

The New Order

Religious
Satire
Not For
The
Overly
Religious.

The
Book Of
Magus

You may believe
in me if you wish.
Personally, I don't
give a damn.
(Magus 12:13)

Charlie Thrun

The New Order

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Characters, in order of entry:

Sammy Travis	New prophet and main character.
Mai Ling	Sammy's only convert and ex-crack whore.
Andy Ching	Neighbor at his old apartment house, and con-man.
Spike	Biker leader with an MBA degree
Stinky	Another biker, an unwashed one. Real name Terry Collins
Slimy Mike	Another biker.
John Petter	The new Messiah.
Tom Sawyer	Reporter for San Francisco News Agency.
Andrew Jones	Photographer for San Francisco News Agency.
Janice Trotsky	Employee of SFNA, assigned to help John.
Harry Grant	News anchor on SFNA.
Maggie Scott	Another news anchor and talk show host.
Alfred Collins	Magician and con-man.
Frank	Works for Spike, doesn't look like biker.
Peter Sanchez	Television preacher Spike blackmails for an endorsement.
Puke Mayhem	One of the Mayhem twins, biker, real name Daisy Tinker
Pissy Mayhem	Another of the Mayhem twins, biker, real name Sharona Jones
Goofus	Huge biker, real name Jeff Downs.
Shawn Tushy	Senator, a pawn of anti-Magus church groups.
Agnes Tushy	Shawn's mother. A rich woman backing her son for Senator.

CHAPTER 1

AT THE BEGINNING

“**I**and only I talk to the Lord,” a raggedy-dressed middle-aged man spoke while standing on a small crate in a city park. “If you follow my lead, we can have world peace in our lifetime. No more starvation, no more war ... no more sin. The Lord God himself has told me how and given me the heavenly mission to spread His true word.”

People in the small park passed him by without a glance as they hurried between two busy commercial streets. A few, mostly children, would stop for a moment to listen, then jeer the speaker. Sammy Travis paid them little attention, being so wrapped up in his speech and the sound of his own voice.

A policeman, seeing as how the man was partially blocking the path, came over and grabbed him gently but firmly by the right bicep.

You should try to be just a little quieter, sir,” the officer told him, “and move your box more to the side. People have to get by, you know?”

“Yes. Thank you, officer. I’m sorry, sir. I get carried away with the Lord’s work. I have an entire world to save.” Sammy sighed, stumbling a little as he stepped down from the makeshift podium. “Sometimes I get discouraged by the lack of response. The Lord’s work is slow but thorough.”

“Well, sir. We all have our duties and I’m only doing mine.” He laughed. “At least ours don’t conflict. We both want peace in this world, specifically in this park.”

Sammy complied, moving the crate over a couple of feet. He smiled at the policeman, who, in turn, helped Sammy get back onto the box and then left him to resume his speech. It wasn't against the law and Sammy had become a fixture in that and other public areas. He was considered one of many local nuts; perhaps one of the least obnoxious.

"I wish you luck, sir. You have a noble calling," the officer told him.

After gravely shaking Sammy's hand, he walked off with a wide grin at the children as he passed them. Jeeze, he thought, what a nut. Anything to keep the peace.

A couple of hours later, throat sore, Sammy stepped down. His trademark crate went onto his head, a slot being cut in each side to see out. Sammy was afraid someone would steal or throw it away if he left it lying around. Besides, he wanted the contraption available for speaking in other locations when the urge hit him. He even had a drawer built into it where he kept a handwritten version of the New Bible as God dictated it to him in the evenings.

Sammy was blessed by a small income from stocks and bonds his parents had left him when they died. Knowing his condition, they'd made arrangements that he couldn't touch the principle. It was enough for a one-room apartment in the worst section of town and to allow him to buy simple foods to keep him alive. Also the basic necessities of life -- such as paper to write on and cheap pens. All his pens were red. After all, his writing was directly from the Lord Himself.

As he plodded home on weary legs, Sammy drew more attention from the box on his head than while speaking. He stopped off at a supermarket, one he frequented simply because the manager let him walk around wearing the box. Others wanted him to park it outside, saying it made other shoppers nervous. But that would mean taking a chance of someone stealing his Bible. Sammy figured he would be crazy to take that risk.

He picked up a few staples: a loaf of the cheapest bread, a small bag of rice -- it was near the end of the month and his check wouldn't be there till the third of the next one -- and a pound of hamburger. On the way out, he stood for a moment, staring into space -- though no one could have known with the box on his head.

Then Sammy spent one of his few remaining dollars on a “Super Interstate Lottery Ticket,” not even interested in the amount of the payoff. The Lord had told him to do it, which was enough for Sammy. As it happened, the jackpot was the largest in history, over \$600 million dollars. Sammy paid for his goods, pocketed the ticket and resumed his journey home.

As he walked, the streets became narrower and dirtier. He crossed an invisible barrier and entered a largely African American and Asian section of town. A familiar sight, most of them not even knowing his race since he was rarely seen there without the box, he plodded on, unnoticed. As he continued, the streets became even dirtier. Rusted and stripped cars lined both sides of the narrow roadway, making it impossible for running autos to get through.

Nobody complained, since no one on the street actually owned a drivable auto in the first place. If they had, they wouldn’t have taken a chance on parking there in the first place -- since the majority of the residents were thieves by nature or inclination. Many of the vehicles, however, were fixed up to serve as housing for otherwise homeless alcoholics and drug users.

Reaching his building, Sammy made his way to the fourth floor and entered his room. There were several locks on the door, all broken. The landlord had long ago given up on fixing locks. All that would mean would be having them broken again within a week or even the door itself if the thief happened to be lazy. Nobody bothered breaking into Sammy’s room anymore -- knowing he owned nothing of value.

Besides, an Asian neighbor named Mr. Ching possessed a large “black” dog, one trained to attack African Americans -- or “black bastards” as Mr. Ching was fond of calling them. At least that cut down the thieves and burglars by half on their floor.

Mr. Ching himself had a nice industry going, where he collected bones from small dead animals -- such as dogs, cats and rats -- from the street, then ground them into “powdered rhinoceros horn” to sell to Asian specialty shops. He had a secret recipe from his district of China, adding spices and other substances. It was supposed to be an aphrodisiac and must work, since Mr. Ching -- in his late eighties -- often had Chinese whores staying with him.

“Good evening, Reverend Travis.” Sammy heard as he stepped into his room. It was his, so far only convert, a former crack whore.

Mai Ling believed in Sammy. His preaching had gotten her off drugs and not leaving his floor for over six months kept her off them. It cost Sammy some of his precious funds to feed her but he figured it well worth it. Her devotion often shored up his resolve, keeping him on the right path during frequent periods of self-doubt.

As a bonus, her expertise with a knife had helped him out of a couple of bad situations. Between Brutus the dog and Mai Ling’s slicing ability, his floor was the safest in the building. After both had moved in, several tenants on that floor had vacated and other, more honest, replacements come up from other floors. Of course, Sammy thought it was due to God helping him in his work.

“Thank you, my child.” Sammy took the box from his head and parked it in its place in the corner of the room, drawer toward the wall. He then placed a regulation Bible and statue of Jesus on top. He knew from experience that most thieves would hesitate to steal either, sort of an ingrained instinct; especially since they had almost no value anymore, either monetarily, ethically or emotionally. It helped keep his precious writing safe. “I’ve brought sustenance for us, thank the Lord.”

“Thank you, Lord Magus,” the Chinese girl intoned by rote, “for your help in our days of need. I have a stew for us, Sammy. Mr. Ching gave me meat for our pot.”

“A real friend, Mr. Ching.”

“He said it was squirrel but I’m not sure. At least it’s free.”

“Thank you, Lord Magus.”

He only used the Lord’s true name in the privacy of his own home. The itinerant preacher knew enough not to annoy less fortunate Christians; the ones not privy to the true name. After all, he was the only one on this earth, as far as he knew, to talk to the Lord directly. Oh, but he had so much to correct and so little time to do it. The Lord must be testing me and mightily, he thought. At least I have Mai Ling -- bless Him.

The two sat and partook of the bounteous stew. It was both delicious and filling, no matter the source of the meat. Afterward, Mai Ling went down the hall to visit a friend on the same floor, while Sammy got out paper and pen. He worked on his Bible, using many sources. The Reverend Travis believed in inspiration in that task. It came in many forms, from the old Bible to newspapers, from old books and memory and also from direct conversation with the Lord.

The finished volume would consist of many clippings from the other sources as well as handwritten sections from Sammy's talks with Lord Magus. The Lord did, however, have to approve of each word, presumably reading over Sammy's shoulder as he worked. Sammy spent several hours alone, cutting and pasting as well as scribbling in a careful scrawl, knowing his penmanship would soon be priceless. It behooved him to make as perfect a missive as possible.

"How was food, Preacher?" Mr. Ching passed by the open door, Brutus growling and rubbing its jowls against his stomach.

"Very tasty, Mr. Ching. Thank you very much, sir."

"Might as well, Preacher. I don't want to throw away, you know? I catch squirrel and only need bones."

"Still, I thank you mightily, sir. You're a good friend."

"Where is your Mai Ling? I wish to talk to her a moment."

"At Mrs. Low's room, Mr. Ching. They're knitting sweaters for winter."

"Ah. She is such a comfort, isn't she, Preacher Sammy? A great comfort."

"Yes, sir, for all of us."

Sammy went back to work, lost deep in thought while Mr. Ching received sloppy comfort from Sammy's convert. Of course Sammy considered the girl as virtuous. The good Lord had told him so. When she threw off her drug habit, God made her whole again -- a new virgin. Lord Magus could do anything.

Sammy was thankful that he was so chosen, rich beyond compare in his twelve-by-fifteen room. He had a good bed -- although the mattress left a lot to be desired -- a dresser, a small stove and a refrigerator. He also had a great mission on this earth.

Time rolled on, as it is wont to do, Sammy preaching and writing, Mai Ling comforting other men on their floor. Days rolled into weeks and Sammy had forgotten about his lottery ticket. When he'd changed into his other pair of pants, the ticket had been dumped on top of the dresser with other junk from his pockets.

One day Mai Ling, having nothing much to do, decided to clean the room. Her mind was half-gone from smoking crack and the thought of cleaning rarely entered it. That day, for some reason -- maybe the Lord helped? -- she scrubbed the bare wooden floor, cleaned the refrigerator of rotten vegetables and then started in on the dresser.

Finding the lost ticket, the girl sorted through a large stack of old newspapers, many pages cut up into sections for the Good Book. The Lord smiled as He helped in finding the right day and the right page, still intact, that gave the winning lottery numbers for that past week.



"The Lord will provide if you only have faith." Sammy was preaching in the same park as before -- although he did move around a lot in order to spread the Word as much as possible. "Please, if any of you are interested, give me your love and I'll give you mine. I don't need your money. The Lord's love is free to all."

"Yeah? What are you, a free male hooker, buddy? I got something here you can love."

Laughter drowned Sammy's hoarse voice. As often happened, he had become the object of ridicule. A group of kibitzers and hecklers stood in front of him, blocking others and proceeding to have their fun at his expense. He wouldn't give up, though, since it was part of his job. That time, things went a little violent. One of them snuck behind him and struck Sammy behind both knees. His already tired legs collapsed as he fell from his perch. The group laughed and postured as he lay on the ground.

One of them jumped high and onto the wooden crate. The big man's -- or large