

If the crime of theft which I committed that night as a boy of sixteen were a living thing, I could speak to it and ask what it was that, to my shame, I loved in it. I had no beauty because it was a robbery. It is true that the pears we stole had beauty, because they were created by you, the good God, who are the most beautiful of all beings and the Creator of all things, the supreme Good and my own true Good. But it was not the pears my unhappy soul desired. I had plenty of my own, better than those, and I only picked them so that I might steal. For no sooner had I picked them than I threw them away, and tasted nothing in them but my own sin, which I relished and enjoyed. If any part of one of those pears passed my lips, it was the sin that gave it flavour.

Augustine, *Confessions*, book II (397-398)

What a weak fellow, this God! how able he was to mould all that we know and to fail to form man in his own guise! Whereunto you will answer, that had man been created so, man would have been little deserving of his author; what a platitude is this! and what necessity is there that man be deserving of his God? By forming him entirely good, man should never have been able to do evil, and only from this moment would the work be worthy of a God. To allow man to choose was to tempt him; and God's infinite powers very well advised him of what would be the result. Immediately the being was created, it was hence to pleasure God doomed the creature he had himself formed... A horrible God, this God of yours, a monster! Is there a criminal more worthy of our hatred and our implacable vengeance than he?

D. A. F. de Sade, *La Philosophie dans le boudoir* (1795)

“And what will men think of me, of whom they used to have so high an opinion, when they learn about the vagaries of my behaviour, the hesitation of my footsteps along the muddy labyrinths of Matter, and the direction of my gloomy route over the stagnant waters and dank reeds of the pool where amid the mists dark-footed crime howls and turns blue! ... I see that in the future I shall have to work hard at rehabilitating myself so as to regain their esteem. I am the Most High and yet on one count I remain inferior to men, whom I created with a handful of sand! Tell them a brazen lie, tell them I never left heaven, have been constantly caught up with the cares of the throne, among the marbles, statues, and mosaics of my palaces.”

Lautréamont, *Les Chants de Maldoror* (1869)

Thou hast many bags of money, and behold I (the Lord) come as a thief in the night, with my sword drawn in my hand, and like a thief as I am--I say deliver your purse, deliver sirrah! deliver or I'll cut thy throat.

I say (once more) deliver, deliver my money which thou hast to poor cripples, lazars, yea to rogues, thieves, whores and cutpurses, who are flesh of thy flesh, and every whit as good as thyself in mine eye, who are ready to starve in plaguy gaols and nasty dungeons, or els by my selfe, saith the Lord, I will torment thee day and night, inwardly, or outwardly, or both waies, my little finger shall shortly be heavier on thee, especially on thee thou holy, righteous, religious *Appropriator*, than my loynes were on *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians in time of old; you shall weep and howl for the miseries that are suddenly coming upon you; for your riches are corrupted, &c. and whilst impropriated, appropriated the plague of God is in them.

The plague of God is in your purses, barns, houses, horses, murrain will take your hogs (O ye fat swine of the earth) who shall shortly go to the knife and be hung up in the roof, except-- --blasting, mill-dew, locusts, caterpillars, yea fire your houses and goods, take your corn and fruit, the moth your garments, and the rot your sheep,

Did you not see my hand, this last year, stretched out?

You did not see.

My hand is stretched out still---

Your gold and silver, though you can't see it, is cankered...

The rust of your silver, I say, shall eat your flesh as it were fire...

...give, give, give, give up your houses, horses, goods, gold, Lands, give up, account nothing your own, have ALL THINGS common, or else the plague of God will rot and consume all that you have.

Abiezer Coppe, *A Fiery Flying Roll*, part II (1649)

Mephistopheles: Within the bowels of these elements,
Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever:
Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd
In one self place; but where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be.

Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus* (1589)

If there be a God, as we most steadfastly must believe, verily there is a Devil also; and if there be a Devil, there is no surer argument, no stronger proof, no plainer evidence, that there is a God.

Roger Hutchinson (*ca.*1635)

The heart of man is the place Devils dwell in: I feel sometimes a Hell within my self; Lucifer keeps his Court in my breast, Legion is revived in me. There are as many Hells, as Anaxagoris conceited worlds. There was more than one Hell in Magdalene, when there were seven Devils, for every Devil is an Hell unto himself; he holds enough of torture in his own *ubi*, and needs not the misery of circumference to afflict him: and thus a distracted Conscience here, is a shadow or introduction unto Hell hereafter.

Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici* (1635)

“No one has ever said of me, sir, that I was a coward. I have looked death in the eyes; I have often hunted and arrested criminals who would not have had the least hesitation in doing away with me. There are whole gangs of crooks who have vowed my death. All sorts of horrible revenges threaten me today; to all that I am completely indifferent! But when people talk to me of Fantômas, when I fancy that I can detect the intervention of that genius of crime, then I am terrified! I tell you this frankly. I am frightened, because Fantômas is a being against whom it is idle to use ordinary weapons; because he has been able to conceal his identity and elude all pursuit for years; because his daring is boundless and his power immeasurable; because he is everywhere and nowhere at once.”

Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain, *Fantômas* (1911)

You say you believe in the necessity of religion. Be honest--what you mean is that you believe in the necessity of police.

Nietzsche, *Posthumous Notebooks*

Prisons are built with stones of law, brothels with bricks of religion.

William Blake, *Proverbs of Hell* (1790)