



Contract with an Angel

By Andrew M. Greeley

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Millionaire media mogul Raymond Neenan can't believe his ears--or his eyes. the seat next to him, empty for the whole flight, now barely contains a huge man who looks a lot like Chicago Bulls superstar Michael Jordan.

In fact, the "man" is the Archangel Michael ("Not Mike, not Mikey, but Michael, you got a problem with that?"), and he's looking to make a deal for Neenan's immortal soul.

Neenan isn't interested in his soul or anyone else's unless there is money in it, but a little well-timed turbulence that sends the plane hurtling earthward caused him to reconsider. If he doesn't believe in it, what could it hurt to sign?

But for a man like Neenan, making amends is no easy task. Though he never knew it, he's damaged a lot of lives, including his own. He's hated or feared by his parents, his ex-wife, his children, and practically everyone he's ever met.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

On a flight into Chicago, millionaire media mogul Raymond Neenan is visited by his guardian angel. Michael informs Neenan that his life is almost over and that he needs to make amends for mistreating people in his profit-centered existence, among them his wife; his estranged offspring, who hate him; and numerous business associates. With Michael's careful orchestration, Neenan is able to resolve issues with this diverse group and even seems to enjoy his newfound attitude. While not great literature, *Contract* will keep demand high from fans of Father Greeley (*An Occasion of Sin*). Very capably read by Dick Hill, this is recommended for most public libraries. *ADavid Scott, Southwestern Oklahoma State Univ., Weatherford*
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From Booklist

Great literature his novels may not be, but Greeley's enthusiastic fans will doubtless enjoy this latest tale, which twists the legend of Faust into a yarn populated by angels wearing fashionable outfits. And as protagonist, there is an Irish American mogul who goes about mending his manipulative, mercenary manners. As the book reads, Michael is not just an ordinary angel. His mission--to inform Raymond Neenan that life as he knows it is close to an end--serves to wake up the libidinous businessman to a lovely wife and estranged offspring who have been relegated to bit players in Neenan's profit-centered existence. Personally and professionally, Neenan proceeds to play catch-up, attempting to remedy the error of his ways, while a chorus of angels lift their lilting voices in accompaniment. A joyful romp, full of blissful interludes signaling love's radiant rewards. *Alice Joyce*

From Kirkus Reviews

Greeley (Summer at the Lake, 1997, etc. etc.) returns with more High Blarney, this time with an inversion on the Faust legend in which an atheist sells his soul to an angel. While flying into Chicago's O'Hare airport, cynical media mogul Raymond Neenan finds the empty first-class seat beside him invaded by the brown-skinned Archangel Michael, the six-foot-six head of the heavenly armies, who's flourishing a contract for him to sign. Neenan must sell his soul to Michael, he's told, or go down with the plane. To sweeten the deal, the angel also gives him a brief but ecstatic taste of paradise. Neenan thinks he's hallucinating and, with nothing to lose, signs. Foremost in the contract, he has to give up his womanizing, predatory business practices and sharply sharkish bent toward everything consumable. Gradually, though, Neenan becomes convinced that he didn't imagine the event. In unmaking the mess he's made of his life, the once fearsome Neenan turns cuddly with his office staff and son Vincent, romances his wife, Anna Maria (while an angelic choir that only he can hear sings joyously), accepts her advice about filming an eight-hour miniseries of Susan Howatch's *Starbridge*, and decides to offer Loyola University, her alma mater, \$5 million to fund four chairs in the humanities. He must also patch things up with his first wife and with the children by that marriage, who detest him. None of this provides much conflict, although Greeley clearly has a ball as the authorial angel setting miracles in motion. Amusingly, while sitting through a performance of Gounod's *Faust* (whose chorus gets a blissful assist from real choirs of angels), Neenan discovers that--aside from Anna Maria--he's spent his life seeking carbon copies of his punitive, mean-spirited, grudging mother. Will Raymond clear up his life's mess before a death warning is fulfilled and he has to check out the light in the tunnel? Should be read with Palestrina Masses playing in the background. -- *Copyright ©1998, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

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