

FREUD/LEWIS 1

FREUD (CONT.)

Not there. Here.

LEWIS

Thank you.

Start

FREUD

Since we have so little time perhaps we should come to the reason I wrote you.

LEWIS

One of my books.

FREUD

Ah. You've written more than one?

LEWIS

I believe it's "Pilgrim's Regress" that's offended you.

FREUD

"Offended"?

LEWIS

Yes. My satirizing you with the "Sigismunde" character. His bombastic self importance; his tossing the Pilgrim to the Giant because he can't bear being contradicted.

(Pause. Freud doesn't respond)

My describing you as a "vain, ignorant old man" was a bit excessive. But I feel that when we put our belief systems before the public we must expect the public to react.

FREUD

As they should.

LEWIS

I'm sorry if you took it as a personal attack. But I can't apologize for taking issue with your worldview when it completely contradicts my own.

FREUD

Which is?

LEWIS

That there is a God. That a man doesn't have to be an imbecile to believe in Him. And we feeble-minded who do, are not, as you claim, suffering from a pathetic "obsessional neurosis".

FREUD

(Pause) I didn't read your book.

LEWIS

You didn't?

FREUD

Dr. Eric Larson, a dear friend at Cambridge, shares my passion for early English literature. When your homage to Pilgrim's Progress appeared he gave me a full report.

LEWIS

That I savaged you.

FREUD

Professor Lewis, I have been "savaged" all my life. Do not be disappointed that your creation of a cartoonish character named "Sigismunde Enlightenment" didn't leave me bedridden. But I must ask; if you assumed I was so offended, why did you come at all?

LEWIS

I was curious to meet you.

FREUD

Even if you dismiss my work?

LEWIS

Not all of it, certainly. Your writings are always thought provoking. When I was a student in University we devoured every book to discover our latest perversions.

FREUD

I hope you found them.

LEWIS

We did. Then competed to invent worse.

FREUD

You enjoy using humor.

LEWIS

I debate my students daily. Humor often tips the scale.

FREUD

Are you thinking, even unconsciously, that "debate" is the reason you're here?

LEWIS

I see it makes no difference I didn't choose the couch. Since you invited me, perhaps you should tell *me* why?

FREUD

Though I didn't read "Pilgrim's Regress", I enjoyed your essay on "Paradise Lost". Quite well written with many original observations. "Paradise Lost" is my favorite book. Many years ago, when I was separated from my future wife, it gave me great comfort.

LEWIS

You were comforted by a clash between God and Satan?

FREUD

I didn't say whose side I was on. But Milton gives Satan the best poetry, don't you think? Tea?

LEWIS

No thank you.

Stop

FREUD

Good; I'm sure it's cold by now. Water?

LEWIS

No.

(FREUD pours himself a glass of water)

FREUD

We both agree that Satan is a brilliant creation. All that is wrong with the world can be blamed on him as conveniently as Hitler blames the Jews. He is a master-(FREUD begins to cough)
He -

(The COUGHING becomes increasingly violent. HE reaches to his mouth in what looks like an attempt to adjust his teeth.

Concerned, LEWIS rises, but FREUD puts up his hand as if to warn him to stay away. FREUD takes a drink of water and the coughing stops)