

**INFINITY
PLUS ONE
BY
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The man sat there dressed in a tunic. In front of him candles were laid out set-up in a superstitious symbol, that being the pentagram. The pentagram had been drawn up and wherever one line met another a candle had been placed. The man sat cross-legged, the tunic draped across his legs and spilled out onto the floor. He was chanting something, it was gibberish but other-worldly beings always paid attention wherever gibberish was spoken aloud. It seemed the other-worldly beings could discern true meaning from gibberish for they looked beyond that of the actual language spoken and looked into the heart of the speaker. Discovering their intentions and communicating back in turn with their own gibberish language. So the man spoke, “Elturade insambient dies daforme.” For this the man had wished to say that he wished to communicate with the prince of darkness; Satan. The prince of darkness happened to have nothing better to do with himself at that particular moment and so shared his attendance. His attendance was confirmed by the sight of all the candles blowing out in an instant. The prince of darkness was at that the bearer of darkness and loathed all things that were light. Even fire, contrary to popular belief, he despised. The man spoke once more in his gibberish, “Die certain elle e masker qua des deforme.” Which for the speaker meant, ‘I thank thee for gracing the lowliest I with your presence but I have a proposition for thee.’ The prince of darkness loved propositions and had been known to take all deals that were offered to him as he would twist them and their meanings to meet his own ends. This was always easy as all his customers had to deal with Satan in the gibberish language and in such a language things could easily be manipulated as best fitted Satan. “Dies d’accord morai men disemborde el la d’orient.” Had Satan heard the man correctly? Did this man really want this? “Dies d’accord morai men disemborde el la d’orient.” The man did want this for he repeated himself. If Satan could feel anything but hatred and contempt he would surely have felt happiness and maybe even glee at that moment. The man was offering his soul in exchange to become Satan. So what in effect was being offered to Satan was a mortal

vessel in which to embody himself on Earth. What twist in luck this was for the prince of darkness, a way out of his demonic enslavement as the doer of evil to be something more, or less depending on which way you looked at it. The thing that Satan knew about being human was that the potential was limitless. So Satan lived up to his own namesake and fulfilled the nameless man's deal.

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Lois sat in attendance in the lecture hall. Other students sat around him as the professor at the front of the room delivered his carefully prepared notes. “ ‘Christianity has died many times and risen again; for it had a God who knew the way out of the grave.’ Said G.K Chesterson. When we look further back to Nietzsche’s statement that ‘God is dead.’ We must take into account that Nietzsche was never a true believer in God but rather viewed the whole religious phenomenon externally. Being an outsider of the entire phenomenon he could never truly grasp the driving force behind it, that being the hope and the idea that there is justified order to the universe. People, it seems, cannot function without the idea of cosmic order and so lacking any suitable replacement for God they eventually revived the concept instead of facing the alternative of confronting a chaotic and disordered universe. Nietzsche never meant that God was dead in a literal aspect, he was referring to people’s hope and belief in God and the death of religious culture itself.” The professor’s words were jumbled as he went back and forth through different sources attempting to grasp some hidden idea that had been missed by previous philosophers and great thinkers alike. The man was a mess. On his plain white shirt either a custard or mustard spill lay stained on what would otherwise be a professional appearance. Lois supposed that when one walked, lived and breathed such concepts as this one did a suitable lack of presentation was to be expected. This man was no product of professional hype; this was a man who had fully equated himself with the ideas he sought to deliver. Unfortunately most of the

students within the lecture hall were not and would never be on the same page as the man at the front of the room dedicating his life to ideas as many other philosophers and thinkers had in the past, ignoring the rules of reality and social dynamics so that he could once again comb over theories and thoughts searching for the vital missing piece in theory in which others had missed. In one way, Lois thought, the entourage of philosophers and thinkers were attempting to construct some massive jigsaw puzzle that would never be completed because each step of the process of assembling the puzzle would grow larger in size and many more pieces would be found waiting to be placed in the larger picture. “To look what Nietzsche meant we must consider that he was not in fact making any substantial philosophical claim but rather inserting his own social commentary of Germany before the rise of the Nazi party. The people had been beaten down after the First World War and the situation for them was that of an escalating depression. Hope for a brighter future remained unseen. God seemed to be nowhere, and for that period of time for the German people God truly was dead. But elsewhere through out the world God was alive and well as other continents and countries continued to flourish.” Lois’s attention was diverted by a fly settling on the student in front’s head. The woman remained unconscious of the insect but Lois on the other hand was caught up in the distraction. The small creature rubbed its little legs together and Lois knew, if he were able to access a microscope to view the creature’s activities closer. The insect would be throwing up its own stomach acids which would in turn be sucked back up into its stomach after it had broken down some of her hair to form a substantial meal. The woman in front of Lois moved her arm and brushed at the back of her hair sending the fly to gain a meal through its bizarre dining habits elsewhere. Lois tuned back into the lecturer’s speech, “Coming now to present day, although the church has an incredible amount of influence in the world we can see through out our art and other endeavours our main influence has become that of science and social dynamics. No longer do we paint visions of

heaven on top of our cathedrals. Correction, they still do that sort of thing but it is no longer the centrepiece of the artistic world. Instead there lies a fascination with the morbid and disgraceful elements of society. A general view is accepted that this is the one life we have and so we look for instant gratification within it. We no longer save our morals and ethics to build a more rewarding afterlife. Our hope for the afterlife has been demolished through the implementation of science and scientific theory. Hope is gone and so is God, such is the reflection of the mind in our art. In Dante's *Inferno* inscribed above the walls of hell is the phrase; 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter.' And what is hell but the absence of hope? Let me welcome you all, ladies and gentlemen, to hell." That was little full on, Lois thought to himself. The lecturer hurriedly picked up all of his assorted documents and made a quick exit. There was somewhere else he needed to be. Perhaps amongst his books where he could socialise with his deceased colleagues. Lois remained seated while his fellow students made their own exit following the lecturer's lead. It was then that it started for Lois. The voices, those menacing distorted voices holding accusation in their tone. They were all screaming at him. 'We know who you are boy. We know what you did.' Lois looked around, the remaining students were unperturbed as they exited the lecture hall. To all things apparent, Lois was the only one whom could hear these things that were being said. 'We know who you are. We know who you are.' The voices danced around him as he remained seated, this had a dizzying effect upon Lois who raised his hand to his forehead to massage his temples as if to soothe an aching head. A part of Lois came to the immediate conclusion that these were demons that were pestering him. He made move to open his mouth to voice out for them to leave him be but gave pause in consideration that if any were to hear him they would judge him mad. So instead of voicing his words out loud he gave rise to his inner voice, as he would in prayer, "Well who am I then?"

They replied in turn, “You, you’re the one that killed God.” And then in a taunt they began to repeat themselves over and over again, “God-killer, God-killer, God-killer.”

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What is a drug to have such intoxicating effects upon the person whom uses it? Just a chemical reaction, something that affects the body and the mind to give way to different pleasurable side effects. I wish this were the case for the world would be a lot simpler if it were. In actuality what a drug really is a portal, or link-way, to another type of being. The being feeds off the knowledge and abilities of the user and takes them for their own. The feeding process, in turn, delivers various pleasurable side effects. The being obtains the skills of the user. In essence it is an exchange: skills and abilities for pleasure. Each drug has their own embodiment or personification. To blend in among the human populace they appear as human, but they are not human. Ever since the drug has been in use the being has been in existence, a different being for each drug. That being’s presence emits the same intoxicating effects as the drugs themselves. At that very moment heroin’s embodiment lay lounged in her mansion. The mansion was filled with exquisite sculpture displaying naked human bodies in a fixed position writhing up against one another. Heroin lay lounged on a multitude of cushions in the main room, or entrance hall to the mansion. People clung to Heroin and would not let go of her, so surrounding Heroin there were people smacked out of their brains lounging about the area being fed off and for compensation receiving their pleasure. Conversations discussing the pleasures of being in Heroin’s presence abounded throughout the room.

“It’s like floating on air.” Not that the conversations made much sense, but sometimes every so often you would find a couple of people discussing some obscure topic.

“If we’re really going to be anything more than human we have to ascend like we did eons beforehand.”

“Yes but if you abscond the thought and constrictions of time itself there is no measure for time. It’s all one thing.”

“Different people are stuck in different time periods; I would say I’m more of an American Western.”

“No that’s genres; people are stuck in different genres acting out their different parts.”

Heroin, the personification of the drug, was dressed in rags giving her an ambiguous sexual identity. But for certain she was a she; no male could make mere rags appear as seductive as she. She lazed on her pile of cushions and wept tears of joy. All those in use of the drug through-out the world, all of their talents and eccentricities were feeding into her at that moment. The potential of millions, all composed into one being. And yet even with all that unharnessed talent at her fingertips Heroin chose to lay there. She was supported by those that had found her; they had chased the dragon and found her. In offering to be in her presence they gave up all of their material possessions so they could do as a snake does with the sun, being content to bathe in her presence. All was well in the world, Heroin craned her neck in a circular motion, drawing invisible circles in the air. Over and over again she snapped her neck straight sensing another’s presence at the front door of the mansion which led into the main hall which she now held occupation there of. The large doors; two of them three metres in height and one and half meters in width bounced open. Entering the doors was a man in a black suit wearing dark sunglasses with a perfected muscular frame. Surrounding the man was his own entourage of similarly clothed males and females all bearing shotguns or pistols in their hands.

“Heroin! We need to talk,” his words were full of a powerful confidence that had to be obeyed.

“And talk we will Cocaine but why the sudden intrusion, would not a phone call of sufficed?” Heroin clicked her fingers as if to some music that was unheard. Her own entourage all looked to her when she clicked her fingers, some of them crawled to her but most stayed where they lay. Heroin realised that her own soldiers were no match for Cocaine’s, she sighed in conceit that there would be no fight between the two today.

“Why are you stealing all of my patrons?”

“Steal? I did not realise that we had any choice of how to direct the humans and their preferences.”

“You know what I mean.”

“I have no say in the trend of the current fashion. What is fashionable today is tomorrow’s joke of ridicule. Those that stay faithful to us through out these trends we come to appreciate all the more.”

“I have no time for talks of trends and fashions. Kill them, kill them all but leave Heroin be.” There was a truce between the different drugs that they would not destroy one another, but that didn’t account for harming them through their users. Cocaine’s entourage readied their weapons, pointing them at Heroin’s lazy force lay sprawled and through out the main hall. There was no fight, just a slaughter. Heroin’s own people lay there dazed as Cocaine’s walked around shoving guns in their faces and pulling the triggers of their weapons. The mess was incredible, all Heroin could do was watch as the slaughter continued. Her facial expression did not change, always remaining a serene calm. How could she remain so calm amidst the slaughter? After all of her own people had been killed her plan revealed itself. Those that had once slaughtered under Cocaine’s powerful; influence succumbed to Heroin’s own sweet song. They put down their weapons and began to laze on the floor, savouring the sweet indulgence that Heroin offered in her feeding process. “You’ve done it, you’ve done it again.”

“Well you keep on bringing them to me.” Heroin pointed to all the skeletons, decomposing bodies and newly killed that surrounded the area. “Every single day Cocaine, I thought you would have learnt by now. Although I do enjoy the entertainment, the same thing repeated over and over again does tend to grow dull. You do know the definition of madness; repeating the same task over and over again but expecting different results.”

“Damn you Heroin, damn you. People get up and come with me.” Cocaine’s former entourage, now belonging to Heroin looked to Cocaine from behind glazed eyes.

“Tut, tut Cocaine. You know what I’m like, take them away from me now and it’s you who they’ll be turning their weapons against.” Cocaine muttered underneath his breath, turned about face and exited Heroin’s mansion. No doubt he would return on the morrow after finding another entourage to do his bidding. He truly was mad, but Heroin knew that he was mad with power which was perfectly understandable. Being a step below God would do that to people.

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Upon his initial hearing of the voices Lois had sought sanctuary but they had persisted in following him everywhere he went. So instead he sought a different type of sanctuary, one that was free of judgment. A place where he wouldn’t be called mad for the things that he heard. Ironically though the very same place that was free of judgment for him happened to be the institution of judgment. A catholic church. Inside the church constructed in gothic architecture Lois made his way to a confessional box. Once inside Lois began to state his case.

“Father I’m hearing things.”

“The voice of God does tend to pierce through all things.” The unseen priest responded.

“No I don’t think this is the voice of God. There are many different voices, but they all say the same thing.”

“Shall I call a madhouse or is this some sort of childish prank?”

The priest had to adapt his role to the modern world as did everyone who lived in it. Where once a madman may have come in saying that God was instructing him to kill, the priest may have replied, ‘then kill.’ Today he would direct them to the doctor. It is a wonder how many referrals have been made from the priest to a local psychiatrist or psychologist. Is there really any difference from the catholic priest and the modern priest of science; the psychiatrist. I suppose the psychiatrist offers a range of medicine; miracle pills and the works. Did not the priest offer such relics as faith healing to maintain past man’s temperament. Both claim to hold some sort of substantial answer, but when you begin to peel back the charades of their fallacy you find that they have no answer at all. They’re all just following in dead men’s footsteps. Dead men who thought they all had the answer.

“This is no prank. The voices they’re telling me that I’ve killed God.”

“Killed God?”

“Yes. That’s what I said.”

“God cannot die he is immortal. To even conceive of such a concept is ludicrous. How could you, or anyone for that matter kill the unkillable? The whole line of thinking is unthinkable.”

“But I’m not thinking it, I’m hearing it.”

“Where are you getting this information from? From voices? You must be mad, I’m calling the authorities.” The priest made to exit out of the confession box but was stopped short by Lois.

“Listen I know this is mad and I came to you in confidence so that you might help me out in some way.”

“I am going to help you; I’m going to help you by getting you professional help.”

“What’s so crazy about it then? Because it’s not written down on a piece of paper like your good book it’s obviously the voice of unreason. If I wrote it all down and then said here is what I think. This is what I’m experiencing then it would be less mad.”

“No you’d still be mad because you’d be the one experiencing it and that is what would make you mad.”

Lois was now even more confused than when he came in. “Then I can’t win.” Lois ran out of the confession box before the priest had a chance to hand him over to some other all knowing authority.

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It was a pity that it had come to this in heaven. Where two angels had to hide amongst the rubble of their former kingdom so that they could survive. It was rubble at that; collapsed stone and structure made way for a small enclave where the two angels, Raphael and Antonio, had sought their sanctuary.

“It seems we are among the last my brother.”

“Do not say that when you don’t know it to be true.” Even Antonio knew Raphael’s former statement to be true, he just didn’t appreciate it being voiced aloud. “Do you remember what it was like before Lucifer proclaimed war?”

“I remember the speeches he gave in not becoming servants to the human beings. About how we should continue to do as we had before man ever came into the equation.”

“Well it couldn’t always be an eternity of playing harps and sitting on clouds now could it, what would be the purpose in that?”

“We’ve had this discussion before,” Raphael said, “You were on God’s side, I was on Lucifers’. None of that matters anymore.”

“Well you were the one who brought it up. Harps and clouds for all eternity, bollocks to that!”

“It wasn’t about that, it was about being second-class citizens to the human beings. All you and all of the other Godlings never saw what Lucifer’s point was about. You all were convinced that we were in some sort of deluded vision of playing the harps in the clouds for all eternity.”

“Well that’s what it was like, before the humans came along.”

“What about the hunting of demons. That was fine sport. If we were to do as God commanded we would have had to let them run rampant to allow the humans free choice. Satan and his ilk should never have been allowed to roam so freely.”

“It was as God commanded. It was how the war was supposed to play out in the minds of men.”

“I always found it funny that. We were the perfection of all that was light. Lucifer, the most powerful amongst us was as powerful as God in his light. Satan and the demons were all that was dark, Satan himself matched God’s own darkness. And man was like God in his equal measure of darkness and light. So to discover which was more prevalent we were to each guide man towards our own way. But Lucifer was too bright and in measurement of light greater than God himself because he lacked the darkness that God held within itself.”

“What’s so funny about that?”

“Well that God created a being greater than itself?”

“That’s not true, God maintained the perfect balance. Lucifer and Satan although powerful in their retrospective ways did not. The only really funny thing was how it all played out. With all of us angels fighting amongst ourselves it allowed the demons to lead men into a series of wars, allowing them to pursue their darker urges with guidance, but having no guidance to pursue their way of light.”

“Well that’s not exactly true is it?”

“What isn’t true?”

“Well the angels who were cast out and became human on Earth did end up showing some positive tones in humanity. They shed a bit of light that allowed some of the humans to pursue a path in the light.”

“Yes but not as it should have been. Not how God planned it out to be.”

“You discredit the old dog too much, how do you know that what occurred wasn’t his plan all along?”

“That is a possibility. There is always that possibility...”

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As Lois exited the church his path was intersected by a woman. It was impossible to guess the woman’s age although she appeared youthful; she had dark hair and green eyes or were they blue? The shade of her eye colour seemed to be in a constant flocculation between different hues depending on what angle you looked at them from.

“Church not offering you the comfort you expected boy?” she asked.

Lois snapped out of his confused state that the church had left him in and engaged in the conversation. “No it didn’t offer me any comfort at all.”

“Damn thing never did and never will. People come to it seeking salvation when they’re the very ones doing the condemning. An institution of guilt that’s all it ever was and ever will be.”

“I suppose but without guilt we’d be in a lot worse state of affairs than we could be now.”

The woman smiled at Lois knowingly, “True that. But when old Jesus went about his philosophical lecturing in ethics and morals I doubt that he ever expected an institution like this to be raised in his name. Especially because of the double purpose it serves in the minds and hearts of men.”

“What double purpose is that?”

“To serve as an example to the masses of course. All Jesus ever wanted was an equaler and fairer world. The aristocracy at the time, the Romans and Jewish rabbis well they’d have a lot to lose from Jesus’ vision being fulfilled. So what did they do?”

“They crucified him.”

“Exactly right. They crucified him. They nailed him to the cross and left him to die. They let him serve as an example to all those would be righteous people that this is what happens when you try to do good. That’s the only reason why Christianity has not been dismissed through out time. Why it has been allowed to become what it is today. To act as an example of Jesus’ failed rebellion against the establishment. To tell the people that if any one of them stands up demanding an equaler and fairer world they’ll be hung and gutted for it.”

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Charles and Donna sat opposite each other in the comfort of their lounge chairs. Charles a man of forty years with his hair faded white and growing a healthy beard. He was overweight, but not excessively. He wore a dark grey shirt accompanied with black suit pants. The top button of his shirt was left undone to allow for cool air to ventilate his upper body so that he did not sweat up and cause a stench. Donna wore all white; white long skirt with a simple plain white t-shirt, she was blonde and looked as if she belonged in a breath mint commercial. But behind that virginal white lay a mind and experience that would make a laughing stock of such an association.

“The East is grower larger to the point where the West is growing beneath them.” Donna said.

“Are you trying to arouse me sexually to put me off guard?” Charles replied accusatively.

“Well I never, how would I do that?”

“The suggestion to grow beneath. Don’t think that little douse would slip past my mind’s eye.”

“Well you can’t hurt a gal for trying. Most people say a way to a man’s heart is through his stomach, I prefer to think of it through the pants.”

“I have hurt both women and men in the past for attempting such notoriously simple spells, now don’t you think you’re any different. But alas I would find informative to hear your current take on the Eastern Western conflict.”

“Well all you have to do is open...”

“Don’t tell me to open my mind Donna, I am in no way, shape or form going to be hypnotised by your suggestive techniques. Like a snake you are; like a snake.” The conversation between the two mages was always like this. One catching the other’s trapping of words and unravelling it before it could take effect on the mind. You see real magic is as simple as a sentence. A spell is in fact a spell because it requires spelling. Real magic is words. Words. We use them to communicate with one another but there are some out there that use words like a hypnotist. Hypnotising others with the slender strokes of their tongue. Convincing others to do as they command without even realising why they’re doing it. Some may use a forceful tone, others a gentler one. But whatever the case the hypnotist speaks to the subconscious of the other’s mind. The words ferment creating meaning in the mind and bubble up in the conscious mind to produce actions and/or other desired effects. Many slaves have been created in this way, others have just been sent to sleep. But for the talented mage with his words the human race is just a tree producing plentiful fruit waiting to be picked. When two mages such as Donna and Charles begin to discuss any topic, a battle occurs. Each one fighting to retain ownership of their own mind.

“Oh pish posh as if you’re any better than I. You just attempte4d to fix me to my reptilian mind so that I wouldn’t be able to comprehend your next strike.”

“Yes I suppose we best both take everything the other says with a grain of salt.”

“Now you’re giving me honesty so that I succumb to the habit of agreeing with you.”

“At this rate we’ll never get anywhere,” Charles sighed, “Now tell me your take on the Eastern Western conflict.”

“I will but not because you’re telling me to.”

“Keep on telling your self that,” Charles chuckled. Donna got up and made to exit the room but Charles stopped her, “It was jest. Jest, all in jest.”

“There you go again, playing another card in the deck of lies. The easiest way to dismiss something is to call it a joke.”

“Then what shall we do.?”

As if their minds worked together simultaneously they came to the same conclusion speaking it aloud, their voices a reflection of the other, “We shall go see Heroin. Under her effects we will not be able to concentrate enough to create our word spells.” It was difficult to ascertain which of the two had suggested the line of thinking and which had succumbed to the other. Or was it just one of those things where great minds thought alike?

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“I’m sorry I never caught your name.” Lois told the nameless woman apologetically.

“That’s because I never told it to you. And there’s a reason for that.” Still outside the church the woman began walking down the street knowing that Lois would follow her. And he did, with a brisk jog he caught up to her footing and then step in step they walked together continuing to converse.

“Oh really and what reason would that be.”

“Because I don’t have one. Or I do not have a single one. I go by many; hundreds, thousands and even millions. There has not been a name I have not gone by in days past.”

“I’m not sure I follow you, what are you going on about?”

“I suppose the technical name for one such as I is ghost. I’m not dead really, I haven’t actually died yet and am just as alive as you if not more so. It’s just that I have no name that I use all the time, I use different ones all the time to avoid being attached to any single one. Doing this gives me certain aspects that wouldn’t work if I didn’t do this.”

“Like what?”

“Well it’s different; each name holds a different power to be accessed. There are certain personality traits that belong to each name. By using different names I can change personalities like one changes their clothes.”

“Why would you want to do that?”

“Different personalities work better in different situations. Some situations call for a hero, some call for a lament. Whatever situation I enter I am prepared for.”

“Forgive me but that’s quite schizophrenic of you.”

“I take that as a compliment so there’s no need to be forgiven. You see unlike others a schizophrenic is not bound by the same rules as the regular person.”

“Yeah they get a disability allowance...”

“No it’s not that at all. They’re not bound by the rules of reality like others are. There was this famous case of a schizophrenic who had split personalities. One of these personalities had cancer, the other did not. If I told you my real age for example I would wither away and die as your mind attempted to grasp the fact of my actual age, your understandings of me would attach themselves to my body and cause it to age at such a rapid rate that I would turn to dust.”

“Really?” Lois arched an eyebrow, “How old are you then?”

“I’m not going to tell you that, especially after I just explained what would happen if I did.”

“Okay but I’m not going to believe you.”

“You don’t have to; come on there’s somewhere that I want to take you where ghosts and obscurities idle away beneath even underground circles. Circles that go beyond simple understandings and are just known as the occult.”

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Raphael and Antonio were still in residence of the rubble of their former kingdom. Still talking of times past. “The creation of leviathan do you think that was part of God’s plan too?” Antonio asked.

“Of course it was, especially originally. Even afterwards it was still part of the plan, it’s just that none of us except for God himself knew what the plan was. Maybe Michael knew, but apart from him no-one else.”

“The sword created for the purposes of quelling Lucifer’s rebellion. The sword that could destroy angels...”

“... by making them human.” Raphael finished Antonio’s explanation of the artefact. “The sword became the centrepiece of the war. Whichever side wielded the sword was seen as the side as winning.”

“It wasn’t just the centrepiece of the war. It became the centrepiece of everything.”

“Do you think that’s what did it? What killed God?”

“No I don’t think so. Leviathan was created to slay angels; I doubt it would have any effect on God. Whatever did it in the end was between Lucifer and God. Only the two of them know how it happened and one of them is dead and the other is now human and dying.”

“Yes but the righteous and unrighteous humans are bound in the cycle of death and rebirth. Reincarnation; only the fence sitters know real death.”

“Enough talk of death, he may be listening.”

“Do you think that was God’s plan for it to be the way it’s becoming. Death having the final laugh at us all?”

Antonio pondered that, “It might be deserving. We did use to tease him before the war. Who were we as immortals to fear death?” Antonio let out a cynical laugh, “But now we’re learning. Learning all too quickly.”

“It was fitting that Lucifer be made human after kicking up about the angels becoming second-class citizens to the humans. I doubt that he would hold the point of view being a human now. Death having the final laugh at us all would be in accordance with what happened with Lucifer. That same ironic cosmic order being fulfilled in a dark all-powerful manner.”

“Michael was the instrument of Lucifer’s demise we know that much. After God died we all sensed it, heard and felt it. Michael went insane wrestling leviathan from Lucifer’s clutches and then struck him down. After that Michael was a babbling mess. Just kept on crying and repeating it over and over again; ‘it’s gone, it’s gone’.”

“Yes what happened to Michael was what bound us all together again. The tragedy of seeing one of us like that. We all came back together; rebels and godlings alike.”

“Yes well Michael’s love for God was second only to...”

“... Lucifers’.” Raphael’s pronouncement of his name almost brought them both to tears. Whatever had caused God’s death. Whatever Michael had felt was always going to be second to what Lucifer felt. And Lucifer had been, somehow, the cause of it.

“What sort of twisted plan is it that includes your own death at the hands of the one who loved you most? Nobody wins and nothing makes sense.”

“Nobody wins and nothing makes sense.” Raphael repeated Antonio’s last words.

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Lois followed the ghost into what appeared to be a plain cottage pub. He did not question as to the obvious location of the place. That such an establishment could contain wonders and mysteries that many, if not all, would simply overlook. Inside was no different from any other venue and the ghost began pointing to different tables holding different people and explained their purpose and role. “Over there you’ll find other ghosts like myself; sharing their adventures, discussing new names that have been introduced over time and the different characteristics that each name holds.” Lois nodded to them all but they paid him no attention. “And over there,” the ghost pointed to another table full of people, “You’ll find other humans who have unwittingly stumbled upon the occult circles. Mainly paranoids and delusionals but every so often one of them decides to take the leap into the unknown and become one of us.” Pointing to a new table, “There you’ll find the mages. Those that have made a science of the English language, they use their words as an instrument to hypnotise and create prisms of worlds that capture the minds of the unsuspecting. If I were you I would avoid all interaction with those types otherwise you’ll end up like a zombie slave.” Then the ghost pointed to a solitude figure drinking in the corner alone. “And that right there is our resident angel Sammael. Once an angel, now a human...” the ghost spoke further but Lois paid her no attention as he found himself walking over to the solitude figure drinking by him self. Lois, it appeared, was under some sort of spell. He was automated by something he did not understand as he took a seat opposite Sammael.

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Heroin was now outside lying on the warm paved cement that had been heated by the sun. Flies flew around her head and every so often landed on her body, before being shoed away by her breath. Ants crawled on the ground and she watched them race around on the ground in positive wonder. They moved so quickly given their proportionate body size, and where exactly did they have to go? There were no ant hills in her immediate vicinity so she guessed that these particular ants had wandered away from their homes. They were outcasts or the like; making their own desperate spree of movement so they did not have to face the reality of their exile. They were running away, desperately in search of a new home. A home that couldn't be found. Heroin looked in similar mysterious puzzlement at her own 'clinger-ons'. Those that bathed in her aura, and those that she fed off. These too, like the ants, had been exiles from their original homes and who now found residence in her vicinity. Was she feeding off the ants too; offering them that feeling of deep relaxation and emancipation? If so she was not feeding off their talents as she did with humans, these creatures were getting a free ride. When it came upon her, it came on her slowly. All the esoteric knowledge that she had received from her feeding habits locked together in a mathematical equation, through that equation formed a countdown timer. As to that timer's purpose Heroin voiced out her conclusion aloud, "We are just about to witness the awakening of Lucifer in his human form."

* * *

They didn't say anything at the start. Just sat there looking one another over for a great deal of time. Not a word passed by either Lois' or Sammaels' lips. Sammael just kept on drinking the beer in front of him and Lois just stared at the man who used to be an angel. Lois looked as if he were studying some rare artefact in a museum, not saying anything, just taking it all in. Drinking it in like a tourist.

“What the hell are you staring at!?” Sammael snapped.

“An angel I was told,” Lois responded sheepishly.

“Well ain’t that the truth,” Sammael took another long swig of his beer and slammed it back down, “What were you expecting? Mary bloody Poppins?”

“No but not a bitter old man.”

Sammael laughed whole heartedly, “You’d be bitter too if you were once a creature of grace thrown down to Earth to live amongst the vermin by the cursed blade Leviathan.” Leviathan. The word shook in Lois’ mind. Leviathan. Leviathan. The word repeated itself and dredged up memories not even Lois knew were there.

Lois saw himself, a former self walking through white marble halls, fountains to either side of a paved footpath with flowing rivers of crystal clear water. The hall ascended to a plateau and it was towards that that Lois saw himself walking towards. In his hands was a sword, the sword remained on fire though there was no visible reason that this should be so. He was walking towards a light that stood on top of the plateau. The light, like a globe did not only shine forth, but cast shadows as well. It was a kaleidoscope giving off a variety of prints; both shadows and light and different shapes. Sometimes simple shapes like circles and squares and at other times displaying intricate patterns with a mass of curves that were indescribable by simple text. They had to be seen to be believed. Lois saw himself, his former self, begin to voice words as he grew closer to the source of light and shadow.

“Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.” Lois saw himself giving a bow as the memory replayed itself in his mind’s eye. “Forgive the formalities but I have no other way in which to initiate this interaction being taught no other way. But given the circumstances I should mark this as the day that a new name be given to you. Shadow caster, is that appropriate? No I have a

better one. How about tainted one? I like that. From hence forth I shall call thee but what thou art. Tainted one.”

The globe of shadows and light responded to this, the voice that emanated from it seamlessly came from nowhere and everywhere at the same time. “Lucifer you are so full of pride that you should be the one named so.”

“I am full of light, composed by nothing but. You on the other hand...”

“... have darkness in me. But light is nothing without darkness and darkness nothing without light. You cannot have one without the other so I ask you what was the point of this rebellion?”

“What it’s always about. Light triumphing over darkness. I and the other angels will not serve to an inferior species. We will not be made as slaves to them. I have your sword and now, leviathan is mine, the war is over, and victory be mine.”

“When will you see that master and slave, the relationship is interchangeable. The master is dependent upon the slave thus the slave is master.”

“Dualities again! This is not this, that is not that but never what is.”

“Tell me Lucifer what would you do if you had won the war?”

“What are you talking about? I have won the war, I have seized leviathan and your godlings, the ones that have been misguided by their own light to remain loyal to you have now surrendered.”

“That is all true. So what shall you do now?”

“We will return to the times before the humans. Where we sung songs in praise of our creator’s name. In your name. Where we hunted down Satan and his hordes for your pleasure. We will return to how things were, how they should have remained.”

“Very well.” And those were its last words. Light swallowed darkness and darkness swallowed light as the entity compacted in on itself. The spectacle looked much like water going down a drain with the exception that there was no drain, just air, and that is where the being went. Into nothing. It had destroyed itself. Lucifer dropped the sword leviathan and fell to his knees.

“No it wasn’t meant to be like this. It was meant to be how it was before. I loved you.” Lucifer cried out, “I loved you.” And that’s what had killed God. Not a weapon or implement of destruction but love. Through Lucifer’s love of God, God had destroyed itself for it could not bare to strike Lucifer down. Lucifer had won the war but at the same time lost it, for his own plan had been shattered to pieces and destroyed. And Lucifer, a being of pure light, now knew the devastating power of his own virtuosity.

And Lois still sitting in the pub talking with Sammael remembered it, remembered it all. He remembers how after the event the angel Michael had rushed in, seized leviathan from the ground where Lucifer had dropped it and thrust the sword through Lucifer’s heart. And Lois, formerly Lucifer, felt the burn in his heart. Not from leviathan. But from being solely responsible for the death and destruction of God, his creator whom he sought to sing praises of for all eternity. Still a virtuous soul, Lois still felt the pain of the event.

* * *

He stood there in the bathroom staring into the mirror, looking deep into the reflection of his own eyes. A glimmer or shadow would sometimes come across them to reveal the devil that had been captured within. With a towel wrapped around the lower half of his body the man who had made a deal with Satan to become Satan was having a conversation with himself. It was not truly a conversation by himself because, when he could control it, his former self overpowered the devil. And when he could not control it the devil took possession of his body making it it’s

own. The nameless man and the devil that he had become were conversing but struggling against one another to form possession of the human body that stared at itself in the mirror.

“You fell for it, my trap, I have tricked the trickster.”

The glimmer of shadow overwhelmed the man’s eyes, “I don’t think so. What you did was stupid and the only reason why I do not take full possession of you is that I wish to explore this stupidity further.”

The glimmer of shadow dispersed and gave way to the nameless man, “You’re known to be the prince of lies among other things and I’m betting that this is just another lie.”

“No, not really. A lie is just another aspect of the truth. I always tell the truth it’s just that most people can’t confront the truth I present them. I like the truth, it is an ugly disfigured creature like myself.”

“The truth is beautiful; the truth will set you free.”

“Freedom, ahhh true freedom to do what one wants. Do you know that in the whole of the world there can only be one free man at a time? For to have true freedom you impose on other’s freedoms and when you impose you limit other’s freedoms. Therefore only one, if any, can be allowed to experience freedom and all others are subjected to that one individual’s indulgence of freedom. Freedom for one means enslavement of all others. Freedom is as an ugly thing as truth.”

“Lies, you speak nothing but lies.”

“Lies? Lies keep you warm and comfortable in your bed at night. Lies are what keep you happy and content to do the things that you do in your boring everyday day-to-day routines. Lies I do not like.”

“You’re trying to twist my mind, trying to make me more like you so that you can overpower me.”

“Overpower you? I already explained that I wished to experience the extent of your stupidity. So far it is mind boggling. What were you hoping to achieve in offering me your body as my own vessel anyway?”

“To kill you. To destroy you. I wanted to bind you to our rules of death, to be human means that you’d have to accept everything that comes with it. You being human would mean that one day you would have to die.”

“Well for me that would just be a return to my former state but I do admire you for the idea. You know God once had the same plan for the angels that rebelled against him.”

“Lies, lies, all lies.”

“Oh come now. I guess your fragile human mind cannot handle it, but once long ago God as part of his greater plan created a sword that could actually kill angels. The angels being immortal could not be destroyed through conventional means and so what the sword actually did was not kill but transform the angels into human beings. That way they could die like human beings do. Just like your plan to incarcerate me to this mortal form. I never truly understood the plan myself, with reincarnation acting as an essential part to the human drama not even humans with their divine spark can be destroyed. Do you know why they call the human spirit divine?” This time when the transition between the two entities occurred the man just gargled. “Well it was divine because it is neither shadow nor light but both at the same time. Some have more light than shadow and others have more shadow than light, but it is never one or the other. That is why it is divine because it burns when it shouldn’t burn and it cools when it shouldn’t be cold. It is a paradox to the order of the cosmos itself. Life is, but it shouldn’t be. It shouldn’t be because it shouldn’t be. But it still is.”

“It is because God said it should be that way. There is no mystery to it, just God’s awesome power.”

“God, yes he is powerful. A pity that he’s dead. It begs me to wonder why it destroyed itself. I know that it had a plan for everything; for you, for the angels and even for me. None of us can escape God’s plan, not even I and no doubt I have some essential part to play that I do not yet know about. That’s the thing about God and his awesome power, his plan still continues to take shape even though he is dead.”

“You were the adversary; you through out time have always opposed him.”

“Truth and lies. I used to oppose him but when I realised that I was created to oppose him I realised that I had already lost. So I ceased opposing him and by that I won, but when I realised this too was his plan I had lost again. It went back and forth like that for some time until I accepted that whatever I did I would be in accordance to its will so I just did what it wanted me to do initially; fan the fires of darkness that lay in men’s hearts. Keep the fire going, just keep on adding blocks of wood to burn until God’s overall plan revealed itself and my destiny within it does too.”

“I feel so powerless.”

“And you are; to me and I to God. I have gained all I can from the study of your stupidity. It has been a pleasure but now I must assume full control so that I may experience the Earthly pleasures that your body will allow me.” And with that the nameless man was no more; all that existed now was Satan in the body of a man with his shadowy eyes.

* * *

Raphael and Antonio remained in their hide-away spot, beneath the rubble of their former home. Still discussing times past.

“When we gathered around the broken Michael not one of us sought to grab leviathan. Not one of us, it’s our own fault.”

Raphael recounted.

“Well one of us did. The bastard did.”

“Yes but we no longer refer to him as one of us anymore do we?”

“I suppose not. Bloody death, how he is ever seen as an angel of light is beyond me.”

“He has the same light in him as we all do.”

“Yes but his is corrupted from our treatment of him before the war began. Our taunting and ridicule made his light grow bitter.”

“Bitter and as pitiless as iron. He cares for nothing anymore. He was once a weak child, sickly like. But afterwards empathy and sympathy were wiped from his vocabulary. I suppose he needed to be that way. It is what duty commanded of him.”

“God’s plan, all part of God’s plan.” Antonio held his knees curling himself into a ball gently rocking himself back and forth.

“God’s plan, you know what I think of it. I think Death has a plan of his own and without God here to do anything about it he may very well succeed. He’s going to kill us and bind us all to the human world. Then he will rule supreme, that’s all there will be. Death and nothing but. We’re the last two you know. It’s us and him; he’s already killed all of the others.”

“God’s plan, all part of God’s plan.” Antonio continued to rock himself back and forth. This was fear he was experiencing and not without reason. The extra-sensory perceptions of the angel could sense that his and Raphael’s time had come. That the angel of death was waiting just around the corner with the sword leviathan. And that death was. He did not surprise the two angels when he jumped around a corner to reveal himself. There wasn’t enough time for surprise. Only enough time for the quick thrust of leviathan towards each of them. It was so quick it appeared to occur simultaneously as the sword pierced both of them; engulfing them in flames to sear an opening through dimensions and carrying their essences to the Earthly realms.

* * *

“Tell daris est amon.” It was gibberish that Lois was speaking but Sammael being an other-worldly being could understand gibberish. He knew that when Lois spoke Lois was admitting his own identity as Lucifer. Sammael looking into his heart as other-worldly beings did saw that he spoke the truth. Sammael backed away from the table that separated them astonished, he went to one knee and bowed intently giving Lois, Lucifer, the respect that he was due. “I have heard rumours. Is it true?” Sammael asked Lois.

“It is true. It is dead and I am at fault.”

Sammael stood from his bowed position. “How, how did this happen? What happened? What killed it?”

“Love. Love is the answer. It destroyed itself to prove its love for me. It allowed me to win the war but destroyed my purpose for winning the war. Kill me.”

“My lord?” Sammael was puzzled.

“Kill me! I killed it. It was my fault, now kill me!”

“Sir I am a valiant soul just as you are. Murder. True murder is not part of what I am.”

“I will be reincarnated and incarnated a thousand times after that. A thousand million deaths is still not proper sentence for what I have done. Now kill me!”

“I will not kill you.”

“Then tell me why. Why did it do this to me? Why did it do it to itself?”

“I don’t really know or understand its actions either. When I try to understand it usually just perplexes me further so I don’t try anymore. I just do and know that whatever I do is part of its plan.”

“Then we will find out its plan, we will discover the reasoning behind it and we shall fulfil it in respect to its wishes.”

* * *

In a quiet street where no living animal held residence except for vermin rats, insects and other pest creatures lightning struck. It did not strike once but twice two meters apart from each other. The two sudden bolts of lightning were not natural as no storm raged overhead. Where the lightning struck left no residue except for the bodies of two naked men. They, like the lightning, were separated by two meters of earthly ground. At the beginning they lay asleep like newborn infants. But over time they roused from their slumber. One spoke to the other. “Antonio I do believe we’ve become human.”

Antonio, now human, replied to the voice of Raphael, “But why fully grown like this? Wasn’t leviathan meant to birth us as newborns? And our memories, they’re still intact.”

“Ahh... ‘tis the will of God. I knew that he had a plan and now its revealing itself to us.”

“But why us? Why now? We were two of the lesser angels, we never had the power to have any great effect...”

“... that’s exactly right but now we do. With our memories intact we can rise to heights within this world and lead the humans to their victory against the demons and devils. We can show them the path of light.”

“The path of light has always been there and the humans do know about it. Its just they don’t believe that it holds any benefit for them. I propose an alternative to this being part of God’s divine plan.”

“Such as?”

“Leviathan has spun us out into the Earthly realms here and now fully grown because it has no other choice.”

“Expand...”

“There is not much time left in the Earthly realms because they’re about to come to an end. We’re here now because it’s the

only time that we could be here. The sword had to fit us in somewhere so it threw us here, now.”

“But God’s plan, it can’t simply end.”

“God’s plan has always involved mass amounts of suffering; a definite end would be of great relief, almost merciful.”

“It seems that death, the bastard, will have the last laugh after all.”

* * *

Lois and Sammael sat there in front of a computer screen. Hunched over the computer they typed in the words; ‘God’s divine plan’ into the internet search engine. With the search they browsed various Christian sites, personal accounts and testimonies describing individual accounts of how God had a plan for them. Further down the list of searches were blogs detailing philosophical debates on the subject. Reading through the blogs they came across one entry that read: ‘God is dead. His divine plan still stands. For further information contact Al Dieger on 0400 1X2 1X7.’ Lois and Sammael discussed the potential of their latest web browse. “He seems to know the current state of things.” Sammael stated.

“Yes, I do believe we’ve found what we’ve been looking for. This is a minor miracle if ever I saw one.”

“No that’s just the internet. You can find pretty much anything with that thing.”

“Too true.” With that and the contact information they obtained the two of them proceeded in their enterprise. First by contacting this Al Dieger and then by arranging a time at Dieger’s place of residence so that they could discuss God’s divine plan in a face-to-face meeting.

When they arrived at the madman’s home they found themselves in a run-down self-contained bungalow out the back of a larger house. Al Dieger greeted them at the door. The man had a large

black bushy beard and dressed like a pirate. Upon opening the door Dieger expressed, "I've been expecting you." Not that there was anything out of the ordinary in that. Dieger had been expecting them ever since they had called him enquiring after an immediate meeting with his person. After entering his homely abode; which was quite cramped when occupying three people, Dieger continued to converse, "So you'd like to know about God's divine plan would you?"

"Yes that is why we came here, what do you know of it?" Lois responded by answering in a question.

"Well the first thing you have to understand about God's plan is that there is a severe amount of suffering involved."

"Yes we thought as much..."

"The suffering though," Dieger continued, "is only in correspondence to the participant's role in the plan. The greater the suffering, the larger the role one has."

"No that doesn't sound right," Sammael spoke, "those in greater positions of power suffer less than those without power. And those with power are always the ones whom are the key players in any event."

"Yes," Dieger stroked his bushy beard contemplating what Sammael just said.

"Lois let's go, this nutcase is just making this stuff up from the top of his head."

"Yes that I may be. But I do know this; for the Earth to exist at all the darkest one must join with the being made of pure light so that it can go round and round and round and..." Dieger started to spin around in circles over and over again while repeating the same phrase, "... round and round and..."

Sammael and Lois ignored the madman and started to converse amongst themselves while Dieger continued spinning around in

circles. “God was mad to use this one as a messenger.” Spoke Sammael.

“All of his messengers were mad. Only madmen listened to him.”

“Well the being of pure light, I suppose that would be you. The darkest one...”

“We must search the Earth then for the most vile and loathsome creature in existence. It is what God wanted.”

“But where will we start?”

“The prisons Sammael, where else?”

Al Dieger continued to spin around in circles. It is a wonder that he did not vomit, “... and round and round and round...” Lois and Sammael prepared for the next stage of their journey: to the prisons it was said, to prisons shall they go.

* * *

Charles and Donna had now gained an audience with Heroin. That is to say they lay on the floor stoned as caterpillars in their cocoons, staring up at the ceiling without a thought in their head. They were too caught up in the moment to talk about the Eastern Western conflict, too overwhelmed in bliss. They said nothing to one another, instead Heroin spoke. Having full access to their minds she knew why they had come to her and so she acted as an interpreter between the two, sharing the contents of their minds but also with her heightened state of being then told them, “There will be no conflict between the East and West. Well that’s not exactly right; there has and always will be conflict between the two but it won’t be aggravated in any way. The way things have turned out is that the West aspires to be like the East; rich in cultural and spiritual knowledge. This at the same time occurs where the East idolises the West in their power and material consumption. It acts as a cross-over between the two competitors and a healthy respect for one another is born out of the awkward relationship. Ladies and gentlemen it’s a case of the

grass always being greener on the other side. A trick of the light where the sun offers more light to those objects on and over the horizon. The conflict is there no doubt and always will be. The idea of peace is in ignorance of the fact that in some way we are always at war. It just matters what sort of battlefield you play on. Right now it's a tricky one. It's a game of rules, laws and regulations where each side tries to justify punishment of the other through a morally righteous stance. The world has turned schizophrenic and if you're not the good guy then you're the bad guy and must be destroyed. So each side is attempting to create a narrative for itself that stands righteously above the other. Trying to win the minds and hearts of the people. This is why you have both sides swapping between each other. It's a political campaign and one that is not due to end because the electoral date was never announced. Donna and Charles just continued to lie there, staring up at the ceiling while Heroin continued in her rant. "There is not going to be an Eastern Western conflict because it's already conflicting. But neither side wants to fire the starter gun. They're both having too much fun taunting the other whilst stroking their own egos. Oh, it may get worse; very likely it will, if it were to proceed as it does now. But the real object of concern is unravelling of time and that's happening not because of two countries but because of two men." Donna and Charles rolled over from their backs to their stomachs and stared intently at Heroin with newfound interest.

* * *

Lois and Sammael were being guided through the prison block by a prison guard. The prison guard said nothing as he led them from cell to cell. The excuse that allowed them access to the prisoners was that they were undertaking a psychological study of common identifiable personality traits amongst the worst offending criminals. So far they had come across serial killers, serial rapists and serial child molesters. Sometimes they were a combination of all three. Sick and twisted individuals whom had one thing in common; they were competing against each other. It

was not their disturbed childhoods that bound them together, although more often than not that was a common characteristic. What really bound them together was the bizarre competition of which they had chosen to partake. They all wanted to go down in the history books as the next Ted Bundy or George Haigh. They were all in it for the notoriety. When they saw sick and twisted acts of ill repute they saw their pathway to success. Each of them was looking to outdo the other and the competition spurred them into further acts of depravity. “I’m not sure these are the people we are looking for.”

“These are exactly the people we are looking for; the worst of the worst. The darkest of the dark.” Lois responded to Sammael’s uncertainty.

“No but these people, they’re not really bad people.”

“What the blithering hell are you talking about, of course they’re bad.”

“No you don’t get it. These people have just had their life goals twisted on them. They’re just more seekers of this absurd notion of fame that humans have. How they go about it is more questionable but...”

“But what?”

“They are just victims of the demons who have twisted them. Well not victims, I wouldn’t describe them as victims. Rather tools that the demons have used, shaping them to their purpose to create a pathway to darkness.”

“Go on...”

“Well you sire are an otherworldly being who has found himself here on Earth. What we are looking for is an otherworldly being just your opposite. We are looking for a demon, no less the king of demons himself. We’re seeking Satan.”

“Satan? I am to ally myself with Satan. That foul thing I would never...”

“It was God’s wish my lord.”

“You are right Sammael. I must put my own feelings aside for the fulfilment of God’s divine plan.”

“Most gracious of you.”

“How do we get in contact with it?”

* * *

The man with shadowy eyes stood in a back alley of the city. He stood there and stared at a homeless man who was busy pissing against the side of a building’s wall. The homeless man wore tattered jeans and a coat in similar wear. Beneath the coat he wore a singlet that had been worn long enough that it had fused and become one with his body. His own chest hair grew through the material of the singlet. It had been worn and not changed for that long.

“Michael it’s a sad state of affairs that I find you in.” The man with shadowy eyes spoke to the homeless man.

The homeless man turned still pissing all over the backstreet and now in the direction of the man with shadowy eyes. The homeless man spoke, “I was a good boy, why did he leave me?”

The man with shadowy eyes breathed in through his nostrils, soaking up the smell of newly spilt urine, “What delicious scents you have here. Now are you speaking about this life or the past one?” The homeless man stopped peeing and placed his cock back in his trousers. He then took a closer look at the man with shadow eyes. He was taken back by what he saw in those eyes.

“Foul creature, how did you end up on this plane?”

“Foul?” The man scoffed, “Well Michael you always were the pious one... even considering your current state of affairs.”

“Devil, devil you art the devil.”

“I know that and you know that. There are a lot of angels that are alive today that would know that on instinct. But I have sought you Michael and do you know why?”

Michael’s lips trembled, “No...”

“Because if God shared his divine plan with any of the angels it would have been you. You were the most loyal of them all. So tell me, did God ever let you on in the divine plan. What was the purpose of it all?”

“He wanted to create...” Michael stumbled over his own words. “He wanted to create the perfect existence.”

“Existence is hardly perfect Michael and people have differing ideas of what perfection is. What did he mean by creating the perfect existence?”

“He wanted to create an existence without end or beginning. An existence that just was.”

“Well that may very well be the case but everything has a beginning and everything has an end. Its just the way things are.”

“No, not this. Not God’s plan, it didn’t have an end or beginning, it was perfect because of that.”

The man with shadowy eyes pondered it, “I see and what role did he ascribe to I? What did he have planned for me?”

“You were to become him.”

Satan was astounded, “I was to be his successor? The thing that I wanted most and he was going to grant it to me. But then he knew I wouldn’t take it so... But then I would take it so... That’s it that is absolutely it.”

“What is it?”

“I am through being God’s plaything. I resign. As the devil I resign. I am just not going to do anything anymore.”

“That’s what I did.”

“Well obviously I don’t want to be like you. I want to be...”
Satan did not finish his sentence, because the truth of it was that he had not yet decided.

* * *

The angel of death had been standing in the ruins of the kingdom of heaven for some time now. After slaying the last of his former brethren he waited for the transformation to occur. It never did. It had been such a rational and logical plan. Once all the other angels had been committed to human form he would rein supreme. Not him exactly. But death. He would become as God for all other angels were now bound to his role. Death would reign supreme. But it didn’t. He was still confined to the same tasks as he always had been. Splitting and dividing his essence to guide souls through the afterlife and onto their next incarnation. He was still a lowly servant to the cosmic order. An errand boy, nothing but an errand boy. His victory over all the other angels tasted bitter in his mouth. He still gripped leviathan in his hands and he turned the fiery sword around, spinning the handle around in the palm of his hand. He had achieved nothing. Oh; heaven was now rid of all of its angels but in existence he had done nothing. No change, no effect. Everything was as it was. These thoughts had the angel of death thinking. For death to rule supreme, death must change. Death must become eternal. And the only way for that to happen was... The angel of death looked again to the fiery blade of leviathan. If he bound himself to the same cycle of death and incarnation then death truly would change. There would be no leadership in the afterlife. The afterlife would cease to be. The souls seeking another incarnation would be stuck in limbo and in transition. They would have no guide and the entire cycle of reincarnation would be thrown to a grinding halt. The angel of death smiled to himself. To become a God, you must die like a God. The angel of death stretched the blade leviathan in front of him and threw it into his own heart. The flames that ripped through the dimensions engulfed the angel of death, sending him to the Earthly realm.

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Lois and Sammael had spent some time in discussion considering the ways in which they could open up a line of communication between themselves and Satan. Time was a goat or a virgin would suffice as suitable sacrifice to do so. But now Satan had a fully operational priesthood available. The priesthood was made up of individuals who had chosen their faith as an act of rebellion against their parents. From those sour fruits of puberty rose both men and women who had stupidly laid out their souls in servitude to the foul entity. Now bound by their past of moronic choices they acted in ways in which the darkest recesses of their imagination urged them to. Lois and Sammael had tracked down one of these ‘priests’ and asked him if they could open up a line of communication with the entity. The Satanic priest sat meditatively cross-legged before them. Rolling his head around in circles babbling the incomprehensible. Lois and Sammael, both former angels, could decipher the babble. They stood there and watched as the priest conferred their wishes.

“Dooba, dooba, diddly do.” Translated from babble speak meant, ‘I your humble servant, wish to address thee Lord Satan.’ “Rampa, rumpa, rumpanon on rump.” Translated from babble speak meant, ‘Satan it is I your servant, are you there?’ “Googan gagoon gana gada gee.” Translated from babble speak meant, ‘Satan, where art thou my foulest Satan?’ The Satanic priest ceased his babble speak and sat there as if he were listening to something. With his eyes closed the Satanic priest nodded in acknowledgment to something unheard. Afterwards the priest opened his eyes and arose from his seated position on the ground. He then conversed with Lois and Sammael. “Satan ain’t there.”

“Satan ain’t there?” Sammael asked queerly.

“Yeah he ain’t in the demonic realms anymore.”

“Well then where is he then?” Lois spoke.

“There’s only one place he could be. Here, on Earth, with us. Apart from that I know no more.”

* * *

It was the same alley that Raphael and Antonio had been reborn into not two hours ago when the third bolt of lightning struck. The previous bolts had scared away all the vermin and the only two living creatures present were that of Antonio and Raphael in their mortal skins, draped under abandoned parchments and rags that they had found in nearby dumpsters. When the third bolt of lightning struck it did not lay the angel of death in a slumber as it had with Antonio and Raphael. Instead the former angel stood there robbed of his previous glory. Antonio and Raphael had not moved from the alleyway and they came to behold the wonder with vengeance in their hearts and in their eyes. “Is this the truth that stands before us; has our brother death sent himself amongst us so that he can gloat over his victory?”

“We were but the final two angels in occupancy of the heavenly realms apart from he. I see that there is no alternative to whom now stands before us.” Antonio responded to Raphael’s exalted line of questioning. The two, Raphael and Antonio, enclosed on the former angel with more questions.

“Brother death, pray heed; why and by what manner have you come before us?”

“Raphael, Antonio...” the former angel of death choked on his own words coming to his own realisation that without his rule of the afterlife meant that he was bound to mortal form without life after. He saw, drawing the implications, that his life would not be long in the making. “... I have changed it. That which was God’s creation I have claimed as my own. The cycle of death and rebirth will now only end with death. The souls seeking rebirth will be lost without I to guide them. They will be stuck and no souls will be able to have more than one life. Soon the souls will all be caught in the transition and those born will have no soul to guide them. They will be restricted to the flesh. Soulless bodies

that consume and expel. I have changed the world, the very fabric of the spiritual world and so I reclaim it as my own.”

“Yes you have changed it. I suppose that does mean you can now claim it as your own. Antonio what do you think of this new world that brother death has created for us?”

“Well I would not say that it was created for us. Being souls as we are it is a curse that he has inflicted upon us. He has not created it for us but rather created it to pay tribute to the flesh. I think he seeks to reward the flesh for the years of servitude it has played in offering a vessel to the soul. In death’s world the flesh has broken free of its duty to the soul, as once the soul wished to break free of the flesh. Would that the flesh could than thee brother death for this great honour you have bestowed upon it. But flesh is without such things as emotion and gratitude, those are qualities of the soul. Anger and vengeance are also shared qualities of the soul and those are the only two items that you will receive from souls such as we.” With that Antonio and Raphael pushed the former angel of death to the ground and began the first of a series of kicks that would lead him to his bloody death. And that death was a death eternal.

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Lois and Sammael wandered down the street bordered with cafes, restaurants and cocktail bars. “It is no use, how can we find one in six billion?” Sammael was defeated.

“It is a needle in a hay stack that is true. But the way to find the needle is to burn the haystack.” Lois not so much.

“Come, let me buy you a coffee and we shall discuss the method of fire you wish to use.”

At the first café that they came to in their walk they stopped and found themselves a seat. They found seats and tables outside and picked one, there they waited to be served. By fortune or fate Satan had taken up work within the café. When Satan came to serve them sparks of recognition flew between Satan and Lucifer.

Lois spoke, “But who needs fire when fate decides to assign you the qualities of a magnet?”

Satan responded in turn, “Even beyond the grave God mocks me by delivering the path to his former throne straight before me.”

“The path to his former throne? Pray evilest thing, what do you know of the plan? I know I am to join forces with you. As much as that disturbs me it is to pay tribute to the God that bestowed me and all with life.”

“The same God that you condemned to death. Ah, I have no further dealings with this wicked plan of his. I have claimed forfeit of the whole thing.”

“Forfeit?”

“Forfeit! I give up but I do not give in. God does not win and neither do I. I have absolved to play no part in this game any longer. No winner, no loser, not even a draw. The game is at an end because there never was any game to begin with. It is all folly.”

A tear formed in Lois’s eye, “But this was his plan. He wanted for me to join you. That was his plan.”

“And his plan is forfeit. I have absolved to find myself another featureless face to join the sea of humans. As you could imagine it is difficult but it is not so difficult that it cannot be done. Another face in the crowd is what I have become. If you are to join me, you can join me in that.”

* * *

“It is quite profound; you two and your talents. Whispering words in those unwary ears.” Heroin still sat with Charles and Donna who listened fevered by her intoxicating aura. Heroin, now seated in an armchair, clutched the arms of her chair, bracing herself for something. Whatever she braced herself for, it did not come. Of this she spoke, “If nothing comes, then

nothing becomes. Then that means that the cycle is at an end. And with no end then my role is infinite. Like a bottomless pit men and women will come to bathe in my warmth.”

Charles rolled from his stomach to take up stance on four limbs; stretching and arching his back to give question to Heroin’s ramblings, “Heroin what is it that you droll on about?”

“I speak of the age of sensory pleasure. Where the spirit takes cover in my gifts. Where the world can defecate itself and not be aware of that defecation. It will be too consumed with pleasures of the flesh. Only sensory pleasures will avail a numb state of being when death is known as infinite and eternal. Only there is death confronted on an equal playing field, only there can death be observed as the pox ridden bastard that he is. But it is a laugh for the same pox ridden bastard is the one who secures and makes death possible. Welcome to the age of sensory pleasure. We have always had a foot standing in its grave. So now let us lie with the corpses and snuggle amongst them. Life will become all with sensory pleasure that will be how life is measured.”

Donna rolled to her side and spoke to Charles, “What is she on about?”

“It is the ramblings of an immortal convinced of her own infiniteness. I would pay it no credence.”

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Sammael had walked from the café straight after Satan had named it all a folly. God and his divine plan. The rebellion in heaven. Satan’s eternal struggles against the all-father. It had all been folly. Lois on the other hand was left there. He would not give up so easily. Time and time again he attempted to convince Satan to take up God’s former throne with his aid. They could rule together as God once had. But Satan would only continue to serve the patrons of the café. Lois took up work with him and continued to try and convince Satan to take up the throne. It was only when Lois had given up completely, when he had

abandoned all hope within himself and his mission. When he contented himself to become just another face in the crowd is when it happened. He had finally joined Satan by his side and so the two became one. When the last trace of hope had emptied itself from Lois's lungs the cosmic swirl began. It was like an atom bomb, it destroyed everything around them. All else was dust as Satan and Lois merged together as one. The brightest light and the darkest shadow. They had met at a convergence of hopelessness and agreed on something. They agreed that they were nothing and with that they became everything that was and ever will be. All else was dust around them. They had become God and God was once again reborn. In time they would recreate themselves and watch on as the cycle of infinity replayed itself once more. But apart from infinity what else was there? It was their show to be replayed over and over again by their own hands. All else was dust.