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Andra delen om journalisten Cat och hennes underliga inställning i livet.

Första delen är Death and I. De är dock fristående från varandra. Det finns även ett par till som jag dock inte publicerat än.

A bargain on a soul

There are many things in this world for which I would be more than willing to sell my soul.

During my younger years I would've given anything to get good grades and all the candy I could take. As I grew older my desires became even more of the soul-selling kind. I'm talking about my very own horse, travels around the globe and, of course, more money than I could ever spend. Wouldn't that be nice?

I would also be willing to sell my soul to the Devil just to get a 4WD Toyota RAV4, silver-metallic with a top-of-the-line stereo and unlimited supply of free petrol. But there is a problem, however.

As you might remember I am a close friend to the Lord of Death, who could put in a word for me with the Soul-buyer, his Dark highness Lucifer. But, alas, my atheistic state of mind doesn't allow there to be a Devil to buy my soul. You see, since I can't believe in God it would go against all reason to believe in the Devil. Even if they exist I'd be hard-pressed to think that the Devil would ever be willing to spend so much money and time on someone who doesn't think he exists. At least, that's what my dear friend Death says.

So, I've kind of given up on the notion to get all my wishes in life granted for selling my soul. You can't make a deal without a buyer, can you now? Ask any self-respecting businessman on the planet and they'll say the same thing. No buyer, no deal.

Anyhow, I spoke to Death earlier this week about this particular problem. He didn't have much to say that was any help to me. Only advice he could give me if I really meant to sell my soul was to go and acquire a Christian Faith ASAP. But it had to be an honest one. I wouldn't fool anyone by claiming, on false grounds, that I believed in Heaven and Hell.

Since that was the best advice I'd got I tried it. I went to the nearest Catholic Church, thinking that since they'd been so successful in converting various heathens around the globe they'd have some kind of agenda for how to do it. I spoke to the monsignor and explained my troubles. I could've sworn the old chap was near a heart-attack. He was very clear when he explained to me that the church wasn't there to help people condemn themselves to Hell. The church was supposed to save the souls, not act the middle-hand in selling them. So I left the church, thinking that the high ceiling had to be good for ventilation and wondering if it was allowed to smoke inside a church. It should be since all the dangerous smoke ought to soar toward the roof two miles above our heads. But I decided against asking the monsignor about this. He was still staring condemningly at my back. I reckon that had I asked him about smoking he would've summoned a witch-trial and burned me on stakes. Just as well not to take the risk. I happen to like my skin.

I was thinking hard on how to gain the faith I needed for selling my soul when I got home. Suddenly it came to me: The Satanic Church! What if I contacted them? At least they wouldn't think I was crazy when I

told them I wanted to sell my soul.

But that plan had just as many flaws as the Catholic plan had. For one, satanic churches aren't exactly listed in the phone-directory, or at least not under that exact title. I called on Death to help me and he gave me the number to some chap said to be leader of one of those churches. He also said it was a damn shame that Anton Szandor LaVey, the Satanic Chaplain, was out of business nowadays. I agreed and then hung up.

I quickly dialled the number in my hand and after three or four tones someone answered in the other end, presenting himself with the correct name.

"Hello. You don't know me but I got your number from my friend Death," I told him.

The man seemed to believe he had a lunatic in the other end because his voice was more cautious as he spoke again.

"I see. And what can I do for you?"

"Well, I've got a small problem. I've been trying to sell my soul to the Dark lord but he hasn't been interested, says it's because of me being an atheist and all. He's unwilling to spend the kind of time it would take to convert my soul into something that would fit in his world. As long as I doubt the existence of God and the Devil my soul is no man's land, if you follow?"

I could hear him clear his throat in the other end. I reckon he was getting really nervous by now.

"I don't know much about that stuff," he finally explained. "Have you visited a Christian church and asked them about this?"

"Yeah, they looked as if they'd burn me on stakes, illegal as it may be, if I said another word. And in all honesty I wouldn't like to be burned. My hair always starts to smell like the mittens whenever I get close to wood-smoke."

"Well, I can't see how I could be of any help. If your... hm, friend... Death gave you my number he must've told you I lead a Satanic religion?"

"Yes, of course he did. I thought it'd be worth a shot to try with you since I don't have to worry about that burning-matter."

"Well, Satanism, just as Christianity, stands on the belief that there is a Heaven and a Hell. If you don't believe in any of that I'm afraid I can't help you."

"Dang. Well it was worth a try. You don't happen to know anyone who can help me?"

"Perhaps the government? I've heard that they're quite good at making people sell their souls."

"Hm, I've heard that same rumour, but I'd hate to contact them. There's just so much bureaucracy I can take. Besides, politicians never hold what they promise. It would probably end up with me losing my soul without getting any richer on it. But thanks for the advice. It was very kind of you. I'm sorry to have bothered you. Have a nice day."

We hung up and I sank down into my favourite chair, at a loss of what to do. I mentally cursed my parents for their lack of belief since it was they who'd convinced me that there was no Heaven or Hell other than in this world. Why on Earth did I have to have scientists as parents? They never believed in anything but the things they could see or feel. It was their entire fault that I wouldn't get my RAV4. Making a decision I picked up the phone again and dialled the number to my parents.

My mother picked up after the first signal, as usual.

“Oh, hello dear. How nice to finally hear from you,” she said.

I’d had to be deaf not to hear the sarcasm in her voice.

“I’ve been quite busy with my articles and all.”

“Oh, I read one of them yesterday. It was really good, dearest, but then you’ve always had a knack for writing.”

“Thanks, mum. Hey, I actually just called to accuse you and dad of destroying my chances of getting a RAV4 and all the money I can handle.”

“Is that so, dear? What made you come to that conclusion?”

Jeez, she’d put on her scientific voice. I could almost feel the microscope above my head.

“Well, you never let me believe there is a Heaven and a Hell, therefore there can be no God or Devil.”

“Why would that have anything to do with you not getting to buy a car?”

“You’re not listening! I don’t want to buy a car. I want to get it for free by selling my soul to the Devil. But he’s not interested since he thinks atheists are bad material for souls.”

“How unsettling, dear. We only raised you as we thought was best. I’m sorry to have destroyed your chance of selling your soul. But I still maintain that you would’ve afforded that car if you’d become a lawyer or a doctor as we wanted you to. But no, you had to become a journalist. As for selling your soul, I think you did that the same day you got your journalist’s license.”

Oh, dear! She was starting to get into one of those speeches again. Best to hang up before she really got into it.

“Oops, I’m sorry to hang up so abruptly, mum, but I think I just heard the cat crash something in the living-room. I love you, mum. Hug dad from me. Bye.”

The last thing I heard before I forcibly threw the phone down was my mum’s voice:

“You don’t have a cat and...”

Ah, blessed silence!

Now, I have accepted that the Devil will never buy my soul from me so I now give anyone interested a chance to lay a bid on said soul. Just give me a brand new silver-metallic RAV4 with a top-of-the-line stereo-system and you’ve got yourself a journalist’s soul. How’s that for a bargain?

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