

The line between the Devil and the minor demons, sometimes blurred in theology, is even more blurred in folklore. The ambivalent Greco-Roman demons were identified by Christian tradition with the fallen angels, as were the nature spirits of the Teutons, Celts, and Slavs. The most prominent fearsome spirits in the north, the giants, though they persist in medieval folklore ("Jack and the Beanstalk"), lose their prominence because the Devil seems to take over their role. The "little people" also take on more sinister characteristics: "Up the airy mountain, down the rushy glen / We daren't go a-hunting, for fear of little men." The little people—leprechauns, kobolds, trolls, dwarves, elves, goblins, *mares*, brownies—are minor nature-spirits who dwell in lakes, woods, streams, caverns, or mountains, even in the barns and cellars of civilization. They are short, dark, and often misshapen. Originally morally ambivalent and sometimes even beautiful, they were assimilated to demons by Christianity, so that their negative and destructive properties prevailed. Dwarves guarded hidden, underground treasures and killed anyone who dared violate their privacy. Trolls (who could also be ghosts of the dead) lurked under bridges in wait for unwary travelers. Elves caused disease in animals and humans by shooting them with arrows or darts—elfshot. *Mares* haunted people's sleep at night ("nightmares"). Whatever the diverse origin of these spirits, they became one in folklore with demons, like whom they frightened, harmed, and killed, but like whom too they could be tricked, cajoled, and bribed. The ancient fertility spirits of agriculture (the Green Man) and of wilderness and the hunt (the Wild Man and Woman) were powerful enough to retain much of their independence and their ambivalence, but they lent their greenness and their hairiness as well as their unbridled sexuality to the Devil and his demons.³⁵

Monsters were usually distinguished from demons, though they could also blend with them. Monsters were supposed to be distorted humans, though doubts existed as to whether they had souls. They

Justice, and Righteousness, the four daughters of God. See H. Traver, *The Four Daughters of God* (Bryn Mawr, 1907). The daughters of the Devil can number as many as nine or ten. Medieval heretics were often represented as having twelve disciples in parody of Jesus. See G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 93–96; M. W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins* (East Lansing, Mich., 1952), p. 194. See also M. Rudwin, *Der Teufel in den deutschen geistlichen Spielen* (Göttingen, 1915), pp. 86–87, 141.

35. Grimm, vol. 2, p. 444, vol. 4, p. 1611; R. Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952). The agricultural spirit lives on in fiction: Kingsley Amis, *The Green Man* (New York, 1960).

were supposed to have been created in order to show humans what physical privation is like, and what, literally but for the grace of God, we might have been. F. Gagnon has plausibly suggested that monsters fit into the ontological chain stretching away from God in the direction of less and less reality: God, angels, human rulers, human subjects, barbarians, monsters, demons, Antichrist, Lucifer. Monsters are physically deprived—they are giants or dwarves, have three eyes or none, or have faces in their bellies. This sort of physical privation is a sign of their ontological privation, which readily transposes into moral privation. Their deformity blends with that of the Devil, the most twisted and depraved of all beings.³⁶ Still, monsters are not properly demons but are at least one step removed from them; they were created monsters by God and thus claim some degree, however small, of goodness and beauty. A particularly persistent and sinister monster is the wer animal. Wer animals are found in most cultures (India, for example, has wer tigers, but Europe, where wolves were more prevalent, has werewolves). Vampires also are found everywhere. Wer animals are not the same as other monsters, for their monstrosity consists less in physical deformity than in their demonic ability to change shapes, and whereas monsters can be ambivalent, wer animals are essentially evil. The Devil is the chief of the shapeshifters; werewolves, vampires, and witches imitate their master in this quality in order to do his will.³⁷

The most important of the Devil's many and varied accomplices is the Antichrist, whose influence permeates human affairs and who at the end of the world will come in the flesh to lead the forces of evil in a last, desperate battle against the good. Heretics, Jews, and witches are among the most prominent of Satan's human helpers. Jews and heretics may at least sometimes be unaware that they are serving the Devil, but the witches enlist knowingly in his ranks, worshipping him openly and offering him sacrifices. One can summon the Devil in many ways:

36. F. Gagnon, "Le thème médiéval de l'homme sauvage dans les premières représentations des Indiens d'Amérique," in G. Allard, ed., *Aspects de la marginalité au moyen âge* (Montreal, 1975), pp. 86–87; B. Roy, "En marge du monde connu: Les races de monstres," in Allard, pp. 74–77; J. B. Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981); H. Schade, *Dämonen und Monstren* (Regensburg, 1962). For another identification, that of the Devil and the blacksmith, see M. Eliade, *The Forge and the Crucible* (New York, 1962), pp. 107–108.

37. D. Kraatz, "Fictus lupus: The Werewolf in Christian Thought," *Classical Folia*, 30 (1976), 57–79; M. Summers, *The Vampire* (London, 1928) and *The Werewolf* (New York, 1934) must be used with extreme caution. *Wer* is Old English for "human."

by whistling in the dark, by running widdershins around a church three times after dark, by writing him a note in Jew's blood and throwing it into the fire, by painting his picture, by looking into a mirror at night, by reciting the Lord's Prayer backward, by saying certain incantations, and so on.³⁸

The most serious summoning of Satan is for the purpose of making a formal pact. The idea of formal pact goes back to a story about Saint Basil circulated by Saint Jerome in the fifth century and an even more influential story of Theophilus of Cilicia dating from the sixth.

In the Basil story as retold by Hincmar of Reims, a man who wishes to obtain the favors of a pretty girl goes to a magician for help and as payment agrees to renounce Christ in writing. The gratified magician writes a letter to the Devil in the hope that the Evil One will be pleased with his new recruit and orders the lecher to go out at night and thrust the message up into the air. This he does, calling upon the powers of evil. Dark spirits descend upon him and lead him into the very presence of Lucifer. "Do you believe in me?" asks the Dark Lord upon his throne. "Yes, I do believe." "Do you renounce Christ?" "I do renounce him." This dialogue is a blasphemous parody of baptism. Then the Devil complains, "You Christians always come to me when you need help but then try to repent later, presuming on the mercy of Christ. I want you to sign up in writing." The man agrees, and the Devil, satisfied with the bargain, causes the girl to fall in love with the lecher and ask her father for permission to marry him. The father, who wants her to become a nun, refuses. The girl struggles against the Devil's temptations but finally, unable to resist longer, yields. At last the story of the pact comes out, and with the aid of Saint Basil the boy repents and the girl is saved from a fate worse than death.³⁹

The other story, the legend of Theophilus, was repeated hundreds of times in a variety of forms in virtually every European language over the span of a millennium, fathering the Faust legend and indirectly influencing the Renaissance witch craze. According to the story, an old Anatolian legend first written in Greek in the sixth century and translated into Latin in the ninth, Theophilus was a clergyman of Asia Minor who was offered the bishopric when the previous bishop died. Theophilus declined the honor, much to his later chagrin, for the new bishop proceeded to deprive him of his offices and dignities. Enraged,

38. Thompson, G 303.16.18.1; UCLA.

39. Hincmar interjects the tale into his *Divorce of Lothar and Teutberga*, written about 860 (MPL 125, 716-725).

Theophilus plotted to regain his influence and to seek revenge. He consulted a Jewish magician, who told him that he could help by taking him to see the Devil. Going out at night to a secluded place, they found the Devil surrounded by his worshipers bearing torches or candles. The Devil asked him what he wanted, and Theophilus replied, agreeing to become Satan's servant in return for his lost powers. He took an oath of allegiance to Lucifer, renounced his fealty to God, and promised to lead a life of lust, scorn, and pride. He signed a formal pact to this effect and handed it over to the Devil, kissing him in sign of submission. His life now increased in power and in corruption. Then the time came at last for the Devil to claim his soul in payment, and he sent out demons to torment the corrupt cleric and drag him off to hell. Terrified, Theophilus repented of his sin and threw himself upon the mercy of the Blessed Mother of God. Mary descended into hell, seized the contract from Satan, and returned it to Theophilus, who destroyed it. Mary interceded for him at the throne of God, Theophilus was pardoned, and the Devil was cheated of his due.

As the legend spread across Europe, it promoted anti-Semitism and the cult of Mary. Most significant, it initiated the idea of pact. The fathers had argued that all evildoers are limbs of Satan whether or not they are conscious of it. Thus pact was considered to include explicit homage to the Devil. Van Nuffel has shown how the idea of pact fit into both the tradition of Christian baptism and that of feudal homage. The power of the idea of pact kept growing; by the time of the witch craze it was taken as literal, historical fact and by the seventeenth century documents allegedly constituting such formal pacts were brought into evidence against accused magicians and witches in courts of law. The idea that witches were worshipers of Satan and had signed a literal, explicit pact with him was the heart of the witch craze. In modern literature, the figure of Faust sprang from that of Theophilus.⁴⁰

40. The Theophilus story was first translated into Latin by Paul the Deacon about 840 (*Miracula Sanctae Mariae de Theophilo penitente*); the next influential version was by Hroswitha in the tenth century (*Lapsus et conversio Theophili vicedomini*); the story appeared in the writings of Marbod (11th cent.), Guibert (12th cent.), and Hartmann (12th cent.) The versions by Gautier de Coinci in the twelfth century (*Comment Théophile vint à pénitence*) and Rutebeuf in the thirteenth (*Miracle de Théophile*) were both signs and causes of its rapidly growing popularity, and many others began to appear in French, Italian, and German. See L. Radermacher, "Griechische Quellen zur Faustsage," *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philologisch-historische Klasse*, 206.4 (1930), 153-219; M. de Combarieu, "Le diable dans le *Comment Theophilus vint à pénitence* de Gautier de Coinci et dans le *Miracle de Théophile* de

Pact stories were tolerably common through the Middle Ages and Renaissance. A student at Saint Andrew's in Scotland encountered a "minister" who helped him with his assignments in return for a pact signed in blood. Sir Francis Drake defeated the Armada with the Devil's help. The favors obtained in return for the promise of one's soul are usually illusory: a scholar signs a pact in return for gold, which turns into stone; elegant feasts become offal and excrement; beautiful maidens turn into shrieking hags. In order to escape the consequences of a pact one may be obliged to journey to hell to retrieve it or else rely on the intercession of an unjudgmental saint such as the Blessed Mother. The typical pact story contains farcical elements. A knight promised to give the Devil his soul if ever he came to a town called Mouffle. The knight, confident that no such town existed, felt perfectly secure. The knight turned to the religious life, became a monk, and finally rose to the position of archbishop of Reims. Eventually he visited his home town, Ghent. There he became seriously ill and to his horror the Devil appeared at his bedside to claim him—on the ground that the real, secret name of Ghent is Mouffle.⁴¹

The Devil encourages Christians to make a pact with him, and thus pact became a favorite theme in sermons, poems, and theater from the thirteenth century onward, contributing to the theory of witchcraft. The popular plays *Miracles of Our Lady* by Gautier de Coinci and *Miracle of Theophilus* by Rutebeuf, Jacques de Vitry's tales for the feasts of Saint Basil and the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, and a number of Caesarius of Heisterbach's stories all established the idea that pact with the Devil was a distinguishing mark of great sinners, especially heretics.⁴² Such tales were not considered fiction. Caesarius' account

Rutebeuf," in *Le diable au moyen âge* (Paris, 1979), pp. 157–182; M. Lazar, "Theophilus: Servant of Two Masters," *Modern Language Notes*, 87, no. 6 (1972), 31–50; Tubach, 3572; H. van Nuffel, "Le pacte avec le diable dans la littérature médiévale," *Anciens pays et assemblées d'états*, 39 (1966), 27–43. On pp. 40–41, Van Nuffel offers his comparison of pact, baptism, and homage (I modify it slightly): *baptism*: introduction by godparent, question posed by bishop, request for admission, submission, become child of God, signature, kiss of peace; *pact*: introduction by Jew, question posed by Devil, request for protection, submission, become servant of Devil, signature, kiss of peace; *feudal contract*: introduction by vassal, request for protection, submission, become vassal of lord, signature, kiss of peace. For the influence of pact on the witch craze see J. B. Russell, *A History of Witchcraft*, pp. 55–58, 76–78; Chapter 10 below.

41. Since *muffle* is colloquial French for "slob" an element of anti-Flemish prejudice seems present here. On pact, see Briggs, vol. 2:1, pp. 111–115, 132–133, 138; Tubach 3566–3572, 4188; Thompson, F 81.2; Bächtold-Stäubli, 1842.

42. M. Lazar, "Theophilus," *Modern Language Notes*, 87, no. 6 (1972), 31–50; G.

of the pact made by heretics at Besançon at the beginning of the thirteenth century was offered as historical fact. The heretics wandered about preaching and working wonders in order to prove the validity of their beliefs. They left no footprints after treading on floured floors; they walked on water; they ordered a hut burned down around them and emerged unhurt. The populace were so impressed that they embraced the heresy and mobbed the bishop and the priests. The bishop ordered a priest who had once himself been a magician to call up the Devil in order to find the secret of the heretics' success. The priest summoned up Satan and promised to become his man again if only he would reveal their secret. Sensing a bargain, the Devil explained that they carried their contracts with them, sewn up under the skin of their armpits. The priest reported this to the bishop, who ordered the heretics stripped, the scars in their armpits opened, and the diabolical contracts extracted. The outraged and disappointed citizens lynched their erstwhile heroes by burning them alive. The heretic (or witch) was no longer merely an unwitting tool of Satan but was considered deliberately and consciously to have made a pact with him, either an explicit pact signed and sealed, or at least an implicit one in which service was performed in return for favor.⁴³

Pact became one of the keystones in the demonization of minorities, the transformation of heretics, Muslims, and Jews from ignorant souls steeped in error to conscious servants of Satan. Total misunderstanding of the religions of others (a misunderstanding no less complete today) led medieval writers to make the most improbable assumptions: the Jews, who did not believe in the Incarnation or the Eucharist, were supposed to obtain Eucharistic hosts and stab them until they bled; the rigidly monotheistic Muslims were supposed to bow down before

Frank, *Le miracle de Théophile*, 2d ed. (Paris, 1969). Theophilus calls the Devil "sire," line 235; the Devil tells Theophilus to place his hands in his sign of fealty: "or joing tes mains, et si devien mes hon" (pp. 239–240); Theophilus does homage: "vez ci que je vous faz hommage" (p. 242); he makes a formal contract: "et je te refaz un couvant" (p. 245). V. F. Koenig, ed. *Les miracles de Notre Dame par Gautier de Coinci*, 4 vols. (Geneva, 1955–1970), vol. 1, pp. 50–176: "Comment Theophilus vint à pénitance;" see M. de Combarieu, "Le diable dans le *Comment Theophilus vint à pénitence* de Gautier de Coinci et dans le *Miracle de Théophile* de Rutebeuf (I)," in *Le diable au moyen âge* (Paris, 1979), pp. 157–182; see the fifteenth-century "Chevalier qui donna sa femme au diable," in which the pact story is more developed than in Rutebeuf: T. W. Andrus, "The Devil on the Medieval Stage in France" (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse, 1979), pp. 147–150.

43. J. Strange, ed., *Caesarii Heisterbacensis monachi Ordinis Cisterciensis Dialogus miraculorum*, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1851), bk. 5, chap. 19.

idols.⁴⁴ A typical Saracen in French epic literature is Agolaffre, whose black skin, misshapen form, long nose, huge ears, and eyes in the back of his head render him more demonic than human. One Saracen leader is called Abisme (Hell); Isembart leads an army of horned monsters bearing great hooks; another Saracen prince rips Christians apart with his great, sharp nails.⁴⁵ The German version of the *Song of Roland* by Father Konrad is even more explicit. The Muslims are pagans (*Heiden*) who worship 700 idols (*apgoten*), of which the chief were Apollo and Muhammad. All the pagans (Muslims) have put themselves under the Devil's power, and he controls them mind and body. Ganelon, the traitor to Charlemagne, is little more than a puppet manipulated by Satan, though the innocent Franks do not know that the Devil is rooted in his heart.⁴⁶

The demonization passes the absurd. Muhammad, the human prophet of Islam, a monotheistic religion shunning all representations of the divine, becomes the chief god of the idolatrous Muslims, parallel to the Devil himself. In many plays the Devil is named Mehmet, Mahound, or another variation of the prophet's name. It followed that individual Muslims must worship the Devil and that their whole lives are in the service of the Dark Lord. Christians on crusade could be confident that they were doing God's work. The demonization of Jews is apparent in the story of Theophilus, in Chaucer's "Prioress' Tale," in the belief that the Antichrist would be a Jew of the tribe of Dan, in pictorial representations of Jews with hooked noses and bestial features, in the demonic characters of Herod and Synagoga, and above all in the sporadic pogroms and persecutions and the belief that the Jews sacrificed Christian children to the Devil or poisoned Christian wells.

The theft of children and the substitution of changelings has always been a deep terror in the human unconscious. It is a defensive explanation of one's children's disappointing behavior or the repressed fantasy

44. For demonization of Jews see below, Chapter 5.

45. G. Ashby, "Le diable et ses représentations dans quelques chansons de geste," in *Le diable au moyen âge* (Paris, 1979), pp. 7-21.

46. See R. A. Wisbey, *A Complete Concordance to the Rolandslied* (Leeds, 1969), s.v. *tuuele, tuvil, tuvel, tuvele, tuvel, tuvil, tuvilis*. Worship of Muhammad and Apollo: "Da waren siben hundert apgot: / Machmet was der herest unter in" (3492-3493); "Uwer goete, di ir ane betet, / Appollo un Machmet, / die sint vile bese. . . / die tuvele wonent dar inne" (805-809). Under the Devil's power: "si sich ergaben in des tuveles gewalt" (3514-3515). Ganelon manipulated by Satan: "Gencilun saz mittin under in, / der tuvil gab ime den sin" (1978-1979). The Devil is rooted in Ganelon's heart: "Da wurzilt der tivel inne" (2858).

of a parent who wishes to be rid of a child; more generally it springs from terror of the transformation of the familiar into the unfamiliar, a common motif of nightmares. The happy ending of some stories of child theft or substitution reassures parents whose children's personalities have been corrupted that the earlier personality is still there and may return: thus it becomes a metaphor for spiritual growth and conversion.⁴⁷ Not only Jews stole Christian children: demons themselves did so. The following story about Saint Stephen was also told of Saint Lawrence, Saint Bartholomew, and others.

A pious Galilean woman gave birth to a son; she and her delighted husband invited their friends to a celebration. While the parents were distracted by their guests, Satan slipped into the house disguised as a human, found the infant in his cradle, and carried him off to Troy. There little Stephen was nursed by a dog, a white bitch, who spoke to Bishop Julian of Troy and told him to care for the child, for God had sent him. Julian named the boy Nathaniel and raised him carefully. One night an angel appeared to the boy, explained what the Devil had done, and told him to return to his real father. Julian sadly gave his adopted son permission to leave. After a long voyage Stephen returned, and when he got home he found a changeling in his place, a demon who had taken on the boy's form. When the changeling caught sight of the real Stephen, it shrieked in horror. Seizing the thing, Stephen demanded that it tell who it really was under penalty of being burned in the fire. The demon groaned, growled, barked, and finally fled with great commotion. The family was happily united at last.⁴⁸

A variation of the theme is the voluntary gift of a child to the Devil by parents grateful to the Dark Lord for favors. When this occurs, the Virgin or an angel comes to the aid of the child when the Devil appears to collect him. Sometimes the Virgin appears in court as defense attorney.⁴⁹ Not only the individual soul, but the whole human race may appear in the dock; the Devil claims his rights over humankind,

47. See Maurice Sendak's children's book *Outside over There* (New York, 1981).

48. G. de Tervarent and B. de Gaiffier, "Le diable voleur d'enfants," in *Homenage a Antoni Rubió I Lluch*, vol. 3 (Barcelona, 1936), pp. 33-58; and the "Miracle de l'enfant donné au diable," discussed by Andrus, pp. 37-39, 56-57, 135-136.

49. See J.-P. Poly, "Le diable, Jacques le Coupé, et Jean les Portes, ou les avatars de Santiago," in *Le diable au moyen âge* (Paris, 1979), pp. 443-460. I am grateful to Prof. A. Bernstein for permitting me to see his unpublished paper, "Theology and Popular Belief: Confession in the Later Thirteenth Century," in which, among other things, he shows how the clergy attempted to persuade the people to go to confession by describing its efficacy in defeating the Devil.

and Christ or Mary acts as counsel for the defense. The trial of humanity usually takes place just after the harrowing of hell. The demons hold a council in hell, and Lucifer complains that Christ has no right to take the imprisoned souls away. Sometimes the Devil claims that he has a right to the souls as a result of original sin. He names an attorney, a *procurator nequitiae infernalis*, whose name is Belial in Palladini's version of the trial of the human race. Belial goes before God the Father and demands a hearing in open court in order to put the case of hell against Christ. The court convenes in Jerusalem, and the personnel of the trial vary according to the version. When God the Father is judge, Christ is counsel for the defense, showing his wounds in argument against the Devil; when Christ is judge, the defense is undertaken by the Blessed Virgin, the *advocata humani generis*. This the Devil claims is unfair on the grounds of nepotism and because no woman can be a fit advocate in a court of law. When the judge is Solomon, the defense attorney is either the Virgin or Moses. The Devil debates his case suavely and cleverly, pulling every legal trick, quoting and glossing Scripture. He pleads that his contract with God at the time of original sin entitles him to the souls and that God himself appointed him to tempt and punish the wicked. But the judge decides in favor of humanity, either on the strict grounds that the Devil has broken the contract, or because humanity has been properly ransomed by Christ's death, or on the grounds that God's mercy and equity supersede strict justice. Belial appeals the verdict, and the case is settled out of court, Belial receiving assurance that the demons will be allowed to continue to keep the souls of whatever sinners they succeed in tempting, but not the souls of the just. In the end Belial returns disconsolately back into the mouth of hell.⁵⁰

50. The idea of the trial of the human race goes back to Ezrik of Armenia's fifteenth-century treatise "Against the Sects," in which Christ and Satan dispute in hell, Christ arguing for mercy against the Devil's claim of strict justice. Among the versions of the trial are the twelfth-century "Altercatio Diaboli contra Christum," the thirteenth-century "Pianto di Dio col nemico," and numerous sermons. It came to be a set case in legal textbooks and commentaries. The great jurist Bartolo da Sassoferrato wrote one of the most successful versions about 1359, a treatise that appeared under a number of titles, notably "Processus Satanae contra Dominam Virginem coram iudice Jesu," in M. Goldast Haiminsfeld, *Processus juris joco-seriosus* (Hanau, 1611), in "Tractatus quaestionis ventilatae coram domino nostro Jesu Christo inter virginem Mariam advocatam humani generis ex una parte et diabolum contra genus humanum ex alia parte" in the *Opera omnia* of Bartolo (Venice, 1590), vol. 10. A fourteenth-century French version of Bartolo's treatise is the poem *L'advocacie nostre-dame*, ed. A. de Montaiglon and G.

The Devil's relationship to law in the Middle Ages appears in both theology and popular religion. If the cosmos is in fact a battleground between the forces of good and evil, the criminal must be regarded as a follower of Satan: he has lost his free will to the power of evil.⁵¹ Certain crimes were regarded as particularly heinous and subject to diabolical inspiration: theft, sex crimes, murder, and maleficent magic. The idea of the ordeal in the early Middle Ages (it came to an end in the twelfth century) was based upon the assumption that supernatural powers were concerned in every legal case. The principle of the ordeal, and of trial by combat, is that God will intervene to distinguish the guilty from the innocent. It follows that the Devil's concern is to protect the guilty and to secure the condemnation of the innocent. Thus the ordeal is part of humanity's struggle against the Devil, and judges must be on their guard against his wiles. The assumption that God and Devil were immediately present in human affairs remained well into the Renaissance and Reformation, especially in the witch craze, when it was thought that the Devil would work every wile at his disposal in order to help his servants, the witches. Judges deemed that the punishment of the criminal was not only for the benefit of society but also for that of the criminal, for at least some legal proceedings were designed to drive the Devil out of the criminal and thus release him from the power of the Dark Lord. The degree to which exorcism may have been used in criminal trials remains a point of discussion.⁵²

The Devil also wrote letters, enough in fact to constitute a whole

Raynaud (Paris, 1869—not 1896 as usually cited). On this see G. Gros, "Le diable et son adversaire dans l'*Advocacie nostre dame* (poème du XIVe siècle)," in *Le diable au moyen âge*, pp. 237-258. The other most influential version was by Jacobus Palladius (Giacomo Palladini da Teramo, bishop of Spoleto), written in 1382 under the title "Consolatio peccatorum, seu Processus Belial;" it is also called the "Processus Luciferi contra Jesum coram iudice Salomone," "Compendium perbreve de redemptione generis humani," and other titles; it too is edited by Goldast Haiminsfeld. Palladini's version was widely translated and remained popular into the eighteenth century, influencing Beaumarchais and the librettist Lorenzo da Ponte. See Bloomfield, pp. 92-93; E. von Petersdorff, *Dämonologie*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1956-1957), vol. 1, pp. 290-292; D. Colombani, "La chute et la modification: Le renversement diabolique chez Gautier de Coinci," in *Le diable au moyen âge*, pp. 133-154; P. B. Salmon, "Jacobus de Theramo and Belial," *London Mediaeval Studies*, 2 (1951), 101-115; K. Frick, *Das Reich Satans* (Graz, 1982), pp. 140-142.

51. H. von Fehr, "Gottesurteil und Folter: Eine Studie zur Dämonologie des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit," *Festschrift für Rudolf Stammer* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1926), pp. 231-254.

52. C. DeClercq, *La législation religieuse franque de Clovis à Charlemagne* (Louvain, 1936).

satirical genre.⁵³ The Devil's letter, which began as a few lines quoted in twelfth-century chronicles, gained more acceptance in the thirteenth century and was widespread in the fourteenth. Its purpose was threefold: to satirize the corrupt morality of ecclesiastics, especially the Roman curia; to amuse; and finally, in its later stages, to offer instruction in the rhetorical arts. After 1350, the tenor of the letters shifted from general moral satire to an attack upon ecclesiastical governance, and they came to be closely associated first with the conciliar movement and later with Protestantism.⁵⁴ Often the form of the letter followed the form of a legal grant or charter in which the Devil bestows a reward for services rendered. He thanks the clergy for their greed, drunkenness, rapaciousness, worldly ambition, and lack of concern for their priestly duties, all of which, he says, brings many recruits down to fill hell. From the later fourteenth century, the satire took a more political turn, attacking the papacy's governance of the church. The salutation was a clever permutation of a normal legal charter: "Satan, emperor of the realms of hell, king of shadows, and duke of the deepest district, prince of pride, and eternal tormentor of all the damned, to his most faithful servant John Dominici, archbishop of Ragusa and abettor of all our works, sends good health and eternal pride."⁵⁵ The most famous letter was the "Epistola Luciferi," composed in 1351 and widely copied, translated, and adapted. After the salutation "to all the members of our kingdom, the sons of pride, particularly the princes of the modern church," it goes on to say, "we

53. The Devil's letter is parallel to the heavenly letters supposedly posted down from heaven by Christ. The idea of the heavenly letter goes back to the eighth century. See W. R. Jones, "The Heavenly Letter in Medieval England," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, n.s. 6 (1975), 163-178; J. B. Russell, "Saint Boniface and the Eccentrics," *Church History*, 33 (1964), 238-240.

54. On the Devil's letters in general see H. Feng's thorough work "Devil's Letters: Their History and Significance in Church and Society, 1100-1500" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1982). I am grateful to Dr. Feng and her adviser, Professor Robert Lerner, for making her dissertation available. See also P. Lehmann, *Die Parodie im Mittelalter*, 2d ed. (Stuttgart, 1963), pp. 57-64; R. R. Raymo, "A Middle English Version of the *Epistola Luciferi ad Cleros*," in D. A. Pearsall and R. A. Waldron, eds., *Medieval Literature and Civilization* (London, 1969), pp. 233-248; W. Wattenbach, "Über erfundene Briefe in Handschriften des Mittelalters, besonders Teufelsbriefe," *Sitzungsberichte der königlich-preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1, no. 9 (Feb. 11, 1892), 91-123; G. Zippel, "La lettera del diavolo al clero, dal secolo XII alla Riforma," *Bullettino dell'Istituto storico italiano per il medio evo e Archivio Muratoriano*, 70 (1958), 125-179.

55. Lehmann, pp. 61-63.

are sending some of the eminent demons and nobles of hell to counsel and aid you; your cleverness knows very well how to acquiesce in their suggestions and add to their treacherous inventions." After a long satire on the state of the church, the letter concludes, "dated at the center of the earth in our shadowy kingdom, in the presence of hordes of demons specially summoned for this purpose to our treacherous consistency."⁵⁶ Variants of the letter of Lucifer were letters from Satan, Leviathan, and Beelzebub.

The Devil continues to prey upon our inclinations to vanity, curiosity, and the other vices, as the stories of Caesarius illustrate. In one tale, a poor Cistercian brother of decent but impoverished family had after long efforts finally learned to read. The Devil tempted him with love of books and with the hope of becoming a bishop. If only you study hard, the Devil told him, you will be bishop of Halberstadt. Deluded by vanity, the brother left the monastery, stole a horse, and rode off proudly in search of his fortune. In eighteenth-century novels such behavior was often rewarded by the temporary acquisition of a beautiful mistress and a fortune, but in the thirteenth century its end was inevitably dire: the brother was seized as a thief and hanged. The moral: do not think above your station in life.

Another story was about a knight named Henry of Falkenstein, who claimed that he did not believe in demons and in order to prove his point asked a magician named Philip to call some up for him. Philip warned him that the might of demons was dangerous and terrible, but Henry insisted, so Philip took him to a crossroads at noon and drew a magic circle round him with a sword, cautioning him not to step out of the circle and not to agree to anything the demons might suggest. Then he departed, leaving Sir Henry sitting in the circle. Soon the knight saw great floods of water sweeping toward him and heard the roaring of wind and the grunting of pigs. Then in the woods near the road he saw a hideous shadow, something like a human but taller than a tree. And this figure was moving toward him. The figure, which he realized was the Devil, approached the circle, stopped, and asked the knight what he wanted. Henry brought himself to look more closely and saw that the Devil had taken the shape of a huge man with black skin and black clothing, and of such horrible deformity that the knight

56. Zippel, pp. 163-166. Zippel also gives a "Sermo de quolibet statu hominum," pp. 166-175, and an "Epistola missa Clementi papae Sexto," pp. 175-179.

quickly lowered his gaze. He found the courage to speak. "You have done well to come," he addressed the dark figure, "for I have heard much about you." "Well, yes," the Devil replied, "people are always judging me and blaming me for everything. Actually I never hurt anyone. Do you suppose you could lend me your cloak?" Remembering his friend's warning, Henry refused. The Devil then asked for his belt, then a sheep from the knight's farm, and finally a rooster, but each time Henry declined, and persisted in asking his own questions. "How is it," he demanded of the Devil, "that you know so much?" The Devil replied that he knew every evil that occurs in the world and proved it by telling Sir Henry in exactly what house and at exactly what time he had lost his virginity and of other sins he had committed. The Devil resumed his own requests, but when Henry refused to accede to any of them, he reached his huge hand out toward him. Caught off guard, the knight stumbled backward and fell, calling out for his friend Philip. When Philip ran up, the Devil disappeared, and from that moment Henry never doubted the existence of demons. As a permanent mark of his experience his former healthy coloring became pale and remained so for the rest of his life.⁵⁷

Once one has summoned the Devil, whether deliberately or inadvertently, one cannot easily escape him. Repentance and a contrite heart help, along with confession, acts of charity, recitation of the Lord's Prayer, the creed, or rosary, and sometimes one can drive him away by literally beating him. But usually one needs outside help. The pope's blessing is effective; most helpful are the saints, whom the Devil fears and shuns. Saint Gall infuriated the demons by driving them from place to place and depriving them of their rest; the Blessed Mother saves even those rash enough to sign written pacts. The signs and symbols of Christianity ward him off: the cross or the sign of the cross, holy water, the name of Jesus, the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), the words of the Bible, holy chrism, church bells. Other protections are unchristian in origin: hissing or spitting at the Devil (though the desert fathers adopted hissing), bronze, iron, fire, garlic, onions, pigs, and salt. This is largely apotropaic magic, in which things associated with the Evil One are precisely those that are most effective against him. Since he is associated with stench and smoke, he

57. Caesarius, 5.2, 5.16.

can be fumigated with incense, smoke from a yule log, or—best—asafoetida (*Teufelsdröck*: "Devil's turd").⁵⁸

58. Müller, 782–786; Thompson, G 303.16; 303.25.7; I. Goldziher, "Eisen als Schutz gegen Dämonen," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaften*, 10 (1907), 41–46. Other legends: God creates the Devil from his own shadow or his own spittle (Thompson, G 303.1.1.1 and 303.1.1.2); the Devil would do penance if assured of a return to grace (Tubach, 1664); God creates the pleasant things of this world, but the Devil creates such things as bats, mosquitoes, and hail (UCLA). See H. Lixfeld, *Gott und Teufel als Welterschöpfer* (Munich, 1971); J. Bolte, "Der Teufel in der Kirche," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturgeschichte*, 11 (1897), 249–266; Thompson, A 63–64, A 2286.2.1.