

DON JUAN IN HELL
Man and Superman - Act III
By George Bernard Shaw

There is an old crone wandering in the void, bent and toothless; draped, as well as one can guess, in the coarse brown frock of some religious order. She wanders and wanders in her slow hopeless way, much as a wasp flies in its rapid busy way, until she blunders against the thing she seeks: companionship. With a sob of relief the poor old creature clutches at the presence of the man and addresses him in her dry unlovely voice, which can still express pride and resolution as well as suffering.

THE OLD WOMAN Excuse me; but I am so lonely; and this place is so awful.

DON JUAN Are you new here?

THE OLD WOMAN Yes: I suppose I died this morning. I confessed; I had extreme unction; I was in bed with my family about me and my eyes fixed on the cross. Then it grew dark; and when the light came back it was this light by which I walk seeing nothing. I have wandered for hours in horrible loneliness.

DON JUAN Ah! you have not yet lost the sense of time.

THE OLD WOMAN Where are we?

DON JUAN In hell.

THE OLD WOMAN Hell! I in hell! How dare you? You do not know to whom you are speaking. I am a lady, and a faithful daughter of the Church.

DON JUAN I do not doubt it.

THE OLD WOMAN But how then can I be in hell? Purgatory, perhaps: I have not been perfect: who has? But hell! oh, you are lying. I have sincerely repented; I have confessed-

DON JUAN How much?

THE OLD WOMAN More sins than I really committed. I loved confession.

DON JUAN Ah, that is as bad as confessing too little. At all events, senora, you are certainly damned, and there is nothing now but to make the best of it.

THE OLD WOMAN Oh! and I might have been so much wickeder! All my good deeds wasted! It is unjust.

DON JUAN No: We have many good people here.

THE OLD WOMAN Were you a good man?

DON JUAN I was a murderer.

THE OLD WOMAN A murderer! Oh, how dare they send me to a place with murderers! I was not as bad as that: I was a good woman. There is some mistake: where can I have it set right?

DON JUAN I should ask the Devil, senora: he understands the ways of this place.

THE OLD WOMAN The Devil! I speak to the Devil!

DON JUAN In hell, senora, the Devil is the leader of the best society.

THE OLD WOMAN I tell you, I know I am not in hell.

DON JUAN How do you know?

THE OLD WOMAN Because I feel no pain.

DON JUAN Oh, then there is no mistake: you are damned. Hell, senora, is a place for the wicked. They are quite comfortable in it: it was made for them.

THE OLD WOMAN Do you feel no pain?

DON JUAN I am not one of the wicked, senora; therefore it bores me beyond belief.

THE OLD WOMAN Not one of the wicked! You said you were a murderer.

DON JUAN Only a duel. I ran my sword through an old man who was trying to run his sword through me.

THE OLD WOMAN If you were a gentleman, that was not a murder.

DON JUAN The old man called it murder, because he was, he said, defending his daughter's honor. I foolishly fell in love with

her and told her so, whereupon she screamed; and he tried to assassinate me.

THE OLD WOMAN Listen to me. My father was slain by just such a wretch as you, in just such a duel, for just such a cause. I screamed: it was my duty. My father drew on my assailant: his honor demanded it. He fell: that was the reward of honor. I am here: in hell, you tell me: that is the reward of duty?

DON JUAN You will be welcome in hell, senora. Hell is the home of honor, duty, justice, and the rest of the seven deadly virtues. All the wickedness on earth is done in their name: where else but in hell should they have their reward? Have I not told you that the truly damned are those who are happy in hell?

THE OLD WOMAN And are you happy here?

DON JUAN No; and that is the enigma. Why am I here? I, who repudiated all duty, trampled honor underfoot, and laughed at justice!

THE OLD WOMAN Oh, what do I care why you are here? Why am I here? I, who sacrificed all my inclinations to womanly virtue and propriety!

DON JUAN Patience, lady: you will be perfectly happy and at home here.

THE OLD WOMAN Happy! here! Where I am nobody!

DON JUAN Not at all: you are a lady; and wherever ladies are is hell. You will find everything here that a lady can desire, including devils who will serve you from sheer love of servitude, and magnify your importance for the sake of dignifying their service - the best of servants.

THE OLD WOMAN My servants will be devils!

DON JUAN Have you ever had servants who were not devils?

THE OLD WOMAN Never: they were devils, perfect devils, all of them. But that is only a manner of speaking. I thought you meant that my servants here would be real devils.

DON JUAN No more real devils than you will be a real lady. Nothing is real here. That is the horror of damnation.

THE OLD WOMAN Oh, this is all madness. This is worse than fire and the worm.

DON JUAN For you, perhaps, there are consolations. For instance: how old were you when you changed from time to eternity?

THE OLD WOMAN Do not ask me how old I was - as if I were a thing of the past. I am 77.

DON JUAN A ripe age, senora. But in hell old age is not tolerated. Here we worship Love and Beauty. Our souls being entirely damned, we cultivate our hearts. As a lady of 77, you would not have a single acquaintance in hell.

THE OLD WOMAN How can I help my age?

DON JUAN You forget that you have left your age behind you in the realm of time. You are no more 77 now than you are 7 or 17 or 27.

THE OLD WOMAN Nonsense!

DON JUAN Consider, senora: was not this true even when you lived on earth? When you were 70, were you really older underneath your wrinkles and your grey hairs than when you were 30?

THE OLD WOMAN No, younger: at 30 I was a fool. But of what use is it to feel younger and look older?

DON JUAN Well, here we have no bodies: we can appear to one another at what age we choose.

THE OLD WOMAN It cannot be true.

DON JUAN Try.

THE OLD WOMAN Seventeen!

DON JUAN Stop. Before you decide, I had better tell you that these things are a matter of fashion. Occasionally we have a rage for 17; but it does not last long. Just at present the fashionable age is 40 - or 37.

THE OLD WOMAN I do not believe a word you are saying. However, 37 be it. [Whisk! the old woman becomes a young one, magnificently attired].

DON JUAN Dona Ana!

ANA What? You know me!

DON JUAN You forget me!

ANA I cannot see your face. (He turns toward her.) **DON JUAN** Tenorio! Monster! You slew my father! And even here you pursue me.

DON JUAN I protest I do not pursue you. Allow me to withdraw [going].

ANA [seizing his arm] You shall not leave me alone in this dreadful place. [releasing him] You may well wonder how I can endure your presence. My dear, dear father!

DON JUAN Would you like to see him?

ANA My father here!!!

DON JUAN No: he is in heaven.

ANA I knew it. My noble father! He is looking down on us now. What must he feel to see his daughter in this place, and in conversation with his murderer!

DON JUAN By the way, if we should meet him

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ANA How can we meet him? He is in heaven.

DON JUAN He condescends to look in upon us here from time to time. Heaven bores him. So let me warn you that if you meet him he will be mortally offended if you speak of me as his murderer! He maintains that he was a much better swordsman than I, and that if his foot had not slipped he would have killed me. No doubt he is right: I was not a good

fencer. I never dispute the point; so we are excellent friends. You would rather not meet him, probably.

ANA How dare you say that?

DON JUAN Oh, that is the usual feeling here. You may remember that on earth - though of course we never confessed it - the death of anyone we knew, even those we liked best, was always mingled with a certain satisfaction at being finally done with them.

ANA Monster! Never, never.

DON JUAN I see. You do recognize the feeling. Yes: a funeral was always a festivity in black, especially the funeral of a relative. At all events, family ties are rarely kept up here. Your father will not expect any devotion from you.

ANA Wretch: I wore mourning for him all my life.

DON JUAN It became you. But a life of mourning is one thing: an eternity of it quite another, dear Ana. Can anything be more ridiculous than one dead person mourning for another? You will pick up our ways soon.

ANA And will all the men call me their dear Ana?

DON JUAN No. That was a slip of the tongue. I beg your pardon.

ANA Juan: did you really love me when you behaved so disgracefully to me?

DON JUAN Oh, I beg you not to begin talking about love. Here they talk of nothing else: its beauty, its holiness, its spirituality, its devil knows what! - excuse me; but it does so bore me.

ANA Has even death failed to refine your soul, Juan? (looks off. Statue enters.)

DON JUAN Hush! Listen! Ah, here you are, my friend. I have news for you. Your daughter is dead.

THE STATUE ^{Pauses} My daughter? Oh! the one you were so taken with. Let me see: what was her name?

DON JUAN Ana.

THE STATUE ^{Ahh~} To be sure: Ana. A [→] good-looking girl, if I recollect aright. Have you warned Whatshisname? her husband.

DON JUAN My friend Ottavio? No: I have not seen him since Ana arrived.

ANA You, father, have forgotten my name. They were right to make a statue of you. You are indeed turned to stone.

THE STATUE My child, in this place, the farce of parental wisdom is dropped. Regard me, I beg, as a fellow creature, not as a father.

ANA You speak as this villain speaks.

THE STATUE Juan ^{isn't} is a sound thinker, Ana. A ^(chuckles) bad fencer, but a sound thinker.

ANA I begin to understand. You are devils, mocking me. I had better pray.

THE STATUE No, no, ~~no~~: do not pray. You will throw away the main advantage of this place. Written over the gate here are the words "Leave every hope behind, ye who enter." *stentorian* ~~What a relief that is! For what is hope?~~ A form of moral responsibility. Here there is no hope, and consequently no duty, no work, nothing to be gained by praying, nothing to be lost by doing what you like. Hell, in short, is a place where you have nothing to do but amuse yourself. [DON JUAN sighs deeply]. You sigh, friend Juan; but if you dwelt in heaven, as I do, you would realize your advantages.

DON JUAN You are in good spirits today, Commander. You are positively brilliant. What is the matter?

THE STATUE Well, I have come to a momentous decision, my boy. But first, where is our friend the Devil? I must consult him in the matter. And Ana would like to make his acquaintance, no doubt.

ANA You are preparing some torment for me.

DON JUAN The Devil is not so black as he is painted.

THE STATUE Let us give him a call.

THE DEVIL Have I the pleasure of again receiving a visit from the illustrious Commander of Calatrava? DON JUAN, your

servant. And a strange lady? My respects, senora.

ANA Are you-

THE DEVIL [bowing] Lucifer, at your service.

ANA I shall go mad.

THE DEVIL Ah, senora, do not be anxious. You come to us from earth, full of the prejudices and terrors of that priest-ridden place. You have heard me ill spoken of; and yet, believe me, I have hosts of friends there.

ANA Yes: you reign in their hearts.

THE DEVIL You flatter me, senora; but you are mistaken. It is true that the world cannot get on without me; but it never gives me credit for that: in its heart it mistrusts and hates me. Its sympathies are all with misery, with poverty, with starvation of the body and of the heart. I call on it to sympathize with joy, with love, with happiness, with beauty -

DON JUAN You know I cannot stand this.

THE DEVIL Yes: I know that you are no friend of mine.

THE STATUE What harm is he doing you, Juan? It seems to me that he was talking excellent sense when you interrupted him.

THE DEVIL Thank you, my friend: thank you. You have always understood me: he has always disparaged and avoided me.

DON JUAN I have treated you with perfect courtesy.

THE DEVIL Courtesy! What is courtesy? I care nothing for mere courtesy. Give me warmth of heart, true sincerity, the bond of sympathy with love and joy -

DON JUAN You are making me ill.

THE DEVIL There! [Appealing to the statue] You hear, sir! Oh, by what irony of fate was this cold selfish egotist sent to my kingdom, and you taken to the icy mansions of the sky!

THE STATUE I can't complain. I was a hypocrite, and it served me right to be sent to heaven.

THE DEVIL Why, sir, do you not join us, and leave a sphere for which your temperament is too sympathetic, your heart too warm, your capacity for enjoyment too generous?

THE STATUE I have this day resolved to do so. In future, excellent Son of the Morning, I am yours. I have left heaven for ever.

THE DEVIL What an honor! what a triumph for our cause! Thank you, thank you. And now, my friend - I may call you so at last - could you not persuade him to take the place you have left vacant above?

THE STATUE I cannot conscientiously recommend anybody with whom I am on friendly terms to deliberately make himself dull and uncomfortable.

By

Open
Hands

THE DEVIL Of course not; but are you sure he would be uncomfortable? Of course you know best: you brought him here originally; and we had the greatest hopes of him. His sentiments were in the best taste of our best people. You remember how he sang? Well, he never sings for us now.

DON JUAN Music is the brandy of the damned. Hell is full of musical amateurs. May not one lost soul be permitted to abstain?

THE DEVIL You dare blaspheme against the sublimest of the arts!

DON JUAN You talk like a hysterical woman fawning on a fiddler.

THE DEVIL Curious how these clever men, whom you would have supposed born to be popular here, have turned out social failures, like DON JUAN!

DON JUAN I am really very sorry to be a social failure.

THE DEVIL Not that we don't admire your intellect, you know. We do. But I look at the matter from your own point of view. You don't get on with us. The place doesn't suit you. The truth is, you have - I won't say no heart; for we know that beneath all your affected cynicism you have a warm one -

DON JUAN Don't, please don't.

THE DEVIL Well, you've no capacity for enjoyment. Will that satisfy you?

DON JUAN If you'll allow me, I'll take refuge, as usual, in solitude.

THE DEVIL Why not take refuge in Heaven? That's the proper place for you. [To Ana] Come, senora! could you not persuade him for his own good to try change of air?

ANA But can he go to heaven if he wants to?

THE DEVIL What's to prevent him?

ANA Can anybody - can *I* go to heaven if I want to?

THE DEVIL Certainly, if your taste lies that way.

ANA But why doesn't everybody go to heaven, then?

THE STATUE I can tell you that, my dear. It's because heaven is the most angelically dull place in all creation: that's why.

THE DEVIL His excellency the Commander puts it with military bluntness; but the strain of living in heaven is intolerable. There is a notion that I was turned out of it; but as a matter of fact nothing could have induced me to stay there. I simply left it and organized this place.

THE STATUE I don't wonder at it. Nobody could stand an eternity of heaven.

THE DEVIL Oh, it suits some people. Let us be just, Commander: it is a question of temperament. I don't admire the heavenly

temperament: I don't understand it: I don't know that I particularly want to understand it; but it takes all sorts to make a universe. There is no accounting for tastes: there are people who like it. I think DON JUAN would like it.

DON JUAN Pardon my frankness - could you really go back there if you desired to; or are the grapes sour?

THE DEVIL Back there! I often go back there. Have you any canonical authority for assuming that there is any barrier between our circle and the other one?

ANA But the Bible says there is a great gulf fixed.

THE DEVIL Dear lady: a parable must not be taken literally. The gulf is the difference between the angelic and the diabolic temperament. What more impassable gulf could you have? Think of what you have seen on earth. There is no physical gulf between the philosopher's class room and the bull ring; but the bull fighters do not come to the class room for all that. Have you ever been in the country where I have the largest following? England. There they have great racecourses, and also concert rooms where they play the classical compositions of his Excellency's friend Mozart. Those who go to the racecourses can stay away from them and go to the classical concerts instead if they like: there is no law against it; for Englishmen never will be slaves: they are free to do whatever the Government and

public opinion allow them to do. And the classical concert is admitted to be a higher, more cultivated, poetic, intellectual, ennobling place than the racecourse. But do the lovers of racing desert their sport and flock to the concert room? Not they. They would suffer there all the weariness the Commander has suffered in heaven. There is the great gulf of the parable between the two places. A mere physical gulf they could bridge; but the gulf of dislike is impassable and eternal. And that is the only gulf that separates my friends here from those who are invidiously called the blest.

ANA I shall go to heaven at once.

THE STATUE My child: one word of warning. Let me complete my friend Lucifer's ~~similitude~~ ^{similitude} of the classical concert. At every one of these concerts in England you will find rows of weary people who are there, not because they really like classical music, but because they think they ought to like it. Well, there is the same thing in heaven. A number of people sit there in glory, not because they are happy, but because they think they owe it to their position to be in heaven. They are almost all English.

THE DEVIL ^{pause} Yes: the Southerners give it up and join me just as you have done. But the English really do not seem to know when they are thoroughly miserable. An Englishman thinks he is moral when he is only uncomfortable.

THE STATUE In short, my daughter, if you go to heaven without being naturally qualified for it, you will not enjoy yourself there.

ANA And who dares say that I am not naturally qualified for it? I owe it to myself to leave this place at once.

THE DEVIL As you please, senora. I should have expected better taste from you.

ANA Father: I shall expect you to come with me. You cannot stay here. What will people say?

THE STATUE People! Why, the best people are here - princes of the church and all. So few go to heaven, and so many come here, that the blest, once called a heavenly host, are a continually dwindling minority. The saints, the fathers, the elect of long ago are the cranks, the faddists, the outsiders of today.

THE DEVIL It is true. From the beginning of my career I knew that I should win in the long run by sheer weight of public opinion, in spite of the long campaign of misrepresentation and calumny against me. At bottom the universe is a constitutional one; and with such a majority as mine I cannot be kept permanently out of office.

DON JUAN I think, Ana, you had better stay here.

ANA You do not want me to go with you.

DON JUAN Surely you do not want to enter heaven in the company of a reprobate like me.

ANA All souls are equally precious. You repent, do you not?

DON JUAN My dear Ana, you are silly. Do you suppose heaven is like earth, where people persuade themselves that what is done can be undone by repentance; that what is spoken can be unspoken by withdrawing it; that what is true can be annihilated by a general agreement to give it the lie? No: heaven is the home of the masters of reality: that is why I am going there.

ANA Thank you: I am going to heaven for happiness. I have had quite enough of reality on earth.

DON JUAN Then you must stay here; hell is the home of the seekers for happiness. It is the only refuge from heaven and from earth; earth which is the home of the slaves of reality. The earth is a nursery in which men and women play at being heroes and heroines, saints and sinners; but they are dragged down from their fool's paradise by their bodies: hunger and cold and thirst, age and decay and disease, death above all, make them slaves of reality: all are driven at last to have but one prayer, "Make me a healthy animal." But here you escape this tyranny of the flesh; here you are not an animal at all: you are a ghost, deathless, ageless: in a word, bodiless. There are no social questions here, no political questions,

no religious questions, best of all, perhaps, no sanitary questions. Here there are no hard facts to contradict you, nothing but a perpetual romance.

ANA But if hell be so beautiful as this, how glorious must heaven be!

THE DEVIL [to DON JUAN] You have been so eloquent on the advantages of my dominions that I leave you to do equal justice to the drawbacks of the alternative establishment.

DON JUAN In heaven, as I picture it, dear lady, you face things as they are; if all the world is a stage, Heaven is at least behind the scenes. There I shall go presently, there I hope to escape at last from the tedious, vulgar pursuit of happiness, to spend my eons in contemplation -

THE STATUE Ugh!

DON JUAN Senor Commander: Even as you enjoy the contemplation of such romantic mirages as beauty and pleasure; so would I enjoy the contemplation of that which interests me above all things: namely, Life: What made this brain of mine, do you think? Not the need to move my limbs; a rat with half my brains moves as well as I. Not merely the need to do, but the need to know what I do.

THE STATUE You would have slain yourself in your blind efforts to fence but for my foot slipping, my friend.

ANA Oh, do not interrupt, father. Is there nothing in Heaven but contemplation, Juan?

DON JUAN In the Heaven I seek, no other joy. But there is the work of helping Life in its struggle upward. Think of how it wastes and destroys itself in its ignorance and blindness. What a piece of work is man! says the poet. Yes; but what a blunderer! Here is the highest miracle of organization yet attained by life, and yet, how wretched are his brains!

THE DEVIL Did I not say, when I was arranging that affair of Faust's, that all Man's reason has done for him is to make him beastlier than any beast. One splendid body is worth the brains of a hundred dyspeptic, flatulent philosophers.

DON JUAN You forget that brainless magnificence of body has been tried. Things immeasurably greater than man in every respect but brain have existed and perished. The dinosaurs have paced the earth with seven-league steps. Where are they now? Fossils in museums; ^{they} wanted to live, but for lack of brains they did not know how to carry out their purpose, and so destroyed themselves.

THE DEVIL And is Man any the less destroying himself for all this boasted brain of his? Have you walked up and down upon the earth lately? I have; and I have examined Man's wonderful inventions. And I tell you that in the arts of life man invents nothing; but in the arts of death he outdoes

Nature herself, and produces by chemistry and machinery all the slaughter of plague, pestilence, and famine. The peasant I tempt today eats and drinks what was eaten and drunk by the peasants of ten thousand years ago; and the house he lives in has not altered as much in a thousand centuries as the fashion of a lady's bonnet in a score of weeks. But when he goes out to slay, he carries a marvel of mechanism that lets loose at the touch of his finger all the hidden molecular energies, and leaves the javelin, the arrow, the blowpipe of his fathers far behind. In the arts of peace Man is a bungler. I have seen his cotton factories and the like, with machinery that a greedy dog could have invented if it had wanted money instead of food. There is nothing in Man's industrial machinery but his greed and sloth: his heart is in his weapons. This marvellous force of Life of which you boast is a force of Death: Man measures his strength by his destructiveness. What is his religion? An excuse for hating me. What is his law? An excuse for hanging you. What is his morality? Gentility! An excuse for consuming without producing. Their imagination glows, their energies rise up at the idea of death, these people: they love it; and the more horrible it is the more they enjoy it. It is the same in everything. The highest form of literature is the tragedy, a play in which everybody is murdered at the end. In the old chronicles you read of earthquakes and pestilences, and are told that these shewed the power and majesty of God and the littleness of Man. Nowadays the chronicles describe battles. In a battle two bodies of men shoot at one

another with bullets and explosive shells until one body runs away, when the others chase the fugitives on horseback and cut them to pieces as they fly. And this, the chronicle concludes, shews the greatness and majesty of empires, and the littleness of the vanquished. Over such battles the people run about the streets yelling with delight, and egg their Government on to spend hundreds of millions of money in the slaughter, whilst the strongest Ministers dare not spend an extra penny in the pound against the poverty and pestilence through which they themselves daily walk. I could give you a thousand instances; but they all come to the same thing: the power that governs the earth is not the power of Life but of Death; and the inner need that has nerved Life to the effort of organising itself into the human being is not the need for higher life but for a more efficient engine of destruction. The plague, the famine, the earthquake, the tempest were too spasmodic in their action; the tiger and crocodile were too easily satiated and not cruel enough: something more constantly, more ruthlessly, more ingeniously destructive was needed; and that something was Man, the inventor of the rack, the stake, the gallows, the electric chair; of sword and gun and poison gas: above all, of justice, duty, patriotism, and all the other isms by which even those who are clever enough to be humanely disposed are persuaded to become the most destructive of all the destroyers.

DON JUAN All this is old. Your weak side, my diabolic friend, is that you always take Man

at his own valuation. Nothing would flatter him more than your opinion of him. He loves to think of himself as bold and bad. He is neither one nor the other: he is only a coward. Call him tyrant, murderer, pirate, bully; and he will adore you, and swagger about with the consciousness of having the blood of the old sea kings in his veins. But call him coward; and he will go mad with rage: he will face death to outface that stinging truth

THE DEVIL Precisely. And these are the creatures in whom you discover what you call a Life Force!

DON JUAN Yes; for now comes the most surprising part of the whole business.

THE STATUE What's that?

DON JUAN That you can make any of these cowards brave by simply putting an idea into his head.

THE STATUE Bah! As an old soldier I admit the cowardice: it's as universal as sea sickness, and matters just as little. But that about putting an idea into a man's head is stuff and nonsense. In a battle all you need to make you fight is a little hot blood and the knowledge that it's more dangerous to lose than to win.

DON JUAN But men never really overcome fear until they imagine they are fighting to further a universal purpose - fighting for an idea, as they call it. Why was the Crusader braver than the pirate? Because he fought,

not for himself, but for the Cross. What force was it that met him with a valor as reckless as his own? The force of men who fought, not for themselves, but for Islam.

THE DEVIL What! you a Catholic, senior DON JUAN! A devotee! My congratulations.

THE STATUE Come, come! as a soldier, I can listen to nothing against the Church.

DON JUAN I am not now defending the illusory forms the great ideas take. I am giving you examples of the fact that this creature Man, who in his own selfish affairs is a coward to the backbone, will fight for an idea like a hero. He may be abject as a citizen; but he is dangerous as a fanatic.

ANA Yes: he shirks all his responsibilities, and leaves his wife to grapple with them.

THE STATUE Well said, Daughter. Do not let him talk you out of your common sense.

THE DEVIL Alas! senior Commander, now that we have got on to the subject of Woman, he will talk more than ever. However, I confess it is for me the one supremely interesting subject.

DON JUAN To a woman, senora, man's duties and responsibilities begin and end with the task of getting bread for her children. To her, Man is only a means to the end of getting children and rearing them.

ANA Is that your idea of a woman's mind? I call it cynical and disgusting animalism.

DON JUAN It is no more cynical than her view of herself as above all things a Mother. Sexually, Woman is Nature's contrivance for perpetuating its highest achievement. Sexually, Man is Woman's contrivance for fulfilling Nature's behest in the most economical way. She knows by instinct that far back in the evolutionary process she invented him. But how rash and dangerous it was to invent a separate creature whose sole function was her own impregnation! For mark what has happened. First, Man has multiplied on her hands until there are as many men as women; she has been unable to employ for her purposes more than a fraction of the immense energy she has left at his disposal by saving him the exhausting labor of gestation. This superfluous energy has gone to his brain and to his muscle. He has created civilization without consulting her, taking her domestic labor for granted as the foundation of it.

ANA That is certainly true.

THE DEVIL Yes; and this civilization! what is it, after all?

DON JUAN An attempt on Man's part to make himself something more than the mere instrument of Woman's purpose. So far, the battles in this campaign are mere blunders, mostly won, like actual military battles, in spite of the commanders.

THE STATUE That is a dig at me.

DON JUAN Commander, you must have noticed in your profession that even a stupid general can win battles when the enemy's general is a little stupider.

THE STATUE Most true, Juan, most true. Some donkeys have amazing luck.

DON JUAN Well, the Life Force is stupid; but it is not so stupid as the forces of Death and Degeneration. And so Life wins, after a fashion. The survival of whatever form of civilization can produce the best rifle and the best fed riflemen is assured.

THE DEVIL Exactly! the survival, not of the most effective means of Life but of the most effective means of Death. You always come back to my point, in spite of your wriggings and evasions and sophistries, not to mention the intolerable length of your speeches.

DON JUAN Oh, come! If I overtax your intellect, you can leave us and seek the society of love and beauty and the rest of your favorite boredom.

THE DEVIL This is not fair, DON JUAN, and not civil. I am also on the intellectual plane. Nobody can appreciate it more than I do. I am arguing fairly with you, and, I think, successfully refuting you

DON JUAN Good: let us go on.

THE STATUE Not that I see any prospect of your coming to any point in particular, Juan. Still, in this place, instead of merely killing

time we have to kill eternity, so go ahead by all means.

DON JUAN No. Life is driving toward its darling object: a brain by which it can attain not only self-consciousness but self-understanding.

THE STATUE This is metaphysics, Juan. Why the devil should - [to the Devil] I beg your pardon.

THE DEVIL Pray don't mention it. I have always regarded the use of my name to secure additional emphasis as a high compliment to me. It is quite at your service, Commander.

THE STATUE Thank you: that's very good of you. What I was going to ask Juan was why Life should bother itself about getting a brain. Why should it want to understand itself? Why not be content to enjoy itself?

DON JUAN Without a brain, Commander, you would enjoy yourself without knowing it, and so lose all the fun.

THE STATUE But I am quite content with brain enough to know that I am enjoying myself. I don't want to understand why. In fact, I'd rather not. My experience is that one's pleasures don't bear thinking about.

DON JUAN That is why intellect is so unpopular. But Life, the force behind the Man, is evolving today a mind's eye that shall see, not the physical world, but the purpose of Life, and thereby enable the individual to

work for that purpose. Only one sort of man has ever been happy, has ever been universally respected among all the conflicts of interests and illusions.

pause
THE STATUE You mean the military man.

DON JUAN Commander: I do not mean the military man. When the military man approaches, the world locks up its spoons and packs off its womankind. No: I sing, not arms and the hero, but the philosophic man: he who seeks in contemplation to discover the inner will of the world. Of all other sorts of men I declare myself tired. They are tedious failures. Professors, Doctors of divinity, politicians. But then came the romantic man, the Artist, with his love songs and his paintings and his poems; and with him I had great delight. His songs taught me to hear better, his paintings to see better, and his poems to feel more deeply. But he led me at last into the worship of Woman.

ANA Juan!

DON JUAN Yes: I came to believe that in her voice was all the music of the song, in her face all the beauty of the painting, and in her soul all the emotion of the poem.

ANA And you were disappointed, I suppose. Well, was it her fault that you attributed all these perfections to her?

DON JUAN Yes. Partly. With a wonderful instinctive cunning, she kept silent and allowed me to glorify her. She would allow me to persuade myself that she loved me.

Henceforth she regarded me as her property, and counted my time as already wholly at her disposal.

THE DEVIL That is where your want of heart came in.

ANA You shouldn't repeat what a woman says, Juan. It should be sacred to you.

THE STATUE Still, they certainly do say it.

DON JUAN Then the lady, who had been happy and idle enough before, became preoccupied with me, bent wholly on making sure of her prey: This was not what I had bargained for. It was not music, painting, poetry, and joy incarnated in a beautiful woman. So I ran away from it. I ran often: in fact I became famous for running.

ANA Infamous, you mean.

DON JUAN I did not run away from you.

ANA If you had had the chance, you would have run away from me too. You would not have found it so easy with me as with some of the others. If men will not be faithful to their home and their duties, they must be made to be. I daresay you all want to marry lovely incarnations of music and painting and poetry. Well, you can't have them, because they don't exist. If flesh and blood is not good enough for you, you must go without: that's all. Women have to put up with flesh-and-blood husbands - and little enough of that too, sometimes; and you will have to put up with flesh-and-blood wives. [The Devil

looks dubious. The Statue makes a wry face]. I see you don't like that, any of you; but it's true, for all that; so if you don't like it you can lump it.

DON JUAN My dear lady, you have put my whole case against romance into a few sentences. That is just why I turned my back on the romantic man. I thanked him for teaching me to use my eyes and ears; but I told him that his beauty worshipping and happiness hunting and woman idealizing was not worth a dump as a philosophy of life; so he called me Philistine and went his way.

ANA It seems that Woman taught you something, too, with all her defects.

DON JUAN She did more: she interpreted all the other teaching for me. Up to that moment I had come to believe that I was a purely rational creature: a thinker! I said, with the foolish philosopher, "I think; therefore I am." It was Woman who taught me to say "I am; therefore I think."

THE STATUE This is extremely abstract and metaphysical, Juan. If you would stick to the concrete, and put your discoveries in the form of entertaining anecdotes about your adventures with women, your conversation would be easier to follow. *slow*

DON JUAN What need I add? Do you not understand that when I stood face to face with Woman, every fibre in my clear critical brain warned me to spare her and save myself. My eye, exercised on a thousand

paintings, caught all those tell-tale resemblances to her father and mother by which I knew what she would be like in thirty years' time. I noted the gleam of gold from a dead tooth in the laughing mouth

THE STATUE You might as well have gone without thinking such a lot about it, Juan. You have more brains than is good for you.

THE DEVIL And were you not the happier for the experience, senor DON JUAN?

DON JUAN The happier, no: the wiser, yes. That moment introduced me for the first time to myself. I saw then how useless it is to attempt to impose conditions on the irresistible force of Life; to preach prudence, careful selection, virtue, honor, chastity-

ANA DON JUAN: a word against chastity is an insult to me.

DON JUAN I say nothing against your chastity, senora, since it took the form of a husband and twelve children. What more could you have done had you been the most abandoned of women?

ANA I could have had twelve husbands and no children: that's what I could have done, Juan. And let me tell you that that would have made all the difference to the earth-- which I replenished.

THE STATUE Bravo Ana! Juan: you are floored, quelled, annihilated.

~~of~~ she with hand ^{Big}

DON JUAN Suppose my friend Ottavio had died when you were thirty, you would never have remained a widow: you were too beautiful. Suppose the successor of Ottavio had died when you were forty, you would still have been irresistible; and a woman who marries twice marries three times if she becomes free to do so. Twelve lawful children borne by one highly respectable lady to three different fathers is not impossible nor condemned by public opinion. That such a lady may be more law abiding than the poor girl whom we used to spurn into the gutter for bearing one unlawful infant is no doubt true; but dare you say she is less self-indulgent?

ANA She is more virtuous: that is enough for me.

DON JUAN In that case, virtue is but the Trade Unionism of the married? Let us face the facts, dear Ana. Marriage is the most licentious of human institutions -

ANA Juan!

THE STATUE Really!-

DON JUAN I say the most licentious of human institutions: that is the secret of its popularity. A woman seeking a husband is the most unscrupulous of all the beasts of prey. The confusion of marriage with morality has done more to destroy the conscience of the human race than any other single error. Come, Ana! do not look shocked: you know better than any of us that marriage

best of the companionship. Many such companionships, they tell me, are touchingly affectionate. But that does not make a chain a desirable ornament.

ANA At all events, marriage peoples the world and debauchery does not.

DON JUAN You have done your best, you virtuous ladies, to bend Man's mind towards honorable love as the highest good. You have taught women to value their own youth, health, shapeliness, and refinement above all things. What place have squalling babies and household cares in this exquisite paradise of the senses and emotions? Is it not the inevitable end of it all that the human will shall say to the human brain: Invent me a means by which I can have romance, emotion, passion, without their wretched penalties.

THE DEVIL All this, senor DON JUAN, is realized here in my realm.

DON JUAN Yes, at the cost of death. But man demands the romantic delights of your hell whilst he is still on earth.

THE STATUE That is all very eloquent, my young friend; but you should have learned that the people who get rid of all the family troubles, and devote themselves to having a good time only leave their minds free for the fear of old age and ugliness and impotence and death. I have had my share of vanity; for as a young man I was admired by women; But I confess that had I found nothing to do

g/ow

fast
 2025
 cut
 throat

but wallow in these delights I should have cut my throat. When I married Ana's mother - or perhaps, to be strictly correct, I should rather say when I at last gave in and allowed Ana's mother to marry me - I knew that I was planting thorns in my pillow, and that marriage for me, a swaggering young officer hitherto unvanquished, meant defeat and capture.

ANA Father!

THE STATUE I am sorry to shock you, my love; but since Juan has stripped every rag of decency from the discussion I may as well tell the frozen truth.

ANA Hmf! I suppose I was one of the thorns.

THE STATUE By no means: you were often a rose. You see, your mother had most of the trouble you gave.

DON JUAN Then may I ask, Commander, why you have left Heaven to come here and wallow, as you express it, in sentimental beatitudes which you confess would once have driven you to cut your throat?

THE STATUE My god, that's true.

THE DEVIL What! You are going back from your word! [To Don Juan] And all your philosophizing has been nothing but a mask for proselytizing! [To the Statue] Have you forgotten already the hideous dullness from which I am offering you a refuge here? [To DON JUAN] And does your demonstration of the approaching sterilization and extinction

of mankind lead to anything better than making the most of those pleasures of art and love which you yourself admit refined you, elevated you, developed you?

DON JUAN I had not finished when His Excellency interrupted me.

THE STATUE I begin to doubt whether you ever will finish, my friend. You are extremely fond of hearing yourself talk.

DON JUAN True; but since you have endured so much, you may as well endure to the end. The great central purpose of breeding the race to heights now deemed superhuman: that purpose which is now hidden in a mephitic cloud of love and romance and prudery and fastidiousness, will break through into clear sunlight as a purpose no longer to be confused with the gratification of personal fancies. Do my sex the justice to admit, senora, that we have always recognized that the sex relation is not a personal or friendly relation at all.

ANA Not a personal or friendly relation! What relation is more personal? more sacred? more holy?

DON JUAN Your relation to God is sacred and holy: dare you call it personally friendly? In the sex relation, a pair may be utter strangers to one another with no bond between them, but the Life Force throws them, nonetheless, into one another's arms at the exchange of a glance. Why, you would

not make a man your lawyer or your family doctor on so slight an acquaintance!

ANA Yes, Juan: we know the libertine's philosophy. Always ignore the consequences to the woman.

DON JUAN The lady would say that she would countenance my advances, provided they were honorable. On inquiring what that proviso meant, I found that it meant that I proposed to get possession of her property if she had any, or to undertake her support for life if she had not; that I desired her continual companionship, counsel, and conversation to the end of my days and turn my back on all other women for ever. I did not object to these conditions because they were exorbitant and inhuman: it was their extraordinary irrelevance that prostrated me. I invariably replied that unless the lady's character and intellect were equal or superior to my own, her constant companionship might, for all I knew, become intolerably tedious; that I could not answer for my feelings for a week in advance, much less to the end of my life. My proposals to her were unconnected to any of these matters, and were the outcome of a perfectly simple impulse of my manhood towards her womanhood.

ANA You mean that it was an immoral impulse.

THE STATUE What did the ladies say, then, Juan?

DON JUAN Oh, come! Confidence for confidence. First tell me what you used to say to the ladies.

THE STATUE I! Oh, I swore that I would be faithful to the death; that I should die if they refused me; that no woman could ever be to me what she was -

*faithful
hand
as in
oath*

ANA She! Who?

THE STATUE Whoever it happened to be at the time, my dear. I had certain things I always said. One of them was that even when I was eighty, one white hair of the woman I loved would make me tremble more than the thickest gold tress from the most beautiful young head. Another was that I could not bear the thought of anyone else being the mother of my children.

DON JUAN You old rascal!

THE STATUE Not a bit; for I really believed it with all my soul. I had a heart; not like you. And it was this sincerity that made me successful.

DON JUAN Sincerity! To be so greedy for a woman that you deceive yourself in your eagerness to deceive her: sincerity, you call it!

THE STATUE Oh damn your sophistries! I was a man in love, not a lawyer. And the women loved me for it, bless them!

DON JUAN What will you say when I tell you that I also had my moments of infatuation. I

gushed nonsense and believed it. Sometimes the desire to say beautiful things so rose in me on the flood of emotion that I said them recklessly. At other times I offered a devilish coldness that drew tears. But I found it just as hard to escape when I was cruel as when I was kind. Once the lady's instinct was set on me, there was nothing for it but lifelong servitude or flight.

ANA You dare boast, before me and my father, that every woman found you irresistible.

DON JUAN Am I boasting? It seems to me that I cut the most pitiable of figures. Besides, the lady's instinct was not always set on me. Not always so; and then, heavens! What overwhelming defiance to the dastardly seducer!

ANA I made no scenes. I simply called my father.

DON JUAN And he came, sword in hand, to vindicate your outraged honor and morality by murdering me.

THE STATUE Murdering! What do you mean? Did I kill you or did you kill me?

DON JUAN Which of us was the better fencer?

THE STATUE I was.

DON JUAN Of course you were. And yet you, the hero of those scandalous adventures you have just been relating to us, had the

effrontery to condemn me to death! You would have slain me but for an accident.

THE STATUE Juan, that is how things are arranged on earth. I always did what it was customary for a gentleman to do.

THE DEVIL I still fail to see, senor DON JUAN, that these episodes in your earthly career and in that of the senor Commander in any way discredit my view of life. Here, I repeat, you have all that you sought without anything that you shrank from.

DON JUAN On the contrary, here I have everything that disappointed. I tell you that as long as I can conceive something better than myself I cannot be easy unless I am striving to bring it into existence. It was the supremacy of this purpose that reduced religion to a mere excuse for laziness, since it had set up a God who looked at the world and saw it was good, against the instinct in me that looked through my eyes at the world and saw that it could be improved. That is what has made this place of eternal pleasures so deadly to me. It is the absence of this instinct in you that makes you that strange monster called a Devil. It is the fact that they are doing your will, instead of doing their own, that makes them the uncomfortable, false, wretched creatures they are.

THE DEVIL Senor DON JUAN: you are uncivil to my friends.

DON JUAN Your friends are the dullest dogs I know. They are not beautiful: they are only decorated. They are not clean: they are only starched. They are not dignified: they are only fashionably dressed. They are not moral: only conventional, not artistic: only lascivious. They are not prosperous: they are only rich. They are not loyal, only servile; not public spirited, only patriotic; not masterful, just domineering; not self-respecting, vain; not kind, but sentimental; not social, but gregarious; not considerate, merely polite; not intelligent, only opinionated; not imaginative, only superstitious; not just, only vindictive; not disciplined, only cowed; and not truthful at all: liars every one of them, to the very backbone of their souls.

THE STATUE How I wish I could have talked like that to my soldiers.

THE DEVIL It is mere talk, though. It has all been said before; but what change has it ever made? What notice has the world ever taken of it?

DON JUAN Yes, it is mere talk. But why? Because, my friend, beauty, purity, respectability, religion, morality, art, patriotism, bravery, and the rest are nothing but words which I or anyone else can turn inside out like a glove. Fortunately for your self-respect, my diabolical friend, they are not realities. They are mere words, useful for duping the civilized poor into submitting to be robbed and enslaved. That is the family secret of the governing caste; and if we who

are of that caste aimed at more Life for the world instead of at more power and luxury for our miserable selves, that secret would make us great.

THE DEVIL On earth there may be some truth in this, because the people are uneducated and cannot appreciate my religion of love and beauty; but here -

DON JUAN Oh yes: I know. Here there is nothing but love and beauty. Ugh! it is like sitting for all eternity at the first act of a fashionable play. Never in my worst moments of superstitious terror on earth did I dream that hell was so horrible.

Commander: are there any beautiful women in Heaven?

THE STATUE None. Absolutely none. All dowdies. Not two pennies' worth of jewellery among a dozen of them. They might be men of fifty.

matter of fact

DON JUAN I am impatient to get there. Is the word beauty ever mentioned; and are there any artistic people?

THE STATUE I give you my word they won't admire a fine statue even when it walks past them.

DON JUAN I go.

THE DEVIL DON JUAN: shall I be frank with you?

DON JUAN Were you not so before?

THE DEVIL As far as I went, yes. But I will now go further, and confess to you that men get tired of everything, of heaven no less than of hell; and that all history is nothing but a record of the oscillations of the world between these two extremes. An epoch is but a swing of the pendulum; and each generation thinks the world is progressing because it is always moving. But when you are as old as I am; when you have a thousand times wearied of heaven, like myself and the Commander, and a thousand times wearied of hell, as you are wearied now, you will no longer imagine that every swing from heaven to hell is an emancipation, every swing from hell to heaven an evolution. Where you now see reform, progress, fulfillment of upward tendency, continual ascent by Man on the stepping stones of his dead selves to higher things, you will see nothing but an infinite comedy of illusion. You will discover the profound truth of the saying that there is nothing new under the sun. Vanitas vanitatum -

DON JUAN By Heaven, should a man give up eating because he destroys his appetite in the act of gratifying it? Granted that the great Life Force has hit on the device of the clockmaker's pendulum; that the history of each oscillation, which seems so novel to us the actors, is but the history of the last oscillation repeated. Does that mean the colossal mechanism has no purpose?

THE DEVIL None, my friend. You think, because you have a purpose, Nature must

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THE DEVIL None, my friend. You think, because you have a purpose, Nature must

have one. You might as well expect it to have fingers and toes because you have them.

DON JUAN I, my friend am as much a part of Nature as my own finger is a part of me. Were I not possessed with a purpose beyond my own I had better be a ploughman than a philosopher; for the ploughman lives as long as the philosopher, eats more, sleeps better, and rejoices in the wife of his bosom with less misgiving. This is because the philosopher is in the grip of the Life Force. This Life Force says "I want to know myself and my destination, and choose my path; so I have made a special brain - a philosopher's brain - to grasp this knowledge for me as the farmer's hand grasps the plough. And this" says the Life Force to the philosopher, "must you to do for me until you die, when I will make another brain and another philosopher to carry on the work."

THE DEVIL What is the use of knowing?

DON JUAN Does a ship sail to its destination no better than a log drifts wherever? The philosopher is Nature's pilot. And there you have our difference: to be in hell is to drift: to be in heaven is to steer.

THE DEVIL On the rocks, most likely.

DON JUAN Pah! which ship goes on the rocks? the drifting ship or the ship with a pilot on board?

THE DEVIL Well, well, go your way, senior Don Juan. I prefer to be my own master and not the tool of any blundering universal

force. I know that beauty is good to look at; that music is good to hear; that love is good to feel; and that they are all good to think about and talk about. I know that to be well exercised in these sensations, emotions, and studies is to be a refined and cultivated being. Whatever they may say of me in churches on earth, I know that it is universally admitted in good society that the Prince of Darkness is a gentleman; and that is enough for me. As to your Life Force, which you think irresistible, it is the most resistible thing in the world for a person of any character. But if you are naturally vulgar and credulous, as all reformers are, it will thrust you first into religion, where you will sprinkle water on babies to save their souls from me; then it will drive you from religion into science, where you will snatch the babies from the water sprinkling and inoculate them with disease to save them from catching it accidentally; then you will take to politics, where you will become the catspaw of corrupt functionaries and the henchman of ambitious humbugs; and the end will be despair and decrepitude, broken nerve and shattered hopes, vain regrets for that worst and silliest of wastes and sacrifices, the waste and sacrifice of the power of enjoyment: in a word, the punishment of the fool who pursues the better before he has secured the good.

DON JUAN But at least I shall not be bored. So fare you well, Satan.

THE DEVIL Fare you well, Don Juan. I shall often think of our interesting chats about

things in general. I wish you every happiness: Heaven, as I said before, suits some people. But if you should change your mind, do not forget that the gates are always open here to the repentant prodigal. If you feel at any time that warmth of heart, sincere unforced affection, innocent enjoyment, and warm, breathing, palpitating reality -

DON JUAN Why not say flesh and blood, even though we have left those two greasy commonplaces behind us?

THE DEVIL You throw my friendly farewell back in my teeth, then, DON JUAN?

DON JUAN By no means. There is much to be learnt from a cynical devil, but I really cannot stand a sentimental one. (pause)
Senor Commander: you know the way to the frontier of hell and heaven. Be good enough to direct me.

THE STATUE Oh, the frontier is only the difference between two ways of looking at things. Any road will take you across it if you really want to get there.

DON JUAN Good. [Saluting Dona Ana]
 senora: your servant.

ANA But I am going with you.

DON JUAN I can find my own way to heaven, Ana; not yours [he vanishes].

ANA How annoying!

THE STATUE [calling after him] Bon voyage, Juan! Whew! How he does talk! They'll never stand it in heaven.

THE DEVIL His going is a political defeat. I cannot keep these Life Worshipers: they all go. This is the greatest loss I have had since that Dutch painter went: a fellow who would paint a hag of 70 with as much enjoyment as a Venus of 20.

Chew on this THE STATUE I remember; he came to heaven. *ah ah*
Rembrandt.

THE DEVIL Ay, Rembrandt. There is something unnatural about these fellows. Do not listen to their gospel, senior Commander: it is dangerous. Beware of the pursuit of the Superhuman: it leads to an indiscriminate contempt for the Human. To a man, horses and dogs and cats are mere species, outside the moral world. Well, to the Superman, men and women are a mere species too, also outside the moral world. This DON JUAN was kind to women and courteous to men as your daughter here was kind to her pet cats and dogs; but such kindness is a denial of the exclusively human character of the soul.

THE STATUE And who the deuce is the Superman?

THE DEVIL Oh, the latest fashion among the Life Force fanatics. Did you not meet in Heaven, among the new arrivals, that German Polish madman? what was his name? Nietzsche?

THE STATUE Never heard of him.

THE DEVIL Well, he came here first, before he recovered his wits. I had some hopes of him; but he was a confirmed Life Force worshipper. It was he who raked up the Superman, who is as old as Prometheus; and the 20th century will run after this newest of the old crazes when it gets tired of the world, the flesh, and your humble servant.

THE STATUE Superman is a good cry; and a good cry is half the battle. I should like to see this Nietzsche.

THE DEVIL Unfortunately he met Wagner here, and had a quarrel with him.

THE STATUE Quite right, too. Mozart for me!

THE DEVIL Oh, it was not about music. Wagner once drifted into Life Force worship, and invented a Superman called Siegfried. But he came to his senses afterwards. So when they met here, Nietzsche denounced him as a renegade; and Wagner wrote a pamphlet to prove that Nietzsche was a Jew; and it ended in Nietzsche's going to heaven in a huff. And a good riddance too. And now, my friend, let us hasten to my palace and celebrate your arrival with a grand musical service.

THE STATUE With pleasure: you're most kind.

THE DEVIL This way, Commander. We go down the old trap [he places himself on the grave trap].

THE STATUE Good. All the same, the Superman is a fine conception. There is

Get
up

something statuesque about it. ^{Down} [He places himself on the grave trap beside The Devil. It begins to descend slowly. Red glow from the abyss]. Ah, this reminds me of old times.

THE DEVIL And me also.

ANA Stop! ^{stop - stop} [The trap stops].

THE DEVIL You, senora, cannot come this way. You will have an apotheosis. But you will be at the palace before us.

ANA That is not what I stopped you for. Tell me: where can I find the Superman?

THE DEVIL He is not yet created, senora.

^{get off} THE STATUE And never will be, probably. Let us proceed: the red fire will make me sneeze. ^{Down} [They descend].

ANA Not yet created! Then my work is not yet done. [Crossing herself devoutly] I believe in the Life to Come. [Crying to the universe] A father! a father for the superman! ^{up}