

## **WORKING TITLE: Angelus Custos**

**By Stephan Domingo | Batch 26 | Oct 3**

We start with Mikhail, a condescending and meddlesome guardian angel, looking down on his sleeping human, Gabo. Mikhail uses his powers to suddenly activate Gabo's phone alarm, causing Gabo to frantically wake up early for his job interview.

Mikhail and Gabo are actually twins, but Mikhail passed away soon after being born. That's why the Council of Angels assigned Mikhail to Gabo. Mikhail isn't the most responsible guardian angel. He is straight-up chaotic good. A guardian angel's goal is to be promoted to a higher rank. But with Mikhail not being given the opportunity to live an earthly life, he tends to "live vicariously" through Gabo. Mikhail prefers hanging out on earth, as opposed to guiding Gabo from heaven at the Cherubim Call Center. When the Handbook of Angels was given to Mikhail, he didn't bother reading it. Heaven doesn't forbid physically appearing to humans, but it is discouraged because it may interfere with free will. However, Mikhail manifests himself to Gabo every single day. As with all guardian angels, Mikhail can choose to appear to Gabo through any form. Mikhail prefers to appear to his brother as to how he would've looked had he lived.

On the other hand, Gabo is a geeky, nerdy fresh grad. This young man is straight-up lawful good. Because he was the only child growing up, his parents made sure to keep him "safe" as best as they could. This molded Gabo with the mindset that he must follow ALL the rules and laws of the world. Gabo learned from an early age that only he can see Mikhail. As a child, Gabo tried to explain his situation to their parents, but his parents just shrugged it off as an imaginary friend phase. Mikhail, on the other hand, cannot manifest himself to his own parents, given that he is not assigned to either of them.

But even if Mikhail is annoying as an angel, he constantly protects Gabo. Especially from the sly attacks of Gabo's tempter - a demon named Daemon. This guy doesn't show up much, but he always strikes when he sees weakness and tension between the two brothers.

Throughout their childhood, the brothers get into moral conflicts. When Gabo was 3, he always ate his veggies (to the point of throwing up) even if Mikhail said he didn't have to. When Gabo was 10, he didn't play with any of his friends after he got circumcised. He just stayed at home for a week even if Mikhail said he could still play wrestling on the bed. When Gabo was 17, he was a gentleman to Catherine, his prom date. When they danced, he made sure there was room for the Holy Spirit. Then Gabo took

Catherine straight home even if Mikhail said it was okay to lean in for an innocent kiss or two. Unfortunately, Gabo and Catherine continue to have unrequited love.

At the present day, Gabo is facing immense pressure to provide for his family. His dad, nearing retirement age, just got laid off while his mom is a housewife. Gabo's by the book personality turns off most of his would-be employers in the field of mass media. Mikhail condescendingly gives advice, saying Gabo should loosen up a bit. His former prom date but still not girlfriend, Catherine, echoes the same sentiments after they have lunch (but still not a date) together.

Gabo shrugs this advice off. As his family struggles with loan payments and daily expenses, Gabo gets rejected after several interviews and eventually goes into a "downward spiral." He starts drinking (but only two bottles), gets a tattoo (a small, minimalist sad face), and begins to (awkwardly) flirt with other girls.

Mikhail continues to intervene at every "act of rebellion." He tries his best to motivate his brother, but Mikhail's condescending personality further offends Gabo. The angel brings up the fact that Gabo has been *torpe* all these years. This strikes a nerve with Gabo and he finally snaps at Mikhail. Gabo then wrestles with his guardian angel on an empty street.

Suddenly, darkness followed by hellfire and brimstone envelopes the other side of the street. Daemon seizes the opportunity to tempt Gabo offering him a life of sure "financial stability" (as an online troll) and "love" (from many women) in exchange for his eternal allegiance to him.

Caught between this battle of heaven and hell, Gabo makes HIS will known. He commands both his Guardian Angel and Demon to leave him alone, so that he can think things through.

For the first time in his life, Gabo's mind is blank - a state of moral neutrality. With his mind at ease, Gabo aces an interview. He even asks Catherine out on a date. They finally make out. A start-up advertising agency decides to take him in. Gabo cheerfully tells the news to his parents, informing them that he can now finally help with household expenses.

Mikhail watches all of this unfold in heaven. At the Seraphim's Spinning Class, he has a chat with Rafaello, a higher-ranking Archangel. This leads to Mikhail realizing he might've been meddling too much in his younger brother's affairs.

Before Gabo starts work, he goes on a surfing trip with Catherine to celebrate. Unfortunately, a freak surfing accident leaves Gabo bloody and unconscious on the beach. As Mikhail is about to swoop down to revive his dying brother, a bright light from above beckons the angel. The council of Seraphims, Cherubims, and Ophanims informs Mikhail that his mission is done and that he will now be promoted to Associate Archangel. Mikhail pleads with the council telling them that he is declining the promotion. He can't let his earthly parents lose another child. The council berates the angel. One cannot *just* change the will of God. In a fit of desperation and defiance, Mikhail storms out of the council room in heaven to save his brother on earth.

Mikhail swoops down to the hospital where Gabo is being treated and confronts Azrael, the just but benevolent Angel of Death. Azrael brings up the Guardian Angel Handbook which states that in order for a life and death decision to be overturned among angels, a decision by combat must take place. The two fight all throughout heaven, purgatory, and hell's gates. We even see Daemon cheering *against* Mikhail. At first, Mikhail's low-level powers are no match for Azrael, but Mikhail's intensive knowledge of video games and super hero movies helps him imagine powers. The match ends in a draw. The Angel of Death, having deemed Mikhail's cause as worthy, gives way to the guardian angel.

Gabo then wakes up in a limbo-like dream sequence (similar to the place where Harry Potter and Dumbledore talk to each other). Mikhail shares the news that he will lose his promotion and will need to be given a more difficult role. He will now be assigned to a neophyte mayor who has yet to be corrupted by the government.

Gabo chides Mikhail for being so stubborn that even God had to change His will. Gabo also makes his own revelation. Daemon had talked to him in an earlier dream. The demon was offering to revive Gabo in exchange for his soul. Gabo said he also declined the demon's offer and started praying the Our Father when the demon wouldn't go away.

Mikhail says a new angel will be taking over his position, but it is likely this new angel won't physically appear to Gabo. The two brothers say goodbye to each other. The touch of an angel revives Gabo and he finally wakes up in the hospital, surrounded by Catherine and his worried parents. He is saddened when he realizes he can no longer see Mikhail.

As he recovers in the hospital and gets ready to go home, his mom and dad are scandalized upon realizing that Gabo has a tattoo. Gabo realizes his sad smiley tattoo has changed: it's now an angel that looks like Mikhail.