

FIRST DRAFT

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“SATAN’S DIARY”

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*January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1914*  
*On-board the "Atlantic"*

Today is exactly the tenth day since I took on this human form and have been leading an earthly life.

My loneliness is great. I have no need of friends, but I need to talk of myself, and I have no one to talk to. Thoughts alone are not enough, and they are not clear, responsive, and exact, until I express them in speech; they need to be perfectly aligned, as a soldier or a row of telegraph poles, stretched like railroad tracks, thrown across bridges and viaducts, build embankments and curves, make stops in all the appropriate places – and only then does everything become clear. This torturous, scientific method is called, I think, logic and reason and is mandatory for those who want to be intelligent; for all others this is not required and they may wonder about as they see fit.

Work is slow, difficult, and repulsive for him who is accustomed to, in a single ... I don't know what to call it, in a single breath to grasp everything and in a single exhalation to explain it all. It is no wonder that they respect their thinkers, and these poor thinkers, if they are honest and do not cheat during construction like everyday engineers, end up in an insane asylum. I have spent few days on Earth, but already in front of me flash the yellow asylum walls and a welcoming, open front door.

Yes, it is terribly difficult and annoys the nerves (There's a fine thing!). Like right now, to express a small and common thought about a lack of their words and logic, I was forced to waste so much of this fine ships' stationery – and what would I require expressing something grand and exceptional? I'll tell you up front, so you wouldn't open your wondering mouth, my earthly reader, that the 'exceptional' in the language of your grumblings, is indescribable! If you don't believe me, go to the nearest insane asylum and listen to them. They've all discovered something and wanted to somehow relate it to others... and you hear the overturned locomotives hiss and spin their wheels, and you notice what labor it takes them to control the runaway lines and furrows of their amazed and wounded faces.

I can see you are ready to stone me with your questions, having found out that I am Satan in human form. It is so fascinating. Where do I come from? What are the rules in hell? Is there life after death, and what are the going rates for coal at the last close of the stock exchange of hell? Unfortunately, my dear reader, with all my will, if I possessed such a thing, I am not empowered to fulfill your justifiable curiosity, I could make up a story for you about the horned

and cloven-hoofed devils, which your poor imagination longs to hear, but you have enough such stories, and I do not want to lie to you in such a rude and simple manner. I will lie to you elsewhere, when you are unaware, and this will be more fun for us both.

And truth – how can I express it if even my true name is unspeakable in your tongue? You called me ‘Satan’, and I accept this nickname, as I would any other. Let me be ‘Satan’ then. But my real name sounds different, very different indeed. It sounds exceptional, and I cannot shoehorn it into your narrow ear, without ripping it to shreds along with your brain. Let me be ‘Satan’ then, and only that.

You are partially to blame for this my friend: why is your conscience so narrow and unimaginative? Your consciousness is like a paltry sum, enough for stale bread only, but here we need much more than bread. You have only two concepts of existence – life and death – and how do I tell you of the *third*? All your existence is meaningless only because you lack this *third*, and how can I give it to you? Now I am human just like you, and in my head are your brains, my mouth is pained by your obtuse words, and I cannot tell you about the exceptional.

If I say that there are no devils, I would lie to you. But if I say they indeed exist, I am also misleading... Do you see how difficult this foolishness is, my friend? And even about my humanization, from which my earthly life began ten days ago, I can tell you little that makes sense. First off, forget about the hoofed, hairy, and winged devils that breathe fire and turn to gold common clay, and turn old men into strapping young men, and having done all this and saying much foolishness, immediately falling through the stage – and remember: when we want to come to your Earth, we are forced to take on the human form. Why this is so you will discover after your death, but for now remember: for now I am human like you, I smell of good perfume, not of the dirty goat, and you can safely shake my hand without fearing my sharp claws: I trim them just like you.

But how did this happen? Quite simply. When I wanted to come to Earth I found a suitable, like a building, 38 year-old American, Mr. Henry Wondergood, billionaire, and killed him – of course at night and without witnesses. But I cannot be tried for the crime regardless of my confession – you see, the American is alive and well, and we both welcome you in one respectful bow – Wondergood and I. He just relinquished to me an empty shell, but even that’s not all, the devil take him! And to return to my world is only possible through the same door that is there for you – that which leads you to freedom as well – death.