

# Celestial Legends

-Captain's Log

Daniel drove the sword deep into the dummy's chest. "Excellent!" Aaron said. Daniel smiled these were some of the rare times his mentor did not crack a sarcastic remark. "Now go put up your sword." He headed into Northern Mountains armory. Theodore and Abner were admiring a rack of weapons. Theo and Abner were First years at Northern Alps academy, soon they'd be warriors. Abner spotted him and waved.

"Hey Daniel!"

"Hey Theo and Abner," he waved back. The rack contained several weapons, including broadswords, crossbows and longbows. Abner hefted a crossbow up.

"Perfect," he said. Theo had his eye set on a huge broadsword. Sir Louis emerged from behind several longbows.

"Have you found your weapons of choice?" he asked. Theo and Abner nodded. Then they followed him to the practice area waving goodbye at him. Sometimes Daniel wondered what he'd do without them. Theo and Abner had been his very best friends since his arrival at the academy. They were leaving soon, and he wished he could go with them, but it was another six months until he became a First year, followed closely by another year of warrior prep. The Northern Alps were boring. Dismissing the thought, he put up the sword and headed back to his quarters. On his way several apprentices waved or nodded. One Third year ran up to him.

"Daniel Reginald?"

"Yes?"

"Maurice wants to see you. Now!"

Daniel raised an eyebrow, "Excuse me?"

"Nothing,"

"Good." He nodded satisfactorily and continued on, this time in the direction of Maurice's office. Later, he entered Maurice's office unaware of his awaiting task. He sure hoped that one of the Third years hadn't fallen sick and he had to do their chores. He shuddered just thinking about it...the mass of sticky, tainted, grimy, grubby, filthy, mucky, foul-smelling, tainted dishes.

"You called for me, Maurice?"

“Yes, Reginald you’re a Second year right?”

“Yes sir?”

“Qualified for missions?” Daniel nodded now aware where this was going. At least some other unlucky Third year would face the fate of Master Rufus leftover tuna supprize bowls.

“Ok here’s the catch, I need you and two Second or First years you trust to go to Count Brian of Stonebridge. He seems to have some sort of a complication. Fix it! Now!”

“On my way!” He said, as he barged past the door to get Abner and Theo. Halfway there, one of the First Years tripped him. He glared at the culprit his face reddening fast, who shrugged unconcerned. Still fuming, he made his way to the practice court.

“Theo! Abner!” Daniel yelled. Several cadets turned towards him. They were all so nosy, and being nosy was for emissaries.

“What’s wrong?” Theo inquired, “is anything wrong?”

“No, I just need to talk to you guys,” Daniel said reasonably. “Alone!” The two boys nodded and followed Daniel into the stables. “Sir Maurice wants us to go on a mission to Stonebridge, and I need two trusted friends to go along with me.” The two boys nodded.

“Whatever you say,” Abner replied.

Two days later, Daniel, Abner and Theo rode their horses Felix, Damien and Abercrombie to Castle Stonebridge. Daniel brought Felix to a stop. Abner and Theo followed in suit.

“What’s wrong?” Theo demanded.

“I don’t know,” Abner answered. They followed Daniel’s eyes to the walls of Stonebridge.

“We’re too late,” Daniel whispered, almost inaudibly. There were shouts, cries and fires everywhere. The trio forced the gates open. Pure instinct drove Daniel to draw his great sword, and bring it down in a large arch. The action saved his life. An attacking enemy got a nasty surprise as the sword stuck him. He fell to the ground, clutching his arm. More soldiers advanced, Theo drew his broadsword. Abner aimed his crossbow at the warrior closer to them. “Charge!” The war-cry that came from Daniel became the undoing of those men. Theo made headway as he swung his broadsword and Daniel followed. Abner who was still on horseback covered them with his crossbow. The defending garrison saw the new arrivals pushing back the invaders and they fought with renewed strength. The invaders began to stream out of the castle screaming and fell back into the forest.

“And stay out!” Theo yelled triumphantly. A man approached them. He was holding a long sword and wearing chainmail armor.

“Thank you for your services, young warriors.” He said smiling. “What are your names?”

"I'm Daniel and this is Theo and Abner." He gestured at them.

"From Northern Alps Academy?"

"Yes."

"Tell Maurice Count Brian says thank you," he said. "We will need you again."

"Anytime," Daniel said. He mounted Felix and the others followed hastily.

"Daniel, tell us where are we off to?" Abner asked.

"Home."

"Why?" Theo interrupted.

"Because there's no place like home and I've learned that," he said bluntly. "You'll be true warriors soon and leave me on my own, but I can't rush into life. The taste of battle taught me how short life is and how thin the barrier between life and death was." The three rode in silence.

"Yeah well you could pass off as a First year," Abner said with a straight face.

Daniel grinned, "Thanks guys. You're not half bad either." Theo glared at him. Abner chuckled slightly.

"Da was right. You are a bad influence, Abner." Theo mumbled just loud enough for them to hear. Abner and Daniel burst into laughter, trying hard not to fall off their horses. Only Theo scrunched up his face and turned away, but they didn't see the widening grin on his face-and he had no intention of letting them know.