

Full Author's Notes

From

Sanctioned, Book 4

The Ascension Myth

Author Notes - Ell Leigh Clarke

July 5, 2017

Special Thanks

I'd like to thank the following embodiments of awesome for their contributions to Book 4:

As always, I'd like to thank Michael Anderle, (aka MA, aka Yoda), my mentor and greatest supporter, for his never-waning enthusiasm, his votes of confidence, and the continuous onslaught of banter.

On the mornings when he hasn't already dropped into my slack channel the screenshots of the kindle reports, and/or excited comments or something that will make me laugh, I notice... and the day just doesn't seem complete.

I'd love to thank the fabulous **Jen McDonnell** for her editing and proofreading kung fu – and also stopping me from saying stupid shit before things “go to print”. You da bomb, lady!

Massive thanks to **Trausti Traustason**, for his assistance in finding place names, and checking the creative Icelandic cussing for correct grammar and usage. Takk fryir, vinur minn.

Thank you also to **Zen Steve and his JIT team** who caught a bunch of stuff that would have made my eyeballs hurt. Your input is very much appreciated, and knowing that we can keep improving the end-product - and that you love the story before we launch - is a huge relief to this little Author. Thank you.

I'd like to thank the **fans on Ell Leigh Clarke's fb page** for:

1. Tolerating (encouraging?) MA on his sneaky posts now that he has admin rights.
2. For your constant enthusiasms for the stories, and
3. For your support as the Author has been floored by caffeine withdrawal and fatigue.

You've been the best, and please know that I note and appreciate your concerns when you say: write faster, but don't burn yourself out. Thank you... <3

Massive gratitude bombs also go out to **Amazon Reviewers** of these books... especially the folks who love the stories enough to give them 5*. You're the best, and a constant source of encouragement on those long writing days. Knowing that Molly's antics are appreciated makes it

all so much more fun.

Michael and The Book 4 Competition

The night before the release of Book 3: Called, MA got on a call with Ellie to discuss the Amazon blurb and author notes she had sent over to him.

He laughed.

A lot.

Which was good.

But then a few minutes into the conversation, things took a turn:

MA: Damn. My author notes are shit compared to yours.

Ellie: no they're not. They're... sensible. (beat.) Like a grown up.

MA: (floats a reversed middle finger over the webcam...)

Ellie: Dude. It's not a competition.

MA: yes it is!

(Pause)

(Opens word doc.)

I've got to seriously up my game for book 4.

Ellie: (shrugs). Ok. I'll let you handle author notes then...

MA: Great.

FOR THE NEXT MONTH, and across 6 different locations, every time anything remotely entertaining was said MA pulled up the document, and hashtags the conversation #AuthorNotes.

Ellie (*one month later*): Dude. It's *still* not a competition.

MA: Yeah, but my author notes are going to be *FUCKING GREAT* this time. And I get final say before it gets published.

Ellie: (shrugs). Ok. (eyeroll).

Michael and King's English

So it can't have escaped your notice that the Author is English. Sometimes it creeps through in the odd turn of phrase, and sometimes the odd word slips through the editing process.

Plus, if you've been on the facebook page, you'll notice I write in normal English.

English that MA calls "King's English".

The Author thought this was odd, but probably just a remnant from when there was a king on the English throne. I mean, it was a long time since MA was in school, so maybe when he learnt this expression, it *was* King's English.

It wasn't until MA was in Europe that it occurred to this author: hang on. Liz has been on the throne about 100 years now.

Ellie: Michael? Why do you call it King's English.

MA: because it is.

Ellie: But we haven't had a king since (pulls up wikipedia) George VI in 1952. How old are you?

MA: you know how old I am.

Ellie: yeah, and that's why I can't figure out why you call it King's English.

Michael and Trees

MA in London. Ellie in LA, laid out on sofa sick.

MA: I've got to say, one thing this place has going for it is there is a lot of green around. Lots of trees.

Ellie: yeah. England, it's good like that.

MA: yeah, you don't really get that in a lot of places in the US.

Ellie: I guess.

3 days later... First call after MA returns to US, jetlagged.

MA: you were right about the jetlag coming this way.

Ellie: yup. It's ok. You get a pass for a few weeks. Takes the pressure off.

MA: yeah. I appreciate that. Fuck I can't stay awake though.

Ellie: yeah, lag monster...

MA: huh?

Ellie: Anyway...

MA: Ah!!! That's what I wanted to tell you....

(Ellie sits up in wrapped attention ready for the stunning revelation that the comment promised.)

MA: so when I was flying out of Heathrow, I looked out of the window, and all around there was just flat... like...

Ellie: field?

MA: Yeah!

Ellie: uh huh. We use them for farming.

MA: right. But they're lined with trees.

Ellie: (slowly.) Yeees?

MA: Yeah, like two or three trees deep! What a fraud! I thought the whole place was trees.

Ellie: (bursts into hysterical laughter.) Oh, you Americans are soooo cute.

MA: (laughing, floats middle finger in front of webcam again.)

Dr. Awesome

So a special note needs to go in to explain ADAM's pooh bear reference at the end of this instalment. It kinda wrote itself in there, maybe because those words had been uttered to the Author recently. Maybe they had been muttered by someone who's designation is similar to ADAM's.

Either way, to protect both the guilty and the innocent, and in deference to the patient-doctor privilege, let's just call our doctor Dr. Awesome.

So the Author (Ellie, not MA) went to see Dr. Awesome recently given the drama of her recent trip to New Orleans. It was quickly agreed that there were changes that she needed to make to her diet.

Pizza was not a good source of nutrition, it seems, no matter how much vegetation it is counteracted with.

And so, Dr. Awesome prescribed a 7 day reset diet whereby all but about five food stuffs were excluded.

For seven days.

Nota Bene: coffee also didn't make the cut.

Ellie: But I won't survive without coffee and pizza!

Dr. Awesome: Suck it up Pooh Bear.

Ellie: (under her breath) *fuck*.

Ellie leaves practice, and takes up the 7-day regime.

So a week or so goes past and the Author had to have some blood tests. Still feeling like shit despite (or perhaps because of) the brutally sudden caffeine withdrawal, she lets (no pun intended) the blood guy into her apartment and offers up her vein. The blood guy gets three vials into the letting, and attached the fourth.

Ellie (looks down at arm): that one's taking a while.

Blood guy: Yeah, it's running out.

Ellie (feeling woozy, and turning her head away): ok, so we're done then?

Blood guy: No, I'll have to try your other arm.

Ellie: Shit.... I don't feel so good. (*nearly passes out*).

Twenty minutes later, after talking Star Wars (Author has a Millennium Falcon and R2D2 soft toy on her sofa), and trying to persuade the guy to call Dr. Awesome to explain he needed to feed her coffee in order to get the rest of the draws, the Author finally submits to the second needle, and eventually all four vials are filled.

Blood guy takes off... leaving phone number for when the Author can drink coffee again.

Ellie opens laptop and types message to Dr. Awesome:

>>>

Blood guy just left.

I have holes in both arms.

FOUR vials?!

You promised two.

My veins gave up after three.

And so ensued a rigmarole that culminated in me trying bargaining with the blood guy.

Yes bargaining!

*"Dude, tell my doctor that you *had* to give me a cup of coffee in order to get that fourth draw out of me. Tell him there was no other way."*

I want you to know he didn't go for it.

... I'm going back to bed now.

<<<

Dr. Awesome's wise and helpful response?

"Aww. Poor pooh bear."

Ellie crawls back to bed to sulk and nurse her wounds. (Actually, she was secretly comforted by the vote of sympathy... but don't tell Dr. Awesome that.)

Squirrels at a Rave

Ellie – on slack, to MA: Dude, this is so you when you're at the computer!

Scandinavia

Ellie and Michael were talking about stuff and things, and Iceland came up in the conversation again. MA references something in Iceland as Scandinavian.

MA: can I say that? Iceland is Scandinavia?

Ellie: (opens mouth to speak)

MA: It is. I *know* it is. I'm right.

Ellie: It is – kinda. Sometimes it's called Scandinavia, but technically not. Scandinavia normally refers to Denmark, Norway and Sweden. (She's about to reference Bjork, but...)

MA: (hitting up Wikipedia, and reads aloud)

"While the term Scandinavia is commonly used for Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the term the Nordic countries is used unambiguously for Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland, including their associated territories (Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and the Åland

Islands).Scandinavia - Wikipedia<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scandinavia>

Ok, we were both right.

(Put's the above in slack. Ellie starts reading.)

MA: oh wait. No. no. you were right. (Pause). *Shit.*

* * *

Cover for Book 4: Sanctioned

Background. Yesterday we received the first draft of book 4's cover. Ellie had some things she wanted to change, but she was cranky about bunch of other stuff. MA by default became... "difficult", arguing with every change she suggested.

Mist was top of Ellie's list.

Ellie: We should see it without mist.

MA: No. I don't think we should take the mist out. I don't agree. At most, maybe 20% mist.

Ellie: ok. Well let's see it with zero and 20% then.

This morning covers come back:

MA, uploading final version of cover for this book to Slack and adds this note to the image where he is explaining how he was being obstinate for no good reason:

"You know you might have been wrong about the need to take the mist out of the original cover, when even the low res version of the image looks better than the high-res with mist. Not that I put my heels in the ground and whined about even trying it...or anything remotely like that... Wait, wait...yeah I did. Ellie was right ;-)"

Ellie: You know there's something very sexy about a man who can admit that he's wrong. Or that I'm right? ;-)

MA: ROFLMAO!!! *"Or that I'm right"*

Ellie: Yeah - either works for me.

Author Notes - Michael Anderle

July 5, 2017

First, THANK YOU for not only reading the book, but reading through Ellie's comments and making your way to the caboose end of the book.

My author notes!

If you read the last sentence in my author notes for Called (the last book in this series) then this makes more sense to you.

HERE is book 04!

(Just make sure *when* you leave a review, you ask Ellie, 'WHERE IS BOOK 05?' Because, I get that shit all the time and let me tell you, it's just *priceless*.)

[Ellie Edit – right. Thanks Michael!]

Sometimes it causes a nice reaction. Sometimes a grumpy reaction. Especially if we are releasing a book having had little sleep. I'm not suggesting it's a bad thing (it isn't) but occasionally, just occasionally, we might think something like - "I just bled on the page for three weeks, you read it in two hours on release day, and you won't give me 24 hours before you ask for the next book? *You're killing me here!*"

(Make sure you read that in Whiny Author Voice (or, Whiny British Accent Female Author Voice...take your pick.))

I can tell you the British female accent sounds much better than my own.

Now, Ellie KILLED me last author notes by remembering stories about this collaboration stuff and my author notes suffered in comparison. So, this time I took notes.

Mwuhahahahahaha.... I'm going to put a few down, carry some over from the website (I used them in the snippets) and generally make sure I give this the ol' college try to do a good job.

REMEMBER: You have to read Ellie's comments in a British accent in your mind, it's 10x funnier that way.

—

A snippet during a miscellaneous conversation before Sanctioned was underway.

Ellie: "You colonials."

Mike: "Who?"

Ellie: "Don't they call you colonials?"

Mike: "Not in the last two hundred fucking years..."

Ellie: something something mumble mumble frizzle snitch... colonials?

Mike: *(Looking at her blankly.)*

Ellie: You have to include my comeback.

Mike: I have no idea what you said, I was ignoring you.

Ellie: That's so mean... *(Starts mumbling and I figure she is just miffed she has to remember what she said, instead on relying on my failing memory.)*

Ellie: I remember - 'Aren't you all colonials?'

So... we now have a discussion about what the hell *colonial* means and we find out MY heritage is NOT colonial, but HERS IS!

BOOYAH, BABY! *(I received an evil eye for that one.)*

—

I'm reading some of the threads on Ell Leigh Clarke's Facebook page (of which I am an Admin, so I can post as her)

Facebook Post: "Now, we have a new cover to show everyone unless Anderle just fucked it up..."

I start looking to see who was writing, thinking that Ellie wrote that.

Me: thinking "Wow Ellie, that was harsh..." I find the person who wrote the comment.

Mike: "Oh, *I'm* the one who wrote that..."

—

Conversation goes off topic and delves into alcohol.

Mike: What is your normal poison?

Ellie: What, when I haven't been a teetotaler for a year and a half?

Mike: Yes.

Ellie: Well, Red wine and Tequila.

Mike: Oh...no problem.

— 5 minutes later....

Talking about wine, Ellie gets so excited and thinks about where she is in her cleanse diet:

Ellie: I GET TO DRINK AGAIN! Dr. Awesome swears I will be able to. And I can have CHOCOLATE as well... He says that he doesn't want me going through life without chocolate.

(She pauses a moment before adding:) I would have just been happy not feeling nauseous, and tired.

—

Now, I drink Coke. Too much Coke, I'm sure. Being a bit of a health... focused... individual, Ellie gives me shit all the time about drinking this beverage.

[Ellie Edit: OMfG – I so do not. I keep my mouth shut and only mention it when you've asked me about it. One time when you wanted to get healthy... yeah remember that one conversation?? And then when you were sick in London and I told you the Strepils that would help fight the infection. And hey, I didn't say anything about COKE. I just mentioned that one's immunity takes a hammering when one consumes sugar... of which there is a metric shit tonne in fizzy drinks. End of rant.]

While in Europe, I get sick.

She gives me shit about drinking more Coke, while in Europe. Now, I can't really talk (lost my voice) so you have to understand, I can't argue very well.

On the other side of an ocean and a continent, she is NOT feeling well herself. I ask a few questions about her own health, cause I'm a nice guy, and find out that milk is probably making her worse.

After a little delving, I find out it is rice milk and coconut milk.

She is upset because the diet is screwing with her ability to have milk... Which, I find out SHE ISN'T SUPPOSED TO HAVE!

So, I can't have Coke (sugar), but I find out she is having issues with milk on her 'get healthy diet'.

Then, Ellie notices me typing.

Ellie: You are NOT going to put these in your author notes??? Right?

I nod my head.

Ellie *YOU FUCKER!* (in her English Accent)

She then explains the REAL problem (since she went AWOL on her diet.)

Ellie: <Name redacted to protect the innocent> is starting to read these books; you are going to get me in trouble!

Mike: (Looking up from my note typing) *Who* is <name redacted to protect the innocent>?

Ellie: The Doctor!

(As you can see, I AM putting this story into the author notes. If Dr. Awesome does read these notes, now you know Ellie's pen name for you.)

—

Mike: You have definitely had more caffeine today.

Ellie: Why, what do you mean?

Mike: You are catching more stuff than you did yesterday

Ellie: *Thinking about what I just said* - What derogatory shit did you say yesterday?

(Michael starts laughing... a long while as she starts to eye him with evil intent.)

Ellie: ... Answer the question, you fucker!

[Ellie Edit: omg you make it sound like I swear all the fucking time!]

Now, I'll add the stuff from the snippets. MOST of you haven't seen this stuff. If you follow the FB Pages, you will get notified of the release of the book, and we start posting the beginning of the book early.

Author Notes From Snippet 01

FROM ELLIE >>> This is from a conversation I had with "Yoda" yesterday.

Ellie: I feel like I haven't had a weekend.

MA: that's because you wrote 20k words.

Ellie: I spent 8 hours watching Vampire Diaries from the beginning on Saturday.

MA: Ah cool. It's research.

Ellie: Uh huh. (Author doesn't mention it's the second time she's watching it through...Allows conversation to move on.)

Now, for Michael's turn at deciphering this snippet (meaning, I get to say my part...)

Ellie: I feel like I haven't had a weekend.

<<*Why? (she tells me) Ok, I understand (and I am sympathizing with my collaborator)*>>

MA: that's because you wrote 20k words.

Ellie: I spent 8 hours watching Vampire Diaries from the beginning on Saturday.

<< *Now, I'm thinking to myself "Vampires...we have vampires in The Kurtherian Gambit.*

How can I make her feel less guilty about taking the time to just enjoy herself a little?">>

MA: Ah cool. It's research.

Ellie: Uh huh. (Author doesn't mention it's the second time she's watching it through...Allows conversation to move on.)

<<*I'm thinking I've done her a good deed...Which apparently doesn't go unpunished as I have to read about it here...Perhaps she forgot I might be the one who loads the snippet? Wait until tomorrow Clarke. Wait until tomorrow...>>*

Author Notes from Snippet 02 – Otherwise known as *tomorrow*

Ellie: (Talking about her being in New Orleans) So, I'm learning all of this stuff on French (for her trip to New Orleans) and after an hour, it's a great sensation because your brain is laying down all of these new neural pathways...

Mike: (Interrupting) It's like a runner's high?

Ellie: Right...

Mike: Not like I run, either...

Ellie: (Shaking her head) Running is like an acquired taste...

Mike: Kinda like vegetables...

One more:

Ellie: Does a two finger gesture for something I must have said... Although I'm sure she was being overly sensitive as I'm always polite and respectful.

Mike: <Looking puzzled.>

Ellie: <Recognizes I'm not catching on> What is the American one finger gesture vs. the English two fingers? You don't know it?

Mike: <looking at her a moment> What, I have to learn Queen's English Finger Gestures now???

[Ellie Edit: dude, you totally called it King's English.]

As you can tell, collaborating with a British Author has its own version of challenges.

Author Notes from Snippet 03

Setup: By now, I know that Ellie is a (literal) genius. Physics, business, IQ God knows where. However...

(You knew there was a 'however', right?)

However, I was chatting about something and the conversation gets around to a piano she owns, or did own, or something and I find out that she is a very good piano player.

#SONOFABITCH – The best 'playing' I can do is (now) tell SIRI or ALEXA to "Hey

Alexa, play <Insert Band Here>”. I used to say hit the play button on the radio, but I don’t even do that, now.

Not that my, by now, mute ego was saying, “Seriously? Seriously? She fucking plays a goddamn piano as well? What the fuck else?” Or anything...

But it was, it totally was.

Anyway, we are having this conversation, my (now not) mute ego was bitching in the back of my mind as we carry on our talk when we have this snippet of conversation:

Ellie: (in her British Accent) The Cello is a completely other musical instrument, it opens <other mind paths or some logical and sciency stuff... my ego was already starting to whine and it was hard to listen to two voices at the same time>.

Mike: Are you going to tell me that you play multiple instruments?

SIGNIFICANT Pause.

Ellie: No, I wasn’t going to tell you that...

<My ego just rolled its eyes and fainted...>

Coming Soon

(And ask for it in the reviews...Ha!)

Book 05 of The Ascension Myth

FUCK!

Ok, I just realized that I have 1725 words to Ellie’s 1836. If I add one more snippet of information, my author notes will be longer than her’s.

Ellie: IT’S NOT A COMPETITION!

Me: Apparently, she doesn’t understand GUYS too well, as everything is a competition to us. Even if four of us are standing at the top of a pyramid, looking down 500 feet at a thousand angry aliens wanting to come up and kill us...

We would think about seeing who could pee down the side of the pyramid the farthest. We can’t help it, it IS genetic.

Blame the creator ;-)

And now, I have 1,843 words.