

**THE HISTORIE OF FRIER RUSH : HOW  
HE CAME TO A HOUSE OF RELIGION  
TO SEEKE SERVICE, AND BEING  
ENTERTAINED BY THE PRIOUR, WAS  
FIRST MADE UNDER COOKE**

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The Historie of Frier Rush : how he came to a house of Religion to seeke service, and being entertained by the Priour, was first made under Cooke by Friar Rush

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# **FRIAR RUSH**

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**T H E H I S T O R I E**  
of Frier RVSH : how he came to a  
house of Religion to seeke seruice, and being  
entertained by the Priour, was first made  
vnder Cooke.

Being full of pleafant mirth and delight  
for young people.



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neere Chrift-Church.  
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[1210]

¶ A pleasant History, how a Deuill  
(named Rush) came to a Religious  
house, to seeke a seruice.

**T**HERE was sometime beyond the Sea edified and founded a certaine house and Cloister of Religious men, which house was founded at a great Forrests side, for to maintaine the seruice of almighty God, and daily to pray for their benefactors and founders, and for the saluation of their owne soules: which place by reason of their founders and well disposed people (which gaue vnto it largely of their goods and possessions) increased in riches, and euery man had gold and siluer at their will, and also of meate and drinke they had great plenty: in so much that they were so well at ease and had so much, that they wist not what to doe they were so full of wantonnesse, whereby the seruice of almighty God was not well maintained among them: for oftentimes they said neither Mattins nor Euen-song: and through their great negligence they forgat cleane the charge that they were bound to when they entred into their Religion, and they liued more like beasts without reason, then like men of good and holy conuersation: for they haunted harlots and liued viciously, and the goods that was giuen them by good and well disposed people, they spent in vnthriftinesse and rybauldry. And when the great Prince of Devils which are the Patrones of all  
B vices

vices vnderstood of the great misrule and vile liuing of these Religious men: consulted to keepe them still in that state, and worse if it might be. And these be the names of the Deuils.

*Belpegor* who was Prince of Gluttony, *Asmodeus* Prince of Lechery, And *Belzebub* Prince of Enuie, with many other Diuels asssembled together, which reioyced for the misorder of these Religious men. And as they were all asssembled together with one accord: they chose a Diuell to goe and dwell among these Religious men, for to maintaine them the longer in their vngracious liuing, which Diuell was put in rayment like an earthly creature, and went to a Religious house, and there he stood at the gate a certaine s'pace all alone with an heauie countenance. Then within a while after the Priour came vnto the gate and espied *Rush* the young man standing there all alone. Anon he said vnto him, what dost thou here, and what wouldest thou haue. The young man with great reuerence answered and said: Sir, I am a poore young man, and am out of seruice, and faine would haue a Maister. And Sir if it please you to haue me, I shall doe you diligent seruice, and shall doe so well that you and all your brethren and couent shall be glad of me, for I shall keepe so well your secrets, that I trust to obtaine at all times your good loue and fauour, and all theirs also.

And when the Priour had heard his words, he was moued with pittie, and said: Goe into the Kitchin to the Cooke, and shew him that I haue sent thee thither, and bid him shew thee what thou shalt doe: for thou shalt be with him a certaine season, till that some other better thing fall. Then the young man made his reuerence to the Priour, and thanked him, and forth he went to the Kitchin, where hee found the  
maister

maister Cooke. Anon he made reuerence vnto him, and said : Sir, my Maister the Priour hath sent me hither vnto you, and he commaundeth you to shew me what I shall doe, for I must be here and helpe you. The maister Cooke answered and said, you be welcome. And anon hee fet him to such businesse as he had to doe. And thus the Deuill became vnder-Cooke in the place that he was assigned vnto, by the Prince of Deuils. And then hee said (laughing to himselfe) as followeth.

These being the words of the Deuill.

**I** Am right glad that my purpose is come so well to passe, for now all mine intent is fulfilled, and I doubt not but all shall be ours : for I shall make such debate and strife among the Friers, that they shall neuer be at concord and peace. And I shall make them good staues wherewith the one shall beate well the other : and often times they shal lye together by the eares, in so much that there was neuer seen nor heard tell of such a rumour and discord in no Cloyster in the world. And I shall vse my selfe so, that I shall be in great loue and fauour among them.

Then within foure or fiue dayes after, it fortuneth that the Priour came into the Kitchin, and there he found the young man, to whom he said, where wast thou borne, and what is thy name ? The young man answered and said, Sir, I was borne very farre hence, and *Russh* is my name. Then said the Priour vnto him, *Russh*, canst thou couple Hounds together ? Yea Sir (said *Russh*) that I can doe right well, and more then that, for I can couple men and women together, which is a more mastric, and also Sir (if neede be) I can conuay a faire woman into your chamber, and conuay her



home againe in the morning fo secretly, that no man shall spye it. And alfo I shall keepe your counsaile fo secretly, that it shall neuer be knowne. And when the Priour heard *Rufb* speake fo, he was right glad of him, and said: *Rufb*, if thou canst doe as thou hast said? I shall reward thee well for thy labour, and thou shalt be my most welbeloued seruant: wherefore make an end of thy businesse, for soone thou shalt goe a little way on a message for me, and fo he departed and went to supper. And when euery man had supped, and *Rufb* had done all his businesse in the Kitchin, hee came vnto his maister the Priour, and said, Sir, what is your will with me? the Priour answered and said: here a little beside dwelleth a faire Gentlewoman, the which I loue very well, but I dare not discouer my minde vnto her my selfe: and if thou canst finde the meanes to bring her secretly vnto me, I shall reward thee right well for thy labour and paine. And when *Rufb* had heard the words of his Maister, and knew all his minde, he answered and said: Sir, be of good cheere, and let mee alone with that matter: for I shall goe vnto the Gentlewomans house, and I shall say your message fo well, that this night she shall come to you: and fo departed *Rufb* from his Maister, and went straight vnto this Gentlewomans house. And when he was thither come, hee found the Gentlewoman fitting all alone. And when *Rufb* was espied of her, he made vnto her great courtesie, and with many reuerences these words he said.

How

How a Deuill named *Ruſſ* came vnto a Gentlewomans  
houſe, and how he brought her priuily  
vnto his Maiſters chamber.

**R**Est you merry faire Miſtreſſe, the moſt faireſt crea-  
ture in the world. My Maſter greeteth you by  
me, deſiring you to come and ſpeake with him. Then  
ſaid the Gentlewoman to *Ruſſ*, who is your Maſter, and  
what is his will with me? faire Miſtreſſe, ſaid *Ruſſ*,  
I will ſhew you, my Maſter is the Priour in a houſe of  
Religion here beſide, and he loueth you ſo well except  
that you come vnto him this night, I know he will be  
dead for forrow.

Here followeth the anſwere of the Gentlewoman.

**A**ND when the Gentlewoman had heard the words  
of *Ruſſ*, ſhee answered and ſaid, Faire Sir, it were  
great pittie that the Gentleman ſhould die for my ſake,  
and rather then he ſhould ſo doe for me, I will come to  
him, and ſhew him all the courteſie that I can. *Ruſſ*  
was very glad of thoſe comfortable words, and thought  
that his enterpriſe was well brought to paſſe, and he  
ſaid vnto her: Faire Miſtreſſe, may it pleaſe you to take  
the labour and goe with me, and I ſhall bring you to my  
Maſter, and as I ſuppoſe, hee will make you good cheare,  
and Gold and Siluer you ſhall lacke none, for hee hath  
great plenty thereof. Then ſaide the Gentlewoman,  
Sir, I pray you let vs depart hence: for as I ſuppoſe the  
Gentleman looketh long for vs. So fourth they went  
both together, till they came to the Priours Chamber.  
And when the Priour ſawe that ſhe was come: he was  
the gladdeſt man in the world, and thanked *Ruſſ* much  
for his labour and paine: And ſo the Priour received  
her

her into his chamber, and there he made her good cheere, and they had good meate and wine great plenty. And when they had well refreshed themselues, *Rusb* departed, and went to the Kitchin, and left the Priour and the Gentlewoman alone, and there she saued the Priours life: And when *Rusb* was in the Kitchin, hee said vnto himselfe: I am right glad that I haue brought this matter so well to passe: and I doubt not but they will agree well enough together, for they be both of one accord. And when the other Friers perceiued that *Rusb* was such a priuie fellow, and so well could keepe counsaile: they desired him to helpe them also, and so he did: for he brought to euery man, the woman that they most desired, whereof they had great meruaile. But they were so blinded with ignorance, that they neuer perceived that he was a very Deuill, but euery man had him in loue and fauour.

How Frier *Rusb* threw the maister Cooke into a kettell of water seething vpon the fire, wherein he died.

**I**T befell vpon a day that *Rusb* went forth to sport him, and it was very late ere he came home againe, and the maister Cooke was very angry with him that hee was so long absent. And as soone as *Rusb* was entred into the Kitchin: the Cooke began to chide, and said vnto him, thou horson knaue where hast thou bene so long: and with a great staffe hee laid vpon *Rusb* and beat him fore. And when *Rusb* saw that the Cooke was angry, and so farre out of reason, and that he had beaten him fore: anon he began to waxe very angry with the maister Cooke, and said vnto him: thou horson villaine, why hast thou beaten me thus: I will be reuenged on thee: and suddainly he caught him in  
his