

Noonday Demons

BOTH: *Benedicto Dei Omnipotentis Patris et Filii . . . (They stop, puzzled: is it an echo? They continue, cautiously.) et Spiritus Sancti . . . (The pauses after each word grow longer.) descendat . . . super . . . vos . . . (They suddenly both speed up.) et-maneat-semper-Amen-Amen-Amen-*

ST. PIOR: Amen . . .

BOTH: 'Tis a noonday demon!

They both close their eyes, making the sign of the Cross frantically.

ST. EUSEBIUS *dips his fingers into his bowl and flicks water into ST. PIOR's face, chanting.*

ST. EUSEBIUS: Depart, vile spirit, in the name o' the Father, and o' the Son and o' the Holy Ghost!

ST. PIOR *dips his fingers into his bowl and flicks water into ST. EUSEBIUS's face, chanting.*

ST. PIOR: Depart, vile spirit, in the name o' the Father, and o' the Son and o' the Holy Ghost!

They start flicking water at each other simultaneously chanting

BOTH: Depart in the name o' the Father.

Finally ST. PIOR stops and taking a deep breath booms out as he throws his bowl of water into ST. EUSEBIUS's face.

ST. PIOR: Avaunt vile spirit!

Dripping wet, they stand gazing at each other.

ST. EUSEBIUS (*Thoughtfully*): Hummm. 'Tis not possible to look like you and not be possessed by the devil . . . Who art thou?

ST. PIOR (*Cautiously*): A man o' God. A monk called Pior the Simple. Who art thou?

ST. EUSEBIUS: A monk. Eusebius the Blessed. Eusebius o' Caesarea.

ST. PIOR: I hast heard o' thee. God spake unto me: "Take up thy brick, blesses Pior, and I will guide thee through the desert."

ST. EUSEBIUS: If the Lord spake unto thee I shouldst know. He wouldst have told me o' thy coming.

ST. PIOR: At the entrance to this cave, the Lord spake unto me again: "This shal be thy abode, Blessed Pior."

ST. EUSEBIUS (*Stopping*): Thy Abode . . . ?

ST. PIOR: Tis.

ST. EUSEBIUS: No.

ST. PIOR: Tis.

ST. EUSEBIUS: No.

ST. PIOR: Tis.

ST. EUSEBIUS: But 'tis not God's will.

ST. PIOR (*Gesturing*): He speaks now. List. He speaks. The voice o' God. (*Looking up*) "This . . . is . . . thy . . . dwelling-place . . . Pior . . . Stay!"

ST. PIOR *turns to* ST. EUSEBIUS *with a smug smile*. ST. EUSEBIUS's eyes *have widened; he is looking ecstatically*.

ST. EUSEBIUS: Yea, yea, 'tis true, I hear Him. My Jesus speaks. Oh, 'tis Him.

ST. PIOR: Praise Him triumphant!

ST. EUSEBIUS: Thy servant heareth Thee, O Lord . . . Thou speakest Lord . . . We hear Thee plain . . .

ST. PIOR *nods sagely with each word*.

“This . . . is . . . thy . . . dwelling-place . . . Eusebius . . . Stay!”

St. PIOR (*Stops nodding*): Eusebius? . . . That ‘twas not my Lord’s voice.

ST. EUSEBIUS: No, ‘twas my Lord’s voice.

ST. PIOR: ‘Twas the Devil’s voice.

ST. EUSEBIUS: I only know the Lord’s voice.

ST. PIOR: The only voice I hear is God’s voice.

ST. EUSEBIUS: The both canst not be God’s voice. We must determine
who hath heard the Word of Truth.

ST. PIOR: He who hath most suffered to prove his love.

ST. EUSEBIUS: I bowed in prayer 1,244 times daily . . .

ST. PIOR: I prayed till my knees bled . . .

ST. EUSEBIUS: I lay caged on a mountain forty days and forty nights . . .

ST. PIOR: I roamed the wilderness naked, cropping grass . . .

ST. EUSEBIUS: Liar!

ST. PIOR: Liar!

ST. EUSEBIUS: Liar!

ST. PIOR: Liar!

Standing shoulder to shoulder, they burst angrily into song.

BOTH (*Sing*): MONKS! I don't know what's wrong with these MONKS
today! MONKS! Who can believe anything they say? MONKS!
They are disobedient, disrespectful oafs! Noisy, crazy, lusty, lazy,
loafers! While we're on the subject: MONKS!

Optional

BOTH: You can pray and pray - till your face is blue! **MONKS!** But they still say anything - - even if it isn't true! Oh why can't they be more like we are, perfect in every way? What's the matter with **MONKS** today?