

FREE PREVIEW



Gary J Grobler

A Novel Idea

Gary J Grobler

FREE PREVIEW

Copyright © Gary J Grobler 2017

ISBN 978-1-928415-12-1

Preview supplied for personal reading only. No part may be reproduced or distributed without permission.

Prologue

In the beginning there was a squabble.

The gods – for there are several – are for the most part siblings (there is always that one family member that in reality isn't related to anyone and yet the children still grow up calling them “Uncle” or “Aunty” and no one ever seems to get around to correcting them. The gods are no different it seems). Siblings tend to fight about everything, except when there is nothing to fight about – then they will fight about that.

The aforementioned squabble wasn't about anything of great importance really. The gods were merely arguing about what colour the sky should be or something of the like. As with most arguments the importance of the subject matter was indirectly proportional to how personally most of the gods were taking the matter and as such two factions had formed.

Meanwhile on a small world in the endlessly large Universe that the gods had created, on a warm winters day (not so warm that you would break into a sweat by just standing in the sun, but warm enough that it wasn't classified as cold) a man was born.

Well let's think about that for a moment. He obviously wasn't a man during or just after his birth – but then again who is (a badly conceived character, that's who!)?

Lets rather it be put this way; a baby was born who would later become a man and this particular man will be to some extent an important part of this story – the word important was used in the most loose definition of the word, it was more like he would at least feature in this story at some stage.

He was born into a world rich with magic and amazing creatures that seem to feature often in stories like this.

This story isn't about them, though it does involve them from time to time.

The baby that was born on that warm – but not hot winters day – lived a life that wasn't too full of excitement, for he lived on a farm in the hills, far away from any large cities where the exciting stuff normally happened.

By the age of five he was wondering if there was anything more to life than waking up every morning before the sun rose and going to milk the cows? As you can imagine there wasn't much to do on a small farm in the middle of nowhere – it is not as if there was even a purple dog anywhere to be seen. Sometimes he even got the opportunity to milk the goats (that is the height of excitement within farm life on most farms – try milking a goat that doesn't want to be milked).

His early years passed quickly for him; probably because he didn't own a watch – and because I need to speed things up to get to out of the Prologue and to the actual story. It seemed that one day he was five years of age and the next he was fourteen – this was due to the fact that as the author I temporarily lost the ability to count properly.

Now I think it's time to take a step back from our young farm dwelling friend and check in on the big shots that made the world and all the wonderful things that dwell on it, in it and around it – and under it for that matter.

The two factions had taken the argument to the next level. One side (Team Blue) had fortified their position by erecting a fence of negative energy. They sat behind their fence and occasionally threw a lightning bolt at the other faction.

The other side (Team Let-it-be-what-it-wants-to-be-seeing-as-we-shouldn't-limit-anyone-or-anything's-creativity) stood around the office water machine waiting for Team Blue to calm down. Occasionally, one of their more enthusiastic members would throw a bolt of lightning back at Team Blue just so that they could highlight the fact that they too had a Lightning god or two of their own (just about every culture has a thunder or lightning god so they tend to be a dime a dozen in the realm of the gods).

The boring farm boy we have heard about was sitting on a hill at this point and had just witnessed the whole farm that his parents owned be burned down . He had been out in the hills looking for a lost calf or something to that effect when bandits had struck. They were probably after what little valuables the poor farmers had and things had gotten out of hand. He wasn't all that fond of the farm itself but his parents had surely died in the attack and he rather liked them.

Now what does a fourteen year old do with himself when all he knows is farm life and now the only farm he has ever known no longer exists?

Isn't there an obvious answer to a relatively straightforward question?

He goes looking for his fortune, his fame and most of all a clean pair of trousers because when he realized that his world had just been taken away from him, he shat himself.

Now for what won't be the last time in this story we will have a look at the gods and what they were up to. Things had calmed down a bit. Both Teams had come to the conclusion that it didn't really matter what colour the sky was. They way most of them now saw things was, they had created a Universe with rules to govern it and it only made sense to obey their own rules – at least in this case.

One of the gods – Bandalash – had been the only one not to agree to obey their own rules and had been subsequently been asked to sit in the corner and think about what he had just done (he had attempted to use one of the Thunder gods to bash the goddess of luck – known as Lady Luck – over the head). It has no impact on the story what so ever, but I feel it bears mentioning that Bandalash was the god of war for a small isolated tribe of island people. They weren't isolated because their island was hard to reach or out of the way or anything like that. They were in fact right next to a rather busy shipping lane. They were isolated because whenever anyone tried to go ashore on their island they would have large stones and rocks thrown at them. The truth behind this matter was that the islands population had declared war, many centuries ago, on the Ocean itself and as such constantly launched rocks and stones at the Ocean. To an outsider this appeared as though the tribe was hostile and so no one bothered them. It should also be noted that the tribe was an extremely self-centred bunch and really wished someone would come visit and take the time to get to know them.

With Bandalash dealt with, the rest of the gods got back to work. The Universe was done, they were tired and someone had mentioned cookies. It was at about this time that Zaktra – goddess of fertility – felt a strange sensation. She decided to ignore the sensation though, as she was a goddess and didn't have to do anything if she didn't want to. I mean, who was going to make her react anyway.

What she didn't realize was that what the strange sensation meant and that by ignoring it she had just set into motion a chain of events that would push our orphaned farm boy to become a somewhat regular

feature in this story (well let's hope he will at least, I understand it looks bad for me as the author when a prediction I make about my own writing doesn't come to fruition, but this is a world of fantasy and fantasy is unpredictable after all).

In other words, thanks to her, we have a story to read.

So let us not delay, and get started right now – or at least on the next page...

Chapter 1

The smoke that rose from the fires was grabbed by the incessant wind and was thrust into his nostrils. Dramatic scenes tend to be windy in my experience.

Khyran stood on the hill, he was merely fourteen years old, and watched as the farm that had been his home burned. The bandits had done a good job – at least as far as he could tell, he had never burned down a farm after all – they had chased away all the livestock and slaughtered his family.

Khyran stood about average height for his age, 5 foot tall, was of a fair complexion, he had blond hair and he was what many called skinny – far from a *stereotypical farmers' build*.

Now this is inconvenient, he thought. *Mom was making such a great stew tonight and even if there is any left after that fire, it will be filled with ash! Those bastards that did this will pay for this! One day I will find them and kill them all!*

Now as the reader you are probably thinking that Khyran either has a mental deficiency or that he is the most uncaring person alive – you would be wrong on both counts.

He felt dreadfully sad about his parents being killed and his home and belongings being destroyed. The big issue for him now was that he didn't have any idea what to do next. Being a fourteen year old boy with no life experience is never fun in these kinds of situations. On top of it all, it was nearing dinner time and he had no food and absolutely nowhere to go because unfortunately he wasn't fire proof and the farm looked like it might burn all night.

Khyran turned from the fire and his home, knowing all too well that going to the house would be pointless, and headed in the direction that he thought the nearest city was in. He would have gone to the nearest town but that just seemed too cliché. The word city just had a better ring to it, and after all if I really wanted to get technical then I could divulge the fact that he didn't even know the difference between the two.

He had just looked upon his childhood home for the last time.

It was almost dark when he set off. He had nothing with him to carry so he made good time. Well he made good time for the first hour that he walked, after that hour though he made pretty bad time.

This was due to the fact that he had stopped walking.

It was already dark and ahead of him, just off the road, there was the glow of a camp fire. Being a country boy, and not thinking he shouldn't trust strangers, he walked up to the camp fire (we all know that when you are in the country you tend to find the strangest people – in fact I would rather walk in a gang infested dark alley than approach a stranger in the country).

There was a man sitting beside the fire. He looked a bit different from the few other people that Khyran had seen in his short life. Khyran had travelled to a market or two with his father and had seen a few people. This man however just looked odd. He couldn't quite figure out why this man looked different – one could even say he looked out of place.

Strange.

The man was old, had a small beard and wore shoes that didn't match. His clothing was also stained from many meals that hadn't all ended up completely in his belly. His face was also so wrinkled that one would guess his age at somewhere north of seven thousand.

The man looked up as Khyran approached. He smiled and said, "Join me my boy; I've been looking for you all over this boo – I mean world." There was a pause from him. "That wasn't quite as dramatic as I thought it would be," he added quietly to himself.

It looked safe enough and so Khyran went over and sat down next to him. Khyran couldn't quite explain why but he had a feeling that this odd looking old man was going to help him in some way, time would tell how exactly though.

The old man and Khyran talked for hours, until late into the night. Khyran was basically using the old man as someone that he could vent on and expose himself to without fear of anyone important finding out – not that there was anyone important alive any more as far as Khyran was concerned. He had a few things he needed to get off his chest and this old man was the perfect person to dump these things on due to the fact that he was completely neutral – and the only person that Khyran now knew.

Khyran even at one stage cried on the old man's shoulder.

Something that nagged at the back of Khyran's mind was the fact that the old man never told him his name and didn't elaborate on the fact that he had been looking for him. All he had said was that there would be time for that later.

Finally, around midnight, Khyran fell asleep.

Bolgoroath (that's the old man's name for those of you readers that don't have any deductive reasoning skills) was somewhat happy. He didn't know exactly how he had got here or why exactly his name sounded odd in this place, but he was happy nevertheless.

On the way over in the Sub-Dimensional Inter-Phase Realm that exists between books, he had found the book he was now in. He had read it, the catch now was that he couldn't remember anything about the book that he had read. He figured it had to do with the fact that he was now a part of the story and therefore the story was changing as he affected it. In place of the memories he should have had, he instead had a strange *déjà vu* type of feeling every time something happened.

He had examined himself as soon as he had the chance and he found he still looked the same, though the world he was now in looked odd to him, though he couldn't quite tell why.

Bolgoroath thought things over and tried to remember what had exactly happened, the details were a bit sketchy.

He had been in his tower when there had been an explosion outside. He couldn't say exactly how long ago that had been due to Inter-Book and Inter-Author Time Lag – much like jet-lag but a hell of a lot more confusing.

He knew he was lucky because if he remembered too much or if he figured out exactly what was wrong with his name he might cause the Author of this book some serious copy right infringement problems.

Bolgoroath remembered after the explosion that he was in the Sub-Dimensional Inter-Phase Realm between books where he met all kinds of strange characters. He even remembered seeing a few familiar faces, though he couldn't quite recall exactly who they were, and then he was at this camp fire.

He decided to leave it at that. He decided to go to sleep and see what the new day would bring.

This being a fantasy novel Bolgoroth figured there would be answers to everything if he just made sure they were the centre of attention. That could wait for the morning though.

Okay for those of you that have been paying attention rather than just reading to humour the author, yes he had said he had searched the whole world for the boy when in actual fact he had just appeared right at his current camp site.

So he is a liar!

Now I should say sue me, but he isn't really my character so that's not an option.

On another note: it would seem as a writer one must always cater for all the possible readers one might get. So I shall do just that.

You might be asking yourself what exactly Bolgoroth was on about?
So I will tell you.

I have a strange feeling that not everyone reading this knows what is going on right about now? In short, Bolgoroth was warped or teleported or transported (whatever you want to call it – polish a stool sample and its remains a stool sample) from another authors fantasy series into my book. His name changed in the transition though due to copy right laws. He has already read this book that you are reading but due to the fact that he has changed the books story line simply by now being in it he can no longer remember what is exactly meant to happen in the book.

It may be a lot to take in but then again you, as the reader, might not quite fully understand what a lot to take in really means. You would however understand if you had say, a pet horse and suddenly the horse was gone and a huge roast was placed on the dining table – especially if Binky tasted just the way you liked your roasts to taste.

Chapter 2

As all people who read know (as there are no pictures in this book I hope you are reading it?), there is almost always a chapter in just about any book that takes you, the reader, for ever to finish. There are several reasons for this. One of them being that it is just so mind numbingly monotonously boring that you will find just about any excuse to put the book down.

Excuses can range from needing a break because one's eyes are tired, or the lawn needs mowing, to retiling the roof. Some people even use non-anesthetic root canals to get out of reading these chapters.

I've even used dinner time in my mom's house as an excuse before (I have already hinted that would be an extreme way of escape, not for the faint hearted or squeamish).

What I am trying to get at is that in order for this book to be any good at all, I need to put a really boring chapter in it in order for the rest of the book to seem that much more interesting and impressive.

Fortunately for you as a reader, I'm not that sadistic a person (anyone who knows me well enough knows that this could possibly be a huge lie though).

So between you and me, let us pretend this is that chapter?

Instead of the chapter happening the way it is meant to happen, I'll just narrate the happenings quickly.

Here goes.

Both Khyran and Bolgoroth awoke early the next morning. Bolgoroth sat Khyran down and over breakfast he explains what I explained in the last six paragraphs of the first chapter. The boy is shocked, and then gets over the shock. Bolgoroth then asks what the boys' plans are. Khyran then tells him that he intends to go to the nearest city, and off they go.

Now wasn't that so much easier to read?

In one paragraph you were able to cover ten pages worth of reading and get what, in my opinion, is the boring part of the book out of the way.

I'm a great guy, I know.

Chapter 3

There was the sound of many pairs of feet running on cobble stone. The black cloaked figure pressed himself hard against the wall, in order to try and move further into the shadows (which never helps – it just leads to problems with your back later in life).

This obviously didn't work due to the fact that he was already flush with the wall, but it sounds nicer to say it than not to say it at all.

The city guards would soon be out in full force...

...sorry but I think I just jumped way too far ahead there. That's not meant to happen for a few more books at the very least.

So please accept my apologies and let me redirect this book back to where it is meant to be. It's a little confusing having strange characters in ones book; they distract a writer very easily due to their admittedly inferior character design (oops that one slipped out and I would take it back if I could).

It had been quite some time since Zaktra the fiery red headed goddess had stepped out for a smoke break (and yes, before you ask, some gods do smoke – especially the god of fertility, or in this case the goddess of fertility. This explains why humans tend to smoke after sex – even if sufficient lubricant is used).

The other gods had been so keen on playing twister and she merely wanted to sit and relax. So she had lost on purpose and used the smoke break as an excuse to step outside and well, have a smoke.

The great philosopher of Yurgarah pointed this fact out after some tabloid or another released this fact about Zaktra and since then he happens to get quoted for some rather odd and ludicrous statements.

A few days before this particular smoke break Zaktra had felt a strange sensation and she had immediately ignored it; owing to the fact that she was on leave. Although now she realized that if it meant she could stay outside for a few moments longer, then she might as well think about it for a bit.

Being a goddess, Zaktra basically knew everything, and if she didn't know something then all she needed to do was make up an answer and that would make it a fact (sounds like a certain gender which exists among us humans – I'll let you as the reader figure out which one I'm talking about there because it just happens to be safer that way).

The other gods didn't approve of this attitude though. They were always setting things up so that if some little insignificant mortal decided that he or she wished to know more about something, that it would take a little deductive reasoning and some predefined facts and said mortal would reach a conclusion and understand the conclusion (I think they called this science at school – like most sensible people I was too busy sleeping to know this for sure though).

Zaktra didn't really like this way of doing things. It required a little bit more work and she preferred relaxation to work (a lazy goddess – who would have guessed that one?).

As do most of us.

So for two reasons, don't judge her. I'll mention the second one first – she is a goddess and she does the judging and the first reason not to judge her is because as I have said before most of you readers prefer it that way too.

The point at which I am obscurely trying to get at here is that if Zaktra wanted that strange sensation to mean anything at all then she could. She didn't actually have to find out exactly what it had been. Being a goddess she had the joy of being omniscient.

The problem with that was that the other gods would have centuries of lectures to give her if she did it her way and that would cut into her relaxation time.

So half way through her cigarette she created a minion (that sounded impressive didn't it?) And gave it instructions to find out what had caused the sensation in question.

With that out of the way she regretfully turned and headed back into the room where her four siblings waited patiently for round two to begin.

Now before we step back to where our orphaned farm boy (I have decided to keep referring to Khyran as that because it is easier to type that out than type out a made up name like his) and the illegal immigrant are (Bolgorth), let me just say this though, bearing in mind that Zaktra is the goddess of fertility I would like to actually explain why she has the right to be so lazy. Being a goddess, she has a fairly long life span (it has been said somewhere by someone that infinity has no end within the human mind) and she has already exhausted all her sexual cravings. Thus in short, don't cross her or

question her because she is the equivalent of a grumpy granny that isn't getting any because as much as she might not have any cravings she obviously still misses it – who wouldn't?

Chapter 4

So now we have reached a point at which this book could quite possibly be becoming a bit stale (it is my first attempt at a novel after all, so I would think I should be excused for this fact) for most of the readers out there – it might be a bit early for this (I can guess what you are thinking. It must be something along the lines of “this guy is such an amateur”, but bear with me please because things will get better). Nothing much is happening at the moment as far as the story goes. So I’ll just have to spice things up for you – the reader.

So now it is the perfect time to introduce you – the reader – to Dretar.

Just so that no one makes any mistakes or has any misconceptions, Dretar is female, a woman, of the feminine persuasion etc. It might sound like she has a mans name but what you don’t know just yet is that she is one lady you wouldn’t want to say that to face to face. In fact even though she is one of my characters and technically I have full control over her actions (which is great in certain regards – we will nip that thought in the bud), I wouldn’t even say that she has a man’s name with three chapters between us (please don’t hurt me Dretar?). She scares me, and yet for many reasons you may discover later though not necessarily in this book, she intrigues me at the same time.

Dretar is one of the most amazing women any man could lay eyes on, she is not just pretty – but beautiful. She is tall, but not too tall. About five foot eight inches, and with a body to kill over (if you as the reader do not have a perverted mind, forget that last sentence if you want but I’ve decided not to for reasons of my own). She has short hair with an oddly purple fringe (and yes it is natural – seeing as it is a world with magic I am lucky in the sense that I don’t really have to give a reason for this) that adds somewhat to her sex appeal. All in all she is what many in the real world would describe as a bomb shell.

We find this beautiful woman at work on a chilly night in her home city. This city is called Ardanon.

Ardanon is in the south of the continent Yearl. It is a coastal city. Ardanon is a rich city, but as with all rich cities it has a few areas which one could call slums. One of these slums happens to be where Dretar

gets to meet a lot of the people she works with. She would change it if she could but her boss will hear nothing of it.

She just now happens to be waiting for one of them to walk past the street corner she has chosen for her nights work as you read this.

She had been standing in her skimpy outfit for hours – skimpy and tight fitting. Many men had approached her for some “companionship” for the evening and she had turned them all down. She wasn’t interested in just any man, she wanted a specific man, and she had it on good authority that he would come this way eventually.

She leaned back against a sign post that was on the corner of the pavement and looked down each possible direction that he might come from. There was no sign of him and she was starting to get extremely cold – evenings were usually cold regardless of what season it was this far south and having a colossal body of water nearby did not help this situation at all. Then you just need to add to the equation the fact that her outfit consisted of very little fabric and you can just about imagine why Dretar was getting cold.

Just as she told herself that enough was enough and that she would call it a night, there he was.

He was a tall and well built man – more than enough to tire her out.

Dretar was looking forward to this more than she could express. She longed to see his body contort and spasm!

She took a deep breathe and assuming the posture that most of the ladies that work the streets would assume when attracting attention to themselves, she waited for the man she had been waiting for to notice her.

As the man drew nearer to her he turned to her and asked, “Now where have you been all my life?”

What a damn cliché! She screamed in her mind but was careful not to let her face mirror that thought.

“I don’t know where I’ve been but if you play your cards right, I know where I will be later,” Dretar said this in the most seductive voice she could muster.

“For a small fee, right?” He inquired while he looked her up and then down, deliberately pausing on the parts of her body that made her a woman.

“A girls gotta eat ya know?” she said in that same seductive voice she had used before. “but who knows, I probably won’t even charge you. In fact I think I definitely won’t charge you.”

“In that case I have something you can eat, and the way I’m feeling right now lady, you will probably be full when we are both done.”

This is one sick man, but a girls gotta do what a girls gotta do.

“Why don’t we continue this little chat in a more secluded spot?” she asked without giving away her thoughts in the slightest (you are going to be shocked when you find out what she had in mind).

“Sure, follow me. I know of the perfect place,” he said and turned back up the way he had just arrived from.

Dretar followed the man, at his side as though they were friends, or maybe a little more than friends and they walked for a minute. Then they stopped outside a small inn. Instead of going inside the inn the man led her down a dark little alleyway. About half way down the alley he stopped and turned. Dretar had stayed at the mouth of the alley looking at the man. After a few moments he beckoned to her.

Perfect! Thought Dretar once she had looked at the alley from top to bottom and assessed that no one would see or hear them.

The man dug in his pocket as she walked towards him and pulled out a gold coin that he showed to her on her approach.

“Here you go, this should cover it,” he said, and dropped the coin into her cleavage once she stood directly in front of him.

Now let us take a few seconds break here. I am sure that some of you readers need it. This is gripping stuff – I know. Well, that and the fact that many of you might find your pants seem a size too small at the moment. I’m sure this feeling will pass momentarily. You just need something to distract you from the thoughts you are currently having. As the author I will provide you with this distraction.

Apple pie!

That ought to do it.

Okay, break time is over.

The moment had finally come and Dretar took a deep breath and did what she was paid to do.

She bent down and with lightning speed drew a small dagger from one of her small boots (she moved so fast that it seemed as though the

dagger had magically appeared in her hand) and with a lightning quick movement she drove it first into the mans groin and then slit his throat. A thin red line spread behind the daggers path and the man fell over jerking and twitching as his life blood flowed from both wounds.

He was dead in a matter of moments.

It was a job well done if she did say so herself.

As the reader I will bet you had the completely wrong impression of this lovely young lady?

You assumed she was a lady of the night didn't you?

Well never once did I mention that phrase before now, did I?

Exactly!

You are all sick people if you thought that, but then again I like sick people – to a point though.

In any case, in a sense you would be right about being a lady that works at night, if that was your thought. Dretar is an assassin and a damn good assassin at that. She had been hired to kill this man by someone and she did just that.

She did have morals after all.

When she had picked his pockets clean of all their valuables she headed back into the street she had entered the alley from and almost bumped straight into a young boy and an old man – who looked odd, though she couldn't put her finger on why the old man looked odd to her.

She made her apologies and walked off back to her guild headquarters.

"I have this strange feeling that we must follow her," Bolgoroth said to Khyran as she was leaving. "I think I might want to have a word with her at some stage."

Khyran nodded and they followed at a discrete distance.

END OF FREE PREVIEW

Khyran, Bolgoroath and Dretar have only just crossed paths. The story – and the trouble – is only beginning.

PURCHASE THE FULL BOOK