

## 1 Michael Strong - Part I

### 3 A Brief Handbook of Exorcism

4 When the search party reached the disused grain store known locally as Puh-Chi (One  
5 Window), the bombing of Nanking was at its height. The night sky was bright with incandescent  
6 flares and filled with explosions. Japanese incendiaries were wreaking havoc on Nanking's  
7 wooden buildings. It was December 11, 1937, about 10:00 P.M. The Yangtze delta all the way  
8 down to the sea was in Japanese hands. From Shanghai on the coast to within two miles of  
9 Nanking was a devastated area on which death had settled like a permanent atmosphere.  
10 Nanking was next on the invaders' list. And defenseless. December 13 was to be its death date.

11  
12 For one week the police of a southern Nanking city precinct had been looking for Thomas Wu.  
13 The charge: murder of at least five women and two men in the most horrible circumstances:  
14 Thomas Wu, the story was, had lolled his victims and eaten their bodies. At the end of one  
15 week's fruitless searching, Father Michael Strong, the missionary parish priest of the district,  
16 who had baptized Thomas Wu, sent word unexpectedly that he had found the wanted man in  
17 the barnlike Puh-Chi. But the police captain did not understand the message Father Michael had  
18 sent him: "I am conducting an exorcism. Please give me some time." \*

19  
20 \* This is the only exorcism reported in this book for which I have no transcript and could not conduct extensive interviews. My  
21 sole source was Father Michael himself, who recounted these events to me and allowed me to read his diaries.

22  
23 The main door of Puh-Chi was ajar when the police chief arrived. A small knot of men and  
24 women stood watching. They could see Father Michael standing in the middle of the floor. Over  
25 in one corner there was another figure, a young, naked man, suddenly ravished by an unnatural  
26 look of great age, a long knife in his hands. On the shelves around the inner walls of the  
27 storehouse lay rows and rows of naked corpses in various stages of mutilation and putrefaction.

28  
29 "YOU!!" the naked man was screaming as the police captain elbowed his way to the door, "YOU  
30 want to know MY name!" The words "you" and "my" hit the captain like two clenched fists across  
31 the ears. He saw the priest visibly wilt and stagger backward. But, even so, it was the voice that  
32 made the captain wonder. He had known Thomas Wu. Never had he heard him speak with such  
33 a voice.

34  
35 "In the name of Jesus," Michael began weakly, "you are commanded . . ."

36  
37 "Get outta here! Get the hell outta here, you filthy old eunuch!"

38  
39 "You will release Thomas Wu, evil spirit, and ..."

40  
41 "I'm taking him with me, pigmy," came the voice from Thomas Wu. "I'm taking him. And no  
42 power anywhere, anywhere, you hear, can stop us. We are as strong as death. No one  
43 stronger! And he wants to come! You hear? He wants to!"

44  
45 "Tell me your name ..."

46  
47 The priest was interrupted by a sudden roaring. No one there could say later how the fire  
48 started. An incendiary? A spark carried by the wind from burning Nanking? It was like a sudden,  
49 noisy ambush sprung by a silent signal. In a flash the fire had jumped up, a living red weed  
50 running around the sides of the storehouse, along the curved roof, and across the wooden floor  
51 by the walls.

52  
53 The police captain was already inside, and he gripped Father Michael by the arm, pulling him  
54 outside.

55  
56 The voice of Wu pursued them over the noise: "It's all one. Fool! We're all the same. Always  
57 were. Always."  
58  
59 Michael and the captain were outside by then and turned around to listen.  
60  
61 "There's only one of us. One . . ."  
62  
63 The rest of the sentence was drowned in a sudden outburst of flaming timbers.  
64  
65 Now, the glass rectangle of the single window was darkening over with smoke and grime. In a  
66 few minutes it would be impossible to see anything. Michael lurched over and peered in. Against  
67 the window he could see Thomas' face plastered for an instant of fixed, grinning agony a  
68 horrible picture, a Bosch nightmare come alive.  
69  
70 Long, quickly lashing tongues of flame were licking at Thomas' temples, neck, and hair. Through  
71 the hissing and crackling of the fire, Michael could hear Thomas laughing, but very dimly, almost  
72 lost to his ear. Between the flames he could see the shelves with their gray-white load of  
73 corpses. Some were melting. Some were burning. Eyes oozing out of sockets like broken eggs.  
74 Hair burning in little tufts. First, fingers and toes and noses and ears, then whole limbs and  
75 torsos melting and blackening. And the smell. God! That smell!  
76  
77 Then the fixity of Thomas' grin broke; his face seemed to be replaced by another face with a  
78 similar grin. At the top speed of a kaleidoscope, a long succession of faces came and went, one  
79 flickering after the other. All grinning. All with "Cain's thumbprint on the chin," as Michael  
80 described the mark that haunted him for the rest of his life. Every pair of lips was rounded into  
81 the grinning shape of Thomas' last word: "one!" Faces and expressions Michael never had  
82 known. Some he imagined he knew. Some he knew he imagined. Some he had seen in history  
83 books, in paintings, in churches, in newspapers, in nightmares. Japanese, Chinese, Burmese,  
84 Korean, British, Slavic. Old, young, bearded, clean-shaven.  
85  
86 Black, white, yellow. Male, female. Faster. Faster. All grinning with the same grin. More and  
87 more and more. Michael felt himself hurtling down an unending lane of faces, decades and  
88 centuries and millennia ticking by him, until the speed slowed finally, and the last grinning face  
89 appeared, wreathed in hate, its chin just one big thumbprint.  
90  
91 Now the window was completely black Michael could see nothing. "Cain . . ." he began to say  
92 weakly to himself. But a stablike realization stopped the word in his throat, just as if someone  
93 had hissed into his inner ear: "Wrong again, fool! Cain's father. I. The cosmic Father of Lies and  
94 the cosmic Lord of Death. From the beginning of the beginning. I ... I ... I ... I ... I ..."  
95  
96 Michael felt a sharp pain in his chest. A strong hand was around his heart stifling its movement,  
97 and an unbearable weight lay on his chest, bending him over. He heard the blood thumping in  
98 his head and then loud, roaring winds. A dazzling flash of light burst across his eyes. He  
99 slumped to the ground.  
100  
101 Strong hands plucked Michael away from the window just in time.  
102  
103 The storehouse was now an inferno. With a tearing crash, the roof caved in. The flames shot up  
104 triumphantly and licked the outside walls, burning and consuming ravenously.  
105  
106 "Get the old man away from here!" screamed the captain through the smoke and the smell.  
107 They all drew back. Michael, slung over the shoulder of one man, was babbling and sobbing  
108 incoherently. The captain could barely make his words out:

109 "I failed ... I failed ... I must go back. Please . . . Please . . . must go back . . . not later .. . please  
110 . . ."

111  
112 When they got Michael to the hospital, his condition was critical. Apart from burns and smoke  
113 inhalation, he had suffered a minor heart attack. And until the following evening, he continued in  
114 a delirium.

115  
116 Before the fall of Nanking, he was smuggled out by the faithful police captain and a few  
117 parishioners. They made their way northwestwards, barely escaping the tightening Japanese  
118 net.

119  
120 On December 14, the Japanese High Command let loose 50,000 of their soldiers on the city  
121 with orders to kill every living person. The city became a slaughterhouse. Whole groups of men  
122 and women were used for bayonet and machine-gun practice. Others were burned alive or  
123 slowly cut to pieces. Rows of children were beheaded by samurai-swinging officers competing  
124 to see who could take off the most heads with one sweep of the sword. Women were raped by  
125 squads, then killed. Fetuses were torn alive from wombs, carved up, and fed to the dogs.

126  
127 All told, over 42,000 were murdered. Death enveloped Nanking as it had the entire Yangtze  
128 delta. Animals and crops died and rotted in the fields.

129  
130 It was as though the spirit that Michael had tangled with in the microcosm of Thomas Wu's grisly  
131 charnel house in the suburbs of Nanking - "the Cosmic Lord of Death"- had been let loose over  
132 all the lands. In the world-shaking events of the war years, some special viciousness had been  
133 given free rein, had impressed itself on hundreds of thousands with the sting of absolute and  
134 irresistible authority. Death was the strongest weapon. It settled all disputes over who was  
135 master. And eventually it claimed all as its victims, putting everyone on an equal level. In war,  
136 where death was the victor, you tried to have it on your side.

137  
138 Back in Hong Kong, where Michael was finally brought in the late summer of 1938 after a  
139 considerably roundabout journey, the realists knew it was a matter of time before the Japanese  
140 winners took all.

141  
142 On Christmas Day 1941, Hong Kong became a Japanese possession. During the years of  
143 occupation Michael lived quietly at Kowloon, teaching a little in the schools, doing some pastoral  
144 work. He was slow in recuperating.

145  
146 During that time, everyone was under a strain. Food was scarce. Harassment by the occupying  
147 Japanese was extreme. And all lived with the sure knowledge that, barring miracles, if the  
148 Japanese had to evacuate the city, they would massacre everyone; and if they stayed on, they  
149 would eventually kill all they could not enslave.

150  
151 Still, Michael took all the physical hardship with greater ease than those around him. He  
152 suffered two more heart attacks during the Japanese occupation, but they did not diminish his  
153 spirit in any way. He did not feel, as his colleagues did, the intolerable uncertainty, the strain of  
154 waiting for death at Japanese hands or for liberation by the Allies. As some of his acquaintances  
155 noticed, his sufferings were not chiefly in his body or his mind or his imagination. He had come  
156 from the interior of China broken in a way neither rest nor food nor loving attention could mend.

157  
158 To the few who knew his story, it was clear that he had paid only part of his price as an exorcist.  
159 He frankly told them of that price. And of his failure. Both they and he realized he would have to  
160 liquidate his debt sooner or later.

161  
162 His waiting creditor fascinated Michael, was always on his mind. For instance, toward the end of  
163 the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, he and a friend were watching a flight of American  
164 bombers progress imperturbably like enchanted birds through a rain of Japanese anti-aircraft

165 fire. They deposited their bomb loads, and then departed unharmed over the horizon. As the  
166 explosions and fires in the harbor continued, Michael muttered: "Why does death make the  
167 loudest noise and the brightest fire?"  
168

169 Some weeks later, a man-made light brighter than the sun mushroomed over Hiroshima. A new  
170 human record: more people were killed and maimed by this one human action than by any other  
171 ever recorded in the story of man.  
172

173 I was not to learn of Michael for some years-or of the special price he paid day by day until his  
174 death, for his defeat in that strange exorcism at Puh-Chi.  
175

176 The recent vast publicity about Exorcism has highlighted the plight of the possessed as a fresh  
177 genre of horror film. The essence of evil is lost in the cinematographic effects. And the exorcist,  
178 who risks more than anyone else in an exorcism, flits across the screen as necessary but, in the  
179 end, not so interesting as the sound effects.  
180

181 The truth is that all three - the possessed, the possessing spirit, and the exorcist - bear a close  
182 relation to the reality of life and to its meaning as all of us experience it each and every day.  
183

184 Possession is not a process of magic. Spirit is real; in fact, spirit is the basis of all reality.  
185 "Reality" would not only be boring without spirit; it would have no meaning whatsoever. No  
186 horror film can begin to capture the horror of such a vision: a world without spirit.  
187

188 Evil Spirit is personal, and it is intelligent. It is preternatural, in the sense that it is not of this  
189 material world, but it is in this material world. And Evil Spirit as well as good advances along the  
190 lines of our daily lives. In very normal ways spirit uses and influences our daily thoughts,  
191 actions, and customs and, indeed, all the strands that make up the fabric of life in whatever time  
192 or place. Contemporary life is no exception.  
193

194 To compare spirit with the elements of our lives and material world, which it can and sometimes  
195 does manipulate for its own ends, is a fatal mistake, but one that is very often made. Eerie  
196 sounds can be produced by spirit-but spirit is not the eerie sound.  
197

198 Objects can be made to fly across a room, but telekinesis is no more spirit than the material  
199 object that was made to move. One man whose story is told in this book made the mistake of  
200 thinking otherwise, and he nearly paid with his life when he had to confront the error he had  
201 made.  
202

203 The exorcist is the centerpiece of every exorcism. On him depends everything. He has nothing  
204 personal to gain. But in each exorcism he risks literally everything that he values. Michael  
205 Strong's was an\* extreme example of the fate awaiting the exorcist. But every exorcist j must  
206 engage in a one-to-one confrontation, personal and bitter, with pure evil. Once engaged, the  
207 exorcism cannot be called off. There will I and must always be a victor and a vanquished. And  
208 no matter what j the outcome, the contact is in part fatal for the exorcist. He must; consent to a  
209 dreadful and irreparable pillage of his deepest self.' Something dies in him. Some part of his  
210 humanness will wither from j such close contact with the opposite of all humanness-the essence  
211 of j evil; and it is rarely if ever revitalized. No return will be made to him I for his loss.  
212

213 This is the minimum price an exorcist pays. If he loses in the fight j with Evil Spirit, he has an  
214 added penalty. He may or may not ever again perform the rite of Exorcism, but he must finally  
215 confront and vanquish the evil spirit that repulsed him.  
216 The investigation that may lead to Exorcism usually begins because a man or woman-  
217 occasionally a child-is brought to the notice of Church authorities by family or friends. Only  
218 rarely does a possessed} person come forward spontaneously.  
219

220 The stories that are told on these occasions are dramatic and painful: strange physical ailments

221 in the possessed; marked mental derangement; obvious repugnance to all signs, symbols,  
222 mention, and sight of religious objects, places, people, ceremonies.  
223  
224 Often, the family or friends report, the presence of the person in; question is marked by so-  
225 called psychical phenomena: objects fly around the room; wallpaper peels off the walls; furniture  
226 cracks;! crockery breaks; there are strange rumblings, hisses, and other noises', with no  
227 apparent source. Often the temperature in the room where the possessed happens to be will  
228 drop dramatically. Even more often an acrid and distinctive stench accompanies the person.  
229  
230 Violent physical transformations seem sometimes to make the lives of the possessed a kind of  
231 hell on earth. Their normal processes of | secretion and elimination are saturated with  
232 inexplicable wrackings ; and exaggeration. Their consciousness seems completely colored by' l  
233 he violent sepia of revulsion. Reflexes sometimes become sporadic or abnormal, sometimes  
234 disappear for a time. Breathing can cease for extended periods. Heartbeats are hard to detect.  
235 The face is strangely distorted, sometimes also abnormally tight and smooth without the  
236 slightest line or furrow.  
237  
238 When such a case is brought to their attention, the first and central problem that must always be  
239 addressed by the Church authorities is: Is the person really possessed?  
240  
241 Henri Gesland, a French priest and exorcist who works today in Paris, stated in 1974 that, out of  
242 3,000 consultations since 1968, "there have been only four cases of what I believe to be  
243 demonic possession." T. K. Osterreich, on the other hand, states that "possession has been an  
244 extremely common phenomenon, cases of which abound in the history of religion." The truth is  
245 that official or scholarly census of possession cases has never been made.  
246  
247 Certainly, many who claim to be possessed or whom others so describe are merely the victims  
248 of some mental or physical disease. In reading records from times when medical and  
249 psychological science did not exist or were quite undeveloped, it is clear that grave mistakes  
250 were made. A victim of disseminated sclerosis, for example, was taken to be possessed  
251 because of his spastic jerking and slidings and the shocking agony in spinal column and joints.  
252 Until quite recently, the victim of Tourette's syndrome was the perfect target for the accusation  
253 of "Possessed!": torrents of profanities and obscenities, grunts, barks, curses, yelps, snorts,  
254 sniffs, tics, foot stomping, facial contortions all appear suddenly and just as suddenly cease in  
255 the subject.  
256  
257 Nowadays, Tourette's syndrome responds to drug treatment, and it seems to be a neurological  
258 disease involving a chemical abnormality in the brain. Many people suffering from illnesses and  
259 diseases well known to us today such as paranoia, Huntington's chorea, dyslexia, Parkinson's  
260 disease, or even mere skin diseases (psoriasis, herpes I, for instance), were treated as people  
261 "possessed" or at least as "touched" by the Devil.  
262  
263 Nowadays, competent Church authorities always insist on thorough examinations of the person  
264 brought to them for Exorcism, an examination conducted by qualified medical doctors and  
265 psychiatrists.  
266  
267 When a case of possession is reported by a priest to the diocesan authorities, the exorcist of the  
268 diocese is brought in. If there is no diocesan exorcist, a man is appointed or brought from  
269 outside the diocese.  
270  
271 Sometimes the priest reporting the exorcism will have had some preliminary medical and  
272 psychiatric tests run beforehand in order to allay the cautious skepticism he is likely to meet at  
273 the chancery when he introduces his problem. When the official exorcist enters the case, he will  
274 usually have his own very thorough examinations run by experts he knows and whose judgment  
275 he is sure he can trust.

276  
277 In earlier times, one priest was usually assigned the function of exorcist in each diocese of the  
278 Church. In modern times, this practice has fallen into abeyance in some dioceses, mainly  
279 because the incidence of reported possession has decreased over the last hundred years. But  
280 in most major dioceses, there is still one priest entrusted with this function-even though he may  
281 rarely or never use it. In some dioceses, there is a private arrangement between the bishop and  
282 one of his priests whom he knows and trusts.  
283  
284 There is no official public appointment of exorcists. In some dioceses, “the bishop knows little  
285 about it and wants to know less”-as in one of the cases recorded in this book. But however he  
286 comes to his position, the exorcist must have official Church sanction, for he is acting in an  
287 official capacity, and any power he has over Evil Spirit can only come from those officials who  
288 belong to the substance of Jesus’ Church, whether they be in the Roman Catholic, the Eastern  
289 Orthodox, or the Protestant Communion. Sometimes a diocesan priest will take on an exorcism  
290 himself without asking his bishop, but all such cases known to me have failed.  
291  
292 It is recognized both in the pre-exorcism examinations and during the actual exorcism that there  
293 is usually no one physical or psychological aberration or abnormality in the possessed person that  
294 we cannot explain by a known or possible physical cause. And, apart from normal medical and  
295 psychological tests, there are other possible sources for diagnosis. However rickety and  
296 tentative the findings of parapsychology, for example, one can possibly seek in its theories of  
297 telepathy and telekinesis an explanation of some of the signs of possession. Suggestion and  
298 suggestibility, as modern psychotherapists speak of them, can account for many more.  
299  
300 Still, with the diagnoses and opinions of doctors and psychologists in hand, it is often discovered  
301 there are wide margins of fluctuation. Competent psychiatrists will differ violently among  
302 themselves; and in psychology and medicine, ignorance of causes is often obscured by  
303 technical names and jargon that are nothing more than descriptive terms.  
304  
305 Nevertheless, the combined medical and psychological reports are carefully evaluated and  
306 usually weigh heavily in the final judgment to proceed or not with an exorcism. If according to  
307 those reports there is a definite disease or illness which adequately accounts for the behavior  
308 and symptoms of the subject, Exorcism is usually ruled out, or at least delayed to allow a course  
309 of medical or psychiatric treatment.  
310  
311 But finally, reports in hand, all evidence in, Church authorities judge the situation from another,  
312 special point of view, formed by their own professional outlook.  
313  
314 They believe that there is an invisible power, a spirit of evil; that this spirit can for obscure  
315 reasons take possession of a human being; that the evil spirit can and must be expelled-  
316 exorcised-from the person possessed; and that this exorcism can be done only in the name and  
317 by the authority and power of Jesus of Nazareth. The testing from the Church’s viewpoint is as  
318 rigorous in its search as any medical or psychological examination.  
319  
320 In the records of Christian Exorcism from as far back as the lifetime of Jesus himself, a peculiar  
321 revulsion to symbols and truths of religion is always and without exception a mark of the  
322 possessed person. In the verification of a case of possession by Church authorities, this  
323 “symptom” of revulsion is triangulated with other physical phenomena frequently associated with  
324 possession-the inexplicable stench; freezing temperature; telepathic powers about purely  
325 religious and moral matters; a peculiarly unlined or completely smooth or stretched skin, or  
326 unusual distortion of the face, or other physical and behavioral transformations; “possessed  
327 gravity” (the possessed person becomes physically immovable, or those around the possessed  
328 are weighted down with a suffocating pressure); levitation (the possessed rises and floats off the  
329 ground, chair, or bed; there is no physically traceable support); violent smashing of furniture,  
330 constant opening and slamming of doors, tearing of fabric in the vicinity of the possessed,  
331 without a hand laid on them; and so on.

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When this triangulation is made of the varied symptoms that may occur in any given case, and medical and psychiatric diagnoses are inadequate to cover the full situation, the decision will usually be to proceed and try Exorcism.

There has never been, to my knowledge, an official listing of exorcists together with their biographies and characteristics, so we cannot satisfy our modern craving for a profile of, say, "the typical exorcist." We can, however, give a fairly clear definition of the type of man who is entrusted with the exorcism of a possessed person. Usually he is engaged in the active ministry of parishes. Rarely is he a scholarly type engaged in teaching or research. Rarely is he a recently ordained priest. If there is any median age for exorcists, it is probably between the ages of fifty and sixty-five. Sound and robust physical health is not a characteristic of exorcists, nor is proven intellectual brilliance, postgraduate degrees, even in psychology or philosophy, or a very sophisticated personal culture. In this writer's experience, the 15 exorcists he has known have been singularly lacking in anything like a vivid imagination or a rich humanistic training. All have been sensitive men of solid rather than dazzling minds.

Though, of course, there are many exceptions, the usual reasons for a priest's being chosen are his qualities of moral judgment, personal behavior, and religious beliefs- qualities that are not sophisticated or laboriously acquired, but that somehow seem always to have been an easy and natural part of such a man. Speaking religiously, these are qualities associated with special grace.

There is no official training for an exorcist. Before a priest undertakes Exorcism, it has been found advisable-but not always possible or practical-for him to assist at exorcisms conducted by an older and already experienced priest.

Once possession has been verified to the satisfaction of the exorcist, he makes the rest of the decisions and takes care of all the necessary preparations. In some dioceses, it is he who chooses the assistant priest. The choice of the lay assistants and of the time and place of the exorcism is left to him.

The place of the exorcism is usually the home of the possessed person, for generally it is only relatives or closest friends who will give care and love in the dreadful circumstances associated with possession. The actual room chosen is most often one that has had some special significance for the possessed person, not infrequently his or her own bedroom or den. In this connection, one aspect of possession and of spirit makes itself apparent: the close connection between spirit and physical location. The puzzle of spirit and place makes itself felt in many ways and runs throughout virtually every exorcism. There is a theological explanation for it. But that there is some connection between spirit and place must be dealt with as a fact.

**Once chosen, the room where the exorcism will be done is cleared as far as possible of anything that can be moved. During the exorcism, one form of violence may and most often does cause any object, light or heavy, to move about, rock back and forth, skitter or fly across the room, make much noise, strike the priest or the possessed or the assistants. It is not rare for people to emerge from an exorcism with serious physical wounds. Carpets, rugs, pictures, curtains, tables, chairs, boxes, trunks, bedclothes, bureaus, chandeliers, all are removed.**

**Doors very often will bang open and shut uncontrollably; but because exorcisms can go on for days, doors cannot be nailed or locked with unusual security. On the other hand, the doorway must be covered; otherwise, as experience shows, the physical force let loose within the exorcism room will affect the immediate vicinity outside the door.**

Windows are closed securely; sometimes they may be boarded over in order to keep flying objects from crashing through them and to prevent more extreme accidents (possessed people

388 sometimes attempt defenestration; physical forces sometimes propel the assistants or the  
389 exorcist toward the windows).

390

391 A bed or couch is usually left in the room (or placed there if necessary), and that is where the  
392 possessed person is placed. A small table is needed. On it are placed a crucifix, with one candle  
393 on either side of it, holy water, and a prayer book. Sometimes there will also be a relic of a saint  
394 or a picture that is considered to be especially holy or significant for the possessed. In recent  
395 years in the United States, and increasingly abroad as well, a tape recorder is used. It is placed  
396 on the floor or in a drawer or sometimes, if it is not too cumbersome, around the neck of an  
397 assistant.

398

399 The junior priest colleague of the exorcist is usually appointed by diocesan authorities. He is  
400 there for his own training as an exorcist. He will monitor the words and actions of the exorcist,  
401 warn him if he is making a mistake, help him if he weakens physically, and replace him if he  
402 dies, collapses, flees, is physically or emotionally battered beyond endurance-and all have  
403 happened during exorcisms.

404

405 The other assistants are laymen. Very often a medical doctor will be among them because of  
406 the danger to all present of strain, shock, or injury. The number of lay assistants will depend on  
407 the exorcist's expectation of violence. Four is the usual number. Of course, in remote country  
408 areas or in very isolated Christian missions, and sometimes in big urban centers, there is no  
409 question of assistants. There simply is none available, or there is no time to acquire any. The  
410 exorcist must go it alone.

411

412 An exorcist comes to know from experience what he can expect by way of violent behavior; and,  
413 for their own sakes, possessed people must usually be physically restrained during parts of the  
414 exorcism. The assistants therefore must be physically strong. In addition, there may be a  
415 straitjacket on hand, though leather straps or rope are more commonly used.

416 It is up to the exorcist to make sure that his assistants are not consciously guilty of personal sins  
417 at the time of the exorcism, because they, too, can expect to be attacked by the evil spirit, even  
418 though not so directly or constantly as the exorcist himself. Any sin will be used as a weapon.

419

420 The exorcist must be as certain as possible beforehand that his assistants will not be weakened  
421 or overcome by obscene behavior or by language foul beyond their imagining; they cannot  
422 blanch at blood, excrement, urine; they must be able to take awful personal insults and be  
423 prepared to have their darkest secrets screeched in public in front of their companions. These  
424 are routine happenings during exorcisms. Assistants are given three cardinal rules: they are to  
425 obey the exorcist's commands immediately and without question, no matter how absurd or  
426 unsympathetic those commands may appear to them to be; they are not to take any initiative  
427 except on command; and they are never to speak to the possessed person, even by way of  
428 exclamation.

429

430 Even with all the care in the world, there is no way an exorcist can completely prepare his  
431 assistants for what lies in store for them. Even though they are not subject to the direct and  
432 unremitting attack the priest will undergo, it is not uncommon for assistants to quit-or be carried  
433 out-in the middle of an exorcism. A practiced exorcist will even go so far as to make a few trial  
434 runs of an exorcism beforehand, on the old theory that forewarned is forearmed-at least to some  
435 degree.

436

437 Timing in an exorcism is generally dictated by circumstances. There is usually a feeling of  
438 urgency to begin as soon as possible. Everyone involved should have an open schedule. Rarely  
439 is an exorcism shorter than some hours-more often than not ten or twelve hours. Sometimes it  
440 stretches for two or three days. On occasion it lasts even for weeks. Once begun, except on the  
441 rarest occasions, there are no time outs, although one or other of the people present may leave  
442 the room for a few moments, to take some food, to rest very briefly, or go to the bathroom. (One  
443 strange exorcism where there was a time out is described in this book. The priest involved



444 would have preferred one hundred times going straight through the exorcism rather than suffer  
445 the mad violence that caused the delay.)

446  
447 The only people in an exorcism who dress in a special way are the exorcist and his priest  
448 assistant. Each wears a long black cassock that covers him from neck to feet. Over it there is a  
449 waist-length white surplice. A narrow purple stole is worn around the neck and hangs loosely the  
450 length of the torso.

451  
452 Normally, the priest assistant and the lay assistants prepare the exorcism room according to the  
453 exorcist's instructions. They and the exorcee are ready in the room when the exorcist enters,  
454 last and alone.

455  
456 There is no lexicon of Exorcism; and there is no guidebook or set of rules, no Baedeker of Evil  
457 Spirit to follow. The Church provides an official text for Exorcism, but this is merely a framework.  
458 It can be read out loud in 20 minutes. It merely provides a precise formula of words together  
459 with certain prayers and ritual actions, so that the exorcist has a preset structure in which to  
460 address the evil spirit. In fact, the conduct of an exorcism is left very much up to the exorcist.

461  
462 Nevertheless, any practiced exorcist I have spoken with agrees that there is a general progress  
463 through recognizable stages in an exorcism, however long it may last.

464  
465 One of the most experienced exorcists I have known and who was in fact the mentor of the  
466 exorcist in the first case related in this book, gave names to the various general stages of an  
467 exorcism. These names reflect the general meaning or effect or intent of what is happening, but  
468 not the specific means used by the evil spirit or by the exorcist. Conor, as I call him, spoke of  
469 Presence, Pretense, Breakpoint, Voice, Clash, and Expulsion. The events and stages these  
470 names signify occur in nine out of every ten exorcisms.

471  
472 From the moment the exorcist enters the room, a peculiar feeling seems to hang in the very air.  
473 From that moment in any genuine exorcism and onward through its duration, **everyone in the**  
474 **room is aware of some alien Presence.** This indubitable sign of possession is as  
475 unexplainable and unmistakable as it is inescapable. All the signs of possession, however  
476 blatant or grotesque, however subtle or debatable, seem both to pale before and to be  
477 marshaled in the face of this Presence.

478  
479 There is no sure physical trace of the Presence, but everyone feels it. You have to experience it  
480 to know it; you cannot locate it spatially- beside or above or within the possessed, or over in the  
481 corner or under the bed or hovering in midair.

482 In one sense, the Presence is nowhere, and this magnifies the terror, because there is a  
483 presence, an other present. Not a "he" or a "she" or an "it." Sometimes, you think that what is  
484 present is singular, sometimes plural. When it speaks, as the exorcism goes on, it will  
485 sometimes refer to itself as "I" and sometimes as "we," will use "my" and "our."

486  
487 **Invisible and intangible, the Presence claws at the humanness of those gathered in the**  
488 **room. You can exercise logic and expel any mental image of it. You can say to yourself:**  
489 **"I am only imagining this. Careful! Don't panic!" And there may be a momentary relief.**  
490 **But then, after a time lag of bare seconds, the Presence returns as an inaudible hiss in**  
491 **the brain, as a wordless threat to the self you are. Its name and essence seem to be**  
492 **compounded of threat, to be only and intensely baleful, concentratedly intent on hate for**  
493 **hate's sake and on destruction for destruction's sake.**

494  
495 In the early stages of an exorcism, the evil spirit will make every attempt to "hide behind" the  
496 possessed, so to speak-to appear to be one and the same person and personality with its  
497 victim. This is the Pretense.

498  
499 The first task of the priest is to break that Pretense, to force the spirit to reveal itself openly as

500 separate from the possessed-and to name itself, for all possessing spirits are called by a name  
501 that generally (though not always) has to do with the way that spirit works on its victim.  
502

503 As the exorcist sets about his task, the evil spirit may remain silent altogether; or it may speak  
504 with the voice of the possessed, and use past experiences and recollections of the possessed.  
505 This is often done skillfully, using details no one but the possessed could know. It can be very  
506 disarming, even pitiful. It can make everyone, including the priest, feel that it is the priest who is  
507 the villain, subjecting an innocent person to terrible rigors. Even the mannerisms and  
508 characteristics of the possessed are used by the spirit as its own camouflage.  
509

510 Sometimes the exorcist cannot shatter the Pretense for days. But until he does, he cannot bring  
511 matters to a head. If he fails to shatter it at all, he has lost. Perhaps another exorcist replacing  
512 him will succeed. But he himself has been beaten.  
513

514 Every exorcist learns during Pretense that he is dealing with some force or power that is at  
515 times intensely cunning, sometimes supremely intelligent, and at other times capable of crass  
516 stupidity (which makes one wonder further about the problem of singular or plural); and it is both  
517 highly dangerous and terribly vulnerable.  
518

519 Oddly, while this spirit or power or force knows some of the most secret and intimate details of  
520 the lives of everyone in the room, at the same time it also displays gaps in knowledge of things  
521 that may be happening at any given moment of the present.  
522

523 But the priest must not be lulled by small victories or take chances on hoped-for stupidities. He  
524 must be ready to have his own sins and blunders and weaknesses put into his mind or shouted  
525 in ugliness for all to hear. He must not make excuses for his past, or wither as even his loveliest  
526 memories are fingered by ultimate filth and contempt; he must not be sidetracked in any way  
527 from his primary intention of freeing the possessed person before him. And he must at all costs  
528 avoid trading abuse or getting into any logical arguments with the possessed. The temptation to  
529 do so is more frequent than one might think, and must be regarded as a potentially fatal trap  
530 that can shatter not only the exorcism, but quite literally shatter the exorcist as well.  
531

532 Accordingly, as the Pretense begins to break down, the behavior of the possessed usually  
533 increases in violence and repulsiveness. It is as though an invisible manhole opens, and out of it  
534 pours the unmention-ably inhuman and the humanly unacceptable. There is a stream of filth and  
535 unrestrained abuse, accompanied often by physical violence, writhing, gnashing of teeth,  
536 jumping around, sometimes physical attacks on the exorcist.  
537

538 A new hallmark of the proceedings enters as the Breakpoint nears, and ushers in one of the  
539 more subtle sufferings the exorcist must undergo: confusion. Complete and dreadful confusion.  
540 Rare is the exorcist who does not falter here for at least a moment, enmeshed in the peculiar  
541 pain of apparent contradiction of all sense.  
542

543 His ears seem to smell foul words. His eyes seem to hear offensive sounds and obscene  
544 screams. His nose seems to taste a high-decibel cacophony. Each sense seems to be recording  
545 what another sense should be recording. Each nerve and sinew of onlookers and participants  
546 becomes rigid as they strive for control. Panic-the fear of being dissolved into insanity-runs in  
547 quick jabs through everyone there. All present experience this increasingly violent and confusing  
548 assault. But the exorcist is the one who rides the storm. He is the direct target of it all.  
549

550 The Breakpoint is reached at that moment when the Pretense has finally collapsed altogether.  
551 The voice of the possessed is no longer used by the spirit, though the new, strange voice may  
552 or may not issue from the mouth of the victim. In Thomas Wu's case, the alien voice did come  
553 from the possessed's mouth; and that was why the police captain was so startled. The sound  
554 produced is often not even remotely like any human sound.

555

556 At the Breakpoint, for the first time, the spirit speaks of the possessed in the third person, as a  
557 separate being. For the first time, the possessing spirit acts personally and speaks of "I" or "we,"  
558 usually interchangeably, and of "my" and "our" or "mine" and "ours."

559

560 Another very frequent sign that the Breakpoint has been reached is the appearance of what  
561 Father Conor called the Voice.

562

563 The Voice is an inordinately disturbing and humanly distressing babel. The first few syllables  
564 seem to be those of some word pronounced slowly and thickly-somewhat like a tape recording  
565 played at a subnormal speed. You are just straining to pick up the word and a layer of cold fear  
566 has already gripped you-you know this sound is alien. But your concentration is shattered and  
567 frustrated by an immediate gamut of echoes, of tiny, prickly voices echoing each syllable,  
568 screaming it, whispering it, laughing it, sneering it, groaning it, following it. They all hit your ear,  
569 while the alien voice is going on unhurriedly to the next syllable, which you then try to catch,  
570 while guessing at the first one you lost. By then, the tiny, jabbing voices have caught up with  
571 that second syllable; and the voice has proceeded to the third syllable; and so on.

572

573 If the exorcism is to proceed, the Voice must be silenced. It takes an enormous effort of will on  
574 the part of the exorcist, in direct confrontation with the alien will of evil, to silence the Voice. The  
575 priest must get himself under control and challenge the spirit first to silence and then to identify  
576 itself intelligibly.

577

578 As in all things to do with Exorcism of Evil Spirit, the priest makes this challenge with his own  
579 will, but always in the name and by the authority of Jesus and his Church. To do so in his own  
580 name or by some fancied authority of his own would be to invite personal disaster. Merely  
581 human power unadorned and without aid cannot cope with the preternatural. (It is to be  
582 remembered that when we speak of the preternatural, we are not speaking about what are  
583 known as poltergeists.)

584

585 Usually, at this point and as the Voice dies out, a tremendous pressure of an obscure kind  
586 affects the exorcist. This is the first and outermost edge of a direct and personal collision with  
587 the "will of the Kingdom," the Clash.

588

589 We all know from our personal experience that there can be no struggle of single personal wills  
590 without that felt and intuitive contact between two persons. There is a two-way communication  
591 that is as real as a conversation using words. The Clash is the heart of a special and dreadful  
592 communication, the nucleus of this singular battle of wills between exorcist and Evil Spirit.  
593 Painful as it will be for him, the priest must look for the Clash. He must provoke it. If he cannot  
594 lock wills with the evil thing and force that thing to lock its will in opposition to his own, then  
595 again the exorcist is defeated.

596

597 The issue between the two, the exorcist and the possessing spirit, is simple. Will the totally  
598 antihuman invade and take over? Will it, noisome and merciless, seep over that narrow rim  
599 where the exorcist would hold his ground alone, and engulf him? Or will it, unwillingly,  
600 protestingly, under a duress greater than its single-track will, stop, identify itself, cede, retire,  
601 disappear, and be volatilized back into an unknown pit of being where no man wants to go ever?

602

603 Even with all the pressure on him, and in fullest human agony, if the exorcist has got this far, he  
604 must press home. He has gained an advantage. He has already forced the evil spirit to come  
605 out on its own. If he has not been able to until now, he must finally force it to give its name. And  
606 then, some exorcists feel, the exorcist must pursue for as much information as he can. For in  
607 some peculiar way, as exorcists find, the more an evil spirit can be forced to reveal in the Clash  
608 and its aftermath, the surer and easier will be the Expulsion when that moment comes. To force  
609 as complete an identification as possible is perhaps a mark of domination of one will over  
610 another.

611  
612 It is of crucial interest to speculate about the violence provoked by Exorcism-the physical and  
613 mental struggles that are so extreme they can bring on death. Why would spirit battle so? Why  
614 not leave and waft off invisibly to someone or someplace else? For spirit itself seems to suffer in  
615 these battles.

616  
617 Time and again, in exorcism after exorcism, there occurs that curious thing to do with spirit and  
618 place, the strange puzzle mentioned previously in connection with the room chosen for the  
619 exorcism. When Jesus expelled the unclean spirits, those spirits showed concern for where they  
620 might go. In record after record, as well as in several exorcisms recounted in this book, the  
621 possessing spirits wail in lament and questioning pain:  
622 "Where shall we go?"  
623 "We too have to possess our habitation."  
624  
625 "Even the Anointed One gave us a place with the swine."  
626 "Here... we can't stay here any longer."

627 Evil Spirit, having found a home with a consenting host, does not appear to give up its place  
628 easily. It claws and fights and deceives and even risks killing its host before it will be expelled.  
629 How violent the struggle probably depends on many things; the intelligence of the spirit being  
630 dealt with and the degree of possession achieved over the victim are perhaps two one could  
631 speculate about.

632  
633 Whatever determines the actual pitch of violence, once the exorcist has forced the invading  
634 spirit to identify itself, and sustained the first wordless bout of the Clash, and then invoked its  
635 formal condemnation and expulsion by the Exorcism rite, the immediate result is generally a  
636 struggle tortuous beyond/imagining, an open violence that leaves all subtlety behind.

637  
638 The person possessed is by now obviously aware in one way or another of what possessed  
639 him. Frequently he becomes a true battleground for much of the remainder of the exorcism,  
640 enduring unbelievable punishment and strain.

641  
642 It is sometimes possible for the exorcist to appeal directly to the possessed person, urging him  
643 to use some part of his own will still free of the spirit's influence and control, and engage directly  
644 in the fight, aiding the exorcist. And at such moments no animal pinned helplessly to the ground  
645 struggles more pathetically against the drinking of its life's blood by a voracious and superior  
646 cruelty. The very nauseous character of the possessed person's appearance and behavior  
647 appears to be a sign of his desire for deliverance, a desperate sign of struggle, evidence of a  
648 revolt where once he had consented.

649  
650 Increasingly what had possessed him is being forced into the open, all the while protesting its  
651 victim's revolt and its own expulsion. The violence of the contortions and the physical  
652 disfigurement of the possessed can reach a degree one would think he could not possibly  
653 withstand.

654  
655 The exorcist, too, comes in for full attack now. Once cornered, the evil spirit seems able to call  
656 on a superior intelligence, and will try to lure the exorcist on to a field boobytrapped and mined  
657 with situations from which no human can extricate himself.

658  
659 Any weakness in the religious faith that alone sustains the exorcist or any fatigue will allow the  
660 exorcist's mind to be flooded with a terrible light he cannot fend off-a light that can burn the very  
661 roots of his reason and turn him emotionally into the most servile of slaves desperate to be  
662 liberated from all bodily life.

663  
664 These are only some of the dangers and traps that face every exorcist. His pain is physical,  
665 emotional, mental. He has to deal with what is eerie but not enthralling; with something askew,  
666 but intelligently so; with a quality that is upside down and inside out, but significantly so. The

667 mordant traits of nightmare are there in full regalia, but this is no dream and permits him no  
668 thankful remission.

669

670 He is attacked by a stench so powerful that many exorcists start vomiting uncontrollably. He is  
671 made to bear physical pain, and he feels anguish over his very soul. He is made to know he is  
672 touching the completely unclean, the totally unhuman.

673 All sense may suddenly seem nonsense. Hopelessness is confirmed as the only hope. Death  
674 and cruelty and contempt are normal. Anything comely or beautiful is an illusion. Nothing, it  
675 seems, was ever right in the world of man. He is in an atmosphere more bizarre than Bedlam.

676

677 If, in spite of his emotions and his imagination and his body-all trapped at once in pain and  
678 anguish-if, in spite of all this, the will of the exorcist holds in the Clash, what he does is to  
679 approach his final function in this situation as an authorized human witness for Jesus. By no  
680 power of his, on account of no privilege of his own, he calls finally on the evil spirit to desist, to  
681 be dispossessed, to depart and to leave the possessed person.

682

683 And, if the exorcism is successful, this is what happens. The possession ends. All present  
684 become aware of a change around them. The sense of Presence is totally, suddenly absent.  
685 Sometimes there are receding voices or other noises, sometimes only dead silence. Sometimes  
686 the recently possessed may be at the end of his strength; sometimes he will wake up as from a  
687 dream, a nightmare, or a coma. Sometimes the former victim will remember much of what he  
688 has been through; sometimes he will remember nothing at all.

689

690 Not so for the exorcists, during and after their grisly work. They carry nagging doubts and bitter  
691 conflicts untellable to family, friend, superior, or therapist. Their personal traumas lie beyond the  
692 reach of soothing words and deeper than the sweep of any consoling thoughts.

693

694 They share their punishment with none but God. Even that has its peculiar sting of difficulty. For  
695 it is a sharing by faith and not by face-to-face communication.

696

697 But only thus do these men, seemingly ordinary and commonplace in their lives, persevere  
698 through the days of quiet horror and the nights of sleepless watching they spend for years after  
699 as their price of success, and as abiding reminders that, once upon a time, another human  
700 being was made whole, because they willingly incurred the direct displeasure of living hatred.

701

702 The following five case histories are true. The lives of the people involved are told on the basis  
703 of extensive interviews with all of the principals involved, with many of their friends and relatives,  
704 and with many others involved directly or indirectly in minor ways. All interviews have been  
705 independently checked for factual accuracy wherever possible. The exorcisms themselves are  
706 reproduced from the actual tapes made at the time and from the transcripts of those tapes. The  
707 exorcisms have necessarily been cut for reasons of length; all of the exorcisms recorded here  
708 lasted more than 12 hours.

709

710 I have chosen these five cases from among a greater number known and available to me  
711 because, both singly and taken together, they are dramatic illustrations of the way in which  
712 personal and intelligent evil moves cunningly along the lines of contemporary fads and interests,  
713 and within the usual bounds of experience of ordinary men and women. No fourteenth- or  
714 fifteenth- or sixteenth-century case, for all its possible romantic appeal, would have any  
715 relevancy for us today. On the contrary, it would remain a simple matter for us to dismiss such  
716 cases as fables made up to suit the fears or fancies of "more ignorant" people of "less  
717 sophisticated" times.

718

719 Each case presented here includes as an important element some basic attitude or attitudes  
720 popular in our own society. In the possessed person, it is pushed to a narrow and frightening  
721 extreme.

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In the first case, Zio's Friend and the Smiler, the insistence is that there is no essential difference between good and evil, and ultimately no difference between being and nonbeing; that all values are subject only to one's personal preferences.

In Father Bones and Mister Natch, the compelling idea that was seized by Evil Spirit seemed to be that all mysteries can and are resolved in "natural" (i.e., rational or scientific or quantifiable) explanations; that there can be no relevance for the modern person in anything that cannot be rationally understood; and that there can be no truth important to man beyond what is rational.

In The Virgin and the Girl-Fixer, the battle concerned some of the great, deep, and mysterious "givens" of our very nature and our society-in this case, gender and human love. The priest in this case said to me a few months before he died, in one of the most profound conversations of my life: "A bird doesn't fly because it has wings. It has wings because it flies." We will ignore that mysterious truth in its applications to our sexuality and our gender only at our great peril, I believe.

In Uncle Ponto and the Mushroom-Souper, we have an example of what may be happening to many in our modern society-without their realizing it and without those around them taking cognizance of it. For it seems that there is an individualism, a purely personalistic interpretation of human life abroad today, which exceeds by far the bounds of what used to be known as selfishness and egotism. It has produced in thousands of people an aberrant and idiosyncratic behavior which is truly destructive.

In The Rooster and the Tortoise, the fatal confusion (and in this case it was literally almost fatal) was between spirit and psyche; between those parts and attributes of ours that are quantifiable, and yet through which spirit most easily makes itself known. If everything we have taken to be of spirit can be made to seem a product merely of the human psyche, with no meaning or significance beyond its factualness, then love can be made to seem only a chemical interaction, and love's paradigm is killed.

**In each case, one basic note of possession is confusion. Sex is confused with gender. Spirit is confused With psyche. Moral value is confused with absence of any value. Mystery is confused with untruth. And, in every case, rational argument is used, not to clarify, but as a trap, to foster confusion and to nurture it as a major weapon against the exorcist. Confusion, it would seem, is a prime weapon of evil.**

There is much more to be observed and said about the meaning of possession. Not everything can be covered in a single volume. But possession and Exorcism are not themselves mere fads with no interest beyond the bizarre and significantly frightening. They are tangible expressions of the reality which envelops the daily lives of ordinary people. No study of possession and Exorcism cases within the Christian optic would be adequate without a minimum of explanation - from the Christian point of view-about that reality: what takes place in possession, and how that degrading process develops in a particular individual. Such an explanation occupies the final section of this book.

This study makes no attempt to answer the ultimate puzzle of possession: why this person rather than that person becomes the object of diabolic attack which can end in partial or perfect possession. The answer certainly does not lie in psychological probings, in heredity, or in social phenomena. A final answer will include, as prime ingredients, the personal free choice which each individual makes and the mystery of human predestination. About free choice we know the essentials: I can choose evil for no other reason or motive than that I choose evil. Some apparently do. About predestination we know little or nothing. The puzzle remains.

All of the men and women involved in the five cases reported here are known to me personally; they have given their fullest cooperation on the condition that their identities and those of their

778 families and friends not be revealed. Therefore, all names and places have been changed, and  
779 other possible pointers to identity have been obscured. Any similarity between the cases  
780 reported here and any others that may have occurred is unintentional and purely coincidental.  
781

782 **Preface to the New Edition:**  
783 **Possession and Exorcism in America in the 1990s**

784  
785 In the blink of God's eye since Hostage to the Devil was first published in 1976, nothing has  
786 changed on the one hand. And everything has changed on the other.  
787

788 Nothing has changed in the process by which an individual is Possessed by personal and  
789 intelligent evil. Nothing has changed, either, in the requirements for successful Exorcism of a  
790 Possessed individual. All of that remains as described and summarized in the chapters and  
791 cases that follow.  
792

793 What have changed are the conditions of the society in which we all now live. To a far greater  
794 degree than most of us could have imagined fifteen or so years ago, a favorable climate for the  
795 occurrence of demonic Possession has developed as the normal condition of our lives.  
796

797 In 1976 Satanism was presented, and was probably regarded by most Americans, as a box  
798 office and a bookstore draw. In fact, Hostage to the Devil was intended as a clear warning that  
799 Possession is not- nor was it ever-some tale of dark fancy featuring ogres and happy endings.  
800 Possession is real; and real prices are paid.  
801

802 Now, in America of the 1990s, there is little question of demonic Possession as an  
803 entertainment. Among families everywhere and at every level of society, there is instead a  
804 justifiable fear. Most of all, this fear is for children. And in point of fact, there are few families not  
805 already affected in some way by Satanism. Even by ritualistic Satanism-formal ceremonies and  
806 rites organized and performed by individuals and groups in professed worship of Satan.  
807

808 For obvious reasons, we don't know everything about organized Satanist groups, or covens as  
809 they are called, in the United States. But the ample knowledge we do have justifies the fear  
810 among average families for their children and their way of life in the future.  
811

812 We know, for example, that throughout all fifty states of the Union, there are now something  
813 over 8,000 Satanist covens. We know that in any major American city or large town, a Black  
814 Mass - almost always organized by covens - is available on a weekly basis at least, and at  
815 several locations. We know that the average membership of Satanist covens is drawn from all  
816 the professions as well as from among politicians, clergy, and religious.  
817

818 We know further that within those covens, a certain amount of "specialization" has come about.  
819 One can choose either a heterosexual or a homosexual coven, for example. In at least three  
820 major cities, members of the clergy have at their disposal at least one pedophilic coven  
821 peopled and maintained exclusively by and for the clergy. Women religious can find a lesbian  
822 coven maintained in a similar way. We know, too, that in many public schools in any major city,  
823 it is a virtual surety that there is at least one group of teenagers engaged in ritualist Satanism.  
824 And though we know very little -again for obvious reasons - about human sacrifice as an  
825 element in ritualist Satanism, we do know that in certain covens in which confidentiality is an  
826 absolute, life-or-death condition, the penalty for attempting to quit the coven is ritual death by  
827 knife, with one stab wound inflicted for every year of the offending member's life.  
828

829 Hard admissible evidence concerning human sacrifice as an element in Satanist rituals is limited  
830 by the fact that disposal of human remains has been developed into one of the dark art forms  
831 within Satanist circles through use of portable incinerators and crematoria; and because there  
832 are no birth or baptismal records - no records of existence - of intended Victim infants.

833 Nevertheless, we have enormous amounts of anecdotal evidence indicating that some  
834 thousands of infants and children are intentionally conceived and born to serve as Victims in  
835 Satanist sacrificial rites. In the world of Satanist worship, boys are preferred as gender-replicas  
836 of the Christ Child. But girls are by no means excluded.

837  
838 In this regard, the emergence of child abuse as a characteristic of our time must claim particular  
839 attention. Not all-perhaps not even most-child abuse originates in ritualist Satanism per se. Each  
840 case must be weighed on the evidence. But the extent of child abuse in America today and the  
841 concrete evidence of Satanism as a factor in many such cases, begins to give some idea of the  
842 degree to which the inverted standards that are the prime hallmark of Satanist activity in any  
843 form -and of ritualist Satanism above all-have infiltrated and influenced all levels of our society.

844  
845 As horrifying as even that much information is - though it is not all of the information we have, by  
846 any means -still more shocking is the realization of the fact that in this, the America of the  
847 1990s, one is never far from a center where such activity is carried out on a routine basis. No  
848 one lives far from some geographical area where some form of ritualistic Satanism is practiced.  
849 Ritualistic Satanism and its inevitable consequence, demonic Possession, are now part and  
850 parcel of the atmosphere of life in America.

851  
852 That a more favorable climate exists now than ever before for the occurrence of demonic  
853 Possession among the general population is so clear, that it is attested to daily by competent  
854 social and psychological experts, who for the most part, appear to have no "religious bias."

855  
856 Our cultural desolation - a kind of agony of aimlessness coupled with a dominant self-interest-is  
857 documented for us in the disintegration of our families. In the breakup of our educational  
858 system. In the disappearance of publicly accepted norms of decency in language, dress and  
859 behavior. In the lives of our youth, everywhere deformed by stunning violence and sudden  
860 death; by teenage pregnancy; by drug and alcohol addiction; by disease; by suicide; by fear.  
861 America is arguably now the most violent of the so-called developed nations of the world.

862  
863 Parents do have every reason to be concerned, then. For above all, the greatest changes in the  
864 conditions in which we have come to live over the past twenty years or so have meant that  
865 young people are left as the most defenseless against the possibility of Possession. Raised  
866 more and more in an atmosphere where moral criticism is not merely out of fashion, but  
867 prohibited, they swim with little help in a veritable sea of pornography. Not merely sexual  
868 pornography, but the pornography of unmitigated self-interest. Whether spoken or acted Just as  
869 the practical impact of large numbers of faithful clergy among us was once so great, so now are  
870 the practical consequences for us all-believers and nonbelievers alike -of large numbers of  
871 unfaithful churchmen.

872  
873 Among the general population of Catholics and Christians of other denominations, large  
874 numbers of people no longer learn even so basic a prayer as the Our Father. In churches and  
875 parochial schools alike, the subject of Hell is avoided, as one midwestern priest put it, in order  
876 not to put people "on a guilt trip." The idea of sin is likewise avoided, according to the same  
877 source, in order not to do "irreparable damage to what has been taught for the past fifteen  
878 years."

879  
880 That much alone leaves every Christian at a profound and needless disadvantage in the  
881 confrontation with evil that life brings to each of us. Deeply felt prohibitions against mixing what  
882 is termed the "rational" with the faith that is necessary for the recognition of evil is, for many, an  
883 insurmountable obstacle. And without the grace that is born of true faith, Satan does what he  
884 does best-he ceases to exist in the eyes of those who do not see.

885  
886 Still, the most dramatic and immediate harm by far that results from such an extensive and  
887 pervasive lack of instruction falls upon the true and valid victims of Possession. The individual  
888 victims of personal evil, in their thousands.



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The Church is the only element in society with the authority and the availing remedy to counteract such manifest evil. If, then, the officials charged with this basic duty of the Church deny the very legacy of that Church-if they turn their backs even on Scriptural descriptions of Christ casting out demons; if they characterize those accounts as false and as literary license - then actual victims of true demonic activity are left with no hope.

"If the salt has lost its saltiness," St. Mark quotes Christ, "wherewith will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another." In a nutshell, that is the condition of some of our clergy; and it is the plight of the Possessed in America of the 1990s. If the Church Fathers no longer believe, then victims of demonic Possession have nowhere to turn. They have no place to seek the help they require and to which they have every right as afflicted Christians.

To combine known, valid Possession with hopelessness must surely cause the worst kind of insanity, if not death. It is a terrible condemnation. But at least as terrible is that those very men whose vocation is to believe and carry out all that the Church has held since its beginning, have abandoned those they still profess to serve in the name of Christ.

The circle of helplessness and suffering caused by such unfaith among churchmen does not stop with ordinary Christians and with the Possessed, however. It widens much further.

Because of the nature of the outrages that occur in the course of ritualistic Satanism - some extreme cases of child abuse and serial killings are but two ready examples - officers of the law frequently enter the picture. Faced with undeniable evidence of a Satanist context-evidence such as Pentagrams, broken crucifixes, Satanist graffiti, and other such paraphernalia-law officers were once able to call on the help of clergymen expert in dealing with demonic Possession.

Such help is rarely available today. Rather, ignorance, disinterest, disbelief, even adamant unwillingness on the part of many Church officials to so much as discuss demonic Possession and Exorcism, is literally the order of the day.

In point of fact, in the Roman Catholic Church, the Order of the Exorcist-part of every priest's ordination since time immemorial - has been omitted from the new rite of priestly ordination, as drawn up by innovators after 1964 in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

Because both demonic Possession and its remedy, the Rite of Exorcism, are thus seen by many officials and their advisors to be irrelevant-to be as negligible as, say, training in the use of a medieval astrolabe - many Catholic dioceses, large and small, in the United States have no official Exorcist.

In some of the more fortunate dioceses, where priests bring in ad hoc Exorcists from out of town, the bishops of those dioceses know nothing and want to know less. But if they are not exactly benign, at least they turn a blind eye. And as permission of the bishop is required for Exorcism to proceed, that blind eye can be, and is, taken as "tacit permission."

In other dioceses, however, bishops are expressly opposed to the rite of Exorcism. Even in such situations, there are priests who still bring Exorcists from out of town. Their canonical justification even here is that the bishop has given "presumed permission." That is, if the bishop believed what he should believe as bishop, and further, if he knew about and recognized as valid a particular case of demonic Possession, then it can be presumed he would authorize the Exorcism.

Such theological reasoning and canonical shenanigans are not only tortuous. They present a scenario that comes right out of the catacombs. For the result is what can only be called an Exorcism underground. A group of priests in one diocese networks in great and guarded

945 secrecy with those of other dioceses, in order to fulfill their obligations to the faithful in need.  
946 Ecclesiastically, this situation gives rise to irregularities, to be sure. It also leads in some cases  
947 to unjustly imposed canonical sanctions by irate and unbelieving bishops who maintain that their  
948 authority is thus being flouted.

949  
950 Even in such difficult circumstances, however, the incidence of Exorcism has been on a steady  
951 rise. There has been a 750 percent increase in the number of Exorcisms performed between the  
952 early 1960s and the mid-1970s. Over the same period, there has been an alarming increase in  
953 the number of requested Possessions - that is, cases in which the Possessed formally request  
954 Satan to possess them -in comparison to the cases of incurred Possessions, which result from  
955 other sorts of activities of the Possessed that facilitate Possession.

956  
957 Each year, some 800 to 1,300 major Exorcisms, and some thousands of minor Exorcisms are  
958 performed. For experts in the field, this is a sobering barometer of the increase in known cases  
959 of Possession. But it is still more sobering to realize how many more cases of Possession  
960 cannot be addressed at all. The thousands of letters I receive from people who are desperate  
961 for help - Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and unchurched -are eloquent, anguished, and a  
962 steadily mounting testimony to the crisis.

963  
964 Law officers, meanwhile, are increasingly confronted on every side by the incontrovertible signs  
965 of crimes committed in the course of ritualistic Satanism or as a grisly result of an individual's  
966 participation in such rituals. They are very often left out of the shrunken loop of expert advice  
967 and assistance. Advice and assistance that was once routinely to be found.

968  
969 To those who are active in the field of Exorcism, and who therefore acquire a greater than usual  
970 ability to uncover and recognize the marks of ritualistic Satanism for what they are, it is clear  
971 that in many police precincts the Satanist character of a crime is either relegated to the  
972 background or not mentioned at all - at least in public reports.

973  
974 By and large, the police have no other choice. They have neither competence nor authority in  
975 the rarefied, and dangerous field of Satanist behavior. Beyond the fact that a meaningless  
976 recounting of Satanist details often inspires imitation, any attempt by an officer-or by anyone,  
977 including a trained and authorized Exorcist, as the five cases recounted in Hostage to the Devil  
978 make clear-to free an individual from a possessing demon places the aspiring rescuer in great  
979 danger of demonic attack.

980  
981 A similar lack of help is faced as well by therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers,  
982 and others who, like police, must deal with aberrant individuals. For, within the present context  
983 of life in America, the probability of Possession having occurred in overtly sadistic or otherwise  
984 violent, antisocial individuals is impressively high.

985  
986 To the problem faced by law officers and others who must deal with the afflictions of Satanism,  
987 the most effective answer would be the development of a close and balanced collaboration with  
988 those who are knowledgeable and experienced in the confidential, personal, and dangerous  
989 field of Possession and Exorcism.

990  
991 To develop such a grid of cooperation in the present era, however, may be next to impossible -  
992 given all the circumstances outlined above, and others besides. Like the Possessed with whom  
993 they regularly come in contact, such professionals are left to deal with the problem as best they  
994 can, using the ultimately inadequate tools provided in secular codes of law and common  
995 behavior.

996  
997 As usual, however, it is the men and women of the general public who pay the greatest price.  
998 For, even though most of us pass all our years without coming directly across any Satanist  
999 covenant as such, and without being approached with a view to joining a covenant, the absence of any

1000 such interdisciplinary grid of cooperation among experts and professionals has consequences  
1001 that affect every one of us.  
1002

1003 Concrete evidence in a substantial number of crimes - in certain cases of child abuse again, for  
1004 example; and in the rising national plague of seemingly motiveless or unprovoked teen-age  
1005 murders, suicides, and rapes - lead some secular investigators to the correct idea that one ring  
1006 of child abusers, say, may be organizationally linked to other such groups.  
1007

1008 Yet, as things stand at the moment, there is no lawfully admissible evidence that a national  
1009 organization of Satanist groups, or covens, exists. Or that coven members in the United States  
1010 and Canada are consciously and deliberately engaged in a nationwide and cross-border  
1011 conspiracy. Indeed, in the United States covens can claim the constitutional protection of law for  
1012 their rites and ceremonies, provided no infraction of that law can be attributed to them during  
1013 their professional activities as coven members.  
1014

1015 Although the Satanist element in such groups may not be a direct and official concern of secular  
1016 law- may, indeed, be officially off limits to the law-laws are nevertheless broken in the pursuit of  
1017 Satanist worship. Understanding that such groups exist in large numbers from coast to coast,  
1018 that some of those groups may be linked with other groups, and that their activities frequently  
1019 and expertly turn secular law on its head, would doubtless go some distance in enlarging the  
1020 circle of legal competence to deal with some part of the problem, at least on one level.  
1021

1022 If to disbelieve is to be disarmed, the reverse is equally true. Given the general conditions that  
1023 surround us in our present society, it becomes all the more important to realize that even in the  
1024 worst conditions, no person can be Possessed without some degree of cooperation on his or  
1025 her part. It is extremely important to be aware of at least some of the factors that are likely to  
1026 facilitate collaboration between a possessing demon and the Possessed.  
1027

1028 The effective cause of Possession is the voluntary collaboration of an individual, through his  
1029 faculties of mind and will, with one or more of those bodiless, genderless creatures called  
1030 demons.  
1031

1032 While there are no causes of demonic Possession that can be physically dissected or otherwise  
1033 reduced to our currently shrunken, laboratory standards of "objectivity," it is and always has  
1034 been both possible and necessary to speak of those causes with theological accuracy.  
1035

1036 Demonic Possession is not a static condition, an unchanging state. Nor does one become  
1037 Possessed suddenly, the way one might break an arm or catch the measles.  
1038

1039 Rather, Possession is an ongoing process. A process that affects the two faculties of the soul:  
1040 the mind, by which an individual receives and internalizes knowledge. And the will, by which an  
1041 individual chooses to act upon that knowledge.  
1042 Ample experience with the Possessed has clearly demonstrated that there are certain  
1043 identifiable factors that dispose an individual to collaborate, in mind and will, with a Possessing  
1044 demon. Disposing factors, therefore.  
1045

1046 The presence of such disposing factors in a person's life does not in itself portend that the  
1047 person will surely one day be numbered among the Possessed. At the same time, and with only  
1048 rare exceptions in my experience, one or several of these disposing factors are operational in  
1049 genuine cases of Possession.  
1050

1051 Some of the most common disposing factors have been with us for a long time, while others are  
1052 of more recent vintage. Some are in the nature of "instruments" outside the individual -the Ouija  
1053 Board, for example, and the Spiritual Seance. Others are in the nature of "attitudes," whether  
1054 taught or self-learned, that are interiorized by the [ person-Transcendental Meditation and the  
1055 Enneagram Method are two of the most prominent in this category.

1056  
1057 In the context of Possession, all disposing factors produce within a person a condition of those  
1058 two faculties of soul - mind and will - that is most aptly described as an aspiring vacuum.  
1059 Vacuum, because there is created an absence of clearly defined and humanly acceptable  
1060 concepts for the mind. Aspiring, because there is a corresponding absence of clearly defined  
1061 and humanly acceptable goals for the will.  
1062  
1063 In the case of the Ouija Board, or that of the Seance or TM or the Enneagram Method, the  
1064 participants must dispose themselves precisely with a view to being opened up; to becoming  
1065 desirous and accepting of whatever happens along.  
1066 The very term, Ouija, for example, is a display of this opening up for the term is composed of the  
1067 French and German words - Oui and Ja - for Yes. The attitude of the participant in Ouija is  
1068 literally "Yes, yes." The mind is to be made receptive to whatever suggestions or concepts are  
1069 presented. If participants also dispose their wills to accept those concepts and act on them, then  
1070 the predisposing circuit is complete. The aspiring vacuum is operative and is powerful enough to  
1071 flood the mind with appropriate concepts that can make a lid for the will's assent.  
1072  
1073 Often enough, the mind and the will are opened up in precisely this fashion in view of  
1074 Possession.  
1075  
1076 Among the vast array of disposing factors likely to lead to Possession, the Enneagram Method  
1077 is nowadays far and away the most common and pernicious. Given the general state of religion,  
1078 it is not surprising that the Method's popularity is enormously enhanced by its having been  
1079 enthusiastically adopted and propagated by Catholic theologians and teachers from the major  
1080 religious Orders-Jesuit, Dominican, and Franciscan -and by some of the official organs used by  
1081 the bishops of the United States and Canada charged with teaching religious doctrine to young  
1082 and adult Catholics.  
1083  
1084 Moreover, because the Enneagram Method is currently presented as an authorized teaching of  
1085 the North American Forum on the Catechumenate -the body that supplies to the parishes and  
1086 dioceses of the United States and Canada precisely those materials intended to bring  
1087 communities and individuals to maturity of faith - the Method penetrates the full fabric of  
1088 religious belief and participation, literally from cradle to grave.  
1089  
1090 So effective has the Enneagram Method become in strangling genuine Catholic faith, that it is  
1091 now considered by some as the most lethal threat to date in the campaign being waged to  
1092 liquidate orthodox Catholic belief among the faithful.  
1093  
1094 True to its name - enneagram means "nine points," or "marks"- the Enneagram is a nine-pointed  
1095 mandala-type figure within a circle. The mandala character of the Enneagram is meant to  
1096 represent the lotus and, as described by Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, is "a symbol depicting  
1097 the endeavor to reunite the self."  
1098  
1099 The Enneagram came to the West from a now dead Asianic spiritual master, George Ivanovich  
1100 Gurdjieff. Gurdjieff claimed in turn that it originated with the Sufi Masters of Islam. It reached the  
1101 United States via "spiritual teachers" in Chile, Bolivia, and Peru and in the early 1970s was first  
1102 broadcast here from the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, and Loyola University in Chicago.  
1103 There is now abundant literature on the subject.  
1104  
1105 According to Enneagram teaching, there are exactly nine types of human personality, each of  
1106 which is represented by one of the nine points of the Enneagram figure. Each human being is  
1107 inalterably confined to one, and only one, of those personality types. But within his or her type,  
1108 each person is infinitely self-perfectible.  
1109  
1110 Two characteristics of the Enneagram Method comprise moral teachings that are irreconcilable  
1111 with the basic moral teachings of Catholics in particular and Christians in general.

1112  
1113 The basic presumption presented to the mind by the Enneagram Method is that each individual  
1114 is self-perfectible, morally speaking, within that individual's personality type.  
1115  
1116 This presumption is in reality a late revival of an ancient heresy known as Pelagianism. It is at  
1117 odds with the basic Christian teaching that we absolutely depend on the action of divine grace  
1118 for all moral perfection. Of ourselves, we are helpless. Not only are we not infinitely self-  
1119 perfectible; we will never of ourselves even escape the grip of our sinful nature. Only  
1120 supernatural grace enables us to do that. And that grace is simply gratuitous on God's part.  
1121  
1122 The teaching of the Enneagram Method cuts both God and his grace out of the loop. In fact,  
1123 there is no longer any loop at all. The individual is cut off from effective knowledge of his or her  
1124 dependence on God and his supernatural grace for ultimate perfection. He or she is confined to  
1125 an inalterable personality type, which has been laid out by Enneagram Masters.  
1126  
1127 The second faulty moral characteristic of the Enneagram Method completes the damage caused  
1128 by the first. Having fatalistically accepted one's own category, the participant is dependent for  
1129 perfection on the Enneagrammatic exercises suitable for one's personality type. In other words,  
1130 the soul of the Enneagram disciple is opened out and made docile, with the goal of receiving the  
1131 promised self-knowledge congruent with his or her type. The soul becomes an apt and classic  
1132 receptor-an aspiring vacuum -ready for the approach of an intending Possessor.  
1133  
1134 In such a setting, the intending Possessor may come as what St. Paul described with dramatic  
1135 precision as an Angel of Light. But the danger is all the more insidious for that. For in such a  
1136 situation, the condition commonly called "perfect Possession" may be the result.  
1137  
1138 As the term implies, a victim of perfect Possession is absolutely controlled by evil and gives no  
1139 outward indication, no hint whatsoever, of the demonic residing within. He or she will not cringe,  
1140 as others who are Possessed will, at the sight of such religious symbols as a crucifix or a  
1141 Rosary. The perfectly Possessed will not bridle at the touch of Holy Water, nor hesitate to  
1142 discuss religious topics with equanimity.  
1143  
1144 If convicted of crimes against the law, such a victim will frequently acknowledge "guilt," and even  
1145 the moral "badness" of the acts committed. More often than not, such a person will petition that  
1146 his physical life be forfeited; that he be executed for his crimes. Thus, in his own way, he voices  
1147 the insistent Satanist preference for death over life, and the fixated desire to join the Prince in  
1148 his kingdom.  
1149  
1150 Because there is no will left to call the victim's own -and because some part of the victim's will is  
1151 necessary for any hope of successful Exorcism - remedy is unlikely to succeed even in the  
1152 event the Possession should somehow be uncovered and verified as the problem.  
1153  
1154 In a very real sense, all of us - the Possessed, the professionals who must so frequently deal  
1155 with them; the parents who fear for their children; everyone who lives in a society degraded by  
1156 happenings that were only recently unimaginable to us -all are in the same boat.  
1157  
1158 Even such a sober-sided and rationally minded publication as The New York Times sees fit from  
1159 time to time to print the most somber laments and predictions. Take, for example, the March  
1160 15,1992, article by Robert Stone in which he says flatly that "our nation signifies the virtual  
1161 apotheosis of the interested self." And in which he goes on to point out that "human nature  
1162 rejects [self interest] as an end, requiring something higher and finer." Then, speaking pointedly  
1163 of the younger generations among us, Stone raises a bleak warning: "If we cannot furnish them  
1164 with a cause beyond the realization of their individual desires, all [of America's] past successes  
1165 may be rendered meaningless."

1166  
1167 That is but one warning parents all across this land might well see fit to tack on the door of every  
1168 recalcitrant bishop, every unbelieving churchman.  
1169  
1170 They might justifiably tack on those doors as well a reminder of St. Paul's admonition to the  
1171 sorcerer Elymas. On the pretext of instructing Sergius Paulus, "a prudent man," Elymas  
1172 attempted instead to corrupt him. Never one to suffer such duplicity or to mince words, always  
1173 prepared to bare his own soul, Paul, we are told, "filled with the Holy Ghost," rounded against  
1174 the pretender. "Oh, full of all guile and of all deceit"- Paul said that day-"son of the devil, enemy  
1175 of all justice, you do not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord."  
1176  
1177 Yet, surely the most important reminder to our churchmen is also the simplest and the most  
1178 direct. A reminder of the admonition of Christ himself to his Apostles as they were beset in their  
1179 little boat by the fury of a storm on Lake Gennesaret: "How is it that you have no faith?"  
1180  
1181 Of the five Exorcees whose cases are recounted in Hostage to the Devil, none was perfectly  
1182 Possessed. Hence, they were all apt subjects for the Rite of Exorcism. Their fortunes and lives  
1183 have varied considerably since their individual Exorcisms. None fell back into Possession.  
1184  
1185 Marianne K. took training as a dental technician, married, and lived for nearly seventeen years.  
1186 She died of cancer in the early 1980s.  
1187  
1188 Jonathan Yves is retired from the active priesthood. He entered the field of computers for a time,  
1189 but has since abandoned that work and now lives with relatives. He never married.  
1190  
1191 Richard O. led a very active life as a counselor and therapist for a number of years in the United  
1192 States before he migrated to Europe, where he died at the end of the last decade.  
1193  
1194 Jamsie Z. pursued his career in radio and is now semi-retired as the president of a company he  
1195 founded.  
1196  
1197 Carl V. tested his religious vocation in more than one monastery before he decided to live  
1198 almost as a hermit in a remote part of the United States. More than the other four Exorcises  
1199 described in Hostage to the Devil, Carl attained what more than one of his acquaintances  
1200 readily call holiness. In the last two or three years of his life, he was graced with a special insight  
1201 into the spiritual anguish of men and women who sought him out for counsel. Many of them  
1202 speak of the radiance in his look and the power he had to bring peace to troubled minds.  
1203  
1204 Of the Exorcists who presented themselves as hostages to Satan for the liberation of his  
1205 victims, Father Peter, Father David M., and Father Gerald are dead. Father Mark A. is living in a  
1206 home for retired priests. Father Hartney F. may be the only one to reach the age of one  
1207 hundred. Still living and retired to a nursing home, Father Hartney is afflicted with severe arthritis  
1208 and is able to say Mass only with intense difficulty.  
1209  
1210 All five of these Exorcists trained several other men and included in their instruction the wisdom  
1211 and the selflessness needed for anyone who would voluntarily give himself as hostage in order  
1212 to liberate another from the bondage of Possession.  
1213  
1214 The epitaph on the tombstone of the gentle Father Gerald is testimony to the vocation of all  
1215 these men, and it is witness to the source of their strength. For that epitaph is from the mouth of  
1216 the loving Lord in whose glory Gerald now rests: "Greater love than this no man hath, than that  
1217 a man lay down his life for his friend."  
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**Malachi Martin New York April 1992**

How are you fallen from Heaven,  
Lucifer! Son of the Dawn!  
Cut down to the ground!  
And once you dominated the peoples!  
Didn't you say to yourself: •  
I will be as high as Heaven!  
I will be more exalted than the stars of God!  
I will, indeed, be the supreme leader!  
In the privileged places!  
I will be higher than the Skies!  
I will be the same as the Most High God!  
But you shall be brought down to Hell, to the bottom of its pit.  
And all who see you, will despise you. . . .

• **Isaiah 14:12-19**

. . . "Lord! In your name, even evil spirits are under our control!"  
And He said to them: "I saw Satan falling like  
lightning from Heaven.  
You know: I gave you power . . .  
over all the strength of Satan. . . .  
Nevertheless, don't take pride in the fact  
that spirits are subject to your control,  
but, rather, because you belong to God . . .  
The Father has given Me all power. . . ."

-**Luke 10:17-22**