

Book II: WAR CRIES

** SONGS OF GRIEF **



ramparts

(15) The Tyranny of Fear

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FEAR: The Guide of Children

PEACE: The necessary province of the Female within us all, the deliverer and sustainer of vulnerable young life.

DEFENCE: The necessary province of the Male within us all, the protector and provider for disabled and vulnerable life.

Peace and Defence: The two conditions which are prerequisite to accomplishing our highest task in life:

Provision for Each Other:

*to share with each other
the bounty of the Earth,*

*and to live within
the Harmlessness of Her Ethic.*

Defence is our necessary preparedness for the dangers threatening a physical body: protection against cold, burning, rockfall, flood, attack, starvation.

Good Defence is forward planning, preventive measures, careful distribution of resources such that none are unfairly deprived or oppressed, and thereby made desperate.

Defence is the rightful life-sustaining action taken for survival of our physical being.

*Defence is **not** a state of War: unless we declare it to be so:*

Unless we become slaves of Fear

*

FEAR is our proper emotional device to trigger self-defensive action. Fear has a high and rightful place in Life: to make us careful about our fragile, mortal bodies. Fear is, simply, a vital gift to ensure Self-preservation : the danger of a hot log, or leaning too far over a riverbank, or playing too hard with cats, or neglecting to detoxify our wastes, or shrivelling with cancer as our poisoned deforested world loses its grateful skin of ozone.

Fear is the especial guide and province of Children.

Early sharp lessons of Pain and Fright teach Caution: the only defence of young minds against a world which is alive with simple perils for those who have not yet learned to manage its complexities.

*Thus is a river a poetic inspiration
to the mature and experienced human mind:*

*and a fatal fascination to
the inexperienced curiosity of children.*



Fear is necessarily a Giant in the minds of children; a beneficent guide and deliverer from danger. And yet in the mind of every child, the presence of Fear can magnify and malform to become a Monster: if they are not introduced kindly to their towering benefactor. To an unguided child,

Fear can remain the ruling tyrant of their whole lives: and so deny them the joy of growing confidently into this fearless adult world of generous provision.

Thus do Teaching, Defence, bitter Experience, and wise Fear eventually guide us into Growing Up.

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And it is only when scared human beings with full-grown bodies make a god of Fear ~ make a devil, in fact ~ that they lock themselves into the extreme terrors of childhood nightmares:



~ and benevolent Fear is mutated into a malevolent imperative for our endless chain of violent mutual Defence and Assault:

~ It is the 'devil' of Fear that twists the goodness of Defence into the malevolent deviations we call War.



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FEAR: Kill or Be Killed

ALL OF US, Men and Women, have together fallen into this nightmare of Fear: throughout our remembered warrior history.

Our lives are prolonged duties of Care, for each other, for our children, for our disabled, old and sick people.

In a world of incessant Fear of each other's Attack, those Women and Men who care for the young and old and disabled, need and expect the protection of Warriors, male and female. Without our soldiers ~ chiefly Men ~ we and our children and grandparents are utterly exposed to the Assault of enemy regimes.

***The blinded, locked and suffering cycle of warrior Men:
Attack and Defence, Annexation and Retribution:***

Kill or Be Killed.

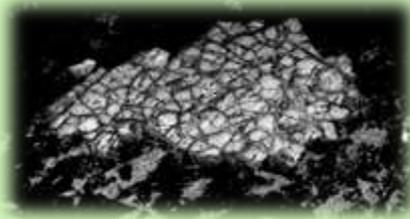
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It is our Women's task today to raise up and fiercely show this Truth:

~ That men in love with Power do Fear, profoundly, women, age, disability, defencelessness : are chained to these needy Vulnerabilities, which hold within them the threat of their own violent Death.

~ That Men's attacks and annexations are directed, in subconscious ultimate truth, not against other men, or against philosophies or regimes:

~ but their attack is directed past these things, towards the guarded heartland of vulnerable women, children and old people who are barricaded within.



There is no war in history which does not climax in annexation, possession, terrorisation, and often murders of the defenceless. The bloody triumph over their defeated defenders.

~ Fighters are therefore trapped forever in a savage Cycle of Assault, injury, abuse of power, and Self-Hatred, which drives their persecutions and retaliations.

All because of Fear.

The province of the Child.

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FEAR: of the Defenceless

AND WHAT IS IT, THAT MAKES THE MALE SO FEAR THE FEMALE ? ~ harbour such Fear and Anger, that men break out intermittently into a frenzy of killing women, and often children, and old and defenceless people: these families traditionally barricaded within the citadel, in times of both war and vigilant peace.

A (mere) half of war-deaths in the 18th and 19th centuries were civilian.

*In the past century, civilian victims have risen to **90 per cent.***

Over 100 million civilians died in war zones in the 20th. century.

Near-one million have died in the 21st. century.

30 million children* killed, maimed, homeless, orphaned, traumatised **in each decade.*

And in modern urban times: unpowerful people barricaded within their homes against muggers, night-stalkers, estranged husbands, drug-peddlers, rapists, anonymous killers of women and elderly pensioners. Huddling in their domestic citadels.

Why else would men kill the vulnerable: if not to destroy them out of Fear?

What is it about Defencelessness, that elicits such reactive force?

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MANY GREAT AND INSIGHTFUL philosophies and researches have understood the primal relationship between Ignorance and Aggression and Fear: the pre-emptive Attack of the Fearful, Ineffectual and Unknowing upon those who represent what is Feared ~ be it a growling enemy, a threat of take-over; or a smashing of whoever stands symbol for a hated oppressor.

For this last - the victim is often the Weakest in sight: the one with insufficient strength to retaliate: the one whose easy felling can deliver, at last, a transient delusion of Power to the attacker.

AND THERE IS THIS FURTHER, DEEPER TRUTH, well-understood by many thinkers : that it is our passionate human attachment to physical survival, to our Bodies and Possessions, to Material things, to *Matter*, which gives rise to Fear:

~ our age-old Fear of the Mortality, Death, the Immaterial.

The fear of the immaterial. Of the intangible, of ghosts, of spirits, of dissolution of bodily solidity, of the unknown, of the Un-Understood.

The immaterial: some undefended state of being which needs no corporeal form, no armour in which to defend itself : being as it is, protected utterly by its impregnable evanescence. Apparently vulnerable, in its utter exposure: *yet absolutely unassailable.*

Thus have ghosts and fairies and witches and wizards and gods and spirits always struck men with terror: not for their assumed malice, but for their unarmed inviolability : Men who have only ever understood the Clash and Power of Arms and Armour :

Fear : the terrified clinging to Matter, to Body, to Physical Life ~ at absolutely Anyone's Cost.

Fear : the Terror of Spirit: in the mind of he who is hollow, Separated from Spirit.

No wonder that Men Fear Their God :

and Fear their Women's Undefended Spirit.



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IT IS EASY to see one simple reason why human males round up and guard women: the obvious mammalian behaviour of annexing females within tribes or packs, and defending them against the raids of other roving males. In this we are no different from other familiar species. It is one of the driving imperatives in our tradition of war and capture, and is reflected in all our art and literature: *Macbeth*, *Rapunzel*, *Rape of the Sabine Women*, *The Valkyrie*, and innumerable others.

*But weaker smaller people are easily subdued by men of superior strength:
There is no need to pinion them to death: as though they were prey.*

The male animals of the bush and plains seldom seriously hurt their captured prizes. Human beings have far more complex objectives: and inflict upon each other vastly more grievous casualties.

No. There is some deeper reason why male human beings have for several millennia treated women as they have, in near-every culture: suffered some profound Fear of them, Anger at them, which drives men to inhibit, crush, and disempower them; to kill them, even: defenceless though they be.

*A silent accusation even :
her involuntary allure;
her fecund uterine response to male's enormous sexual demand :*

*To the point that within our own male-ordered myth,
our traditions of europe and the near to far east :*

it is Woman alone who stands Blamed and Condemned,

She, prime-mover of Evil and Fear:

*~ as Eve, the temptress, the seducer, the betrayer, the weak, the original sinner, who condemned us
all to the Fall into misery;*

*~ as ensnaring pregnant mother, capturing his wild-sown sperm, shaping it into
dependant newborn, demanding provision and chivalry;*

*~ as witch, siren, harlot, snake, vixen, cow, slag, bitch, slut, fluff, minx, meat, whore, delilah:
as the primal cause of men's fall from grace, their helpless fall into vice.*

*Listen to them : those diverse colloquial virulences for Women (for which we can find ~ can we not ?
~ no equivalent epithets for Men: for whom the most our slang tolerates is prick or deadshit or
bastard. Though let's not forget fucking cunt too).*

(And that casual, gross american pals' bonhomie which utterly revolts all other nations : son-of-a-bitch and motherfucker.)

There is no male siren, no magical tormentor who lured us all to our guiltless doom.

*No : Woman alone :
The magical tormentor, seducer, spell-weaver.*

*- Her mystery, her air of abstraction in secret communion with Sisters,
her manifest Defencelessness.*

*Her subtle and easy alliance with intuition, with clairvoyance, with Spirit :
without need for cathedral spires, or jewelled vestments, or lordly processions.*

Her gentle alliance with the powerful Immaterial.

Oh Yes :

*Powerless Men in love with Power
Fear and Hate
her Secret Un-Known Spirit.*



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THE TWO FACES OF DEFENCELESSNESS

True and Dreadful Secrets

WE CAN SORROW FOR YOU MEN, that you have chosen to see Women's discreet and evanescent powers as furtive or malevolent. How sorrowful for us all that, in your historic solo annexation of national rule, and of the world's towering male monotheistic religious traditions, you have refused to seek or hear, nor codify nor elevate, the Truth of Women's graceful spiritual and moral experience; *and thus have had no other template than your own Male experience of warrior anger and pain*, with which to guess at the Inward Form of your own Mothers, Wives and Daughters.

What a tribulation it has been for Women for millennia, to have been forcibly silenced; and then accused of imagined evils in men's voices in kangaroo courts, and delivered up to the gossips and priests and executioners as the primal harbingers of original sin.

What a tribulation it has been for Men for millennia, to fall into this Fear of an imagined female malevolence: and so enter the cycle of annexation, and force, and confinement, and repression, and false condemnation, and killing, and consequent self-disgust, and self-hatred.

What unavailing ordeal : this monstrous cycle of capture, imprison, guard, and defend against the assaults of other men suffering the same Fear: That defenceless people are somehow the repositories of dark secrets, that they must be commandeered and disempowered and held ceaselessly captive by contempt and physical threat. The tyranny of Weapon-Power.

*And it is reality, it is so ~
they are indeed become the repositories
of True and Dreadful Secrets
about their persecutors.*

*The streets of our western cities.
The streets of kigali.
The fields of kosovo.
The maimed rubbles and peoples of syria, yemen.*



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The Dreadful Duty of Protection

THE CYCLE OF FEAR, of kill or be killed, attack and defend, capture and guardianship, has a wretched penalty for its entrapped soldiery.

No wonder that men not only fear women for their illusory powers of evil.

*Men must also hate and fear Women
for their own male enslavement
to lethal duties of sentinel, protector, captor and guard.*

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WOMEN : WE MUST REALISE THIS :

THERE IS NOT ONE BOY BORN ON EARTH who can face life certain of his safety and freedom. *There is not one boy who can be assured that he will not be called up one day to fight a war: who can know that he has the Right to live out his own life with his own four good limbs, his own good head and heart.*

Not a single one of our beloved sons enters life without Threat of the militarily enforced loss of an arm, or of his mobility, or of mental capacity, or of his Life itself. He is threatened with the loss of his friends, his family, and his livelihood. He is threatened with imprisonment and vilification, execution even, if he refuses martial duty.



Oh yes : he may be comforted by promises of posthumous valediction, medal crosses, harsh warrior valhalla, reward for ruthless valour and godly death :

~ but in his Heart he must answer to himself, and to his Family :

~ that he must kill or be killed : that he must fight or die for them, by putting to the Sword or to the Incendiary Bullet the lives and liberty of others.

*Thus are all warrior men condemned
to a subterranean misery
of self-contempt and self-hatred:*

***Men being inescapably, as they are,
High Moral Beings :***

Condemned to kill the friends, brothers and sons of other good people;

***in order to protect
these God-Damned women and children.***

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*What covert anger must Men feel against Women,
what bitter envy at times;*

*for their fortified security, their guarded freedom from risk,
their integrity of life and limb,
their security against
explosive amputation and brain-damage :*

deep within the heartland of the citadel.



No wonder that when men look upon us through the steel bars of the citadel, the prison-windows of women : that they see our quiet waiting as though through the vertical slits of their own loathed helmet-visors.

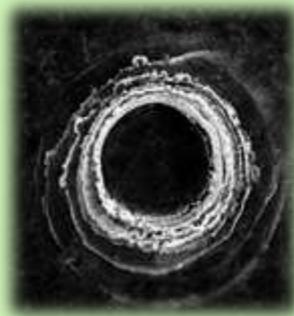


No wonder that Men ignore, deny and reject the Woman who lies deep within themselves.

No wonder they long to damn us for some nameless crime.

*No wonder that, in their anger,
men have convicted us
without trial
as authors of
the greatest apocryphal crime of all:*

the crime of Original Sin.



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ORIGINAL SIN

What is it, this piece of fantastical biblestory moral legend ? ~ which apparently moves most of us little enough, in our modern industrial sectarian lives -

- And yet which lurks in the depths of our mythic tradition, lies like a dark sea-bed beneath our ruffled post-Christ religious ocean.

And which, in its discreet and buried accusation, still haunts and guides our constructs of human action, moral responsibility, and blame, to this very day.

Indeed ~ it is the very touchstone, whether we recognise it or not, of our perception of our fellow beings.

*Let she or he who is Without Sin cast the first stone.
(Who has not, and never does, cast a stone ?)*

WHO HAS NOT, and never will, look sideways at a suspect neighbour ~ or a relative, a friend, an ethnic group, a nation, a race, a political party, a civic institution, a convicted offender, a doubtful parent ~ and will not lay upon them some sort of Blame, for some perceived offence or fault or error ? ~ some kind of guilty responsibility? ~ whether they bear it knowingly or not ?

WE ARE BORN INTO A WHOLE LIFESPAN OF MUTUAL ACCUSATION. We spend an extraordinary part of our exchanges ~ no matter how high-minded and serious ~ in criticism and ascribing Blame.

Even those who seek, decently, to find compassionate causes for the wanton cruelty or deceit of an offender, must pursue a literally endless regression of responsibilities: seeking into the remote past for the ultimate brutal parent, tyrannical regime, or blighted philosophy: to take Blame for the legacy of like behaviour passed from generation to generation.

The search is futile: there is no end to it. No possible, conceivable, discoverable Primal Culprit.

It seems, in the end, that we are stuck with it: an immemorial, generational succession of botched and blameworthy human misjudgements; which by propaganda and example, live on today with our own dreary and repetitive inheritance of reprehensible family and national deeds.

For which we can all Blame each other, and right back to our remotest forebears.

So we have no choice, in the end, but to Blame some profound, primal, congenital defect within our moral being:

our Original Sin.

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Original Eve:

Original Woman:

storied embodiment of humanity's primal weakness :

suffering even today under

this mythic condemnation:

her forbidden apple,

her unwitting siren body :



*Never invited
or permitted
to speak her case.*

*Original Eve:
whose primal, fatal mythic act
was not assault, or hurt, or evil :
but fearless defiance, and a thirst for knowledge.*

*Original Eve:
whose searching curiosity is
the source of her singular Power :
She who is the Seer of the human race.*

***If there is Evil :
It Lies Not In Eve.***

It lies in what she Sees.



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Fear: and the Illusion of Evil

OUR BAFFLEMENT at our own savage behaviour is surely unchanged today. Our cultural styles and attitudes have passed through myriad variations in recorded history: but we remain, in the end, grappling with the same dark monsters of Power-struggle, Violence, and Oppression, with greater or lesser measure of success; and never victory.

Thus the contemporary human being is as good a study as any, in which to look at the usual legacies of decencies, loves and attainments; but also of cruelty, greed, selfishness and aggression ~ of original sin, or original unpleasantness, or original avarice, or whatever unattractive weakness currently on display.



*Look at ourselves, look at each other, closely, today.
Search those feelings which condemn us to an endless chain of mutual suspicion, mistrust, betrayal, aggression, defence, fear, anger, pain.
And which absolutely require of us that we arm ourselves, from an early age, with layered defences of family allegiance, of ethnic identity, of religious rectitude, weaponry, citadels, organisations, gangs, razor wire, hoarded goods, police, armies, mace, possessions, guarded vigilance.*

For we have every reason to fear our foes, whoever they are. They can rob us, sell our children drugs, smash us drunkenly on a highway, threaten our acquisitions, steal our family members to hostile religions, take control of our lives. All of them armed and defended, as we are: with weapons, intolerance, anger, duplicity, bullet-proof vests, dogma: ~

~ just in case we attack first, or run drugs, or belt their children, or smash into their vehicle, or thieve their stash, or accuse their religion, or join the wrong party.

Mutual Fear.

Yes : Fear that the other's Fear may be even more intense than our own: and that their fierce behaviour will be yet more fearsome than our own.

Hence the appalling face of Tyranny: a regime in an agony of Fear, barricaded behind steel phalanxes of tanks, and walls of stone; holding off the angry oppressed by control-militia and fearsome threat to kill.

*Well might they Fear him;
and well might he Fear them.*



Hence also, the lesser but equally real Fear and resentment of adherents to one or other political party in a democracy; who see (rightly or wrongly) a greater component of Fear in the opposition's platform, reflected in policies of greater repressions, or, for that matter, of dangerous leniencies.

Hence our insistent, pre-emptive struggles for power, for prosecution of the weak by the strong, our tedious parliaments of traded insults, to hamstring the opposition before they can strike.

FEAR governs the entire historic chain of pre-emptive strike, fright and cruelty which marks our confrontations; and gives perennial anguish to those many amongst our number who long for Decency, Fairness, Justice, and Peace.

***This absurd and baseless mental creation
which rules our mutual suffering ~***

***FEAR :
Our real, primal Original Sin.***

FEAR :

***The damnation of Eve.
The prime illusion of our man-fabrication of Evil.***



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