

BNA 02 – Forbidden Garden Party

Description

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Be not afraid. I'm the only one who should be afraid right now, in the company I find myself in. This is Enoch, Metatron, voice of God, reporting live from a unique event being set up in the Forbidden Garden. Yes. The Garden of Eden. It has been closed for a long time, in a human's understanding of time.

Apparently, two angels stumbled upon Eden while playing a game of featherpooft. As they were zigzagging through a particularly rough asteroid belt, the Garden was just there right in front of them. Barely hidden. A single island of paradise, floating peacefully in an atmospheric bubble. Not even attached to a planet or anything. It was just... there. So. Naturally, the hotshot angels decided it would be a fantastic idea to throw a party there! Their reasoning being; It would be a shame to let such a beautiful venue just sit around unused, right?

So here I am, reporting live from the actual Forbidden Garden. I have repaired my mobile transmitter since the mountain incident. The hydrogen rod is still bent out of shape, but I have verified that the transmission should reach most of our prophets.

I am still getting used to navigating spacetime, among other things. I will take this chance to try to bond with my new colleagues, and hope that they will grant me some insight in this strange experience of being a multidimensional entity of nightmares and forced hope. Such as, what do angels normally think about? What do they eat for breakfast? Do angels dream of electric feathers?

The party planning team is also here with me, rushing about and preparing everything for the big event. So in the meantime, let's talk about what to expect.

Not everyone will be participating, because not everyone will be able to find the location. Since it has been moved from its earthly confines and hidden away in another plane. Of course.

But you are lucky, dear entities, because I can tell you that it's right through the singularity of—

BEN: (Menacing radioactive humming and glitching)

Excuse me a minute, observers and listeners. A seraph is flaming angrily at me, emitting rude frequencies and trying to blind me with his light.

I'm so sorry dear colleague, angel, I forgot your name?

BEN: (Static)

Ben? Really? Your name is Ben? There are so many angels, and you all greet me by declaring BE NOT AFRAID. After that my senses are still ringing, so your names are usually lost to me—

BEN: (Static)

Look, Ben. I am sorry, I will not disclose the location to our mortal listeners. Not that they can reach it, but okay...

Metatron is my job and not my name, okay!? If you glorified birds keep bothering me about it, I might just... leak some heavenly knowledge to the humans! Who knows, maybe I'll leak the cure for the common cold.

Right. Thought so.

Forgive me. My colleagues mean well. I think. For human listeners, a seraph is a... sort of angel. They look like large flaming serpents, and I'm counting six wings. I have learned they are pretty pompous and waltz around the throne of God all day. But let's go back to the event invitation!

The dress code is polished wings or an undecorated meat suit. The naked meat suit is usually not appropriate even for casual celebrations of our kind. It's kind of like wearing sneakers and body paint to a red carpet event. The last time anyone was allowed in the garden was when the first humans roamed here. So Eden will be the perfect venue to reenact some of the most hilarious moments of human folly. So on this very special occasion, nude human bodies *are* appropriate. The hosts have asked me to remind cherubim, seraphim and other hot individuals to keep their flames from the rich foliage. You are responsible for any damage done to the decor, and please think of the cleanup staff.

It has come to my attention that the Fallen Ones are invited as well. We are having a joint office party! Which is very exciting, because I have no recollection of meeting that many from the, uh, rival office. In fact, one of the hosts is Fallen! The hosts' names are Asha and Seir. No, I do not know who is who. But compliments to them for organizing all this!

There are countless entities here right now, and I don't know a single one of them. I admit I feel a bit forlorn. Oh, but there seems to be a group in high spirits hanging out around the fountain of youth. At the center of the group are the two main hosts, and they seem to be deeply engaged in a conversation about featherpoo.

Quick note for our non-angelic listeners. Featherpoo is a celestial sport for two participants, where they race each other through space. There are two rules. One: to win, you have to crash into the target goal first. Two, if one participant crashes into a solid object before reaching the goal, they lose, and the game is over. Either way, the game always ends with one participant crashing into a solid object. The crash is harmless, but the impact causes a poo of feathers to explode out of the angel. Thus, featherpoo. Earth has been the target goal on a few occasions, which has resulted in unexplainable phenomena and distressed earthly inhabitants.

FLAMING SWORD: So who was in the lead when you found the garden?

asks the flaming sword, her burning hair dangerously close to torching the nearby ivy.

ASHA: I was about one and a half light years ahead, I would easily have broken the ethereal high score this time.

says Asha.

SEIR: Isn't it forbidden for angels to lie? I was so far ahead of you, I couldn't even sense you when I crashed into this place. You would have missed it if you hadn't sensed my aura.

says Seir.

ASHA: It *is* forbidden for angels to lie, which is why *I* am telling the truth.

SEIR: Come on man, aren't you supposed to be the bigger person in arguments?

ASHA: I am the bigger person, and I would have beat you and set a new ethereal highscore! You never look where you're going! And that is that!

The entities are killing the party spirit here, so I will distance myself from them. I notice another somber-looking entity standing beside the pair. Maybe I can get to know him better.

ENOCH: Hello good sir, why the bleak look?

RAPHAEL: Oh I'm sorry, it was not my intention to look aloof. It didn't use to be like that, you know.

The entity points to the arguing pair.

RAPHAEL: Before the Fall, we were all on the same side. We used to only do important things, things that mattered. A common ambition to realize God's vision for this universe. When God started to punish some angels for seemingly random mishaps and reward others, that's when the chasm between us started to grow. Some of us still find purpose in carrying out the plan, but some angels care more about scoring cheap points and looking good in God's eyes. I don't understand it, but that's how it is. The weird thing is that even most of the fallen are still carrying out the plan because they believe in it. Sometimes I doubt that even God believes in the plan at this point. How else would you explain that He won't cast out the posers? As it is now, there is not much difference between fallen and unfallen.

ENOCH: Maybe She too saw the chasm it caused and decided to stop taking far reaching actions of incalculable consequences?

RAPHAEL: Could be, could be. No matter. Before you came here, I was reminiscing on the last time I was here. When the humans last roamed this place, I used to visit them once in a while. I showed Adam parts of his and his descendant's future. It was an attempt to show him that even though he had lost his immortality and could not stay here anymore, a lot of good was still to come of it. It all depends on perspective. The bad defines the good.

ENOCH: It was nice and enlightening to talk with you, what's your name?

RAPHAEL: Raphael. You're the Metatron, right?

ENOCH: Enoch, please. I would like to chat more with you but I am also dying to try the delicacies at the stairing table. Have a good one!

Jeez, prophets, that guy was talking about some heavy stuff that I am not inclined to endure at the moment. I'm here to have fun. I am going to try the food at the stairing table now. There is so much food that they actually had to build a staircase out of several tables, so that you can climb to the next level once you've tried everything on your current level. There's even food from other worlds here that I have never seen before. An entity in a particularly hairy looking meat suit is currently raiding the buffet on the second level.

ENOCH: Hello there, nice suit! It's from the really early collections, right?

The hairy entity simply grunts in response, has a blank look and very deep dark eyes. He is just staring at me, obvious confusion written all over his face. It is like looking into a void. Some of the food is stuck in his beard. I can honestly say that I have seen nothing-

(PANICKED SCREAM)

A scream of fright comes from outside the rave tent. I wonder what this could be about. As I move through the crowd toward the source of the screams, I hear whispers.

"Are there humans here?"

And

"Weren't they supposed to be banished?"

As I get closer to the source I see more and more panicked entities trying to get away.

ENTITY: Get it off! Get it off!

, one is yelling as he runs away.

A deep and powerful voice is booming over the noise. It is Asmodeus.

ASMODEUS: Take off your meat suits right now so that we can put an end to this.

Classic Asmodeus, god of Lust. But for once, there is no innuendo behind his statement. For your information, prophets, the meat suits that angels wear to masquerade as humans can be opened with a zipper-like opening that goes from the end of the jaw bone, across the neck, over to the other jaw bone. Asmodeus reaches for the zipper and starts to peel off the human costume like a regular garment, revealing a larger, glowing body within. It keeps growing until it's as tall as the palm trees, if you include the horns. His wings are very well conditioned! Note to self: Ask Asmodeus who grooms his wings.

The rest of the entities proceed to open their meat suits and undress, and it is now apparent that there are in fact real humans among us. They must have snuck into the party at some point, and freely

mingled among the other entities, because they are still in the middle of... let's call it dancing, when they notice the sudden change. I have seen terrified faces before, in my own village when we were attacked by giants, but I have never seen terror of this magnitude. They look like their eyes are about to pop out of their heads and it is almost as if their throat muscles have forgotten how to cooperate with their vocal cords. They sound like they have a bad case of screaming hiccups.

Human beings are normally not frightened of angels, as long as we are emitting good intentions. If that fails, one can always tell them to stop being afraid. But now, with many entities being confused and anxious, it seems the humans are picking up on these signals. The humans are exhibiting signs of great distress, crying uncontrollably and shouting with anxiety. The entities are trying and failing to calm them by screeching "I SAID BE NOT AFRAID" with their inhuman voices. They are equally frightened of all of us, angels and fallen alike.

The frightened humans flee the party and leave us ethereal beings in silence. This type of scenario was not included in our training.

ASMODEUS: What in tarnation was that?

asks Asmodeus.

STRANGEL: Did God start over with new humans?

The last one was said by a beautiful tall entity. I do not know his name, but I have met him before.

SEIR: Why would She do that?

says Seir, one of the party hosts.

The beautiful one responds:

STRANGEL: Maybe He gave up on the old earth. It sure explains why He's been so absent.

A familiar, panicky voice pipes up. It is Gabriel.

GABRIEL: God can *not* find out about this, no matter what! If the humans tell on us, we'll just... say they are lying! Listen to me, we have NOT been living it up in Eden-

ASHA: I say we kill them.

,says Asha, the second party host.

ASMODEUS: Catch them first and we will decide what to do with them later

,Asmodeus thunders.

Angels are excellent in warfare, especially the unfallen who God taught even more secrets in order to defeat the fallen. They spread out and scare the humans seemingly on random occasions. Slowly the humans start to find their way back to their group after having fled in various directions. It is obvious that this is coordinated by the angels, who are now herding the humans toward the bouncy castle like a collie herds her sheep. Once they are all inside, four of the angels start to pray and a translucent force

field appears in the opening to the bouncy castle.

ASHA: Now. What's the plan?

Asha asks Asmodeus.

ASMODEUS: This bouncy castle is conveniently located in an easily flooded valley. What do you think? But maybe we should talk to them first and try to calm them. They seem to have settled down now that they have bounced off some energy in the castle.

Gabriel sighs.

GABRIEL: I will talk to them.

Gabriel dons a reassuring smile and takes a step out of this dimension only to appear on the other side of the force field, inside the castle. It seems to be going well, the bouncing stops and low murmurs are heard from inside. Now Gabriel is raising his voice.

GABRIEL: WHY ARE YOU NOT LISTENING!?

And the murmurs start to get more agitated.

GABRIEL: Not this again. (Powerfully) BE NOT AFRAID!

He yells with more power than before. I think I heard a *pop* from in there. Now there's red liquid trickling down in one of the creases of the brightly coloured bouncy castle. Oh no...

The humans scream, terrified again, and the whole castle starts to wobble as the humans try to flee by unsuccessfully jumping over the walls.

Gabriel appears before us again.

GABRIEL: Well that went all kinds of sideways. They are impossible to talk to. They don't respond to anything and apparently their heads pop if you yell too close to them."

ASMODEUS: Oh well, there's only one option left then

, Asmodeus says.

ASHA: I saw a waterfall over there by the mountain. Let's move some rocks around and drown the buggers. God's done that before, when humans got troublesome. In God we trust

, Says Asha.

GABRIEL: Move the rocks and I will encourage the river

, says Gabriel lazily.

Asha assembles five of his friends and they start to examine the waterfall, mapping out its weak points and shaping the ground to help lead the river toward the valley. Gabriel is doing some chanting ritual at

the top of the waterfall. It reminds me of the rain dance that the cherokees used to perform. The flow increases dramatically. It doesn't take long before the water level begins to rise in the valley.

SEIR: Hey guys!

Seir shouts urgently, waving his long arms and flapping his wings violently to get attention.

SEIR: It's already too late guys, God knows! The Metatron is standing right there, broadcasting this as we speak. Look, he's repeating everything I'm saying. Hey I am Metatron, more like meaty spawn, and my mother was a-

Ooh I get it, it's me they're talking about, and that's why everyone is looking at me. I got so caught up in the broadcast.

ENOCH: Hello everyone! I'm new here, my name is Enoch and...

ASHA: Shut up, Metatron. You have sealed our fate. We will surely fall now

, says Asha.

In the middle of all the screaming and splashing from the fear-stricken and now drowning humans, a familiar feeling is creeping at the back of my mind.

"Everybody scatter!" says one of the more alert angels.

"Look sharp!" says another.

A terrible rumbling is heard from beyond the hills. The sky is ablaze in orange and pink as flames start to consume the beautiful rich foliage. There is a distinct smell of burning, and grey smoke is twirling in the air around us. A smile way too bright and way too wide can be seen through the smoke.

GOD: WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I can do nothing else but stare fixated on the all-knowing smile that we all know and fear and love. Before I have a chance to answer, it continues.

GOD: W-WHAT'S WITH ALL THE MEAT SUITS, HAVE YOU BEEN FORNICATING WITH THE HUMANS?

ENOCH: No, Lord! We were just-

GOD: OUT! EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU!

ASHA: Are we cast out of Heaven as well?

asks Asha.

GOD: I DON'T C... NO. IT WOULD MAKE NO DIFFERENCE. YOU ARE ALL THE SAME. NOBODY IS FALLING TODAY, BUT THERE WILL BE NO MORE OCCURRENCES SUCH AS THIS."

Before anyone has a chance to say “yes Lord” we all find ourselves outside the Garden, in the cold vacuum of space, gazing back at the paradise island. A lonesome balloon that had been stuck to my heel pops. Nobody says anything.

Shame about the Forbidden Garden. This is really the end. It seems that history is bound to repeat itself. It is still a beautiful night though. The rich sky is embroidered with billions of sparkling stars that shine through the branches of the trees down below. The sight was more beautiful from down there looking up, than from here looking down. Although that could be due to the fact that Eden is a raging inferno right now. This has been an illuminating experience for all of us.

I haven't learned as much about angels as I had wished. In the end, you are who you are mostly because of what you are not. Someone else is what you are not. But that person may not be all that bad either, if you have an open mind.

My studio may be in heaven, but I have my mobile setup. I can just as well visit our friends in the Pit now and again. Be not afraid of the unknown. Once you learn what it is, it will not be unknown anymore. Be not afraid.

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Date Created

March 10, 2020

Author

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