

LITERARY SECTION

Hell Hath No Fury
by Jean Hardwick

Satan - dark handsome, formal dress, horns
Dotty - Dorothea, fat, old, ugly, an entertainer,
diverse talents billed as "Dotty."

Dark, Noisy, smokey watering hole, rammed with customers. Piano, Shadowy figure playing the piano. Spotlight on Dotty at piano. She ends her song and moves towards table where Satan sits sipping a drink, front stage centre.

Patron (bellows): Dotty come here; Gimme a kiss.
Dolly: Not now honeydove, I'm working. (She is now standing at the table where Satan sits.)

Dolly (to Satan): Mind if I sit here?

Satan: Good evening Dorothea.

D.: (sitting down) How come you know my name is not Dorothy?

S.: I know your name is Dorothea. It means "gift of God".

D.: Really? I didn't know that.

(Waiter puts down two drinks. Satan pays, offers Dolly a cigarette. She takes it, he lights it. As he does, she screws up her nose at the smell of sulphur.)

D.: What's that awful smell? Like rotten eggs. You new around here?

S.: Not at all.

D.: Haven't seen you here before. You look some fancy. (She looks him over more closely, sees the horns.)

D.: Thought I seen the Devil! You ain't the Devil?

S.: Satan if you please.

D.: Knew I'd be seein' you in person some day, but no' just yet! I ain't dead yet! A lady wouldn't be here if she's dead, so I ain't dead!

S.: Of course you're not dead!

D.: Wha' cha doin' here?

(Satan puts down drink, dabs lips with napkin)

D.: So you don't think that's my business.

S.: I'm looking for souls, madam.

D.: Naturally, that's what the Devil does, don't he. But why'd you come here? There's worse sinners - devils themselves at other places I been - or was it you that was always them devils?

S.: All imposters, madam. There is only one Satan if you please.

D.: Hey, what's it like in Hell really? There's times I'm ready to go there. Like last month when the landlord raised my rent and I tell him I won't pay, so he turns off the heat. So I pay the B... before he freezes my ass ets. (sighs) Then there's the time I'd like to go to haven, but I don't think they let me in; ain't been perfect enough.

S.: What do you know about Heaven?

D.: Only righteous Jacks and Jills so there. Place must be empty. Most of us will be your customers, eh? (winks)

(Satan straightens, slightly pained expression)

D.: Say - didn't cha used to be in heaven? Yah! - yuh was bounced! What cha do up there, eh? What was it yuh done?

S.: I tried to persuade the management to improve conditions.

D.: Nah?? Improve what?

S.: For one thing, a heavenly day begins with compulsory prayers, from five a.m. till noon. That's seven hours pain in the knees. And continues, twanging a harp from one p.m. till lights out, perched in a cloud, a chilling draft billowing out your nightgown. That's ten plus more hours misery. That's heaven. And it's freez-up there. Myself and others tried to persuade the almighty to install a furnace but he insisted physical agony keeps the soul pure. So I resigned and set up my own business - flourishing, too.



D.: Huh? That's nothing like what I was told before. Aah, you're lying to me.

S.: Why would I lie to you?

D.: You're after something. Tell me you want me body and soul.

S.: No.

D.: What the hell! Nick, if heaven's so bad, I'm glad I'm not going there.

S.: No? You can't stay here forever.

D.: So I die and go to Hell. I'd rather. How about it Nicki?

S.: Oh, I'm afraid that will be impossible, madam. You see I have rather an exclusive clientele, mostly very wealthy persons. The poor end up in heaven. And frankly there's no fortune in your face or figure. You look like an old toad.

D.: F---!

[She jumps up, heaving the table and Satan into the lap of another customer. The bouncer pounces, casts out Satan from the premises. Dotty flounces back to the piano to sing, "Hell Hath No Fury Like a Woman Scorned"]

Submit your creative works

to my post box at Gazette

- ed.