



## Before the Fall

*Sable Grace*

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Zach was once the Order of Ancients' most feared warrior, beating back the hounds of hell to protect the unsuspecting human race. But since he left the Order ten years ago, he's been living as a mortal . . . until now. The gates of the underworld are breaking open, and Zach is needed in the fight once again. But before he can answer his summons, there's one person he refuses to leave behind. Shanna may think Zach has a screw loose, spouting all this "hounds of hell" nonsense, but he has to get her to safety. The journey to the Order's headquarters is a dangerous one, and even a warrior like Zach might not be strong enough to keep the darkness at bay.

### Before the Fall Details

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Author : Sable Grace

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## From Reader Review Before the Fall for online ebook

### Vanessa theJeepDiva says

I know I say this often in novella reviews, but they really do work best for me when the couple knows each other from the beginning of the novella. That is the situation with Zach and Shanna. Although with a couple already knowing each other I am sometimes left with the feeling of they had to have ended their relationship for a reason why are they revisiting their past with a rekindle. That is not the case with this novella. The reason behind Shanna and Zach's break up is tied into the story and works well with the flow of this novella and the romantic development of the story.

Zach was one of Ares sentinels. An injury left it difficult for him to continue with this line of work thus he took an early retirement from the Order of Ancients. The gates of Hell have begun breaking open and the Hell bound creatures are beginning to escape. Ares has called Zach back to duty. Zach can't leave without Shanna. Shanna left Zach when he started telling her of a world filled with demons, lycans, vampires and numerous other evil beings. Now he has upped the ante by trying to protect her from these beings that she truly feels do not exist.

I really enjoyed reading the events that happened as the gates of Tartarus began to fall. Before the Fall can easily be read as a stand-alone. It can also be read before or after Ascension. Timeline wise, Before the Fall takes place the evening before Ascension begins. I highly recommend Grace's Dark Breed series. Ascension is the only full length novel in the series thus far, but I am highly anticipating Bedeviled which will be in bookstores in late December.

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### Jen Davis says

In this prequel to *Ascension*, we get a close-up look at what it was like when the walls fell between Hell and Earth. The story is told from the perspective of Zach, a retired soldier of the Order who is being called back into service to help deal with the slaughter to come. He's being summoned to meet with the rest of the army. But before he leaves, he knows he must find Shanna, the love of his life.

Zach tried to tell Shanna about his history months ago, but she thought he was crazy and ended their relationship. And convincing her to come with him takes some arm twisting. But it's only a matter of time before she is unable to deny what is right before her eyes. All the nightmare creatures Zach tried to tell her about are real, and they're hungry.

This is a fast paced short story with a lot of action. And it really does a good job filling in some of world-building in the Dark Breeds universe. We're treated to one good love scene and a pretty big cameo from Kyana, the main heroine of the series. Not bad for just 70 pages.

There was only one part that wasn't a win for me... the plot device that cements our couple together at the end. I would have believed in their future even without it and it felt a little trite. (\*\*sigh\*\*) I still liked the story though. It's worth picking up, even if you're not familiar with the series. 4 stars.

*\*ARC Provided by NetGalley*

## **Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says**

Originally posted at: <http://longandshortreviews.blogspot.c...>

At one time, he'd have given his life to save the world. Now, there's just one woman he's desperate to protect. A brave warrior, Zach had devoted his loyalty to the Order, and his life to humanity. When a run-in with a lychen leaves him less than capable of holding his own as a fierce warrior, he's forced to retire from service, to be called upon only as a last resort, so to speak.

Nevertheless, not all is lost; he soon meets a woman who gives him more reason to live than his duty to the Order ever did. Unfortunately, she's not so keen on the whole idea of demons, vampyres, and werewolves. His confession of such things sends her packing, taking his heart with her. Booze and loneliness become his only friends, that is, until the Order summons him and he's forced to take up his sword once again. Whether she likes it or not, Zach is determined to protect Shanna from the evil about to change the world as she knows it.

Shanna loved Zach, still does, despite the fact that he's obviously a lunatic. Vampyres? Lychen? He must be insane. Or so she thought. But when four-legged, flesh-hungry creatures start chasing after them, and beings that stink like rotting flesh come crawling out of the very ground beneath her feet, she's forced to reconsider Zach's warrior stories. Despite what common sense tells her—things such as these don't exist—her eyes aren't blind. Like it or not, she's going to have to accept the changes to come, as well as the determination of the man trying to save her life. She just hopes he can forgive her for walking away before. If there's a chance for their love re-ignite, she's ready to try again.

Before the Fall is a fast-paced story. There are few breathers, so to speak. The reader is hurled right into the midst of impending chaos, which makes for a very exciting ride.

I really liked Zach's sense of humor; he had me laughing at his sarcasm several times. Shanna is humorous herself. Together, they make a good demon kick-butt team.

If I had one complaint, it was that the story just got to the real meat of things, and then ended. It almost felt rushed for completion, when there was so much more that could have gone in to it. One thing I did notice, and this may be something allowed by the publisher, was some head-hopping. In some scenes, point-of-view shifts back and forth between the characters without any warning ahead of time, leaving you a little confused as to whose head you're in.

The author does a great job of painting the impending doom. Her visual stimulation succeeds in propelling the reader along on the characters' plight to safety. I thoroughly enjoyed the story. It's fast and furious and well written. I only wish it had lasted a little longer.

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## **Meredith says**

Excellent action scenes, very atmospheric and apocalypse-y.

Only giving this two stars because of the content of chapter 13.

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### **Kristin (MyBookishWays Reviews) says**

You may also read my review here: <http://www.mybookishways.com/2011/11/...>

I'm a huge fan of this series (see my Ascension review), and the upcoming 2nd novel, Bedeviled, is just as good (review to come), so when I got a chance to review the newest novella, I was eager to dive back into the world of the Dark Breed and the Order. It's less than 6 hours until the gates of Hell open up, unleashing all matter of beasties and supernatural nastiness on to an unsuspecting public. Zach, who left the Order of Ancients 10 years ago after a Lychen injury almost killed him, is called back to action, but he doesn't plan on getting anywhere without the woman he loves, Key West cop Shanna. They broke up a while back after Zach confided in her what he used to do for the Order, and her disbelief and refusal to trust him broke his heart. He refuses to leave her to a fate worse than death, and has to kidnap her and show her what lurks beneath to convince him that they must run for their lives. During their journey to St. Augustine, and the relative safety of the Order, Zach realizes that he's still very much in love with Shanna, and she realizes that her love for Zach never really died either. She proves to be a strong ally and when the gates begin to open, they'll have to battle some baddies before they can fall safely in one another's arms.

Before the Fall is a short, quick read at about 100 pages, and you certainly won't regret your time spent with it. As usual, the authors create a fun world filled with diabolical creatures, and the pacing is lightening fast as our heroes race against time. If you haven't discovered the Dark Breed series yet, this is a great primer, and will certainly whet your appetite for the awesome world that Sable Grace has created!

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### **Mel says**

Before the Fall is a prequel to the Dark Breed series. It tells the tale of Zach, a former member of Ares's Order of Ancients, and his ex-girlfriend, Shanna.

In the Dark Breed world, the gates of Hell have opened and now lychen, vampyres, demons and other creatures of myth are free to make Earth their home. Ascension, the first book in the series starts with the Dark Breeds already roaming the Earth. Before the Fall takes you through six hours leading up to the Fall.

Zach left the Order ten years ago due to an injury. He didn't expect to be called back in but when he gets the summons from Ares he knows that something major has happened. He does what he can to protect the only woman he ever loved even if she did leave him because she thought he was crazy. He kidnaps her and fights tooth-and-nail to get her to St. Augustine and relative safety.

This novella was action packed and I loved seeing the events that led up to the Fall. The only problem I really had with the story was the ending, I found it kinda silly and very far fetched but it is fantasy after all.

I look forward to Bedeviled and getting back into the Dark Breed world through Kyana's eyes. I give this book 3.5 stars.

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## Stacy says

BEFORE THE FALL was a neat short story about Zach and Shanna (they are not in ASCENSION) fighting their way to safety at the Orders Headquarters before the fall. They had a relationship that ended about 6 months before the events in BEFORE THE FALL but still loved each other. Zach is a retired warrior that served under the god Ares and Shanna is a police officer. Zach attempted to tell Shanna about what he was and the things that were in their world but she called him crazy and left him. When Zach was called back to duty he immediately went to her to take her with to safety. I enjoyed the story, I really liked book 1 ASCENSION so it was neat to see some other character views and experiences. This was a short quick read to get me ready for the release of BEDEVILED and I really liked Zach and Shanna and hope to see more of their story in future books as I would love to know how things are working out with their situation in the world after the fall. You can definitely read BEFORE THE FALL before or after reading ASCENSION so pick it up whenever.

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## Damian Southam says

Acceptance can never be found at the bottom of a bottle, only denial lives there; as Zach Merchant can attest, despite his best efforts to forget. Fate had seen Merchant as a soldier (Sentinel) for the Order of Ancients; a sentinel against the Dark Breeds (demons of various types including Vampires that feed on human blood), tasked with defense of the gods and the innocent. A prior guard now inactive, retired for near on the last ten years, his arm was savaged during an attack and nearly lost to infection.

Merchant becomes active again when he discovers the elderly couple living near his home coming under attack. Killing the vampire responsible, but not before he could change the death which occurred, his beacon requiring he call in lights up once again. Such events as these, plus his losses and past memories go some way towards explaining his current addiction, not that denial was ever going to be very effective.

As Merchant learns of upcoming events his immediate concern drifts to the lady cop Shanna; his still loved ex who walked out of his life six months earlier. Taking his heart with her after she responded drastically to the trust he'd put in her, when he'd revealed the truth of his past, Shanna had deemed him insane and walked away from their life together. True love never dies and Merchant's heart dictates he ensure her safety before returning to active duty.

With new evidence undeniably supporting Merchant's honesty, Shanna briefly considers what she lost by not believing him; all the while in shock at what she witnesses come of her life. Whilst the deadline is known to be a few hours away, the opening of Tartarus - Hell in mundane reference - is a process that continues to gather momentum as the minutes tick by and they near their destination. Whether they'll make it in time and in one piece, with all their parts still intact, becomes less certain despite their gaining ground.

A fast paced, suspenseful and detailed prequel, Before the Fall gives an up close and personal account of events during the lives of two ex lovers in the six or so hours leading up to the fall of Earth's mortal realm. One perspective is accustomed to and experienced in otherworldly horrors, and one previously disbelieving of otherworld existence. The quickly changing points of view between the fleeing couple make for a more involved experience of the fall; and the contrasts between their monologues and internal reflections adds flavour to the storyline.

I read book one (Ascension) before this prequel and whilst I cannot comment for a different order, I am glad I read the novel first; as I feel it added to the enjoyment found herein. As prequels go, Before the Fall adds to the environment encountered in successive novels. Whilst typical of novella lengths, the shortened scope in

no way detracts from the enjoyment. The countdown of time captivates whilst events tantalise and stimulate your imagination, creating an exceptionally well written and valuable asset to the series.

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### **Stacey says**

I loved this prequel. This short story tells about how the Fall came to be. The Fall has already happened by the time the first book in the Dark Breeds series "Ascension" begins. This short story doesn't feature the same characters as the regular series but it did help clarify things I found confusion in "Ascension". I wouldn't say this was a must read for the series but it certainly helped in my situation. Plus it is a fairly action packed and fully formed story. Zach gets word that the end of the world as we know it is coming and Hell is about ready to open up and unleash a lot of really bad creatures, including Dark Breeds, into the world. He grabs his ex-girlfriend and they are off...his main goal is to get her to relative safety. She actually broke up with him when he told her about the strange world he was from and in "Before The Fall" she begins to see it all unfold before her eyes. I gave this book a four star review solely because I wasn't 100% in love with the ending but I am sure most readers what find it a satisfying conclusion. It just felt like it wrapped up a little too sweetly for me. It almost has a 'happily ever after' and yet it ends in the destruction of the world. I was slightly perplexed. Currently this story is available for \$1.99 on Amazon and I would say it is worth that price, easily.

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### **Vannessa says**

This short little story is set before the first book in the Dark Breed series and tells the story of the night that Hell opened and all the dark breeds infiltrated the world.

Zach Merchant is an ex-member of the Order of the Ancients, the group of people who fight against the Dark Breeds. He left the Order 10 years ago after a fight with a Lychen, a werewolf by another name, left him with such severe injuries that he almost died.

One night, he receives his summons from the god Ares to return to battle, but before he does, he knows he has to save the one person he has ever loved, but the last time he tried to explain all this otherworldly-ness to her, she left him, thinking he was crazy. Will he be able to convince her to come with him and try to escape this time?

The journey to the portal for them both was not easy and Shanna finally starts to believe what is going on around and helps to fight back.

I did think the ending was a bit quick and jumped too far forward, but I guess with this short little novella, it has to. I just expected Zach to go back into the fight rather than go off with Shanna and do what they do!

I would like to thank the author, publisher and NetGalley for this free ARC.

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### **Amy Braun says**

Pretty good opening to what promises to be an interesting series, following the events of the Fall, the moments before the Dark Breed began to ascend to earth. Lots of interesting monsters in here, which

surprised me since the Greek Gods were also included. You won't see me complaining about that, but I did forget what this series was about when I bought it (been on my list for a while and I just pressed Buy Now). Still, the action and world-building seem pretty solid, so we'll see what happens next!

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