

*Fr. Perozich comments —*

*In the style of The Screwtape Letters, Nicoll gives us a modern version to warn us how the demonic works to pull us away from what the demon calls the “Adversary”, the “Enemy” Who is their enemy and adversary, but Who is our almighty God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!*

*My fellow Catholic, hold to Jesus Christ and remember the first 3 questions of your early catechism to help keep you on track along with your frequent confession and communion:*

- 1. Who Made me? God made me*
- 2. Who is God? God is the Supreme Being Who made all things.*
- 3. Why did God make me? God made me to show forth His goodness, to know, to love, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him in the next.*

*Should some cleric tell you different, grant him respect, but hold to Jesus and to your faith in Him as the Savior of your soul.*

## Two Paths to Hell



REGIS NICOLL

Voiced by **Amazon Polly**

[https://3m7ajlsrzj92lfd1hu16hu7vc-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/amazon\\_polly\\_88889.mp3?version=1563941695](https://3m7ajlsrzj92lfd1hu16hu7vc-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/amazon_polly_88889.mp3?version=1563941695)

Dear Swillpit,

The sure way to Hell is by a series of incremental adjustments so small, and seemingly innocuous, that earthlings never notice they are woefully off course until they find themselves aboard Charon's skiff heading for the opposite shore.

A believer who turns against our Adversary in a moment of anger or doubt is just as likely to turn back when he becomes a father or is diagnosed with cancer. But the man who over years and decades has developed a thick crust of disbelief is nearly impenetrable; he's one to [dismiss](#) a seraphic visitation as "an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of underdone potato." Oh, how I devoured that story until its distasteful, and wholly, unrealistic turn. The legions of "Scrooges" who have passed through our gargoyled gates are testimony against its highly mythological ending.

Ah, but I digress!

With every victory, you should be at the ready with the next "right step." It grieves me how many earthlings have slipped through our talons because an agent fell aswoon over

his latest accomplishment. Your silence about this leads me to believe that you, too, are nodding under the stupor of success. Awake, sluggard! Back to your station!

Attend closely to my words, remain vigilant to the task at hand, and before long your pet will be slipping his head in the collar you have put before him.

Upon closer review of his dossier, I see that he is a highly empathetic sort; one who, even before his tilt to evolution, winced at squashing the smallest of insects. This sentiment for lower creatures has been instrumental in shaping his attitudes and behaviors. For example, over the years his diet has gradually shifted from anything and everything to anything save red meat, to vegetarian to, now, vegan. Not that his dietary decisions are important in themselves, but only as they reveal something that we can exploit.

In cases like this, the notion of common descent can feed and intensify an already strong fellow-creature feeling. The evolutionary tree unites all life from the oldest bacterium to the most advanced biped in a bond more imperishable than the nuclear binding force.

Spluteen told of a rube with a refined taste for eastern philosophy and Darwinism who “found himself” when he looked at the face of a canyon wall. Surveying the stratified surface, he caught sight of a 60-million-year-old fossil and, straight away, experienced oneness in the evolutionary flow of the cosmos.

In that golden moment, he realized that the “good life” is not about conformance to binary distinctions of right or wrong, good or evil; it’s about being “in the flow.” He has become, I’m proud to report, a most apathetic creature who has lost interest in any objective distinction whatever. I’m told

that, when recently pressed, the creature had a hard time articulating a coherent position about the Holocaust.

Once the unintelligent origin of animate forms is accepted, it is easy enough to expand that to inanimate forms, as well. Your man is content for the moment to permit our Adversary that role. But the more he is exposed to the “fact” of evolution with vaunted theories from every department of the Academy “explaining” how the wonders of natural selection account for everything from physiology to theology, the less content he will be with that permission.

While the originators applied evolution from a simple, primordial life form forward, latter-day popularizers extend evolution from that point back, to a terrestrial life-generating cocktail; and some, all the way back to the sudden, unexpected explosion of photons and quarks when the Enemy uttered, “Let there be light.”

Your creature’s present inclination is to limit science to the physical questions of “how,” leaving the metaphysical questions of “why” for his religion. Just let him see how totalizing science can be, and watch him slide into a gut-gripping existential crisis of meaning. Once he does, you have two paths to take him down.

If he is an individualistic sap who places supreme value on courage, competency, and self-sufficiency, put him on the path of nihilism. Steer his thoughts to the vast emptiness of the universe, silent and cold, save for shocking violence where, from mate-eating insects to exploding supernovae, man is an oddity, a thinking being left alone to make sense of his existence. Feed his sense of alienation and loneliness in this hostile place by laying before him the unavoidable logic: a cosmos created from the haphazard collision of particles is a universe without purpose or meaning.

From there, you can beguile him into either life-ending despair or self-exalting pride. While the former gives us an immediate, lasting victory, the latter has proven infinitely more expedient in the long term. Throughout history, individuals who have heroically braved the uncaring cosmos, creating their own meaning of existence through an authentic (how I love that word!) journey of personal autonomy and discovery, have influenced multitudes to assume the throne of Self. Our Master is the first (and best!) example of this.

However, in your patient's case, I strongly suspect that a spiritualistic path has the best chance of success. Remember that the Enemy fashioned them with a spiritual nature and a spiritual longing, making them irrepressibly religious. This hard-wiring is extremely difficult to short-circuit, even by our most experienced tempters. It is a reality made piercingly clear by the fact that, despite all of our painstaking toil since the Garden, less than three percent of today's worldlings profess atheism.

Like the vast majority of his kind, your man has come to the realization that without transcendence, life is not only inexplicable, but untenable. If he's going to place faith in something, it's going to be Something that, at least, promises answers to his most pressing questions—answers that make life meaningful and livable.

That's why we've had more success re-directing their spiritual yearnings; Cosmic Consciousness, universal Mind, and the Force are a few of the concepts we've exported. These organizing principles *beneath* nature, give rise to the laws *in* nature, revealing the purpose *of* nature for unlimited evolutionary progress. It should not strain your imagination to see how this had led to the spiritualization of Nature.

For the spiritually bent, Nature assumes the role of mystical Mother with answers to the timeless questions of life; which, according to one of our more effective scripts, go like this:

*Where did I come from?* Gaia.

*What went wrong?* The scourge of pollution, consumerism, waste.

*How should I live?* By the principle of sustainability.

*How will it end?* In a climate change meltdown.

*What's the fix?* Recycling, carbon credits and ... population control!

That's right, population control. With Nature as the measure of all things, humans have value only as they contribute to her evolutionary progress. I, myself, confess surprise at how quickly this spawned the belief that there is no problem on earth that fewer people on the planet wouldn't solve. It will strike you ironic, as it first did me, that this is especially popular among those who have strong empathy for high and low organisms, alike.

It's like this: Much to our credit, they have come to see lower creatures living cooperatively and harmoniously in the ecosystem according to the inwrought laws of Nature. Man, on the other hand, stands against Nature, upsetting her balance through arrogance, greed, and immoderation. Restoring Nature to its Arcadian past is a matter of reducing the human footprint.

What makes my scales tingle, Swillpit, is *how* we've been able to pull this off: by contradicting the claim of our Enemy that creation is untamed, *needing* the caring touch of man to flourish and, more deliciously, by exploiting the very thing

designed to draw man to him—the spiritual impulse. Oooh, I'm feeling another spell of giddiness coming on!

Well, well, enough for now. I'll expect a full report on your progress, soon.

Feverishly Yours,

S.