

Terry Pratchett
& Neil Gaiman



GOOD
OMENS

ECIES OF AGNES NUTTER, WITCH

GOOD OMENS

THE NICE AND
ACCURATE
PROPHECIES OF
AGNES NUTTER,
WITCH

A NOVEL BY

NEIL GAIMAN
AND
TERRY
PRATCHETT



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CAVEAT

Bringing about Armageddon can be dangerous. Do not attempt it in your own home.

DEDICATION

The authors would like to join the demon Crowley in dedicating this book to the
memory of

G. K. Chesterton

A man who knew what was going on.

In the beginning



t was a nice day.

All the days had been nice. There had been rather more than seven of them so far, and rain hadn't been invented yet. But clouds massing east of Eden suggested that the first thunderstorm was on its way, and it was going to be a big one.

The angel of the Eastern Gate put his wings over his head to shield himself from the first drops.

"I'm sorry," he said politely. "What was it you were saying?"

"I *said*, that one went down like a lead balloon," said the serpent.

"Oh. Yes," said the angel, whose name was Aziraphale.

"I think it was a bit of an overreaction, to be honest," said the serpent. "I mean, first offense and everything. I can't see what's so bad about knowing the difference between good and evil, anyway."

"It must *be* bad," reasoned Aziraphale, in the slightly concerned tones of one who can't see it either, and is worrying about it, "otherwise you wouldn't have been involved."

"They just said, Get up there and make some trouble," said the serpent, whose name was Crawly, although he was thinking of changing it now. Crawly, he'd decided, was not *him*.

"Yes, but you're a demon. I'm not sure if it's actually possible for you to do good," said Aziraphale. "It's down to your basic, you know, nature. Nothing personal, you understand."

"You've got to admit it's a bit of a pantomime, though," said Crawly. "I mean, pointing out the Tree and saying 'Don't Touch' in big letters. Not very subtle, is it? I mean, why not put it on top of a high mountain or a long way off? Makes you wonder what He's really planning."

"Best not to speculate, really," said Aziraphale. "You can't second-guess ineffability, I always say. There's Right, and there's Wrong. If you do Wrong when you're told to do Right, you deserve to be punished. Er."

They sat in embarrassed silence, watching the raindrops bruise the first flowers.

Eventually Crawly said, "Didn't you have a flaming sword?"

"Er," said the angel. A guilty expression passed across his face, and then came back and camped there.

"You did, didn't you?" said Crawly. "It flamed like anything."

"Er, well—"

"It looked very impressive, I thought."

"Yes, but, well—"

"Lost it, have you?"

"Oh no! No, not exactly lost, more—"

"Well?"

Aziraphale looked wretched. "If you must know," he said, a trifle testily, "I gave it away."

Crawly stared up at him.

"Well, I had to," said the angel, rubbing his hands distractedly. "They looked so cold, poor things, and she's expecting *already*, and what with the vicious animals out there and the storm coming up I thought, well, where's the harm, so I just said, look, if you come back there's going to be an almighty row, but you might be needing this sword, so here it is, don't bother to thank me, just do everyone a big favor and don't let the sun go down on you here."

He gave Crawly a worried grin.

"That was the best course, wasn't it?"

"I'm not sure it's actually possible for you to do evil," said Crawly sarcastically. Aziraphale didn't notice the tone.

"Oh, I do hope so," he said. "I really do hope so. It's been worrying me all afternoon."

They watched the rain for a while.

"Funny thing is," said Crawly, "I keep wondering whether the apple thing wasn't the right thing to do, as well. A demon can get into real trouble, doing the right thing." He nudged the angel. "Funny if we both got it wrong, eh? Funny if I did the good thing and you did the bad one, eh?"

"Not really," said Aziraphale.

Crawly looked at the rain.

"No," he said, sobering up. "I suppose not."

Slate-black curtains tumbled over Eden. Thunder growled among the hills. The animals, freshly named, cowered from the storm.

Far away, in the dripping woods, something bright and fiery flickered among the trees.

It was going to be a dark and stormy night.

GOOD OMENS

A Narrative of Certain Events occurring in the last eleven years of human history, in strict accordance as shall be shewn with:

The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter

Compiled and edited, with Footnotes of an Educational Nature and Precepts for the Wise, by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

God (God)

Metatron (The Voice of God)

Aziraphale (An Angel, and part-time rare book dealer)

Satan (A Fallen Angel; the Adversary)

Beelzebub (A Likewise Fallen Angel and Prince of Hell)

Hastur (A Fallen Angel and Duke of Hell)

Ligur (Likewise a Fallen Angel and Duke of Hell)

Crowley (An Angel who did not so much Fall as Saunter Vaguely Downwards)

APOCALYPTIC HORSEPERSONS

DEATH (Death)

War (War)

Famine (Famine)

Pollution (Pollution)

HUMANS

Thou-Shalt-Not-Commit-Adultery Pulsifer (A Witchfinder)

Agnes Nutter (A Prophetess)

Newton Pulsifer (Wages Clerk and Witchfinder Private)

Anathema Device (Practical Occultist and Professional Descendant)

Shadwell (Witchfinder Sergeant)

Madame Tracy (Painted Jezebel [mornings only, Thursdays by arrangement] and Medium)
Sister Mary Loquacious (A Satanic Nun of the Chattering Order of St. Beryl)
Mr. Young (A Father)
Mr. Tyler (A Chairman of a Residents' Association)
A Delivery Man

THEM

ADAM (An Antichrist)
Pepper (A Girl)
Wensleydale (A Boy)
Brian (A Boy)
Full Chorus of Tibetans, Aliens, Americans, Atlanteans and other rare and strange Creatures of the Last Days.

AND:

Dog (Satanical hellhound and cat-worrier)