I'll come with you,— answered Michael, also animated but more conscious.

They paid and headed to the Retiro Park. It took a quarter of an hour from when they entered the park until they found a dealer who sold them five euros worth of hashish.

They sat down on a bench and Salvador took out paper, a cigarette and a lighter. He rolled the joint with a generous amount of hash, especially considering he was going to smoke by his own.

Michael took out a cigarette to accompany him.

After five puffs, his friend began to philosophize unconventionally:

—There's one thing that bugs me, friend.

—Let's see, what's going through that head?— Michael asked, drawing a sincere smile on his face.

—Well, we're old.

—Shhh... Speak about yourself! Haha.

—No man, think about it, we used to drink whole bottles and smoke until we burst. It didn't do anything bad to us. Now I have two drinks and I can't.

—Pass me the joint, come on.

—Look, the one who didn't smoke. —He passed it on.— Michael knocked it to the ground and stepped on it.

—This is your fucking problem,— he said, kicking the remaining piece of joint. Look at me, tobacco and alcohol... Tobacco and whiskey to be exact, and I'm a kid. But that shit destroys you, you were fucking chill until you smoked.

—I know but...

—And besides, bastard, you haven't had two drinks, you've had three, and five beers. Come on, why don't you drop that shit and we'll walk around until you get over it.

His friend took his advice and they returned to Vallecas for a walk. Michael left his friend near his house and took the train back to Atocha.

Chapter V

The following Monday the alarm clock rang again at the usual time. Michael arrived at work and Mary was waiting for him at the door.

—Good morning,— she greeted him.

—Hello, what are you doing here this early?

—I didn't know what time the store opened and I need the laptop. Is it already fixed?

—Like new, ma'am.— Come with me and I'll give it to you.

Michael pulled up the DiscoTech button and opened the door. The woman followed him. He went to the other side of the counter and pulled out from under it the lady's laptop, to which he had made the necessary modifications. She put it on the counter.

—Here it is.

—Is it alright now?

—Absolutely like new, as I told you. I have tested all functions myself.

—By the way, —Michael continued— I really liked you, wouldn't you be interested in having coffee with me one day? —He looked at her with confidence, showing all the attractiveness of his. The hardest part of Michael's business was onboarding new clients.

—Well, look, if the people of my land like something, it's coffee. Of course I accept!

—And I'm glad,— Michael smiled. And where do you say you're from?

—Bogota, Colombia, sir. And if you think so, I think we can go less formal.

—Well, yes, if you like, I'll give you my number and you'll give me a ring.— We can have coffee at my house.

—Seems right.

They exchanged numbers as Michael had suggested.

Chapter VI

Mary knocked on the door of Michael's house on Wednesday at five o'clock in the afternoon, which is when they had arranged to meet.

—Hello, come in, come in, don't stay there.

—Hello, Michael,— Mary greeted, with her goofy smile.

—I made coffee. It's Colombian coffee, or so they told me at the store, I hope you can mind me up.

—I'm sure it's delicious coffee.

Michael ushered her to sit at the table in the living room while she made two cups of coffee in the kitchen.

—How do you drink your coffee?

—Black with sugar please.

He came into the living room with the two cups of black coffee and the sugar bowl on a white porcelain tray and sat down, seemingly without doing it on purpose, in front of Mary.

The two of them poured sugar into their coffee and took a sip.

—It really is delicious,— said Mary.

—I'm glad you like it.

—How long do you say you've been in Spain? Michael began to ask.

—Well, I came here about fifteen years ago.

—I already said you don't have an accent or anything.

—Haha. Do not be silly. I know that I do have a little. He played with her hair. He gave the impression that he was trying to fool around, albeit very painfully.

—And did you come alone?

—Yes. Let's say I don't have a family, it's complicated...

—Tell me.

—Well, look, my mother died giving me the world, and my father when I was five years old... I barely remember him. So I grew up in an orphanage.

—And you don't have a husband or children?

—I never got married... Although I've done my first steps, of course. Again he tried to fool around, this time letting out a totally stupid giggle.

—Hey, is that...? Mary asked, pointing to the purple baize and the tarot deck that Michael had completely forgotten to pick up.

—Yes... That. Not many people know this, it's a secret, I don't know if I should tell you. do you believe in something?

—Yes, in fact, in Colombia I left behind a very good fortune teller who helped me a lot with many things.

Michael smiled.

Well, I have that gift too. Another day we can look at some things for you.

—It would be good...

—But you have to understand that this aspect of me is as professional as what I can do in the store.

—No problem, I'll pay.— Do you have rates?

—No woman, you come, and if you consider that I have helped you, you give me what you can.

—Well then.

They finished drinking coffee and talking and said goodbye.

Chapter VII

Michael was thrilled with the big deal he had in hand, so Friday night he went out to celebrate. You don't have to count the chickens before they are hatched, but you don't have to pay attention to all the proverbs either. And what the hell, he wanted to get wasted.

He started with two drinks at the usual bar.

He went through Madrid towards the center, stopping at each bar that caught his attention to order at least one drink.

That night he exceeded even the amount of alcohol that custom allowed him to tolerate.

He didn't even know where he was, but after thinking about it for a while he knew how to find his way back to his house on Delicias Parade. Of course, he was quite far away, so along the way his mind cleared a bit, since he had the good head not to get more alcohol into his body.

He was going down Atocha Street, on the last stretch, downhill. That helped. It also helped that it was late at night and it was freezing. Although Michael did not feel cold. He actually hardly ever felt cold.

At the end of Atocha Street, near the entrance to the Metro station of the same name, he was assaulted by a young man, thin, somewhat short, very nervous and disheveled, with all the appearance of being a drug addict in overalls.

Michael knew perfectly well that drug addicts aren't nearly as dangerous when they're high, in which case the only danger is if they're still physically strong, like when they're going through withdrawal from whatever shit they're habitually using. That's when they are capable of absolutely anything to get the next dose.

—YOUR! YES YOU! Give me what you got or...

Michael, drunkenly on top of him, wasn't there to be robbed or screwed over in general, least of all

with such hackneyed cliches.

—As you say? — He just said, cutting him off and pretending to be much more drunk than he really was.

—I tell you...

—Look I-I —Michael said, stealthily approaching the entrance to the Atocha Metro.

The young man followed him and went to take something out of a pocket, already very upset. He didn't realize that he was exactly at the top of the stairs.

Michael pushed him down the stairs and then, without even stopping to watch him fall down them, he kept walking towards his house as if nothing had happened at all.

Chapter VIII

The next day he got out of bed early. She took a Paracetamol, like a liter of water and a full glass of black coffee, and went back to bed.

In the afternoon he was a person again. They had not said anything in the media about a homicide in the Atocha area, so he assumed that either the champ had survived or he had not, but that was not particularly relevant news.

He had to be clear to continue his business.

Mary arrived shortly before nightfall. Michael greeted her and ushered her into the living room.

This time he had staged the entire scene, with candles, holy cards, and so on.

—Please tell me what's bothering you,— Michael said, dead serious.

—You see, there is a problem.

—You tell me.

—It's just that it's something that the sorcerer I knew back in Colombia didn't like to talk about.

—And what is it about?

—From communication with the other side... With the dead,— Mary said, wavering with fear.

—I see, that's a problem. The thing is that people like me can break through the veil and communicate with the other side, but that carries a lot of risks for us.

—And would you be willing to...?—

—That depends on what you're willing to offer.

Mary reached into her pocket and pulled out a folded €100 note. Michael took it and put it in his

own pocket, allowing only the necessary time to pass in the process.

—Who do you want to talk to?— What do you want to know?

—I want to know if my parents are still together and loving each other there in Heaven.

Michael, already knowing all the evils of this world, was not surprised by the stupidity of the question.

—Okay, now I want you to close your eyes and think about your parents.—

Mary obeyed.

—Now you can talk to them, and they will answer you through me.

—Dad? Mom? are you there?

—Yes,— Michael said, altering his tone as professionally as possible.

—You are together?

—Always.

—Are you with me?—

—Never... Never stop... being... being...—

Mary opened her eyes.

—I'm sorry,— Michael said, —but that's as far as I can go without seriously endangering my own spirit.

—Don't worry,— Mary said, sobbing. It has been wonderful. Thanks.

She finished breaking down crying.

Michael invited her to make herself a coffee in the kitchen. She did and Michael took the opportunity to put her ticket in her corresponding hiding place. As she was closing the cabinet door, Mary came into the living room and asked her where the sugar was, saying that the sugar bowl was empty. Michael acted natural and answered her question.

They had coffee and said goodbye.

Chapter IX

On Sunday Michael decided to take it to rest, fix some little business and surf the Internet.

He turned on his laptop and put an Iron Maiden playlist on YouTube while he managed a couple of things.

He was not a graphic designer, but he understood the importance of this versatility. He spent half a morning getting a pirated copy of Photoshop from Adobe. While he was doing it, he thought the piracy thing had gotten gross. Now not only was it much more difficult to obtain illicit material, but everyone was trying to get a slice of it. “Shameless bastards” he said to his neck.

The rest of the day he spent with a bottle of Four Roses and a pack of cigarettes, and he psyched himself up about how to deal with something that he didn't know how it was going to play out or end, but it certainly was going to happen.

.Chapter X

He had arranged to meet Mary on a day like any other, a work day. A Tuesday afternoon.

This time they were not going to do a session, but they were going to see each other as any two friends, which was still a fundamental part of the business.

Mary offered to make two cups of “that great coffee,” to which Michael agreed.

He was waiting for her in the living room when she appeared with two cups. She then brought the sugar bowl and two teaspoons.

The conversation was proceeding perfectly normally until Michael started to feel really bad.

—Oh poor boy! What’s wrong?

—I don't know, I... I. —He couldn't even speak.

—Do you want to know what's wrong with you? I'll tell you what's wrong with you, what's more, I'll tell you the name of what's wrong with you: *Datura stramonium*. You were not expecting? Poor thing! She exclaimed sarcastically and with genuine evil.

»I know who you are. I know what you are! You are a witcher. Yes, Michael, you are a witcher, a servant of the devil. But I am not far behind. I fight people like you. Of course I'm also a bit of a witch... To be clear, you could say that I'm the devil's favorite daughter and you're his bitch.

»If you're interested, you've already taken enough to kill a young adult, so it should be enough to screw you up.

»I don't even know why I bother to talk, I'm sure you can't even understand me...

Michael was paralyzed. Mary went to the liquor cabinet and picked up every last bill. She brushed them across her cheek and kissed Michael before putting them back in her bag.

»I hope you enjoy the rest of your life along with the other chronically mentally ill, —she whispered in his ear, denoting in her tone that she was enjoying everything.

Then she walked out the door.

Chapter XI

Without wasting a second, Michael glanced at his wristwatch. He wasn't as bad as he had made Mary think, but he was having a hard time keeping track of the second hand on the clock. He counted as he could for a minute and went straight to the bathroom.

Vomiting was made over the toilet. He then drank as much water as he could from the sink and forced himself to vomit again. He repeated this process two more times. The jimsonweed is no joke, he couldn't gamble that his body would absorb more.

Afterward, he undressed, turned on the shower faucet and turned on the lukewarm water, and lay in the bathtub with the shower head at chest height.

The next two days were hellish. Much worse than the worst experience that a conventional psychedelic can cause you. He suffered visual and auditory hallucinations and his thinking degenerated by strong delusions.

In addition, his perception of time was altered, and he had the feeling that this would never end. He had never felt so much fear in his life. It was like an episode of absolute panic lasting 48 hours. He didn't know if he was asleep or awake because of how altered his consciousness was. Although he was awake, he felt all the oppression of a horrible nightmare on his chest.

He came to think that Mary was really right and would go crazy for life.

But he resurfaced. From his bathtub. On the third day. Covered by water and traces of their own feces, vomit and urine. Apparently his instinct was correct and he was able to subconsciously drink at least enough to not die of dehydration.

He took his time cleaning up and making sure everything in his head was still in place.

The fast had also left him shaky, so he went to the kitchen, he ate practically everything he had that didn't require any prior preparation and drank a lot of water.

Then he headed off to take his next step.

Chapter XII

He plugged the laptop into power and turned it on. The first thing he did was locate Mary's laptop, and he placed it in Bogota. He was sure that was one of the few things she was sincere about.

He then pulled his ID out of the wallet and turned it over. He took off the Micro SD card and plugged it into his laptop. From that bitch's computer he had managed to recover 16 Bitcoin cryptocurrency files. He logged in anonymously on a virtual currency exchange website where, for security reasons, he had to register with an ID that he had forged with Photoshop.

He exchanged the stolen Bitcoins for another virtual currency, which he in turn exchanged back for Bitcoins, thus destroying the former in the process.

He now he had his own Bitcoins, which were his by right and untraceable.

He lost almost €20,000 in commissions and earned more than €150,000 clean, which that hag had been scamming guys like him. Or almost like him.

Fin