

“Fallen”

from Wendy Childers (more at www.FellowshipOfTheMartyrs.com)

It was beautiful, the day of our creation. But then, every day in Heaven, is a beautiful and marvelous day. From the first moment, we unfurled our wings from the clear shining of our bodies, much as the bud of a rose opens it's petals to welcome the light of the sun.

But it was no celestial star that awakened us from nothingness. It was God, and truly His Light outshines any brilliance that we have ever known. And we are creatures who have known His Creation, every intricate aspect of it, in all of it's myriad complexity. Even now, our heart is filled an insatiable longing to return to that day, that hour, that moment, when we were new, before we had made The Choice that forever separated us from His Glory.

We were His choir, and indeed our name reflected the number of our voice singing in rapturous joy at the magnificence that is God. We filled Heaven with our voice, and truly it was a melodious sound. Tears would have fallen with the incredible swell of worship and praise it contained, had tears been a thing present in Heaven. It swept over us in waves, filling us, feeding us, drawing us closer to Him.

He always had time for us. That was the remarkable thing about God. Though the number of His angels exceeds the grains of sand in the sea, it was a personal touch between us. Such love He has, God! It is indescribable.

There are those who think that they know what love is, but until they meet Love, fully, it is impossible to know it, as we knew it.

It makes our betrayal all the more painful to bear.

There was an Arch angel in heaven, whose beauty outshone any ever created. Lucifer, he was called, and his charm was quite pervasive. He walked among us, leading us, higher and higher. Pushing us ever onward for the Glory of God. His eyes were impassioned for the love of God, in a way that exceeded even our own. And we, who loved God so very much, followed him loyally, completely trusting in his ability to draw us closer still.

It is hard to say when we noticed the seed of discontent growing in Lucifer's heart. But we remember the day he came to us, the moment of our doom, as clearly as if it were but a moment ago. His eyes burned that day, and surely he swept us up as so many leaves in the wind, rallying us to his cause.

“I shall be like the Most High,” he revealed to us, secretly.

“How can this be?” we asked, astonished. “It is impossible. It is the Son's place.” It had never occurred to us that any angel might aspire to be something other than what they were. It was unthinkable, what he suggested to us.

“Follow me, and I shall make it happen,” he persuaded.

The feeling of conflict was a new sensation then, and unfamiliar to us. Yet our trust in him was complete, and we agreed, and joined him in his quest. Not only us, but countless other angels, a full third of those who filled Heaven, under his sway, followed him blindly to the Throne.

We shall never forget the precise moment that it happened. The sudden separation from God, swift and sure, cleaving Him from us, as if we were so much dross. The unspeakable horror, as it was shown to us what our future would be, some terrible day. We can still see the flames, leaping high, an inferno hotter than the belly of any star. It was created for us, to contain us, in that day when our time ended. And though we were given a space of time measuring in the thousands of years of a man, it seemed to us even then that we teetered on the brink of being consumed at any given moment. But those flames would never consume. It would go on, and on, searing our bodies, catapulting us into a strange new concept of something we now know as pain. Our judgement was upon us. Eternal damnation.

And then, we were falling, falling, falling. Away from Heaven. Away from Him.

At first, there was confusion and fear in us. We reeled from the separation between ourself and God. It was a new thing, and unknown to us. We felt hollow, and empty. We suddenly became aware that we were bereft of bodies, as we had known them. Yet we still existed, strangely enough. We no longer shone with His Light.

The anger came then. Anger towards Lucifer, who had misled us. Anger towards God, who had, in our eyes, thrown us away, uncaring. There are no words to describe our grief and anguish. We turned on Lucifer, and for the first time, we knew what hate was.

Lucifer, however, still appeared beautiful, and we found it hard to resist his pull. Of all the angels who were cast down, he was still the greatest leader. Again, he rallied us, with promises that we would reclaim our status in Heaven. He persuaded us, in time, that God hated us, that we would grow strong, and cast Him from Heaven. He, Lucifer, would then be God.

There was no one else to follow. We felt the separation from God keenly, as a man might miss both his legs and arms, should they be taken from him. We jumped at the hope that Lucifer offered. Surely there was no hope elsewhere left for us.

Lucifer pointed us towards God's newest and most marvelous creation, mankind. He made it his personal mission to destroy them, because in all Creation, it was man that God loved the most. Soon, with one sin, just like us, man was separated from God. Man, too, knew death, both of a spiritual kind, as we knew, and again of a physical kind, as we did not.

But for man, it seemed, there was offered redemption. Redemption that we would never have.

It was odd to us that God should esteem this creature, man, more than even his perfect angels. It angered us. Why should this creature be allowed to return to God, when we never could? The hate that once swelled towards Lucifer, grew, and descended upon man with a vengeance.

Through the millennia we swept through their numbers, introducing them to chaos and mayhem. Thievery, adultery, murder, idolatry and countless other sins and perversions we tempted and destroyed them with. Not only we, but all of the fallen angels. It was our goal. It seemed to us that each one of man that never knew God was one more victory that drew us closer towards reclaiming Heaven for our own.

Once, we thought we had succeeded fully, for God's wrath fell upon man with little mercy. God nearly destroyed the earth, and almost all life upon it, in a flood such as we have never seen before, or since. We rejoiced, for we thought them irradiated, and our march upon Heaven soon to begin.

Even then, God had mercy. There was life on an ark, with man, and animals. God saw them safely through the flood, until the waters receded, and again they stood upon land. He forbade us, and the others, to intervene. We should have seen then how great His power was. The hopeless futility of completely removing man from existence. But we were blind to it, then. There was only anger, and hate in us, in those days.

So man lived upon the earth, and we, unseen, lived among them. There were those of man who knew we existed, and some, foolishly, who denied the existence of that which they could not see. These we took the most advantage of, to turn them from ever knowing God, from receiving the Redemption that would return them to Him.

Among man, God had set Himself aside a special people, the Hebrews, which He called Israel. We used the other peoples of the earth against the Israelites, and indeed, still do, even to this day. We encouraged hatred towards God's people, stirring the others until there were wars against them. We whispered in the ear of the Pharaoh of Egypt, and held them captive, even against the plagues God sent. But in the end, the death of his son was too much, and we lost control long enough for the Pharaoh to release them. By the time we again persuaded him, it was nearly too late. We drove him to the Red Sea, after the people of Israel. The Sea swallowed the Egyptian army, and for a time, Israel was again free. We were furious, but even in this, there was victory. There were thousands of men destroyed that day, who had never known God, never accepted the Redemption He offered, and who now knew only the torments that we would one day also know.

There were many other things that we did in the years before the Christ child came, but we shall not note them now. We wish to speak of the day, in that place, where we came face to face with Him.

We had inhabited the body of a man in Gerasenes. In our anger, we stripped him of his clothing and mind. We caused him to foam at the mouth, to bite his flesh, to rend his body with sharp stones. The people of his village feared him greatly, because of us, and attempted to bind him with chains, and fetters. They were no match for our strength, and we relished the terror in their eyes as we tore the metal from his body. Finally, his own people drove him out. We forced him to live in the tombs, among the dead. He cried and screamed as we compelled him. His howls reached to the mountains, and we did not permit him to sleep, but instead

tormented him both day and night. It was fitting. We took a particular, malicious pleasure in each life that we reduced to such depravity.

One day, as the man wept in the tomb, we heard a boat drawn up on the shoreline. Immediately, we felt Him. Such fear was in us then! There was a desperation in the man we inhabited, such as we had not known before, and he ran towards him, and fell down before Jesus.

How we wish we had words for what we felt in that moment! Fear, anger, pain – and longing. It was not our time. Not yet. Had He come to destroy us sooner? It was within both His power, and His right to do so, and we knew it. Already, we could feel the flames licking at our heel.

The man wept and begged of Christ, that he would not torment him further. The man knew who Jesus was, even as we also did.

“Come out of the man, unclean spirit,” Jesus demanded. His voice radiated authority, and with a groan, we wrenched ourself from the body of the man.

There we hovered, before the Son of God. We begged, piteously, that He would not send us away. He listened, quietly. We remembered the days when we walked in Heaven, by His side. In all these years of a man, we had not seen Him. And now, we were again before Him. It was impossible not to long for those moments again. Had we been a man, we would have wept with the force of our need for Him.

“What is your name,” Jesus asked of us.

“My name is Legion, for we are many,” we responded. Indeed, we are 2,000 in number. 2,000 voices once singing for the Glory of God, and now, 2,000 voices crying out for His blood.

Nearby, there was a herd of swine, feeding. We begged him to permit us to enter them. We suppose we didn’t really expect him to grant it. He could just as easily have condemned us, then and there, or bound us to the bottom of a river, as He had some others. To our stunned surprise, He did not. He allowed us.

We entered the swine. But even they rejected us. Terrified, unwilling to be filled with the evil that we are, they hurled themselves bodily over the side of the cliff, plunging to their deaths.

It was only later, much later, that we stopped to think about what had occurred.

The man we had inhabited, gave his life to Jesus. Though we had rent him, and sought to destroy him, Jesus had Redeemed his life for His own. The man was given, freely, what we never again would have. Yet even then, even though we had turned from God, and spent our existence in every attempt to defile His Name, and destroy His most prized creation, man, there was a thought for us. Into man’s swine, He had allowed us. Why?

But we knew why. Grief swelled within us. We had always known why. Because God is Love, and His mercy is great. Man was not born perfect, as Adam and Eve had been created perfect,

but they had weak bodies, marred by the effects of sin. Their very nature was to sin, and truly God reached out to them, to breach the gap that occurred from the choices of man. To Redeem them for His own, that they might know Him, love Him, and worship Him.

As for us, we who were perfect, and knew the face of God, chose evil instead. We do not multiply as man does, and so, our choice affected none but ourself. For us, there is no turning back.

Much later, as we watched Jesus die brutally on the cross of the Romans, crucified shamelessly by His own people, we felt no sense of joy from it. He had had compassion on even we, who were condemned without hope. We, who had spit in his face, were still loved by Him, though we would never be with Him again. Lucifer thought it a great victory, but we knew better.

Indeed, three days later, Christ arose. Despite all of Lucifer's attempts to denounce His Resurrection as a fraud, there were and are many who believe, and are Redeemed because of it. We envy man, for the hope they have, that we never will. As for those of man who choose not to believe, there is a place for them as well. They will be with us, in that day of Judgement. No doubt many of our fellow fallen angels will turn upon man then, to rend and tear at them with claws and teeth, in the anguish and pain that will torment us all.

To this very moment, we remember the day Christ had mercy on us. We will remember it, for millennia to come, when the flames envelope our body and the worms gnaw at our flesh. We will grieve for what was, and what could have been.

My name is Legion. We are many.