

**GOD**

**INC.**

**BY MONICA JOY BOUMA**

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*GOD INC.*

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*This book is dedicated to the indigenous  
peoples of North America — the keepers of  
the land.*



*Light and Dark*

# MONDAY

The man sought refuge under an overhang. A sudden storm had sprung up in the hot evening and rain sluiced off the roof in a deluge. The downpour and deepening twilight shrouded him from sight and he rested, leaning against the wall.

He waited there for five hours.

\*

At three a.m. a weight slammed heavily against the inside of the exit door. It flew open and a young man lurched forward, pushed roughly from behind by a bouncer. The spring-loaded door snapped shut, pulling the riotous bar noise back inside with it.

He had landed hard on the cement. His forehead bled profusely from the gash he sustained during his face-off with the asphalt. In the background, the thump-thump of the bass deep in the bar — the heart of the beast — beat on steadily.

Water dripped from the eaves and echoed between the buildings.

The man stepped forward now, and stooped to lift the boy's wrist, feeling for a pulse. He turned then, and melted again into the darkness.

An hour passed and then, with a loud groan, the boy opened one eye and watched as the neon signs turned the rain-slicked pavement into pink and yellow rivers winding their way around the garbage that littered the alley. His eye fluttered shut.

He drifted in and out of consciousness.

He lay there until the door — the mouth of the beast — burst open again, spewing out a rowdy crowd that fell cursing and stumbling over his figure. He struggled to a sitting position, flailing his arms, calling out incoherently. The rabble swirled around him, jesting and jeering. They laughed raucously as the boy tried to stand, staggering around.

He was a delectable looking ghoul. He suited their taste, with two red gaping holes for eyes. Dark blood was caked to his face and staining his clothing.

They decided to take the apparition home with them. Someone threw a drink in his battered face and the blood unstuck a little. The figures he saw around him swirled in a red-tinged fog. They put their arms under his and wound their way down one back street and another, then through a park. They were well acquainted with the secret paths of the city. They kept out of sight.

The man stood in the shadows under the trees where they passed. He watched the boy carefully.

The group reached its destination. The leader fumbled with the key to the downstairs apartment. Behind him, the others were loudly guffawing and cursing. Finally they were in and they threw their

new acquisition unceremoniously onto a battered couch.

Inside they continued their drinking and carousing. The disgruntled upstairs neighbour hammered loudly on the ceiling above them, a familiar warning to quieten the party. They paused and lowered their voices to loud theatrical whispers, laughing at their own shenanigans.

The blackness outside turned to the dismal grey of a rain soaked morning. He waited patiently in the dawn, that place between dark and light. His eyes never left the boy.

As the night turned to day the partiers hatched a plan. The boy was becoming more alert, laying with his eyes half open, searching his surroundings. Voices that were strange to him competed with the music that swelled from the radio. A bare light bulb hung from the ceiling. He reached up and touched his face. When his hand came away it was covered with blood.

“Here, try this.” Someone held out a drink of clear liquid in a shot glass. He took it. Held it up to the light with tremulous hands and then drank it all in one go. He let his head fall against the back of the dirty couch, ready to give in to the drink’s effects, whatever they may be.

\*

The call came in at dispatch. The voice on the other end of the line was clear and concise. The caller said a young man had unknowingly ingested an overdose of street drugs. The drugs would cause the boy to have seizures if he was left untreated. It was pos-

sible that he would be paranoid and combative. The caller provided an address and apartment number, identified himself as Joe and hung up.

\*\*\*

Morning sounds stirred, breaking the night peace. Bird song filtered in through the open windows. The breeze that caught at the curtains smelled of roses. A pale almost-full moon was still visible behind the gossamer clouds that hung in the east. The sun had begun its rise. The day would be born from the night, as it had been planned from the beginning.

God rolled over and fumbled around on his nightstand for his glasses. He gave up, slumping back into the pillows...

A half hour later God woke again with a start. He swung his legs over the edge of the bed. The cool floor felt good under his feet. He stretched his toes as he listened for the coffee to start percolating. He hit another button and sheer white drapes hanging in front of 20-foot glass windows swished open. God Inc. was a wonder of remote control.

God stood and hoofed it to the bathroom. He really had to go!

As he washed his hands he studied his reflection. He splashed some water on his face and then drew his wet hands back through his silver hair. God turned sideways and had a look at his physique. He thought he looked darn good in his white t-shirt and boxers. He worked hard at his fitness routine, especially now that he was in training.

Of course, he had a weakness for dessert, but who didn't? That Michael made the *best* angel food cake. He sucked in his tummy. But, for the next few days he wasn't going to worry about his diet. He was carbo-loading, and he was going to take advantage and eat as much cake and ice cream as he wanted.

God did his muscle man pose in the mirror, as he did every morning. Yes! He felt strong and healthy.

Coffee in hand, he sank down into one of the lounges he had set up in the lofty bedroom to watch the sunrise. God crossed one tanned, lean leg over the other — at the ankle, of course. He couldn't risk blood clots. Not at his age.

The sky grew lighter. Sweeping lawns of native grass, broken by lines of trimmed hedges and rows of perennials spread out into the distance. Far off the water of the river caught the morning sun.

God thought back to the beginning of creation again. Pure chaos! Walls of water rearing and heaving into eternal darkness. That was what God Inc. had to work with at the beginning. They couldn't see a thing and so God had used himself as the light. He liked to think of himself as a 'glow in the dark' kind of guy. Savouring his latte he closed his eyes, resting the cup in his lap. Drowsily he reminisced. Yes, the good old days, at the beginning... the sense of excitement, the feel of the cool clay in his hands, his imagination full of possibility...

God's eyes flew open. The tennis game — scheduled with Moses for seven! He glanced hastily at the clock and then jumped out of his chair, almost spilling his coffee in the process.

When the knock sounded at the back door he was halfway through a piece of toast. He ran to open it. Aaron, Moses' brother, was standing there. God blinked. Maybe he had his days mixed up. Maybe this wasn't tennis day?

"Aaron, good morning! How are you? Moses couldn't make it?"

Aaron hesitated. His tennis racket hung from his hand. "Moses — he didn't feel up to the match this morning. He phoned and asked if I would fill in for him."

Moses. *Again with the attitude*, sighed God. *What to do?*

"Well, never mind. It's great to see you Aaron. You and I haven't had a visit in a long time. Now here's the perfect opportunity."

God grabbed his racket from behind the door and they set off down the path to the courts.

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When they brought him in, he was on his stomach, hands cuffed behind his back, his feet shackled. The handcuffs and shackles were manacled together. He formed a human 'U.' It was quite the sight. Not one that Faye, the night nurse, really relished. Her shift was only half over. She ushered them into the trauma room.

Between gawking at the gorgeous nurse and struggling with the belligerent patient, it took two police officers, two security guards and the ambulance attendants to off-load him onto the gurney. He was

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