

God, not one accustomed to problems without solutions, found himself in quite a unique quandary. The business of running the world aside, there is family, angels and no shortage of hangers on when you are the supreme being of the universe. But I digress. Today, the issue was one that should have been, under normal circumstances, rather pedestrian and mundane. Could have been, actually, delegated to a lesser being were it not for the fact that this one presented problems that even The Man Himself found a little less than appealing.

Running a universe, particularly one rife with demons, evildoers and an overabundance of attorneys is quite a task, even if you do know it all. Certainly, Jesus, Gabriel, St. Peter were all able men who made the job of planetary CEO much easier but sometimes when you are the one in charge it is as simple as good ole Harry Truman said.. "The Buck Stops Here". It was in this quagmire that the Lord found himself on this Tuesday, the 11th of June, 2014.

Emily Crowley was perhaps one of the kindest, most Christian women who ever passed through this world. Upon her passing to the next world she was well aware she would not be seeing her husband, Frank, anywhere within the vicinity of heaven or it's outlying environs. Frank, she was certain, was much further south. He had died some 12 years ago and until the moment of his last breath he had never done a good deed, or even contemplated one, in his 72 years on the earth. This troubled her, naturally, as a Christian woman, but you can only do so much with a man who thought the March of Dimes was greedy. Frank Crowley, to put it plainly, was an unredeemable asshole. Mrs Emily was not fully aware of this before she married him but she stuck it out, through thin and thinner, for some 40 years and if anyone earned a spot in heaven it was certainly she. But there was a lingering problem and it had to be dealt with. Now. Or fairly soon lest her son Emerson, a pale, retiring copy of his father, but a pretty good copy nonetheless, find himself in his fathers company very soon.

The Bible, as any religious scholar is aware, has been interpreted through various tongues over numerous years and even with such a wonderful document some things are simply lost in translation. One of these things, which should have been fixed centuries ago, is the name of the ruler of the underworld. Satan, as we know it. As anyone who knows Aramaic, Arabic and Hebrew is aware, the first vowel in a proper name is silent. Therefore, as much to my surprise as to you the reader, the name of the director of all that is evil and debauch in the universe is not Satan, but Stan. Stan, as those who are familiar with the story, was once an angel who challenged his superiors and was cast into a lake of fire to burn for eternity with several life insurance agents. It is from this point that our story shall spring forth. Mrs Emily, Frank, God and Stan all brought together by the desire of a holy woman to save her son.

Having been in heaven for about 11 months, Mrs Emily certainly had no clout. Not being apprised of how the pecking order there works I assume she was just a newbie, as many of us have been at new jobs or places in our lives. The point is, her influence was probably about zero, except for the fact that we all assume God is a pretty nice guy and willing to lend an ear if warranted, as, in her case, it certainly would be.

Emerson Crowley, the sole offspring of Emily and Frank, was a ticket agent at the Albuquerque

Greyhound Bus Station. The old line is, unfortunately, based in fact. The Albuquerque bus station may not be hell, but you can certainly see it from here. It was from this mundane position of toil that he led his somewhat silent and desperate life. 3 ex wives, 2 worthless teenage children from these unfortunate dalliances and child support payments that would choke a goat. Emerson's hobbies included around the clock drinking, gambling away the aforementioned child support (and everything else) and spending his time with dates who charged by the hour. As Emerson liked to say, money can't buy you love but it can rent you a reasonable facsimile thereof. Of course, Mrs Emily had tried hard with her son throughout her life. She was forever encouraging him to attend services with her at the Second Holiness Church of Faith By The River to no avail. Like his father, he preferred pursuits with more immediate gratification and earthly benefit. Unlike his father, she always thought that he was redeemable and worth saving. And so it went until she died, leaving him some \$14,869.38 in savings which he promptly invested in a losing horse named Hoof Hearted and a comely young Mexican girl named Twilight, which he assumed was an alias to avoid deportation for lack of a green card. She spoke not a lick of English, which suited Emerson just fine because everybody knows women talk too much anyway.