

Mr Slot On The Road To Damnation.

Gabriel was under a lot of stress. Things weren't going well in Heaven lately. Ever since Peter had moved downtown the place had slowly fallen apart. Something had to be done, but there was a problem. That problem had just walked into Gabriel's office.

"Good morning, Gabriel, isn't it a wonderful morning?" asked the short, balding man in an old tweed suit as he sat down in front of Gabriel's desk.

"Yes, Sir, it is," relied Gabriel. "It would be even better if it were actually morning, instead of late afternoon."

"Oh, is it?" asked God, slightly distracted. "I could have sworn..." He trailed off as he looked out the window. "Maybe I should talk to Peter about switching morning and afternoon around."

"I really don't think it would be a good idea to mess with time like that. It'll play havoc with commuters," said Gabriel. "Oh, and Peter doesn't work here anymore," he explained for what felt like the thousandth time.

"He doesn't? When did he leave?" God was still looking out the window, staring at a young couple having sex on a swing.

"I don't know, Sir," sighed Gabriel. "Time has no real meaning in Heaven, remember? You can tell the difference between morning and afternoon, but the days just seem to blend together." Gabriel lightly pressed the back of his hand to his forehead. Talking about the convoluted mess that time had turned into always gave him a headache.

"Well that's just silly," said God. "Who came up with that ridiculous rule?"

"You did, Sir," replied Gabriel.

"Oh yes, that's right." God pointed out the window at the couple. "Marvellous invention that. I'm glad I invented it."

"Sex, sir?" asked Gabriel.

"No, the swing. I think I'll go and join them." God stood up and climbed out the window.

Gabriel watched as the old man ran across the lawn to where the couple had reached an interesting phase in their lovemaking. They weren't so involved that they didn't notice the deity heading their way. As he neared them, they got up and ran for their lives. God barely noticed the fleeing couple as he climbed onto the playground equipment and started swinging.

We are in serious trouble, said Gabriel to himself as he watched Jehovah playing like a child. It was painfully obvious to all in Heaven's upper management.

God was going senile.

Peter was relaxing in his plush office, smoking a cigar. Things had been going pretty well for him since he had come to work in Hell. He could now get his prized Cuban cigars without having to worry about how those in charge would react if they found out. The work was

frequent, but never too taxing. And if by chance the paperwork did start to get out of hand he could just ask for help, and get it. In Heaven all requests had to be processed in triplicate, and if you were lucky you would only have to wait a week or two before they said no. Not that you knew it was a week or two, thanks to the holy decree that time was inconsequential in heaven, a decree that Peter was convinced was just a knee-jerk reaction to God getting old. But regardless of how time now worked in Heaven, it definitely felt like a week or two. In Hell, all he had to do was ask, and his request would be processed and delivered within the hour. And they always said yes. Peter had once asked Lucas why things often went so smoothly.

“Because Heaven got all the bureaucrats,” had been Lucas’ reply. “And they can keep them as far as I am concerned. They cause far too much red tape for my liking. Besides, we got the TV evangelists.”

“The TV evangelists? Why would Hell want them?” asked Peter.

“Well in the beginning it was just a little hobby of mine,” said Lucas, “I liked to screw with their heads by putting them in a secular version of Hell. You know, fire, brimstone, all that teeth gnashing. But then we found out they knew where to score all the best drugs and hookers, so it worked out for the best in the end.”

So things were going well for Peter. As he puffed his cigar the phone on his desk rang. He made no move to get it - that was his secretary’s job. Said secretary climbed out from beneath his desk, wiped her mouth, then answered the phone.

“Hello, Peter’s office. Yes, sir, I was just doing that.” She looked over at Peter. “Yes, sir, he appears to be very pleased.” She listened for a few seconds, then handed the phone to Peter. “It’s Mr. Lucas, Sir. He wants to talk to you.”

Peter took the phone from her, taking a moment to drink in her appearance before speaking. He liked the rule that stated all personal secretaries must be dressed in the finest of leather bondage apparel.

“Hello,” he said.

“Peter, I have interesting news for you.”

“But I don’t wanna.”

Gabriel sat quietly fuming as the Son of God threw a hissy fit in his office. A lot had happened since the swing incident. God had attained a moment of lucidity and decided to retire. Now Gabriel had to find a replacement. At first the choice had been obvious, but now Gabriel was beginning to wonder. He thought Jesus would have jumped at the chance to take over but it looked like supreme power was not something he wanted.

“I’ve already done my bit,” pouted Christ. “I got nailed to a tree for fucks sake, surely that was enough.”

“But don’t you want to be the one true God?” asked Gabriel.

“I thought that was Allah,” replied Jesus.

“No, you idiot. I’m talking about the one true Christian God, which will be you as soon as you accept the fact that you have to take over from your father.”

“Not on your life. I’d much rather sit around all day and smoke weed.”

Gabriel sighed. Everyone knew about the Son’s penchant for pot. There had been a rumour that Mary Magdalene had gotten him started on it. She was known as one of the biggest potheads in Heaven. Gabriel tried a different tack. “You know if you’re in charge you can get all the pot you want.”

“I can get all I want now,” countered Christ. “And I don’t have to worry about making decisions and all that shit.”

“But we need someone to take charge,” pleaded Gabriel.

“So give the job to Spooky,” replied Jesus.

“Okay, number one, the Holy Spirit is not ‘Spooky’. And number two, he’s gay.”

“So?”

“So we can’t have a gay God,” said the Archangel. “We would have to rewrite half of the bible, thanks to the rampant homophobia of the early days.”

“That’s just because Dad didn’t like it when Spooky hit on him,” said Jesus, carefully studying his fingernails.

“Regardless of the circumstances,” said Gabriel, choosing to overlook the Spooky reference, “the fact remains that the bible is heavily against homosexuality. If we appoint Spoo... the Holy Spirit as God, and he’s the only one around here who’s willing to do it, then we would have to change things.”

“So do it,” responded Christ. “It’s been done before.”

“Not to that extent. We were lucky to get away with toning down the reference to lesbians,” replied Gabriel. “We could never change the scriptural reference to homosexuals. There’s just too much of it. People would notice.”

“Well, you better do something,” said Jesus, “because I ain’t playing God. Why don’t you get someone else from our bloodline? Someone from earth.”

“Because in order for there to be a bloodline you would have had to have sex with a woman while on earth,” explained Gabriel. “And seeing as you died a virgin there isn’t much chance of...” He trailed off as he noticed the guilty look on Jesus’ face. “You didn’t.”

“Well...”

“Oh Christ,” sighed Gabriel.

“Yes?”

“No, I wasn’t... Never mind. You better give me the details.”

“So Christ had a bastard son huh?” The news was quite a surprise to Peter. “Why didn’t Heaven know about this?”

“Because Heaven sees only what Heaven chooses to see,” responded Lucas.

They were sitting on a non-descript park bench, feeding some ducks in a nearby pond. It was a peaceful place that shocked Peter when he first saw it. The propaganda machine in Heaven was effective.

“Hell, on the other hand,” said Lucas as he continued to hand out bread crumbs, “chooses to see everything. Life is a lot more interesting when you don’t wear blinkers.

“I’m sure you’re right,” agreed Peter. He had often disagreed with the way things had been run in Heaven, which was why he had made an arrangement with Lucas to come and work in Hell. When the Samson situation had erupted Peter had seen his chance, and grabbed it with both hands. “So what are we going to do about the bloodline, if anything?”

Well,” said Lucas. “Heaven has a slight power vacuum. God has retired, Jesus doesn’t want the job, The Holy Spirit can’t have the job because of his leanings, and they need someone to take over. And that someone has to be a member of the bloodline.”

“They must have a lot to choose from,” said Peter. “After all, Jesus had brothers and sisters. They must have procreated.”

“Wrong bloodline,” replied Lucas. “It has to be direct from Jesus himself, not his half siblings. And there is only one of them left.”

“And who would this be?” asked Peter.

“Cynthia Cascade, please.”

Petula Clarkson looked up at the tall, imposing-looking man with a mane of jet-black hair. Images of the two of them engaged in several lurid situations flashed through her mind, causing her temperature to rise. She found herself wanting to take this stranger, wanting to tear his clothes off and ride him like a wild stallion. She wanted to...

“Ahem,” said the stranger, breaking through her fantasies. “When you’re quite finished ravishing me with your eyes I would like to see Ms. Cascade.”

“I’m sorry,” said nurse Clarkson, struggling to gather her thoughts. She had no idea what had come over her. “Are you relatives?” she asked, noticing for the first time the smaller man with him.

“No,” said Gabriel, “We’re friends of the family.”

“Well I’m sorry, but I’m afraid Ms. Cascade can only see relatives at this stage in her treatment.” Petula was genuinely sorry too, she would do anything to keep this man around. Then she had an idea. “If you could get permission from a relative I’m sure we could allow you to see her.”

“I’m afraid I don’t know any relatives,” admitted Gabriel. As far as he knew Cynthia was an orphan.

“Well her uncle is in with her right now. Maybe you could ask him when he comes out.”

“Yes, that’s a good idea,” agreed Gabriel, not showing any surprise at this interesting development. “Thank you for that, Petula.” He moved over to some nearby chairs with his companion and sat down.

“Now how did he know my name?” thought Petula. She decided not to worry about it and went back to work, glancing at the stranger every now and then to make sure he hadn’t left. She considered asking him out for dinner, or lunch, or anything where they would be alone together. But in the end she decided her husband probably wouldn’t understand.

Gabriel picked up an old National Geographic and started to flick through the pages.

“What are we doing here?” asked Nemamiah. “I mean, why are we waiting when we could just stride in there. We’re part of the Heavenly Hosts for Christ’s sake.”

“Because,” said Gabriel, his patience beginning to wear thin, “we’re on earth now. We have to play by the rules, which means no drawing attention to ourselves.”

“Oh yeah, we’re doing pretty well so far,” said Nemamiah sarcastically. “That nurse looked like she was ready to fuck your brains out right there on the reception desk. In fact, ever since we got down here women have been throwing themselves at you. What’s up with that?”

“It’s just part of being an Archangel,” shrugged Gabriel. “Mortals find themselves attracted to us, especially the women.”

“So why aren’t they attracted to me? I’m an Archangel too, remember?”

“Because you’re an ugly fuck,” replied the larger Angel. “Now shut up and read a magazine.”

“So if you’re such hot stuff with the women, why don’t you take advantage of it,” said a sulking Nemamiah.

“I did, once. Spent a nice little week in Sodom and Gomorrah,” sighed Gabriel, remembering his youth. “Unfortunately there were side effects. Both cities developed some sort of disease that had them screwing anything that moved, and quite a few that didn’t. In the end we had to napalm the place, just to maintain control of the situation. That little episode kept the boys down in PR up for months trying to repair the damage. So now when I’m down here I make sure to keep my dick in my pants.”

“That’s a shame,” said the smaller Angel. “It’s been a while since I’ve gotten any, and some of these mortals look very good indeed.”

“Don’t even think about it,” warned Gabriel. “It’s a lot harder to do a cleansing these days. Fire and brimstone just doesn’t cut it anymore. Besides, I don’t want to carpet bomb a city block just because you can’t keep it in your pants.”

The two Angels sat quietly for a while, reading old magazines and twiddling their thumbs. Gabriel was curious about Cynthia’s Uncle. A lot of things in Heaven were fucked up these days, but their record-keeping was always excellent. And according to the records, Cynthia had been alone on this planet since her parents had died in a car crash last year.

“Why are we here?” asked Nemamiah.

“Because this is where the last of the bloodline is,” replied the Archangel.

"I know that. What I mean is why is she in here?"

"You mean why is our future God in a mental institution?"

"Well, yes. What's wrong with her?"

"She has a multiple personality disorder," replied Gabriel.

"Oh great," said Nemamiah dejectedly, "God's a schizo."

"Basically. But it's a mortal disease."

"You mean..." Nemamiah was cut off by Gabriel standing up. The Archangel had spotted a distinguished looking gentleman walking towards them from the ward.

"Hello, Gabriel," said the man, extending a hand in greeting.

"Hello, Peter," responded Gabriel, shaking his hand. "Long time no see. Fitting in well downtown?"

"Yes, it's quite revealing actually. But enough chitchat. You've come to see Cynthia?"

"Yes," said Gabriel. "And I suppose you're her mysterious uncle."

"That would be me," said Peter, bowing slightly.

"In that case, Uncle Peter, would you care to give us consent to see Cynthia?"

"Sure," replied Peter. He went over to the reception desk and spoke momentarily with the nurse before coming back to where the Angels were standing. "Everything's set. Of course, as her uncle I wouldn't feel right about strangers seeing her alone, so I'll accompany you."

"As you wish," said Gabriel, determined not to show his displeasure at having the competition listening in on their meeting.

The three men walked back to the hospital room where the future of Heaven now resided.

As soon as they walked into the room Gabriel's hopes for Heaven collapsed. The girl that sat hugging herself on the bed was slowly rocking back and forth, mumbling incoherently and drooling onto her smock.

"What the fuck?" asked Nemamiah. "Is she drugged or something?"

"As a matter of fact," said Peter, "she's shot full of Thorazine."

"So let's get her off it. It's obviously affecting her thought processes and we need her to be clear headed to accept her position in Heaven." Nemamiah was worried about the state of the girl before him. The sooner she was fixed up the better.

"There's just one small problem with that," said Peter. "She needs the Thorazine to keep her from bouncing off the walls. I'm afraid our little Cynthia has had a set back."

Nemamiah turned to Gabriel. "You said this was a mortal disease, didn't you?"

“Yes,” agreed Gabriel.

“Fine,” said the young Angel. “Then let’s kill her. Her soul will be free of her affliction and able to take on the mantle of God.” He reached behind his back and pulled out a fiery sword, seemingly from nowhere.

“Nemamiah, stop,” warned Gabriel.

With a mighty lunge Nemamiah swung his sword at Cynthia, only to see it pass through her body harmlessly. “What the hell?” he said, flabbergasted.

“You can’t kill a mortal unless they ask you too,” explained Gabriel. “Even if it’s to help them.”

“That’s just great,” said Nemamiah, sheathing his sword again. “What the hell are we supposed to do?”

“Well,” said Peter bemusedly, “you could hope for a miracle cure, which is doubtful, or you could wait for her to die of natural causes.”

“And how long will that take?” asked Nemamiah.

“She’s eighteen now,” said Peter, working things out in his head. “Assuming she lives to an average age, and there’s no reason to doubt she won’t, you should be seeing her in Heaven in about sixty years.”

“Sixty years?” asked a shocked Nemamiah. “What the hell are we supposed to do in the meantime?”

“That’s your problem,” said Peter, opening the door to leave, “and you’re welcome to it.” He turned to Gabriel. “I’ll see you around, Gabe.” And with that he left.

“So what do we do now Gabriel?”

“We go back to Heaven,” replied the Archangel.

“I mean about the God situation. We need someone to take over now, not in sixty years time.”

“Unfortunately, there is only one thing we can do, and it means there will have to be some serious changes made,” said Gabriel. “It looks like we’re going to have a gay God.”

The two Angels walked out of the room, muttering about how things had gone from bad to abysmal. When their voices had faded away a head poked around the doorway to Cynthia’s room.

“They’re gone,” said Peter.

“Thank God for that,” said Cynthia, wiping the saliva from her chin.

“No,” responded Peter, “thank Cynthia.”

Cynthia Cascade giggled. Who would have thought that an eighteen-year-old girl would become a deity? “Are you sure this will work?” she asked.

“We’ll soon find out,” said Peter.

“So this is Cynthia,” said Lucas, smiling down at the young girl. He thought she was a pretty young thing, with curly brown hair and eyes the colour of blue fire. “It’s so nice to meet you,” he said, extending a hand.

“It’s nice to meet you too,” replied Cynthia, taking his hand. She was surprised at the appearance of the man the world knew as Satan. He appeared to be pleasant enough, neatly dressed and sporting a shock of red hair. He was certainly not a picture of pure evil. “Peter tells me you have an interesting proposition for me.”

“That’s right, young lady. As I’m sure you’ve seen from the tour of Hell that Peter gave you, this is quite a nice place. Nothing like the propaganda Heaven puts about.” Lucas led Cynthia to a comfortable lounge and motioned for her to sit. “What we would like for you to do is consider staying here with us. I personally guarantee that you will be well looked after, and that every need and desire will be catered to.”

“That sounds tempting, Mr Lucas,” said Cynthia, “but what do you want in return?”

“Why nothing, my dear,” said Lucas, “nothing at all.”

“You don’t want me to sign over Heaven to you?” asked Cynthia. “After all, I am God-in-waiting.”

“I’m quite aware of that, Cynthia,” said Lucas, smiling, “but I would rather watch Heaven fall apart at the seams. It’s much more fun that way. It’s also the reason I offered Peter a job here, not because I need him but because Heaven does.” He turned towards Peter. “I hope that revelation isn’t too unsettling.”

“Not at all,” said Peter as he headed for the door. “I was actually depending on it.” He opened the door to reveal Gabriel and Michael. One look would tell anyone that these were two very pissed off Archangels. “Have you heard enough Michael?” asked Peter.

“Quite enough thank you Peter,” responded Michael. The head Angel was trying hard to control his temper. Never before had he heard of such treachery, such deception. And especially at a time when Heaven was at its most vulnerable.

“Umm, Peter, what have you done?” asked Lucas.

“Just my job, Lucas,” responded Peter. He walked over to Cynthia. “You better go with Gabriel now. Heaven is waiting for its new leader.” He led her to the door where Gabriel was waiting.

“Come with me, my Lord,” said Gabriel, taking her hand. He led her out of the room.

“Now, Lucas,” said Michael, “you have a choice to make. I would be quite within my rights to cut you up into little pieces for what you tried to do here. But I’m feeling generous. I’ll just exile you into limbo.”

“Oh gee,” said Lucas sarcastically, “nothing like spending the rest of eternity wandering about in a void. However shall I thank you?”

“Just get your arse out of here before I change my mind,” said Michael. Both he and Peter watched as the fallen angel walked from the room and out of Hell forever. “Heaven owes you a lot, Peter,” said Michael after Lucas had gone. “Whatever you desire is yours.”

“In that case,” said Peter, “why don’t you give me Hell? I’m sure I could turn this into a place that would rival Heaven.”

Michael laughed heartily and clapped Peter on the back. “I’ll bet you could at that, Peter. Okay, I agree. Hell is yours to do with as you wish. Now if you will excuse me, I have a new God to swear in.”

“By all means,” said Peter. He watched Michael leave, then settled down in his new office. All in all it had been quite a day.

Later that night Peter was lying in bed when a figure stole into his room.

“So how did it go?” asked Peter.

“Everything went great. They took me into this huge hall where it looked like everyone in Heaven was waiting just for me,” replied Cynthia. As she talked she undressed and slid into bed, wrapping her arms around her lover. “And then Michael himself declared I was God and the head of the Holy Trilogy. By the way,” she whispered in Peter’s ear, “did you know the Holy Spirit was gay? And I could have sworn Christ was smoking a reefer. Anyway, they had this big celebration feast afterwards, which is why it took me so long to get here.” She kissed him passionately.

“That’s good,” said Peter after they had broken their kiss. “I told you everything would work out. Now you and I control Heaven and Hell. If this isn’t supreme power I don’t know what is.”

“You know,” said Cynthia, “the day you walked into my life I just knew there was something special about you. I guess you could call it love at first sight.”

“I know the feeling,” agreed Peter, “I felt the same way. As soon as I saw you I totally changed my plan. When Lucas had first approached me about going to work for him I had gone straight to Michael. He had come up with a plan for deposing Lucas. I only had to make a few slight changes to the plan to make sure we would both take over.”

“It was a clever idea to check me into the hospital like that,” said Cynthia, “but how did you know we would have enough time?”

“Because God totally stuffed up time in Heaven,” explained Peter. “We’re lucky they managed to get down as soon as they did. Otherwise you might have been in that hospital for a long time.”

“Well it all worked out okay,” said Cynthia. She snaked a hand down to Peter’s crotch. “So tell me Peter, have you ever fucked a God before?”

“No, but there’s always a first time for everything.”

The End.