

*Those ungrateful children.* He thought to himself. *Thousands of years, hundreds of names and millions of people cursing me. Nice.*

Simon leaned back in his chair, sighing theatrically as he stretched his arms out in front of himself. Lawyer. Everyone always thought he hid on earth as a lawyer. My how upset the world would be if they knew where he hid, how he subverted people...

“Father?” The young man called from the doorway.

“Yes, my son?” Simon answered quietly.

“The parishioners are ready sir.”

“Very well. I’ll be there momentarily.” He said calmly, motioning to be left in peace.

Simon rose from his chair and pulled the little white strip of plastic from his breast pocket and slipped it into his black collar. He walked slowly over to the door and pulled a purple robe down from its hook. Stepping in front of the full length mirror, he pulled the robe over his head and let it drop heavily to his feet. Next he grabbed the golden stitched shall hanging from the lower hook and placed it carefully around his neck, taking care to tuck it under the hood of his robe.

He checked his reflection in the mirror one last time and smiled the grin that typically set people to wetting their trousers, which of course he never shared with the flock gathered outside his door.

Simon walked out behind the alter-children, musing that the Vatican allowed girls to bare the crucifix of Christ, but not to become a priest. The arch-diocese had once again mandated that he speak out about the evils of homosexuality and foreign religions like Muslims and Pagans, who only existed to lead God’s people down a dark path of selfishness.

The politics of the Vatican always amused him. Had they the wisdom of their forbears they might actually focus their message on something of importance, like that idiot of a Son who wasted his life.

*My greatest trick indeed.* Simon mused darkly to himself.

In today’s day and age, it wasn’t even a challenge to convince people that the Devil not only didn’t exist, but was a weak subservient fallen angel who hadn’t the power to challenge the armies of Heaven.

The reality of the situation was that since the beginning of what the humans called the First World War, Simon as he preferred to call himself these days, had more than enough soldiers to overthrow heaven. He simply refused to follow through with Armageddon. Why? Then the fun would be over. He would either win; in which case there would be no good to define evil...or he could possibly be defeated in which case the fun would be over anyway. Why give the old bastard the satisfaction? Simon had lived his extremely long life to this point cheating and breaking the rules...why follow them now?

His very nature was to be contrite and rebellious. It was his purpose. So why not spend eternity subverting God’s most fervent followers and watch as the old man and all his favorites squirm in their seats waiting for a day he wouldn’t allow them to have anyway.

Free will. The ultimate divine farce as far as Simon was concerned. Wealth, power, sports cars, they were the price of giving mankind free will. Of course it didn’t stop Simon from possessing many houses, each teaming with men and women of all ages to answer his every want and desire. Hundreds of cars, gas guzzling SUV’s and forty year old diesel burning Humvees.

Simon had never actually been a lawyer, even though that was the running joke amongst his parishioners. He had been many things though, doctor, teacher, priest, and not always as a man either. Sometimes he allowed himself to be born in the mortal body of a woman. Watched in the

back of her mind as she filled out nicely, with or without cosmetic help, and then paraded around in next to nothing, opening her legs for anyone (man or woman) with enough money to buy her love. Of course, women weren't his only vessels for moral degradation. Sometimes he was a beautiful man, powerfully built or lath, it didn't matter. Women were just as prone to buying a man's love as men buying a woman's. Although he refused to correct the behavior, in fact he fostered it.

As he went through the motions of yet another agonizingly boring Mass, in which his flock all called out their appointed words with all the conviction of a serial killer professing his regret, he chastised himself for not being the brains behind the emergence of selfish stars and starlets so wrapped up in their own egos to do any real good.

Adopting third world children rather than doing anything of meaning in the country that gave them their fame and wealth. In fact, the only time the selfish elite did anything in their own back yard, it was when their celebrity began to fade.

Simon took credit where credit was due though. The fall of many empires were the direct result of his tampering and it bothered him more than a little that the fall of modern America had absolutely nothing to do with any of his plans coming to fruition. A hundred years of degradation and a class system that was all the rage in Ancient Rome had bred a killing ground that was highly amusing to watch, even though he was depressed that he hadn't done anything to bring it about.

In his depression, Simon had turned back to his more petty escapades. Subverting a so-called Holy Congregation was an old favorite. No less than seven spouses were thinking about their latest extra marital affairs and all of them were on the church council.

"Peace be with you." He intoned, fighting mightily to hold back a smile.

"And also with you." His parish answered lifelessly.

Sixteen seniors were clipping their nails, only attending the Masses to hedge their bets just in case God was real. Nine underage girls daydreamed about making love with the stars they idolized, one of them was the alter-girl who'd carried in the crucifix no less. Four boys daydreamed about their substitute teachers breasts, another thirty daydreamed about their babysitter's endowments.

Yes. This parish was ripe with 'sin'. None of these fools would make it past St. Peter, assuming that old sycophant still manned his post. If there was any divine justice, God would hit this building with a lightening bolt and send all of them crashing into oblivion.

The really annoying part though, was that there were three people in the church who actually wanted to be here. They weren't on the council, didn't belong to the women's league or the knights, hell...they were dirt poor and sat in the very last pew. The woman had recently lost her husband in the latest fabricated war on whatever the flavor of the week was. She prayed for his soul. It was an irritating request as he had been just as devout as she and her two spawn were.

The eldest child prayed for her boyfriend, a verbally abusive pretty boy who's verbal abuse would likely turn to physical abuse now that her father was gone and she relied on him for love and affection of both a mate and a father. Simon knew though, even now, that if that future should come to pass, she would still be here every Sunday, bruises and all, to thank God for her blessings. It was irritating beyond reason.

The youngest prayed for his mother, whom he'd silently watched cry herself to sleep for weeks on end. He was going to grow up to be a professional athlete, and would be rocked by a false conspiracy and cheated on by his first two wives. Yet, he would still be in church every damned Sunday thanking God for his gifts.

In four years the mother was going to win her battle with the State department and they'd move out of their hovel. Simon meant to see them fail. The mother was the lynch pin of this triad of pathetically mindless obedient children. He smiled in spite of his rattling off the mundane words that meant nothing to almost everyone in this building.

This was going to be fun.