



Wherein We Let *Beauty and the Beast*
Explain the Human Shadow

2009 Bronze Medal

Independent Publisher Book Awards

Self-Help

2010 Silver Medal

Young Voices Foundation Book Awards

Inspirational/Spiritual



The *what?* The Human Shadow? Never heard of it, you say. And you are not alone. So far, the term has mainly functioned as a psychological definition. But you do already know something about how the Shadow works. We all grew up hearing, “*That’s the pot calling the kettle black!*” Or “*People who live in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones!*” Or “*Takes one to know one!*”

So *why* would we need to explain the Human Shadow any further than that? Because humanity’s destructive power now far outstrips its acceptance of responsibility. At personal levels (me/you), state levels (Blue State/Red State), national levels (war/terrorism), and global levels (climate change/ecological damage), we waste most of our time and intelligence blaming others, rather than using our time and intelligence to correct our problems. All we hear these days is denial, projection, and blame. Denial, projection and blame. Over and over again. Vicious, downward spirals of finger pointing that get us nowhere and solve none of our problems.

Read this book. If you find it helpful, **Share** it with others. **Download** it. **Send** it on. **Print** it up. **Give** it away. **Discuss** the Shadow with other people.

**Because we’re not just running out of time.
We’re running out of world.**

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Using Beauty and her Beast to Introduce the Human Shadow, in 2008
and *Shadow in the USA*, in 2011

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“Thanks for writing this book. It is a gem and a treasure!”

—Robert Johnson, PhD, Analytical psychologist & author of
Owning Your Own Shadow



“Hats off to you for doing a wonderful job of making a distasteful subject so entertaining.”

—Katherine M. Sanford, MA, Analytical psychologist & artist

“This is a powerful little book—a gem whose facets gleam with insights into our shared American identity. It is also an alarming little book. Plumb strips away our delusions of God-given moral superiority to expose contemporary American life. Why read it? Because somehow it also manages to be delightful. And because the true potential of the USA—as well as the true potential of individual freedom—can only evolve if we dare to look into such mirrors.”

—Robert Tompkins, PhD, MFT, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Marriage/Family Counselor

“While skillfully retelling a familiar tale, Kay quickly leads us into depths which invite introspection regarding the “beast” within each of us, and the “beast” within our culture. Those aspects of ourselves which we would deny or project onto others invariably show up in ourselves anyway, slipping through the cracks of our denial, repression and psychological sloth. This book obliges the reader to look at ordinary life through a sharpened lens, and see that, beneath the surface of daily events, deeper and darker energies are spilling into our lives.”

—James Hollis, PhD, Analytical psychologist & author of *Why Good People Do Bad Things*

MIDWEST BOOK REVIEW, Reviewer's Choice:

There is a darkness in all of us, and how we deal with it is what determines our future, on a personal as well as a societal level. *Shadow in the USA* is a discussion of human nature and philosophy, as Kay Plumb argues that humanity's power to hurt itself has run amuck. With honesty and knowledge, *Shadow in the USA* presents plenty to ponder and makes for a very much recommended reading.

—James A. Cox, Small Press Bookwatch

“I like your enthusiasm for the shadow.”

—Robert Bly, Award winning poet,
troublemaker, and author of *A Little Book on the Human Shadow*

“I wish I'd written this book.”

—John Perkins, author of *Confessions of
An Economic Hit Man*



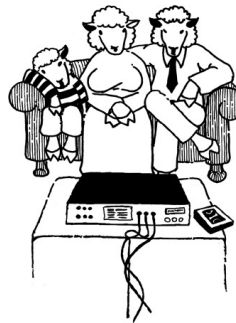
The information in this pdf is intended to be educational, and is strictly the commentary and opinion of the author. It is not intended to be psychological analysis or professional advice. It should not be used in any manner whatsoever other than personal commentary on its subject matter.

The fairy tale retold in this pdf is based on a 1757 version of “Beauty and the Beast” written by Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont and translated by Marie Ponsot for *The Fairy Tale Book*, Golden Press, New York.

...with special thanks to Danny Decker of Harlo Interactive for all around invaluable assistance...

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A
Short Prologue
Containing Appropriate Warnings



This little introduction to a big subject is going to follow a classic version of *Beauty and the Beast* through a dark and stormy forest. We'll start off slow and easy, following behind the story, going at the story's pace, occasionally peering through the dense and tangled undergrowth along the path. But be forewarned: when we get near the territory of our Collective Shadow, the going's gonna get rough.

Furthermore, before we follow a fairy tale into a dark and stormy forest, we should warn you about fairy tales themselves. Like many familiar things which seem harmless at first glance, fairy tales can be quite dangerous. They've become especially lethal in the last fifty years or so, with entertainment moguls selling them to a willing public as real life possibilities—*this could be you!*—when the truth is: any fairy tale will explode in your face if you try to reenact it here on planet Earth. The safest course is to remember that characters in fairy tales are archetypes, not human beings.

But of course this is not easy to remember. We all secretly long to be as beautiful as the king's daughter or as brave as the handsome prince. It just isn't humanly possible. The prince, the princess, and all their fairy tale cohorts are archetypes, airbrushed by centuries of repetition. They each represent a certain aspect of human nature—like purity, or selfishness, or royalty, or brute force—but that aspect is only one bone in the complete psychic skeleton. It is *not* a human being.

The archetypes appeal to us because they're psychologically useful. Sometimes we need the fierceness of a witch, or the authority of a king, or the innocence of a child in the woods. But prolonged identification with any one archetype is not a good idea. At

the very least you'll be sorely disappointed, and at the very worst you'll be dead—Marilyn Monroe, John Lennon, Princess Di, Robin Williams. **A human being simply cannot live a fairy tale life.** Consider yourself warned.

Beauty and the Beast belongs in a very old, widespread category which folklorists call the “animal husband” story. Versions appear on prehistoric pottery, were specialties of the house when Zeus reigned from Olympus, and persist in many forms today. Why was *Dracula* such a ladies' man? What kept *The Mummy* alive for 4,000 years? Or how about *King Kong*? All he wanted was a little Fay Wray or Naomi Watts. We've watched in horror as Sigourney Weaver was impregnated by aliens and adored by their offspring, and we've sympathized with the monster as he begged Dr. Frankenstein to make him a “F-f-frrrienndd...”

Once you start noticing the pattern, you'll see animal husband stories everywhere. Sci-fi, fantasy, horror, vampire romance—they're all variations on the animal husband theme. But... why does this type of story occur so often? Why do human beings have such a pronounced tendency to pair hideous monsters with comely maidens for entertainment purposes?

And, could this tendency help explain the Human Shadow—which is an elusive, evasive beastie, very difficult to catch in words—to people who've never heard of it?

Turns out it could. But here comes a second warning: don't expect an easy read. Since our Shadows are full of the things we don't like about ourselves, the things we don't want anyone else to know about us, they prefer to remain well hidden in the tangled undergrowth of our minds, and they do not relish exposure.

Trying to describe the Human Shadow is like trying to see the wind: you don't see the wind itself, you only see whatever the wind blows. The Shadow is an unconscious phenomenon, which only exists within people, but it can only be seen in the outward things that people do—in their words and actions, in their histories and stories.

So we're going to focus our flashlights on something unmistakably human—that old familiar story *Beauty and the Beast*—to see if we can catch a glimpse into the Shadows along its path as we travel through the dense and tangled undergrowth of our minds.



Once upon a time...

... there was a rich merchant who had six children, three boys and three girls. All three daughters were pretty, but the youngest was beautiful. Indeed, as the years passed by, she became so beautiful that everyone simply called her Beauty.

The two elder sisters were envious of Beauty, and missed no chance to make her miserable. These two were vain of their wealth and position. They liked to be seen with the richest people, going to the most exclusive parties. They enjoyed making fun of Beauty, who preferred staying at home with their father, reading and playing music.



Where's Mama?

Something's missing here. What about dear old Mom? She's not even mentioned. We have no idea what happened to her. She's just—not there. We don't even get a cruel stepmother. Nothing. Since it usually takes some sort of mother to produce six children, it seems a bit odd that there are no grown women in the beginning of this story.

Plus, the immature women we do get are really out of whack. One daughter is modest, beautiful, and too attached to home, while the other daughters are jealous, spiteful, and too worldly. There's a real split here—Little Miss Virtue versus the Bad Girls.

And that, easy as it was, is the first step in deconstructing a classic fairy tale. See who's in the opening scene. In this case, since it's a family with scads of motherless children, we could even take a look at who *isn't* in the opening scene. Since each character in a fairy tale is an archetype, an instinctual element of human nature, each character stands for something.

Folklorists tell us that the same type of characters appear in stories all over the world, following the same type of plot. Why? Because they *stand for something*, because they're expressing something fundamental, something archetypal, about human nature.

However, fairy tale characters have a little problem with delivery. They don't know how to speak in English—or Spanish or Greek or any other language. They only know how to speak in “symbol,” the language of the collective unconscious. And the meaning of each symbol will vary from person to person and from age to age. Even a universal archetype like “mother” will mean something slightly different to each person and in each culture. And let's look at snakes to illustrate just how much symbols can change over time.

In the early planting cultures of what later became Western Civilization, snakes and serpents starred in important ceremonies. Because they could shed their skin and be “reborn,” because they could live in any element—land, water or air—snakes and serpents symbolized rebirth and healing. They coiled around goddesses, appeared on pottery and engravings—they were just flat sacred. But circa 4,000 BCE, things began to change. Different rulers appeared, with different priorities, different gods. And in that process serpents slithered all the way down to the spawn of Satan. It's the same reptile, it's the same symbol, but in *our* time, at the level of *collective imagery*, snakes and serpents tend to represent dread and evil, not rebirth or healing.

Then there's the level of *personal imagery*. If you live in a cool damp climate like the Pacific Northwest that doesn't have any poisonous snakes, you might think of snakes as harmless little garden helpers who eat slugs. If you live in a hot dry climate like Arizona, where stepping on a snake could kill you, you might think of snakes as wicked, dangerous vermin.

So symbols can and do change from place to place and from time to time. Any symbol or archetype—like serpent, like mother—comes from, and is formed by, collective experiences of millions of human beings over thousands of years. But it has to be filtered through an individual’s mind to be understood, and it is colored by the time and place in which that individual lives.

To know what ‘mother’ represents in this story all we have to do is start asking ourselves. And we might come up with a homey mother, who whips up brownies and hot chocolate; or a career mother, who brings home the bacon; or a destructive mother like Medea, who murders her kids to spite her man. Or maybe we aim big and come up with Gaia the Great Earth Mother, or Eve the Temptress, or Mary the Virgin. Given enough time, any one of us could come up with a hundred different layers of meaning for the archetypal symbol of mother, spanning everything from coddling and culture to chaos and correction.

But—wait a minute. Where the hell are we going? There *is* no mother in this story. There’s an *absence* of mother. There are no grown women at all. Which is strange, given all those offspring.

Where’d Mama go?

To answer that question, we’ll have to keep reading the story.

“In a patriarchal tradition, the image of the woman is not represented. As Jung said, ‘she has no representative in the Upper Parliament.’”

—Marie-Louise von Franz, *The Feminine in Fairy Tales*

“And so it has been throughout all patriarchal mythologies. The function of the female has been systemically devalued, not only in a symbolical cosmological sense, but also in a personal, psychological sense.”

—Joseph Campbell, *Occidental Mythology*, Volume III of *The Masks of God*

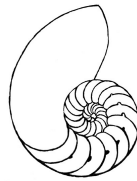


One day misfortune came to the merchant, and he lost all his riches. He was left with nothing but a small farm in the country. “We shall have to leave the city and live on the farm,” he told his children. “But at least if we work hard we’ll have plenty to eat, and for that we can be thankful.”

On the farm, the merchant and his sons worked the fields. Beauty got up at dawn each day to clean the house and wash the clothes and cook the meals. She wasn’t used to working, so it was hard at first. But she never complained, and soon she became capable and strong.

Her sisters, on the other hand, moped around moaning over their misfortune day after day, doing as little as possible.

Just to see Beauty working so willingly and so hard made them cross.



Too Docile For Your Own Damn Good

Except for the shrew sisters, this looks pretty good, on the surface. Beauty seems like a nice girl, working hard to make the best of a bad situation; and her father and brothers sound really heroic, getting to work right away on whatever needs to be done in a very manly fashion. It’s wonderful, really. Kind of like a sitcom. “Father Knows Best” or “Full House” or “Family Matters.” Clearly identifiable good guys and bad guys—or girls.

The problem is, sitcoms do not happen in real life, and the surface isn’t all we care about. Waters like these can have nasty undercurrents. Why should the older sisters get to shirk, complain, and be absolutely useless while Beauty takes on their

work as well as her own? The story could use a good old scolding-type mama at this point, who'd nag those elder daughters back into line. But since there *is* no mother in this story, Beauty has to come up with her own solution. And since she's a one-dimensional figure of sweetness and light, she comes up with a really simplistic solution. She acts like a martyr.

Does this sound vaguely familiar? Would you rather do someone else's work than confront them about not doing it themselves? Do you work more hours than you're paid to work? Do you do most of the picking up and putting away in your household?

Sometimes we act like martyrs because it seems easier than demanding that others do their fair share. Avoids conflict. And sometimes we act like martyrs to prove what fabulous people we are. Makes us feel righteous and hard-working. And sometimes we combine the two, since conflict avoidance and self-righteousness go together so well.

Occasionally there is good reason to become a martyr, and the people who do so under those circumstances become justifiably famous: Joan of Arc, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr.

But most of us are more like Beauty: we're just commonplace, garden variety, everyday, self-appointed martyrs. We tend to wait on people who don't deserve it to keep from rocking the boat, and we generally suffer unfairness in silence.

Doesn't seem like we've learned much since 1757, does it? Nowadays, aren't we supposed to know that Beauty is merely "enabling" her sisters' bad habits by not confronting them, that she's being the "co" to their "dependent" by acting submissively? Nowadays, aren't we supposed to realize that not demanding justice merely contributes to injustice?

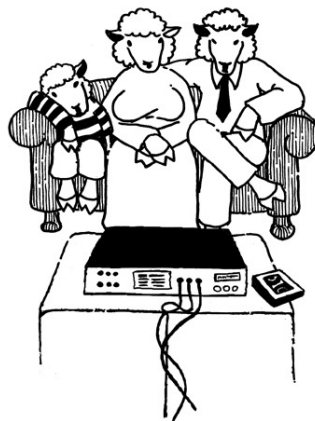
Theoretically. But somehow in actual practice we've gotten more complacent than ever. We live in a democracy—a system where people are supposed to govern themselves—but we tolerate—nay, we applaud—blatantly criminal actions in high offices. Most of us earn wages that don't come close to keeping up with what it actually takes to get ahead in this country, and while we labor to earn the incomes we pay taxes on every year, we get fewer social services, higher health care costs, and less funding for child care and public education than any other "developed" country in the world.

There's a whopping 400%+ disparity between top corporate salaries and bottom corporate salaries in the USA today. And there is not a single city where a person working full time while earning minimum wage can rent a two bedroom apartment without paying more than half of their wages in rent.

Which leads to our next sobering statistic: four (4) out of every ten (10) people in the USA have less than \$400 in savings. They work full time, at some of the hardest jobs in our society, yet they teeter perpetually on the edge of financial ruin. They're one paycheck, one bad accident or lingering illness, one huge credit card debt from homelessness, day in and day out. Like Alice trying to get through Wonderland, four (4) out of every ten (10) people in the USA have to run just as fast as they can to stay in the same place.

We *know* our laws are skewed and manipulated so the top rung gets more goodies than the bottom rung, we see big tax breaks going to the very wealthiest among us, but still only 61% of us voted in the last presidential election. And only 46% of participate at all in politics, with most of that happening digitally.

Geez. Even back in Beauty's time, there was such a thing as being too docile for your own damn good.

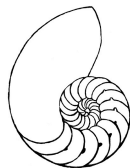


“The general message the child receives is of powerlessness in the face of the Other. From this compelling message three basic strategies will evolve.

First, one learns patterns of *avoidance* to stay out of harm’s way... Second, feeling disempowered, we are then driven by *the power complex* to become more powerful than Others... Third, we *learn to comply*, to curry favor, to please Others...

All of us evolve all three of these strategies in the course of our early development, and over time they show up repeatedly in our adult relationships.”

—James Hollis, *Why Good People Do Bad Things*



“Most of us started doing these things out of necessity to protect ourselves and meet our needs. We tried to understand and cope with our complex worlds... We did the best we could.

However, these self-protective devices may have outgrown their usefulness. Sometimes, the things we do to protect ourselves turn on us and hurt us. They become self-destructive.

Many codependents are barely surviving, and most aren’t getting their needs met. As counselor Scott Egleston says, codependency is a way of getting needs met that doesn’t get needs met. We’ve been doing the wrong things for the right reasons.”

—Melody Beattie, *Codependent No More*



After a year spent on the farm, good news came to the merchant. A ship he believed lost came into port, laden with cargo. As he made ready to go to the city to meet it, the elder sisters begged him to bring back clothes and jewels. They were wild with joy at the thought of being rich again.

“And what would you like?” the merchant asked Beauty as he turned to go.

“Perhaps you could bring me a rose, Father. We haven’t any in our garden,” answered Beauty.

She really couldn’t think of a thing she wanted, but she knew better than to risk her sisters’ wrath by saying so.



Figure Out What You Want, Then Say What You Mean

The rose is one of the oldest, most beloved, most frequently used symbols for the feminine principle. On the symbolic level, Beauty just said, “Bring me back some Mama.” On the practical level, we’re beginning to see why Beauty could use some animal husband as well as some Mama. This girl has a bad habit of being too good.

Her sisters are, of course, acting vilely, but couldn’t Beauty have asked for *something* personal? A spool of thread? A book? New strings for her lute? No. Not our Beauty. She denies—even to herself—that she wants anything at all—even the rose—and it is this denial that brings on the problems. Beauty’s denial of her own needs, her refusal to try to figure out what she wants, brings a monster down on the whole family. In real life, this girl would be so passive-aggressive there’d be no living with her.

Selfishness is a basic human trait. We're each born as selfish as a sea gull chick, *Mine! Mine!* ready to knock our siblings out of the nest for an extra morsel. Selfishness is an instinctual form of self-preservation, it's an archetypal way of acting, as Beauty's sisters demonstrate—it's the raw will to thrive in a hostile world. Thus no human being who is still breathing can be totally unselfish. A human being can only acknowledge the human tendency towards selfishness, and then try to manage that tendency without harming others.

As Thomas Moore says in *Care of the Soul*, there is simply no curing certain things in ourselves. All we can do is *care* for those things. But to take care of something, you have to—at the very least—be able to admit that it exists. Pretending not to be selfish does not equal 'taking care of' one's selfishness. Pretending not to be selfish equals ignoring one's selfishness.

Besides, if we don't know what we want and how to go about getting it, why should anyone else know? Should other people have to read our minds so we can get whatever we want without having to come out and ask for it? That can get real nasty in real life. Not being able to just come out and say what you want—or what you mean, or what you feel—may be the leading cause of resentment and divorce on the planet Earth.

But... it's still early in the story. Perhaps we should give Beauty the benefit of the doubt here. We just met her, and she seems so nice. Maybe she really doesn't want a single thing. Maybe she has completely conquered all desire, like a bodhisattva.

Then she should've said so! No matter what her sisters thought. Saying something she doesn't mean just to keep her sisters happy allows their bad attitudes to determine her actions.

Going along with something you don't agree with, just to be polite, is not civil—it's servile. And it's also downright dangerous, as we're about to find out.

"I'd rather be whole than good."
—Carl Jung



In the city, the merchant was forced to use most of the money from the ship's cargo to pay old debts, and the rest to settle legal matters. As a result, after a great deal of trouble and anxiety, he started for home as poor as before.

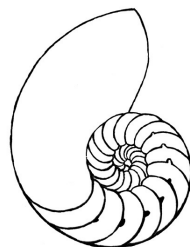
Halfway there he entered a deep forest, where it began to snow so hard the merchant lost his way. Night fell, the wind raged, wolves howled. The merchant had no idea which way to turn.

Then he saw a gleam through the forest, and hurried toward it. At the end of a long, tree-lined drive, lights shone forth from every window of an enormous palace surrounded by beautifully tended gardens.

Gratefully the merchant galloped up to the elaborate bronze gates, which were standing wide open. But the courtyard was empty, and the stables, where the merchant tended his tired horse, were also empty. Bewildered, the merchant went up to, and then through, the intricately carved palace doors without seeing a single soul.

Inside, he came upon a cheerful fire blazing in a handsome fireplace, and a table set for one near the hearth. Thinking, "Surely the owners will pardon me for taking refuge here. They're bound to come soon," he went up to the fire.

But he waited for hours, and no one came. Finally, being faint with hunger, the merchant sat down and ate. Then he walked through the adjoining rooms calling out, but still seeing no one, until at last he collapsed upon a fine bed in a magnificent bedroom and slept.



Falling Into It



Darkness, debt, despair, loneliness, wild animals, stormy weather, gloomy forests—now we're cooking! These are all signs of 'falling action.' We're 'descending into the territory of the unconscious,' as a Jungian or a Freudian might say.

Un = under or opposite. Conscious = your thinking mind. Unconscious forces are the ones that lie underneath our everyday, daylight, thinking minds. These are the forces we're generally not aware of, the ones that go on all by themselves.

Under? Around? Behind? The location's a bit vague, but the relative ages are certain: unconscious forces are far older than conscious forces. That's because—evolutionarily speaking—thinking is a fairly new thing.

Horses will not eat foxglove or tansy. No one told them the plants were poisonous. They don't have to 'think' about whether or not to eat them. They simply know better. That's an *instinct*, an *unconscious* process. People don't eat foxglove or tansy because we've been told the plants are poisonous, and we've been taught what poisonous means. That's *thinking*, that's a conscious process.

We were animals far longer than we've been human beings. So while we rational types are generally doing our very darndest to ignore them, instinctual forces are still at work in us all the time. They emanate from that vast colorful realm the collective unconscious, which we only reach fully in dreams or drug-induced states, and they affect every aspect of our waking lives, whether we're willing to admit it or not. Indeed, there's a known psychological proportion along the lines of: the less you tend to acknowledge instinctual forces at work within you, the worse those forces will act when they slip by your conscious guard. *I just don't know what came over me!*

Since they well up out of the collective unconscious lying underneath our rational minds, fairy tales often start with some sort of downward action. The hero or heroine

gets lost in the woods, or falls from favor, or finds a stairway leading down into the earth, or is swallowed by a fish, or goes after a golden ball that rolled into a well.

Unfortunately, human beings generally have to 'fall' to get anywhere. That's because we don't change when things are going well—we only change when we have to. We usually have to be *hurtin'* to change. Which means most real learning is preceded by suffering; most going forward entails leaving something behind.

Myths and hero tales follow a similar format: the hero or heroine, often of divine or unusual parentage, 1) ventures forth from the common world, 2) endures great suffering and hardship battling supernatural forces, and then, *by following his or her own heart*, 3) triumphs over insurmountable odds and brings a hard won gift back to the common world (which may or may not gladly receive that gift).

Alas, there is no getting around the suffering in these stories. Suffering is vital to the enterprise. It's the hero's initiation. It's actually *the point*, it's the main reason we tell these stories to ourselves over and over again. We're supposed to learn that heroism = overcoming obstacles by following your own heart. And we're supposed to notice that our fortunes are going to go up and down during this process, not just up and up, like the proverbial gross national product. We're supposed to get that *dealing with bitter times and hard tasks is necessary for the development of the human soul*.

So you see the problem here for us modern folk. We don't like to feel bad, we've seen enough advertising to be firmly convinced that we shouldn't ever *have* to feel bad, and we have thousands of ways to entertain ourselves and/or self-medicate.

But if we *don't* let ourselves go 'down' into the depths occasionally, if we *don't* ever turn inward long enough to figure out why we feel bad and what in heck we ought to be doing about it, what will happen to heroism? Or learning? Or simply moving forward?

?

We left the merchant feeling relieved to stumble upon an elegant palace in the middle of such a threatening forest. And although he has no idea how to get around in

these woods, it's clear that someone else does. Someone with vast resources and tremendous power.

So... who's the best at getting around in the woods? An animal, of course. A beast.

Beasts aren't afraid of the dark. Beasts don't get lost in the woods. In fact, beasts are right at home in the woods. They *need* the woods, they *use* the woods, for shelter and sustenance and protection. Thus, to follow this metaphor: the more 'civilized' you are, the less connection you have to your instinctual animal nature, the easier it will be for you to get lost in the woods of the unconscious.

We should note here that no one forced the merchant into the palace. He wasn't kidnapped, or handcuffed, or blindfolded. He simply got tired of how things were going on the outside and went on in. Similarly, our own interior processes are open to us—well, some of them are, anyway—but unless we start losing our minds, no one *forces* us to look within. We have to *choose* to look within. We have to make a conscious choice to enter this palace.

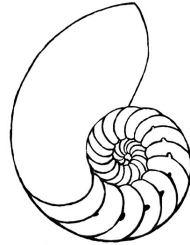
And it's too bad, but the one thing you will *not* find advertised here in the USA is the way to enter the Beast's palace, the way 'down.' Despite the obvious arc of human life—birth, growth, maturity, decline, death—most of us just can't bear to think of it that way. We like linear. We like straight lines, please, and may they always go up.

So don't look for a lot of outside help in this area. There will be no 30 second spots advocating introspection during the next Super Bowl. In our day and age, the way to get "down" beneath your conscious mind just isn't that clearly marked anymore. These days, it's off the beaten path.



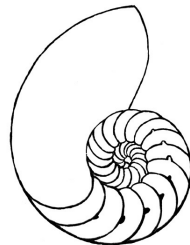
“Each of us has some part of our personality that is hidden from us. Parents, and teachers in general, urge us to develop the light side of the personality—move into well-lit subjects such as mathematics and geometry—and to become successful. The dark part then becomes starved. What do we do then?”

—Robert Bly, *A Little Book on the Human Shadow*



“The culture teaches us to be extroverted, quick, ambitious, productive. Workaholism is lauded; contemplation is shunned. But shadow-work is slow, cautious; it moves like an animal in the night. It moves us against the collective mandate.”

—Connie Zweig & Steve Wolf, *Romancing the Shadow*



“By now, the upward idea of growth has become a biographical cliché. To be an adult is to be a grown-up. Yet this is merely one way of speaking of maturity, and a heroic one at that. For even tomato plants and the tallest trees send down roots as they rise toward the light.”

—James Hillman, *The Soul's Code*



When the merchant awoke the next morning, he blinked in surprise to see a fine new suit laid out for him in place of his damp, dirty old one.

“A kind fairy must own this castle,” he thought. He looked out the window, and instead of a snow-covered wood, he saw masses of flowers blooming in the sun. Returning to the hall where he’d dined the night before, the merchant found a breakfast table set for one. “Kind fairy,” he said aloud. “I’m deeply obliged to you. Thank you for your generous care of me.”

After a hearty breakfast, the merchant went outside to find his horse ready and saddled, and he set out for home at once. As he rode under a trellis covered with roses he thought of Beauty’s wish, so he reached up and picked a rose for her.

Immediately there was a deafening roar, and a hideous Beast charged toward the merchant, snarling and growling. “Ungrateful man! I saved your life, I offered you hospitality, and then you steal my roses, my only pleasure, in return? Prepare yourself for death!”

“Majesty, forgive me!” begged the merchant, dropping from his horse and falling to his knees. “I merely took the rose for one of my daughters.”

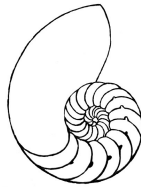
“I am not a Majesty—I am a Beast!” roared the monster. “I know what I am, you wretched fool. Your flattery is pathetic, and your struggle would be useless. Yet... you say you have daughters... If you have daughters, merchant, you may perhaps yet live. If one of your daughters comes willingly to me in your stead, you may go free. I shall give you three months to decide. But know that without fail, in three months, either you or one of your daughters must return here to me.”

The merchant had no thought of letting any of his children die for his sake, but as he wanted to at least see them one more time, he agreed to leave and return in three months.

“Then go now,” said the Beast. “But I shall not leave your children penniless and orphaned over this folly of yours. There will be a trunk full of gold standing at your bedside by the time you reach your home.”

“What a strange Beast,” thought the merchant, “to be so cruel and yet so thoughtful at the same time.” He left the palace, and now his horse seemed to know the way of its own accord, so he soon arrived at the gate leading to his cottage.

But rather than filling him with joy, the sight of his children running toward him made him weep. As the merchant handed the rose to Beauty he said, "Take this rose, Beauty. But little do you know what it cost your father."



Beastly Stuff

You can't stay in balance from way out on one end of the teeter-totter. 'Too good' eventually does as much damage as 'too bad.' Being perfectly beautiful and perfectly sweet only makes Beauty's sisters perfectly jealous. Wanting nothing but a rose simply enrages the Beast.

But who—or what—*is* this Beast? He's a representative of the instinctual, animal aspect of human nature. He's a part of each one of us, but he is far older than any one of us—he's as old as human evolution. And like the natural world itself, he is completely unpredictable: mild one minute, deadly the next. So understanding this Beast can be difficult, as is calming him down once you rile him up.

He lives in a hidden yet magnificent castle, not in some dank cave or crooked hut up on chicken feet, and this is important symbolically. It means this Beast knows how to live, and he lives well, but he's been removed from society. He was once a part of the human world, but lately he's fallen from grace. Now, unless someone seeks him out, he can only hide in the woods. Sneak into town at night. Ambush the unwary.

For most of human evolution, our ancestors were inextricably bound to the lives of animals and the world of nature. The intimate connections between human and animal, hunter and hunted, land and body, water and blood, were a part of daily life as well as the basis for ritual and worship. On this continent alone, hundreds of Native American cultures struggled to keep such traditions alive despite hordes of invading Europeans bent on wiping them out and taking their territory.

“The Lakota was a true naturalist—a lover of nature. He loved the earth and all things of the earth, the attachment growing with age. The old people came literally to love the soil, and they sat or reclined on the ground with a feeling of being close to a mothering power, to be able to think more deeply and to feel more keenly; to see more clearly into the mysteries of life and come closer in kinship to other lives about them...

Kinship with all creatures of the earth, sky, and water was a real and active principle for the Lakota.”

—Chief Luther Standing Bear, in *Touch the Earth*

But elsewhere, as modern civilization ‘advanced,’ as people spent more and more time developing complex hierarchical social systems, which run on thought at the expense of instinct, connections to the natural world and to animal instincts were weakened and pushed further and further from consciousness. ‘Civilized’ people began to be ashamed of, and then finally began to deny, any association with animals or nature—other than exploitative. They began to think of themselves as ‘higher’ than the animals. They began to think of nature as something fearful, needing to be tamed and conquered, not as something nurturing, requiring their reverence and cooperation.

In 325 CE, when Constantine made Christianity the official religion of Rome, Western civilization consolidated vast amounts of political power around a religion that *refused* access to instincts and dreams and ‘animal’ impulses, on pain of present torture and future damnation. And then along came St. Augustine, with his idea of innate depravity, or “original sin.” As two eminent religious scholars explain it:

“From the fifth century on, Augustine’s pessimistic views of sexuality, politics and human nature became the dominant influence on western Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant, and colored all western culture, Christian or not, ever since...”

—Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve and the Serpent*

“Born in grief and fear, this doctrine has left Western Christians with a difficult legacy that linked sexuality indissolubly with sin and helped alienate men and women from their humanity.”

—Karen Armstrong, *The Case for God*

Innate depravity? Original sin? Torture? Eternal damnation in lakes of fire? No wonder people became afraid of their Beasts! They could have been burned at the stake for embracing them. And plenty of them were.

In the words of our story, Western civilization started to get lost in the woods. The more civilized we became, the more our animal and instinctual natures were banished to the dark and stormy forests of the unconscious.

Perhaps it’s inevitable, as Robert Bly speculated once during a lecture on the Human Shadow at The Open Center in New York City. Perhaps with each technological advance there’s a necessary and corresponding spiritual loss. Perhaps each conscious gain has to push out some older unconscious entity, like knowing which plants are poisonous, in order to gain a toehold.

Who knows? What we *do* know is that microwaves cook so fast we get impatient now if it takes two minutes to boil water. We do know we can connect ourselves to the whole world via the Internet, as long as we focus on the screen and don’t look around the room we’re in. We do know we can walk down the street talking to someone miles away through a telephone plugged into one of our ears *Look ma, no hands!* but only if we ignore the people right in front of us.

And we *ought to* know that unless we’re very careful from here on out, each technological advance will only make us more impatient with each living breathing

moment, will only take us further away from the here and now which the instinctual nature calls home.

Unless we happen to be drunk, stoned, and/or at a rock concert, most of us just don't have much connection to our animal, instinctual natures anymore. We've pretty effectively banished our Beasts from consciousness.

But has banishing our Beasts from consciousness actually gotten rid of them? Let's look around. Look at our movies. Look at our TV shows, our video games, our headlines, our political vehemence, our endless wars, our violent hatreds, our rapidly escalating, truly horrifying mass shootings.

I'm afraid that after even a casual glance at the evidence, we shall be forced to concede that banishing our animal, instinctual natures from human consciousness is *not* working. It is simply allowing our unconscious Beasts to run amok and pop up everywhere, particularly in how we "entertain" ourselves, and in the ever-increasing hatefulness of our political rhetoric.

Stories about sacrificing pure young maidens to hideous monsters are older than written history. And there's a point lurking in there: ignoring monstrosity, pushing it beneath the surface, will not get rid of it. While we roam freely about our business topside, that Beast we have imprisoned down in the labyrinth of our psyches will continue to require a steady diet of victims. School children shot to pieces, innocent bystanders, grandmothers killed at grocery stores...

More speculation from that lecture by Robert Bly: what if we asked our Beasts to stop hiding out down there in their labyrinths? What if we asked them to come up and join us? What if we brought them out into the light?

Could we make peace with our Beasts if we asked them what they wanted, or how they felt? You think our banished Beasts would stop demanding human sacrifices if we acknowledged their existence? Could we maybe even *learn* something from them, if we gave them our attention?





When they'd heard their father's story the older girls howled and scolded and blamed Beauty. "Why could you not ask for clothes or jewels, as we did? Why do you have to be so wonderful? You've caused our father's death, yet you don't even shed a tear!"

"There's no need for tears," Beauty replied quietly. "The Beast said I could go in Father's place, and that's what I intend to do."

"No, sister!" cried her brothers. "We'll kill this monster, or perish in the attempt!"

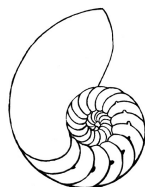
"We cannot hope to kill him," said the merchant. "His power's far too great. I know you mean well, Beauty, but I am an old, old man, soon to die in any case. I only came back to bid you all good-bye."

But for the first time in her life, Beauty stood firm. "Father, I must go. I'd rather be eaten quickly by a Beast than die slowly from sorrow over causing your death."

And although the merchant tried in vain to reason with Beauty, she kept obstinately to her purpose. For their part, her sisters began to secretly rejoice at the thought of getting rid of her.

The merchant was so grieved he never once thought of the Beast's promise. Thus he was greatly surprised to find a chest full of gold coins standing by his bedside that evening. Bewildered, the merchant called Beauty, pointed to the open chest, and explained what the Beast had said.

"Good, father," declared Beauty. "Two gentlemen have been courting my sisters in your absence. Use this money for their weddings."

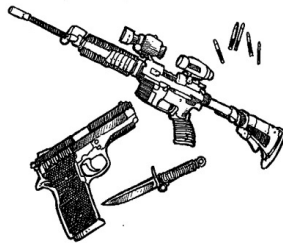


Brothers Like To Fight

Beauty's brothers represent conscious masculine energy in this story, and they gladly offer to fight the Beast. (*Symbolically* speaking, words like "consciousness, light, day, sun, intellect" represent masculinity, and words like "unconsciousness, darkness, night, moon, instinct" represent femininity. It's not sexist, it's the way the symbols work in our minds, and have worked in our minds for thousands of years. Yin/Yang. Whether you're male or female, your *conscious processes are masculine*, symbolically, and your *unconscious processes are feminine*, symbolically. There's no need to fret. It's not chauvinism. We've all got both sorts of processes going on within us, all the time.)

Brothers like to fight. Whether it's an old story like *Bluebeard* or a newer story like *Legends of the Fall*, the brothers, our representatives of conscious masculine energy, gallop up with drawn swords and serious expressions, ready to kick some butt.

"We are *Homo hostilis*, the hostile species, the enemy-making animal...—Sam Keen, from "The Enemy Maker," in *Meeting the Shadow*



In addition to fighting and waging wars, conscious masculine energy also tries to control the Beast with rules, regulations and religions, which don't work any better than fighting does. Rules, regulations and religions just result in wars against those who have different rules, regulations and religions—or in crime.

You can't beat the Beast by fighting, or by passing laws, or by calling him the devil. The only way you can beat the Beast is to acknowledge his presence in your own heart. If you can admit you have a Beast, right there in your own heart, then you can start to tame him. Then you can start to teach him some manners.

There's definite value in conscious masculine energy—in linear, rational, heroic, masculine-type thinking. Beauty's brothers don't hesitate a moment when courage is needed, or when sacrifice is called for. They're determined to do what's right at any cost. That's great! That's how we accomplish things in this world. That's the part of human nature that builds bridges and cures disease and puts food on the table. If we want to grow in wisdom and self-government human beings have *got to* practice conscious decision-making. In fact, it's been said more than once that our sole function in the evolutionary scheme of things is to develop consciousness.

But conscious masculine energy without regard for feminine values—like negotiation, or nurture, or ecology—is an orphan. It has no mother, no depth, no roots. It grows afraid of strangers, afraid of the dark, impossible to satisfy, and quick to wrath.

Meanwhile, still upholding the other extreme, good little Beauty doesn't have *enough* fight. We applaud her willingness to take her father's place at the Beast's palace when the time comes, but wanting to use that gold for her sisters' weddings is just lame. She's trying to placate them, trying to purchase their good will. She's trying to keep wickedness at bay by pretending it's not really all that wicked, when she should be looking squarely at the situation and serving up some justice.

Someone in touch with her animal, instinctual nature would not pretend everything was fine when she was looking at those two. She'd admit she had a problem and then she'd do something about it. If Beauty were already in touch with her Beast, she wouldn't use that gold to pay for her sisters' weddings. She'd use that gold to hire a magician who could turn her sisters into toads.

But that'd be another story, wouldn't it.



“Even our virtues become demonic when not balanced by their opposite.”—James Hollis, *Why Good People Do Bad Things*



Three months went by, only too fast. Then Beauty and her father made ready to set out for the palace of the Beast. The two sisters rubbed their eyes with an onion to make believe they were crying, but the merchant and his sons cried in earnest. Only Beauty shed no tears. As the horses seemed to know the way, they reached the palace in a very few hours, where the horses went into the stable without bidding.

Inside the palace, Beauty and the merchant found a table for two set with gold plates, crystal glasses, and fine food. The merchant had very little appetite, but Beauty tried to be cheerful for her father's sake and began to eat, thinking, "I suppose the Beast means to fatten me up."

As they finished their supper they heard a great roar, and the Beast entered the room. Beauty was terrified, but she controlled her fear and sat still as he approached.

"Did you come here willingly?" growled the Beast, after looking at her for a long time.

"Yes," said Beauty.

"Then I am very much obliged to you. As for you sir," he said, turning to her father, "leave here tomorrow and do not even think of coming back. Good night, merchant. Good night, Beauty."

And with that, the Beast left them.

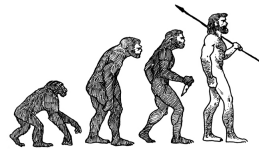


Choosing to seek the Beast

Now Beauty starts being a little more likable. She stands up to her father and her brothers, shoulders the consequences of her own actions, and starts off down her own path. Now she's not just "daddy's little girl" anymore, and such changes are usually

more painful for the father who has to stay behind than they are for the daughter who gets to move forward. When the merchant cries in this passage, he may be crying for all the parents who've been left behind by growing children.

For us civilized types, our first sight of that banished Beast lurking in the collective unconscious *is* terrifying. We each have a personal unconscious that's as old as we are and develops as we develop, but our share of the collective unconscious is as old as human evolution. And just as the physical evolution of the human being can be traced in fossil records, the spiritual evolution of the human being can be traced by the things that appear in our collective unconscious.



This grab bag holds everything in our past: every god and every demon, every blessing and every curse. Thus the collective unconscious is extremely juicy, but not at all tame. It's also far more emotional and far less logical than the newer 'civilized mind' we're so proud of, and its vibrant animal instinctual elements feel *really pissed off* about being repressed for centuries. The results can be rather frightening. Which might help to explain why Western religions began to insist that the causes for evil must be 'out there' rather than 'in here.' *The devil made me do it!*

But why is this hideous Beast from a tough neighborhood like the collective unconscious being so well-mannered here in the dining room? He's "humbly obliged" to Beauty for coming to see him? Why doesn't he just rip her from limb to limb? Why's he being such a gentleman?

Because he *is* humbly obliged! Because the only legitimate way he can get to see her is if she comes on over to his place. Here's that metaphor again: we're so civilized, we've become such able practitioners of conscious thought, that getting to instinctual material doesn't just *happen* anymore, not in a good way. We have to *make it* happen.

Beauty and her father both chose to walk into the Beast's castle. The merchant sort of stumbled in, pushed by dire circumstances, so he may or may not learn anything. But Beauty is *choosing* to enter the castle of the Beast, even though she thinks the Beast is going to eat her up. That's the kind of heroism that powers myth. That's the beginning of a quest.

To be eaten up is to disappear into, to be completely absorbed by, the eater. And it's true that we fear getting lost in our old animal, instinctual natures. *He just went wild!*

So we tried to leave the dark and stormy forests behind us. We built thicker walls, taller buildings, bigger cities. We developed ever more elaborate indoor amusements. Until gradually, as the centuries rolled by, we stopped having much to do with messy old nature at all.

And, just as gradually, as the centuries rolled by, we began to lose our animal wisdom, our partnership with the planet we live on, our sixth sense, our cunning, our instinctual knowledge of which way to turn, our ability to see in the dark.

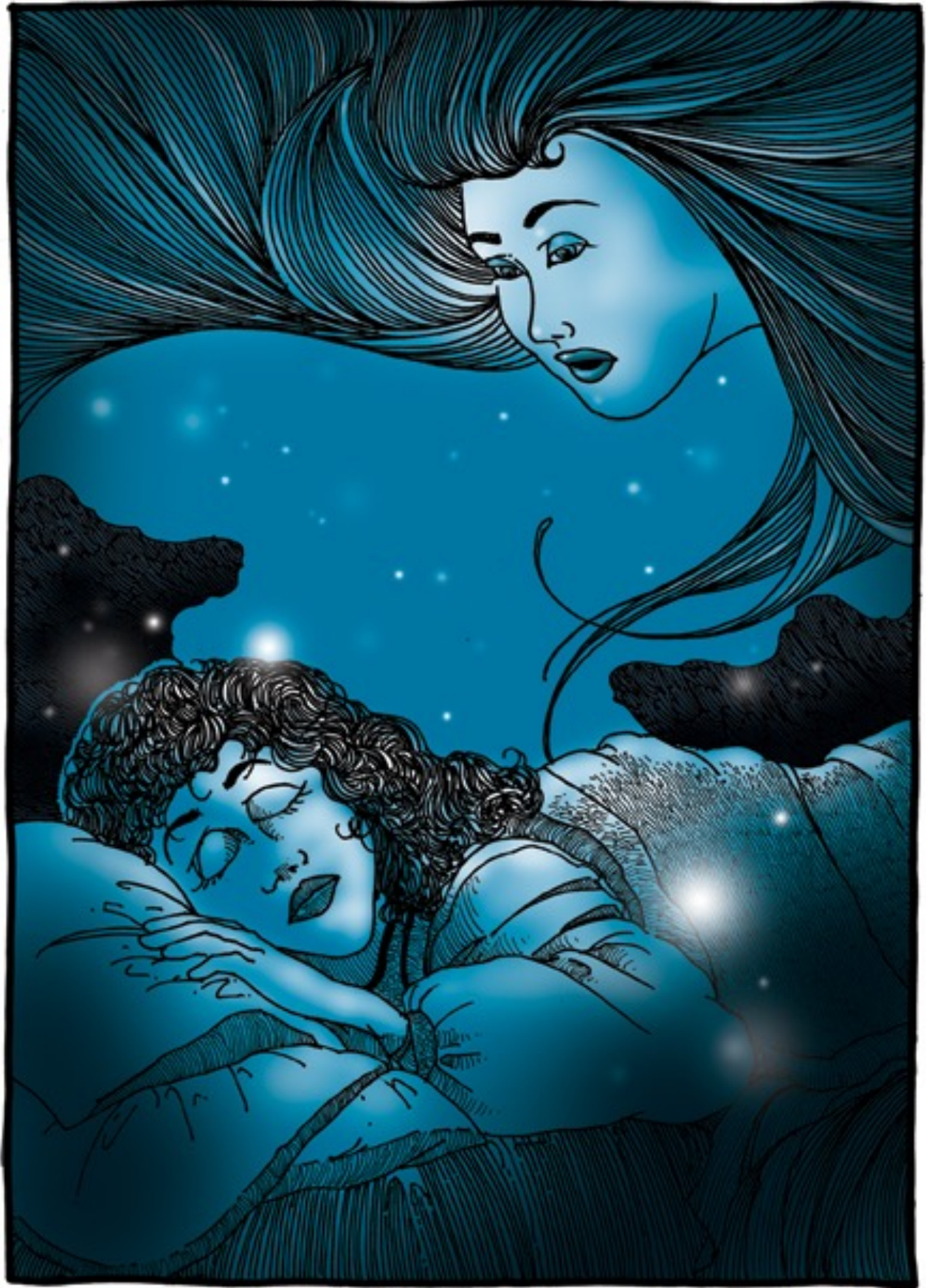
“The story that we have in the West, so far as it is based on the Bible, is based on a view of the universe that belongs to the first millennium BCE. It does not accord with our concept of the universe today or of the dignity of men and women. It belongs entirely somewhere else.

We have to learn to get back into accord with the wisdom of nature and realize again our brotherhood with the animals and with the water and the sea...

The idea is not pantheism. It is trans-theological. It is of an undefinable, inconceivable mystery that is the source and end and supporting ground of all life and being.”

—Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*





Then Beauty and her father said good night and went to bed, each expecting a sleepless night. Nevertheless, each immediately fell into a deep sleep.

Beauty dreamed of a beautiful lady who came to her and said, "Do not be afraid. Choose well, and you shall be rewarded."

As soon as they met the next morning, Beauty told her father about her dream.

And although it gave him some comfort, it was still a long time before Beauty could persuade her father to leave the castle.



Where Mama Went

At last! A mother figure. Who comes to Beauty in a dream, which is no accident. Dreams are one of the royal roads to the unconscious. And since this young woman has no connection to her own mother, Beauty sorely needs a bit of mature feminine wisdom.

But why should Beauty have to get vital information from a fairy in a dream? Why *doesn't* she have a connection to her own mother? Where *did* Mama go?

To answer that, we'll need a Brief History of Western Civilization. I'll paraphrase from two of Joseph Campbell's works, *The Power of Myth*; and *Occidental Mythology*, which is Volume III in his series *The Masks of God*.

What is now referred to as Western Civilization was born in the great valleys of the Nile, the Tigris-Euphrates, and the Indus rivers. Circa 7500 to 3500 BCE, this was the territory of goddesses who were associated with agriculture and earthly cycles. A

woman gives birth, just as the earth gives birth to plants. She gives nourishment, just as the earth gives nourishment to us all. So in ancient Mesopotamia, the Egyptian Nile, and early planting cultures, womanly magic was associated with earthly magic. The nature goddess—from whom all things were born and to whom all things returned at death—was the prominent mythological form.

Beginning around 4000 BCE, these agriculturally based, great mother cultures began to fall one after another to more aggressive invaders, Semites and Indo-Europeans, who were herders and hunters. When one society takes over another society's territory it incorporates and annihilates the local gods, until its own religious system stands supreme. So as the agricultural societies fell to more warlike hunting and herding societies, the religions featuring goddesses who embraced all of creation went down one after the other. And the my-way-or-the-highway religions, featuring warlike, masculine gods with long lists of rules and very loud voices, rose up.

When the Old Testament mentions “the Abomination,” or people “worshipping on the mountaintops,” right before it says to “kill every man, woman and child,” it is referring to the old Canaanite goddess worshipers, and it is rationalizing the complete annihilation of their cultures by conquest.

Bloody conquests are typically the times in history when a symbol like the serpent sheds its skin.



With the new warrior gods it was not a good idea to ask questions, or to desire to be as smart as they were. In fact, eating fruit from the Tree of Knowledge bought you a one-way ticket out of paradise. Curiosity, or the desire to know as much as the gods, became a punishable offense in Western thought somewhere right about here. Sort of explains the next big segment of Western history, doesn't it? **THE DARK AGES.**

These victorious nomadic tribes eventually became the Jewish, Christian and Muslim civilizations. Their religions all spring from a common source, Zoroaster (or Zarathustra), who lived in Persia a thousand years before Christ and was the first to

preach a strict dualism between god and man, good and evil. Zoroaster visualized a holy war between God (Ahura Mazda) and Satan (Angra Mainyu), and in his thought we see the first glimmers of the later “solar monotheisms”: religions with singular, warlike, all-powerful, totally masculine gods, viewed as separate from and completely ‘above’ humanity.

Their resulting societies were all extremely patriarchal in nature. Which actually makes sense, given the course of Western history. Under the earlier agricultural systems presided over by goddesses of nature and harvest, men and women worked together in seasonal, ritualized rounds of birth-growth-death-rebirth, where everything in creation was magical and full of holy significance; a world view the anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl later called *participation mystique*.

There is a great reverence for nature in this type of worldview. And this reverence—along with its level of cooperation between the sexes—simply had to be eliminated for more aggressive societies to take over and establish complex power grids in which only a few were masters and all the rest obeyed orders. (In *The Chalice and The Blade* Riane Eisler calls the earlier groups “partnership societies,” and the later groups “dominator societies.” She also makes a hopeful point: being stuck in “dominator” mode now doesn’t mean we couldn’t re-establish “partnership societies” in the future.)

Or perhaps, as Erich Neumann rather poetically describes it in *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, we could say that the nomadic warrior civilizations were struggling to leave the “womb” of unconscious participation in the world around them—a predominately “lunar” feminine realm—for the “solar light” of conscious decision making—a predominately masculine realm. May-be...

But over in the Far East, religions were stressing the divinity *within* each individual, and devotion to a pantheon of deities, both male and female. The traditional greeting in India, “*Namaste!*” literally means: “the divinity within me salutes the divinity within you.”

Whereas the Middle Eastern-into-Western religions stressed obedience to a singular, jealous, judgmental, masculine god, *outside of* and completely separate from themselves, and reachable only through the proper hierarchical power channels.

(We're bypassing a few side roads here—the Greek rationalists, the mystics in all three religions, the Gnostics, Alchemists, Troubadours, Renaissance—but if this is going to be a *brief* history of Western civilization, we better stay on the main path.)

Thus, rather than being all-embracing, these cultures stressed differences and opposites—god versus man, man versus nature, man versus woman, priest versus layman, black versus white, good versus evil, civilized versus primitive, winner versus loser, saint versus sinner, saved versus damned, us versus them—which is what *dual-*ism means, *two* opposing sides—and in the process, both the feminine principle and the natural world got the shaft.

Animals in these cultures were no longer revered as special beings—as emblems of courage, cunning or wisdom, with inherently valuable traits—they became property, to be bred and herded and exploited. Women were no longer venerated participants in the great wheel of cosmic life—goddesses—nor were they allowed to be equal partners in civic life. Women became villainous temptresses, collectible possessions, spoils of war, second class citizens, and slaves. Nature was no longer something to revere or cooperate with, nature—including human nature—was something to conquer and subdue.

And dreams? Well... if your 'hierarchical channel to God' advocated *never* having sexual relations, even with yourself, what would *you* dream about? Thus dreams became the work of the devil, the last thing in the world a devout person should ever heed, lest he be tempted by Satan and fall into sin.

So it's no wonder that as these civilizations advanced, eventually covering all the land from Europe to India, it became far more important for a woman to be ladylike than to be in touch with her instincts. It became far more important for a woman to behave than to be powerful. In most situations it became flat dangerous for women to be powerful, or to follow their own hearts in any way, as it still is today in many parts of the world. Men—fathers, husbands, brothers, rational, light, solar—made the rules, and women—wives, mothers, sisters, emotive, dark, lunar—were supposed to obey them. Women were supposed to be good. Women were supposed to stay in the background and out of the decision making process, lest they be punished as witches and whores.

Thus, as we saw in the beginning of this story, Western civilization, which has now advanced far enough to develop a wireless telephone, did so at the expense of a connection to its own mother: there's no one to call. By the time Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont wrote down this version of *Beauty and the Beast* in 1757, there was no mother at all for the six children, only a father. That is the ultimate symbolic, mytho-poetic description of "patriarchy."

There were girls—good girls, bad girls—but no grown women. Strong, grown-up women who participated equally in life with men—along with all things wild, natural, animal or instinctual—had to be pushed way down out of sight, way down into the 'dark and stormy forests of the unconscious' for Western humanity's war-like, empire-building, nature-ravaging, conquering-consciousness to emerge.

The beautiful lady in the dream is telling Beauty, "Enough with the one-sidedness already! Surely we can make better choices than this by now! Let's start using *both* sides of that old yin/yang symbol again!"

She's telling Beauty to cherish her animal, instinctual nature, that it's perfectly OK to follow her heart and heed her dreams.

She's telling Beauty—that sweet, good, innocent, well-educated, upper-class specialist in classical music and polite conversation—to choose what appears to be a Beast as a mate.

"Myth changes while custom remains constant; men continue to do what their fathers did before them, though the reasons on which their fathers acted have long been forgotten. The history of religion is a long attempt to reconcile old custom with new reason; to find a sound theory for an absurd practice." —James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*

"In the world as it will be when women and men live in full partnership, there will, of course, still be families, schools, governments and other social institutions. But like the already now emerging institutions of the equalitarian family and the social-action network, the social structures of the future will be based more on linking than on ranking.

Instead of requiring individuals to fit into pyramidal hierarchies, these institutions will be heter-archic, allowing for both diversity and flexibility in decision making and action. Consequently, the roles of both women and men will be far less rigid, allowing the entire human species a maximum of developmental flexibility." —Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade; Our History, Our Future*

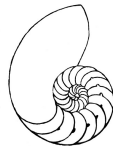


After her father had gone, Beauty wandered through the palace. Each spot seemed more beautiful than the next, until she came to a door which said, “Beauty’s Room.” It opened to reveal a suite far more splendid and tasteful than any of the rest. What amazed her most was a large library filled with artwork, books, musical instruments, and sheets of music. “Why does the Beast take such pains to amuse me if he means to eat me up?” she thought. She opened one of the books and saw, written in gold letters on the frontispiece:

Beauteous lady, dry your tears,
Here’s no cause for sighs or fears.
Command as freely as you may,
For you command and I obey.

“Then I wish to know what my father is doing right now,” said Beauty. And immediately the looking glass on a nearby table held a picture of her home, with her father riding mournfully up to the door. She watched as her brothers and sisters ran out to meet him, and then the image faded away as fast as it had appeared.

Beauty felt sorely puzzled that the Beast, who was so frightening and hideous and powerful, could also be so thoughtful, and generous, and kind.



The Personal Shadow

Well, that *is* the puzzle, isn’t it? We want things to be black or white, good or evil, for us or against us—Joseph Campbell called it “a function of Biblical thinking”—but it’s just not that easy. People are complicated. Life is complicated. The simplest human

impulse stems from gnarled and ancient roots. There is no “one way” to act can be worn around like a suit of armor and used in every situation. Every archetype—every instinctual impulse of human nature—has a value and a use. Sometimes you’re the goddess of wisdom, sometimes you’re the village idiot.

Let’s say an accident happens right in front of you and simple physical strength on your part will save someone’s life. You’ll be as strong as a giant in an instant. You’ll lift up that rock or pull the door off that car, without even thinking. But since giants are dumb as stumps and shy of cameras, your giant will run offstage as soon as he’s done the heavy lifting. By the time a news person holds a microphone up to your face, you’ll be your regular old self and no stronger than normal.

There’s an entire cast of archetypes milling around inside each one of us, just *longing* for their chance to appear on stage. The entire ensemble of myth, tale, dream and evolution stand waiting in the wings of your psyche.

However, human beings tend to get typecast into one role. We learn this role in our family-of-origin theater, and then we continue to play it out on the world stage. We dutifully don our masks and go out and perform “I’m cute,” or “I’m a loser,” or “I’m smart,” or “I’m a victim” or whatever, day after day after day, just as if we *were* characters trapped in fairy tales. Unless knocked off balance by some sort of unforeseeable disaster—or a ton of therapy—human beings tend to muddle along all through life stuck in one persona.

Look at poor Beauty: kind, long suffering, beautiful and dutiful. Now *there’s* a limited role for you. And how could such a role possibly be sustained for a human lifetime? Could a girl dedicated to this role ever admit she’d been mean, or told a lie? Could she ever own up to farting, or feeling horny? Could she simply be in a bad mood? Of course not! She’d have to appear perfect. Blameless.

So if she were human, and dedicated to performing a ‘Beauty’ of a role like this, her options would be limited. She’d have to push bad moods, shortcomings and mistakes way down into the forbidding forest of her unconscious, denying she knows anything at all about them, and even more importantly, **she’d have to blame someone else when anything goes wrong in her life.**

Carl Jung was one of the ‘big three’ fathers of modern psychology—Freud, Jung, Adler. He began to call the contents of the mind’s unconscious its “shadow” in the early 1900s. He also gave us the terms introvert, extrovert and complex, and he classified which basic psychological processes a person tends to use the most, which led to those personality tests that HR departments use today. Interesting guy. 70 percent scientist/50 percent mystic. And although his works can sound dated now—this guy could write in Latin and use alchemical symbols as allegories—your work may sound dated too, in another 100 years. Jung’s mysticism makes him somewhat controversial, but there’s no denying his lasting impact on the field of psychology.

This particular concept, the Human Shadow, is where Jung began to branch away from Freud. Whereas Freud insisted that everything in the unconscious referred to repressed sexuality (and maybe most of it did, back then), Jung said, no, I think the unconscious holds whatever you don’t know about yourself, not just repressed sexuality, particularly those things about yourself which you really don’t want to admit.

So Jung was using the word “shadow” to describe the parts of the psyche that a person doesn’t want to—usually just *can’t*—think about or acknowledge. It refers to the repressed, un-lived side of your normal daytime personality—the stuff you don’t like about yourself, the stuff you don’t want anyone else to know about you.

Thus your Shadow assuredly contains negative qualities, such as envy or prejudice or cruelty. And it could even contain positive qualities, if you like to think of yourself as some sort of criminal badass. But these qualities, whatever they are, stay in your mind’s Shadow because you don’t like to—in fact, most of the time you simply *can’t*—admit you possess them. Some parts of ourselves we like to show to others—put out into the light—and some parts of ourselves we like to hide—keep in the Shadows.

Coming up with the word ‘Shadow’ for this phenomenon was a stroke of genius. It puts a memorable label on a basic psychological process, and it is *extremely* apt symbolically. Neither our outside shadow nor our inner mental Shadow can be smelled or tasted or touched or felt, yet both are very firmly hooked to us, whether we like it or not, whether we can see them or not. And while other people can see your Shadow pretty easily, you’d have to turn your head around to be able to see it.

There's also a nifty irony built into both meanings of the term: whether it's a shadow cast by light in the natural world, or a Shadow cast by your mind, the brighter the light, the darker the Shadow. Some of the most vile, most grotesque acts in history have been done—and are still being done right this very minute—in the name of God, which is the brightest light we've been able to imagine.

Ever noticed how often someone at the top of the heap—famous, wealthy, powerful—gets caught doing something ridiculously low-brow? How often celebrated evangelists or celibate priests become embroiled in sleazy sexual scandals? **The brighter the light, the darker the Shadow...**

The enchantments and bewitchments that occur over and over again in classic fairy tales mirror those that happen in real life. In fact, most of us fall into an enchantment at one time or another. We identify with one type of role until we think that we *are* a good girl, or we *are* a hero, and then we try very hard *not* to be anything else.

We just flat get stuck in our role—as athlete or honor student or class clown or thin woman or powerful businessman or laid back dude or loving spouse or hard working wage earner or devoted religious disciple—and deny the very existence of any part of ourselves that doesn't fit neatly into that role. We deny we have any desire to skip class, or eat the whole bag of cookies, or blow off work today, or hop into bed with a total stranger, or scream loudly at the children.

And we usually can manage to cram all those contrary desires way down into our Shadows. *What contrary desires? I don't see any.* That is, until we wake up one day and find ourselves doing something really stupid and totally “out of character.” Out of character... out of the role we've chosen—or were told—to play. Which was probably a fairy tale role, from an idealized family, and so not even humanly possible in the first place. It's sad, poignant, and paradoxical that, despite the evil increasing exponentially around the world, most of us are trying really hard to be good.

There's actually a correlation between trying hard to be good and an increase in evil. Denying parts of your personality on a daily basis is called repression, and it creates another ongoing problem called regression. If I can't even admit I have certain feelings—if they shame me, or scare me, or if they're not permitted in my culture—those

feelings are not going to look the same when they finally slip past my conscious guard. Those feelings will have regressed.

Re-gress is the opposite of pro-gress. To regress is “to go backwards.” Which means the parts of myself that I just can’t stand to think about will get *less* human the longer I refuse to think about them. The longer I pretend not to know anything at all about some part of myself, about a basic instinctual impulse of mine, the grosser and hairier and wilder that abandoned part of myself is going to get, like a troll living under a bridge, or a castaway all alone on an island.

Like that caveman hidden in your sub-conscious.



What makes a bunch of good ole boys who usually hang out down at the café go out and lynch a black man? Or beat a gay man to death and leave his body dangling from a barbed wire fence? Who does the actual torturing in torturous regimes? Who carries an AR-15 into a grocery store or a classroom? Were these people all *born* evil?

Probably not. But we are *all* capable of taking a distinct downward slide as we go through life. From repression, to regression, to aggression.

When we try to appear angelic, the devil inside dances. When we are absolutely certain that our way is the only way, imps start to grin. Being right at all times and never making a mistake is just not possible for a human being.

If we can’t admit being wrong... can’t calmly discuss important issues... simply won’t tolerate other points of view, much less change our minds when faced with new evidence... when we are *obviously* much cooler or smarter or more righteous, and everyone else is *obviously* lamer or dumber or down-right damned... that’s just sheer

self-enchancement, folks. In classic fairy tales, that's how the siblings act who *don't* find the treasure.

Luckily, there's a sure-fire way to break this sort of self-enchancement. And it's a fairly easy process once you get the hang of it, but you have to perform step one while totally alone. 1) Stand in front of a mirror, look long and hard at your face, which is the mask you wear for the role you usually play, and then say out loud, "Aw, *man*, I am as full of shit as a clogged toilet!" 2) Keep that in mind while you go out for coffee, or walk down to the pub. 3) Repeat this process every few days.

If you do this correctly, while you're out and about you'll begin to realize that every person on earth—you, me, and that guy in the corner booth over there—is as much Court Jester as Wise King, as much Evil Stepmother as Snow White, and that the easiest way forward for humanity would be for all of us to go ahead and admit that.

None of us are perfect! All of us have flaws! And the sooner we can own up to that, the sooner we can get to mending our mistakes.



"Sin is nothing more and nothing less a failure to be continually perfect. Because it is impossible for us to be continually perfect, we are all sinners.

Be perfectly honest with yourself, and you will realize that you sin. If you do not realize it, then you are not being perfectly honest with yourself, which is itself a sin. It is inescapable, we are all sinners...

Those who have 'crossed over the line' [into evil] are characterized by their absolute refusal to tolerate the sense of their own sinfulness." —M Scott Peck, "Healing Human Evil," in *Meeting the Shadow*



In the middle of the day Beauty found a table elegantly set for one. A delightful concert played all during her luncheon, but not a soul could she see. Finally, at dinnertime, she heard the noise of the Beast approaching.

"Beauty," he growled, "may I stay here while you eat dinner?"

"As you wish. You are master here," she answered.

"No!" said the Beast. "In this place you alone command. If you don't want my company, you need only to say so, and I'll leave on the instant... Am I very ugly to you, Beauty?"

"Why, yes," said she. "But you can also be very considerate."

"Yes, I can," replied the Beast sadly. "Yet, still—I'm an ugly, stupid Beast."

"Well, not stupid," laughed Beauty. "Stupid people are never aware of their own stupidity."

At this the Beast looked pleased but only managed to say, "Please don't let me keep you from your dinner, and be sure you're well served. Consider all you see as your own. I should be deeply grieved if you lacked for anything."

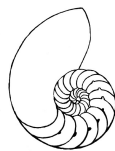
"Your kindness makes me forget how ugly you are," replied Beauty. "Truly, many men are more beastly than you. A handsome heart and an ugly face are far better than a handsome face and an ugly heart."

"I'm too stupid to reply properly," the Beast growled. "But thank you for your good opinion."

Then they spoke of many things, and Beauty had almost forgotten to be afraid of him when the Beast turned to her and asked abruptly, "Beauty, will you marry me?"

She sat awhile, shocked and silent. Then at last she simply said, "No, Beast."

At which the Beast sighed, said "Good night, Beauty," and left her.



How the Personal Shadow Fits Into the Collective Shadow

While it's true that the unconscious mind has many interesting and powerful channels, in our day and age the conscious mind has the remote. Beauty usually does rule, and the Beast usually does hide in his palace. If we want our animal nature to disappear, that's what it has to try to do. If we like to pretend we're always nice, then our inner-ogre has to sneak around to get out.

The Beast is unsatisfied with this lop-sided dominance. He yearns for a 'marriage,' a union. Beauty may have the remote, but she is still his prisoner, and he is still a Beast. Neither can get to 'happily ever after' until instinct and intellect join forces.

But Beauty does deserve some credit here. She shows a good grasp of a basic and important principle: a handsome face can hide a beastly heart.

Whatever you have in your Shadow is in there because it's a part of you. You don't want to think about it—that's why it's hidden in your Shadow—but it's still a part of you. Which means it *has* to, it *will*, show up somewhere in your life. It is simply not possible to get rid of parts of yourself by ignoring them.

So if there are some things you can't stand to admit about yourself, if you just can't face some of your own stuff, then you're going to see your own stuff on someone else's face.

Guaranteed. It will not just disappear. It will not simply give up and go away because you refuse to own it. The qualities you dislike in yourself will start appearing in other people. You'll see it in this person and in that person. It will keep popping up in *other* people again and again, and all those *other people* doing whatever it is you don't like about yourself will look worse and worse to you as time goes on.

Human beings have gotten very good at pretending to be innocent while blaming other people for everything that goes wrong. Along with rocket science and satellite communications we've developed ego-protecting psychic monsters, who live right inside our heads. Like the Muttering Monster.

This guy mutters continually about what other people are up to, blames whatever happens to him on someone else, feels slighted by everyone, sees enemies

everywhere. Envious and vindictive, Muttering Monsters never stop to question their own attitude, or make an effort to snap out of it, or seek solutions. They just mutter and gripe. Mutter and gripe. Continually.



And then there's the Gloater. This timid psychic monster is just as hateful, but it doesn't bother to produce its own muttering. It prefers to get onto a web site or tune into a certain station so it can laugh gleefully or cheer loudly whenever someone else utters monstrosities—the Gloater lets talk show hosts and power crazed politicians do the heavy lifting.

But if all this belly-aching, fault-finding, fact-twisting, finger-pointing, and crushing-of-those-who-deign-to-disagree-with-me is only coming from talk show hosts, fanatical politicians, and an occasional President of the United States, then the Gloater couldn't really be an internal monster of *mine*, could it? Just because I tuned in to those stations, or voted for those guys?

Ah... yeah—afraid it could. Gloaters aren't that easy to disown. They're just as pathetically desperate for attention as everything else crammed into your Shadow. In fact, Muttering Monsters and Gloaters are both so pathetically desperate for attention that the better we get at pretending they don't belong to us, the more monstrous everyone around us will look.

“Consider the convenience of knowing who the enemy is, always. If the enemy is *there*, they are not *here*, so I have no burden of consciousness, no obligation of self-examination.”

—James Hollis, *Why Good People Do Bad Things*

Humph. Kind of explains why we hear so much ranting and raving over the airways, doesn't it? And why it's so easy to get all hot and bothered about what other people are up to... And why we just can't seem to get *off of* certain subjects...

“Hate has a lot in common with love, chiefly with that self-transcending aspect of love, the fixation on others, the dependence on them, and in fact the delegation of a piece of one's own identity to them... the hater *longs* for the object of his hatred.” —Vaclav Havel, in *The Shadow in America*

The process involved here is childishly simple: **we dwell on what others are doing to keep from noticing what we've been up to ourselves.**

This is called **projection**, in psychological terms, and it happens all the time. It starts with **denial**, and it ends in **blame**. We take some part of ourselves we don't like—or are ashamed of, or don't want to think about, or can't bring ourselves to deal with—and then we project it out onto another person, where we can see it.

This is not a new concept. Jesus scolded his followers about pointing out specks of dirt in other people's eyes while failing to see whole logs in their own eyes. We all grew up hearing “That's the pot calling the kettle black!” or “Takes one to know one!” or “People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones!” We all know *something*, vaguely, about denial, projection and blame.

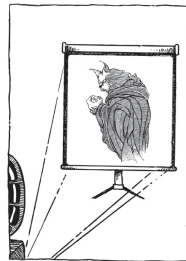
What we haven't yet come to grips with is how prevalent and malevolent this simple ego defense mechanism has become.

“If we do not see our own shadow, we project it onto other people, who then have a fascinating effect on us. We are compelled to think about them all the time; we get disproportionately stirred up about them and may even start to persecute them.

This does not mean that certain people whom we hate are not in truth intolerable; but even in such cases we could deal with them in a reasonable manner or avoid them—if they were not the projection of our own shadow, which never fails to lead us into every possible exaggeration and fascination.”

—Marie-Louise von Franz, *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*

Imagine a movie projector. Your mind would be the machine whirring away in that little room at the back, and the other person would be the big screen down in front. You're *creating* the image. The image is actually being produced inside your own head, but the *other* person is the only place where you can see that image. You're *projecting* that image onto another person.



Thus we can hate someone else for having whatever quality we're projecting, while remaining steadfastly in love with ourselves and not having to change a thing personally. “I don't have a bad temper. What are you talking about, you asshole? You have a TERRIBLE temper!!*#%*#!”

“A predominant behavior characteristic of those I would call evil is scapegoating. Because in their hearts they consider themselves above reproach, they must lash out at anyone who *does* reproach them. They sacrifice others to preserve their image of self-perfection...”

Since deep down they feel themselves to be faultless, it is inevitable that when they are in conflict with the world

they will perceive the conflict as the world's fault. Since they must deny their own badness, they must perceive others as bad.

They *project* their own evil onto the world. They never think of themselves as evil; on the other hand, they consequently see much evil in others.”

—M. Scott Peck, from “Healing Human Evil,” in *Meeting the Shadow*

And this is where it gets serious. I'm sure you've heard that Denial ain't just a river in Egypt. Well, Projection and Blame ain't just small towns in Texas. We are not talking about a quaint practice only carried out by a few remote primitives somewhere on the other side of the planet. This cycle—**denial-projection-blame**—is a basic psychological mechanism. It's a description of what went on at your dinner table last night. It's a description of what we each do all day long unless we're making a sincere attempt not to do so, and probably a good 78.87% of the time even then.

There's no getting around the fact that human beings are now using their intelligence to project whatever they don't like about themselves onto other people, rather than using their intelligence to correct whatever it is about themselves they don't like. Shoot—we're *taught* to project whatever we don't like about ourselves onto other people. Children hear their parents, civic leaders and sports stars do it every day.

Try looking around for someone who is projecting his own Shadow material onto someone else. (Blaming others for what they're done themselves, or accusing others of qualities they're ashamed to admit in themselves). It won't take you long to find—in current politics, in the news, at sporting events, on the internet, on television, in history, in your own home, and in your own heart. Nor will it take you long to come to the conclusion that this is not some harmless procedure easily overlooked among friends. This is killing us.

As Robert Bly put it,

“Projection of shadow material causes most of the misery, injustice and warfare in the world.”

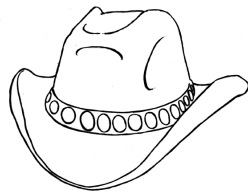
And as Carl Jung wrote,

“Learning to integrate shadow material is the single most important task facing mankind, as failure to do so will lead to the extinction of the human race.”

Whoa. *What?* Extinction of the human race? *Why'd he say that?* He said that because we do not just project blame individually. **We also project blame collectively.** The really dire news is:

Whole Cultures Cast Shadows

A hat that looks really cool in a bar in Wyoming may not look cool at all on Fifth Avenue in New York. There are substantial cultural differences between the Pacific Northwest and the Deep South. Between being German and being Sudanese. Between Chinese and Chilean. We're not just 'stuck' in ego roles and family roles; we're stuck in social-historical-mythological eras and areas.



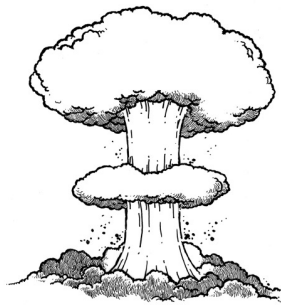
And then, in practice, we refine our differences even further by only hanging out with people *inside* our era and area who are the most like us. Red State, Blue State.

As history has shown over and over again, if enough people deny the same qualities in themselves, and then project those qualities out onto other groups of people, something really nasty occurs. Like “witch” burning crazes, or exterminations of native populations, or slavery, or civil wars, or Holocausts, or genocide, or *Capitalism in America—Where the Rich Get Richer!* while the other 80% struggle to afford housing and health care, and the mentally ill wander the streets.

Massive acts of evil simply could not be perpetrated without massive amounts of denial, projection, and blame.

You can think of the Human Shadow as layered, or tiered: there are personal layers, and then there are collective layers. **We each have Personal Shadows** that can get out of hand: for example, we tend to make fun of how someone else looks if we feel insecure about our own attractiveness. **And then we each belong to Collective Shadows** that can get out of hand: we tend to accuse another group of evil if we can't bear to look at the evil our own group has done, or is doing.

An excellent example of the latter occurred in US history at the end of WWII. The saturation bombing of German cities by British and US forces culminated in a firestorm at Dresden so fierce that people hiding in underground bomb shelters melted into liquid sludge. Then the USA dropped two atomic bombs on Japan.



At Hiroshima and Nagasaki 199,000 people were either killed instantly or died later, slowly and hideously, from radiation poisoning. These three events—Dresden, Nagasaki, Hiroshima—killed what historians now estimate to be 224,000 people, and not soldiers, either. They were completely innocent civilians who had been going about their business in big cities. Gruesome. Ghastly. Way, way, beyond what gruesome or ghastly or any other word could possibly convey.

So very soon after these events, unable and unwilling to comprehend that such colossal evil could be perpetrated by their own country, citizens all over the USA (spurred on by their leaders), began to obsess about how evil *Russia* was, and to build bomb shelters in their backyards in case of a Russian nuclear attack.

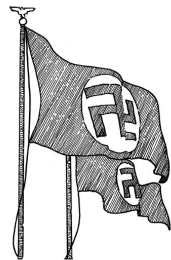
The author grew up with one of those bomb shelters in her backyard. She also grew up hearing stories and watching movies about how badly German and Japanese soldiers acted in WWII. The 224,000 civilians slaughtered at Dresden and Hiroshima and Nagasaki were simply not mentioned during her childhood, in the USA in the 1950s. Not by anyone. We were too busy hiding under our school desks during air raid drills because we'd been told that Russians were Commie bad guys who were out to get us.

In other words, there is a '**me against you**' aspect to the **Personal Shadow**, and there is an '**us against them**' aspect to the **Collective Shadow**. And projected out onto others, both types of Shadow material can do colossal amounts of harm.

“The collective Shadow can take form as mass phenomena in which entire nations become possessed...
When a minority is forced to carry the projections of the majority, the potential for great evil is activated.”
—Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams, *Meeting the Shadow*

Politicians use symbols and symbolic language to manipulate their populaces because symbols and symbolic language stimulate the unconscious, they pull the heart-strings to our Collective Shadow ties. And we tend to fall for it because we each have to belong to something bigger than ourselves to make it on this planet, and the scarier this planet gets, the more we unconsciously hope that whatever we belong to is really powerful. Mighty. Right. Beyond reproach.

So we all respond heartily—no thinking required—to waving flags, national anthems, simple catchy slogans, clothes that match, or links to the past through the use of archetypal words like 'fatherland' or 'motherland' or 'homeland.'



Hitler was a consummate master of the symbol. The salute, the swastika, the rows upon rows of clean uniformed youths singing and marching in step... symbols like these speak directly to the need to belong to, and to be protected by, something bigger than ourselves; a need that lives in every human heart.

“Groups always have a fluid, amorphous but highly vulnerable group “ego”...

Moreover, that fluid, amorphous group ego is always highly susceptible to the manipulation of a charismatic leader...

Charismatic madness touches and activates the “mad parts” in otherwise quite sane people. Psychological contagions, Shadow plagues, do occur, and few of us, if any, are exempt.”

—James Hollis, *Why Good People Do Bad Things*

Of course political examples of the Collective Shadow abound today, but we’re going to look at rather old examples, on purpose. Current events would be way too divisive. However, before we go any further, two things need to be said:

1) We are not just talking about Republicans or Democrats, and we are not just talking about the USA. We’re talking about how the Shadow side of human nature operates at a national, collective level. My examples focus on the USA because I live in the USA and what my country does matters to me. But go ahead—choose any other big country you like. If you look into its history you’ll find the same thing: denial, projection and blame, operating on colossal scales.

2) The rest of this chapter will not be easy reading for citizens of the USA. We’d all like to believe the surface version of the fairy tale. We’d all like to live without guilt in the home of the free and the brave, just as we’d all like to be as lucky as Jack or as pretty as Snow White. But life is not a fairy tale. Projecting Shadow material at a national level is serious, deadly business. So. Some historical examples of the Collective Shadow of the USA.

In a 2002 “State of the Union” address, the President of the United States called three other countries an “axis of evil” for “selling arms to enemies” and “fostering terrorism.” Really read them the riot act, in a very rousing way.

O...K... but... what was 'Iran-Contra'? Wasn't that when the USA sold arms to a country that was actually holding US citizens hostage at the time (Iran). And didn't the USA then use the profits from these covert, illegal sales to train and finance a guerilla army (the Contras) in order to overthrow a democratically elected government in Nicaragua? Yes, it was. That's exactly what 'Iran-Contra' means.

Do you see how that works? You sell arms to enemies and foster terrorism yourself, then you accuse *other* countries of "selling arms to enemies" and "fostering terrorism" to divert attention from your own crimes. The best defense is always a good offense.

This is a classic example of 'the pot calling the kettle black' at a national level. It's like name calling on the playground, except with far deadlier ammo. And while it does let off a little saber-rattling steam and allow the USA to feel superior for the moment, speeches that accuse and belittle other governments do not win any friends or solve any problems. They will not provide universal health coverage, balance the budget, adequately fund teachers and education, curtail environmental degradation, hold corporations accountable to their cultures, lower our dependence on fossil fuels, or index the minimum wage to the cost of living.



That's one of the problems with slinging Shadow material around at a national level. It doesn't get a damn thing done. It's sheer subterfuge, which doesn't accomplish anything at home except obfuscation. The more we self-righteously puff ourselves up and accuse others of evil-doing, the more we can get away with ourselves. This is

exactly what George Orwell meant by “doublethink” and “newspeak” in his famous novel *1984*.

DOUBLETHINK: was used to train the populace to be able to hold two obviously contradictory facts as equally true. **“The Party told you to reject the evidence of your own eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command.”** (Today we’d call it cognitive dissonance.)

Doublethink was used in conjunction with **NEWSPEAK:** this was a language with limited vocabulary and restricted grammar designed to prevent freedom of thought by reducing complex ideas to simplistic jingos. **“The intention was to make everyday speech as nearly as possible devoid of thought.”**

This same president later gave a speech in Tbilisi, Georgia, about the glories of freedom and democracy, which was broadcast live. Everyone listening heard a homey, heart warming, cliché-filled, archetype-stirring speech. Very noble. Very presidential. Particularly impressive was the way it would have been impossible to disagree with a word the man said: ...who *doesn't* love freedom, or want to practice democracy? And this whole speech was doublethink and newspeak. Astoundingly so.

The man wasn't democratically elected himself, as we all know. He actually lost the election, but was placed in office before all the votes in Florida could be counted by judges his father appointed to the Supreme Court, with help from his brother's State Election Officials. (He did manage to win a second term though, by cruelly and dishonestly attacking his opponent's character, and by badly “misrepresenting” the facts about his first term. “Misrepresenting?” What a hoot.)

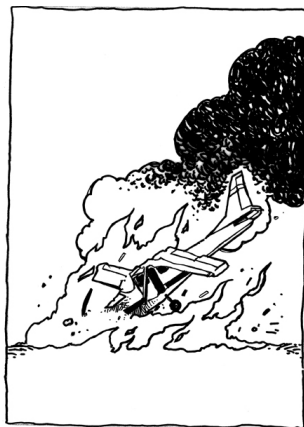
The day he gave this laudable speech in Tbilisi about the glories of freedom and democracy, his administration was actively engaged in *demolishing* a weaker country's sovereign government. In defiance of world opinion. For reasons that turned out not to exist. It caused bloody chaos in that country (Iraq), and turned a federal budget that was balanced when he took office into a cripplingly huge deficit from which our country may never recover.

So—what was this president *doing* when he used the words “freedom” and “democracy” over and over in a speech? *Doublethink*. Trying to fool the rest of us? *Newspeak*. Trying to convince himself? *Denial*. For that matter, what do the words “freedom” and “democracy” mean when used by any President of the United States so far in history?

Is it “democracy” when the USA engineers the overthrow of a legitimate government (Allende in Chile, Arbenz in Guatemala, Mossadegh in Iran) because it won’t play along with US/corporate schemes to fleece its country of resources? Or does the “democracy” happen afterwards, when we install and support an abusive dictator (Pinochet in Chile, Castillo Armas in Guatemala, the Shah in Iran) because he will play along with US/corporate schemes? Sadly, all of these countries *were* fledgling democracies, beginning to hold elections, heading toward prosperity and stability, until the USA interfered in their governments for reasons of its own.

And what in the world does “freedom” mean, given US history? Is “freedom” what happened to the Africans we enslaved, or the Native Americans who were here first? Is “freedom” the racial profiling that still happens everyday to US citizens who don’t happen to look white enough?

Our political rhetoric neatly emphasizes our nobility, but it conveniently leaves out our Shadow. And while we can call ourselves ‘the home of the free and the brave’ if we want to, that won’t keep people in Ecuador or Panama from remembering the Roldós/Torrijos coincidence. Both of these men were elected, charismatic, reform-minded Central American presidents. But they each had the audacity to feel that a country’s resources should be used primarily for the good of its own people, rather than for the good of huge corporations based in the United States. So they each died mysteriously in fiery plane crashes. Within two months of one another. Jaime Roldós Aguilera in Ecuador, and Omar Torrijos in Panama.



If you haven't already done so, please read *A People's History of the United States*, by Howard Zinn. And while you're at it, read *Overthrow, America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, by Stephen Kinzer. It's time we did a little homework. It's time we citizens of the USA examined our knee-jerk, for-me-or-against-me, flag-waving-without-thinking-patriotism, which can be so easily exploited by people who are up to no good.

Here are the hard, unnerving, and soberingly sad facts about the Collective Shadow of the USA: this bastion of freedom, this bright light of democracy, has fostered more terrorism in more different places than any other country in recent history. Whether a Democrat OR a Republican was in the White House.

Fourteen (14) other governments have been overthrown by the USA since 1893:

“Throughout the twentieth century and into the beginning of the twenty-first, the United States repeatedly used its military power, and that of its clandestine services, to overthrow governments that refused to protect American interests.

Each time, it cloaked its intervention in the rhetoric of national security and liberation. In most cases, however, it acted mainly for economic reasons: specifically, to establish, promote, and defend the right of Americans to do business around the world without interference.”

—Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow; America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*

Overthrown: Hawaii, Nicaragua, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Iran, Guatemala, South Vietnam, Panama, Grenada, Chile, The Philippines, Afghanistan, Iraq.

Seriously destabilized: Indonesia, Brazil, The Congo, Mexico, Haiti, The Dominican Republic.

And since that book was published in 2006 we can add Libya, in 2011. Which makes **fifteen (15)** governments overthrown by the USA since 1893. Vladimir Putin reportedly *obsessed* over the beheading of Libya's leader, Mommar Gaddafi. He watched a film clip of the beheading again and again, declaring that he would *never* let the United States depose another world leader. Which sheds some light on Putin's later support of Bashir al-Assad in Syria, and helps to explain his current obsessions with Crimea and Ukraine.

“From the vantage point of history, it is clear that most of these operations actually weakened American security. They cast whole regions of the world into upheaval, creating whirlpools of instability from which undreamed-of threats arose years later...

Every American overthrow of a foreign government has left in its wake a bitter residue of pain and anger. Some have led to the slaughter of innocents. Others have turned whole nations, and even whole regions of the world, into violent cauldrons of anti-American passion.”

—Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow; America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*

The word “covert”—which we hear all the time in reference to our own policies—does not mean “above board” if we happen to be the ones using it. No matter who's using the word, covert still means secret, under the table, clandestine, guerilla. “Covert” refers to a secret act against an established regime. So how hypocritical was it, what heights of doublethink and newspeak had our national Shadow reached, to proclaim a “War on Terrorism” in the early 2000s? (Proclaimed by the very President that was flattening Iraq, of course.)

And while it *is* slightly understandable that we swallow whatever we hear from our leaders without question—because we want our country to be right, we want our favorite talk-show hosts to be right, we want our party to be right, and can be very good at ignoring all evidence to the contrary—while it *is* understandable, that does not make it smart. Nor will it keep people in the afflicted countries from hating our guts. How should we expect people who have been oppressed or impoverished by our policies to feel? Happy for us? Ready to turn the other cheek? In just *one* of the instances mentioned above (Iraq) thousands of people died when we toppled their government. And every Iraqi citizen suffered. Is *still* suffering.

It's time the USA started talking honestly about what lies in its Shadow. Time to admit that as long as our country pushes other countries around for economic or political gain, taking our shoes off at the airport will not keep us free from harm. It's cause and effect: as long as a powerful country—*any* powerful country—gives noble sounding speeches while performing dastardly acts, those being affected by the dastardly acts will hate the powerful country.

No matter how eloquently leaders speak of grand ideas like democracy or freedom, those who are being exploited, disenfranchised, maimed or bereaved will still know—to the depths of their beings, from their own history and experience—that power and corporate profits are valued far more highly than their own lives. Hence they will fight, they will rebel against tyranny—*just like the colonies rebelled against England*—in any way they can.

The USA does not stand alone, here. We do not hold a monopoly on deplorable history. Germany has had to own up to its support of Hitler's sadistic Fascism in WWII, and has become a better, stronger country for doing so. The Colonial European empires (England, France, Holland, Spain, Portugal) spent several centuries wrecking entire continents full of vibrant and varied civilizations for their own profit and power. These colonial imperialists and profiteers destabilized huge areas of the world, from which refugees and immigrants still continue to pour today.

No, unfortunately, ours is one of the most frequently told stories in history. From humble and heroic beginnings a country becomes a Great Power. Then it begins to push other countries around, proclaiming its God-given right to do so. Meanwhile, its

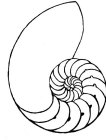
increasingly privileged citizens refuse to tax themselves enough to pay for the services they've come to expect, while its politicians wrangle pointlessly to no effect as they accumulate personal wealth. The Great Power eventually amasses so many unsolved internal and external problems that it either 1) is toppled by another country, or 2) sputters into a steady decline. In our case, there's even a third option: 3) one party might demolish the democracy it claims to be so proud of to keep the other party from ever winning an election. *Just toss that baby out with the bath water, would you?*

Ancient Greek dramatists used the word 'hubris' to mean a great, overweening, invincible-feeling pride that invariably causes its own downfall. Hindus and Buddhists use the word 'karma'—you will experience the type of actions that you commit. Christians say: "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." In the 1960s hippies used to say, "What goes around comes around, man."

Put it however you want. The point's the same: any country—any group of people—who cannot admit mistakes, who would rather blame the evil they do on others than change their own behavior, will have astronomical prices to pay in the long run.

And judging from the number of serious problems the USA faces—never-ending foreign wars, enormous federal deficits, underfunded educational systems (with no system whatsoever for the youngest among us), crumbling infrastructures, rising poverty and mortality rates, steadily worsening weather due to unaddressed climate change, lakes and oceans full of pollution and plastic, chronic racism and sexism, truly bizarre mass shootings, political parties that cling to power by lying and obstructing rather than by governing—judging by all of this, it's safe to say we've already entered "payback" stage, and that it is indeed a bitch.





Projection dominates our interactions because it's easier to accuse others of wrongdoing than it is to admit the wrong we've done ourselves. **It is so much easier to attack others than it is to change...**

Personally *or* collectively.

So we go for the surface interpretation of the fairy tale. We see ourselves as the good guys and all those *other guys* as the bad guys, who deserve whatever they get.

We tell ourselves that all the monsters are on the outside.

But, just like Beauty said, the real monsters are on the inside.

Personally *and* collectively.

Makes them hard to see.

“The only devils in the world are those running around in our own hearts.
That is where the battle should be fought.”

—Mahatma Gandhi





Three quiet months passed. Each night the Beast came while Beauty ate dinner. Each day he proved his kindness. The only sad moment came in the evening, as the Beast always asked, "Beauty, will you marry me?" before he left her, and Beauty always had to refuse.

One night she added, "You're very dear to me, Beast. I shall always be your friend. But I shall never be able to marry you."

"You're my only joy, my only reason for living," the Beast begged in return. "I'd die without you. At least promise never to leave me."

And Beauty blushed deeply, for that very day the mirror had revealed that her father lay ill, sick with worry, close to death. She'd been longing to go and comfort him.

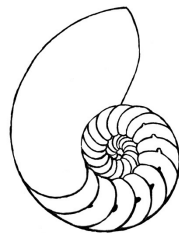
"Beast, I promise never to leave you for good. But I want to visit my father. My sisters are married, my brothers are in the army, and my father is left all alone, worrying and grieving over me. Let me go and stay with him for a week, to comfort him."

"Go then," the Beast answered stiffly. "Go to your father's house tonight. And you will stay there, and I will die here, of grief."

"No, Beast!" cried Beauty. "I would never be the cause of your death. I promise to return in a week."

"You'll wake at home tomorrow," said the Beast. "When you want to come back here, just put this ring on the table as you go to bed. Good night, Beauty."

And the Beast sighed an even deeper sigh than usual as he left her.



It May Be Nasty, but We Gotta Deal With It

“It takes nerve not to flinch from or be crushed by the sight of one’s shadow. It takes courage to accept responsibility for one’s inferior self.”

—Edward C. Whitmont, from “The Evolution of the Shadow,” in *Meeting the Shadow*

It is not easy to look at your own Shadow. We don’t *want* to marry our virtuous maiden to our hideous monster. It’s hard to love the parts of ourselves that feel monstrous, that we’ve been told are nasty, much less *marry* them. We’re ashamed and afraid of our Beasts. That’s why we keep them in our Shadows. Or try to.

In order to make our parents happy we started covering up parts of ourselves before we could walk. And we definitely knew the difference between approval and disapproval before we could talk. It’s another basic survival skill. We can’t make it on our own as infants. We *have to* depend on the goodwill of others. So if we hear we’re too much trouble, or our poop stinks, or we’re too loud or too clingy or too stupid, we try to stuff those things down into our Shadows very quickly. By second grade, hiding parts of ourselves in order to please other people has become second nature.

Which is not necessarily a bad thing. In order to become a thinking human being who can cooperate with other thinking human beings, some of our old animal instinctual nature *needs* to be controlled. Some parts of the psyche are like Beauty’s sisters: extremely selfish. “Letting it all hang out” just won’t work among intelligent mammals who’ve been honing their warfare skills in dominator societies for thousands of years.

So a bit of repression serves a useful purpose. It allows children to become functioning, cooperative members of society. We learn not to drown our baby sister, or hit our brother over the head with a baseball bat. We learn how to sit still and pay attention to others. We figure out that we are not the center of the universe. (Hopefully.)

But once we grow up, we have a responsibility to get curious about what happened to all that juicy emotional energy we’ve been repressing since childhood. Otherwise, we’re liable to end up becoming a danger to society anyway. For **when we**

refuse to admit that we even *have* certain feelings, we exclude the possibility of dealing with those feelings rationally. If we don't take responsibility for whatever lurks in our Shadow, we set other people up for ambush by our unsupervised inner demons.

In the famous book by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll* was a perfect gentleman, a widely respected, highly cultured, upper class, sterling citizen who spent most of his daylight hours doctoring the poor and needy. Afraid to mar his perfect image, but full of unappeased desires—this was back in the Victorian age—Jekyll used his laboratory to create an alternate ego to act out the less respectable urges in his soul, *Mr. Hyde*. Bad idea. Because when Hyde slipped out the laboratory door at night and headed straight for the seediest parts of London, Jekyll had no control over him. As time went on and Jekyll kept denying his existence, Hyde's desires took ranker and ranker forms. He persecuted prostitutes, preyed on the weak, even committed murder. Disconnected from Jekyll's civilized side, Hyde grew ever more warped, ever more bestial, ever harder for Jekyll to manage. Eventually? You know it. Hyde took over. Jekyll became all Hyde, all the time.

There's a recurring theme in animal husband stories—and literature in general—about taming the Beast, about soothing the savage soul. But for that to happen, someone in the story has got to pay attention to the poor old Beast. Conscious, thinking attention. And as it is in literature, so it is in the psyche: no instinctual creature thrives on neglect. No archetypal critter will stand for being perpetually caged.

The general psychological rule is: any instinctual character prowling around in your psyche will act better and be easier to handle if you can (1) admit that it exists, and (2) figure out what it wants. Then you can open negotiations with it. Then you can manage it without harming others.

Let's go back to selfishness. As we've seen, all human beings have a fair amount of selfishness to keep under control. We even have a good strong symbol for selfishness in Western folklore—a dragon hunched over his hoard.

Dragons take treasure from others. They never actually *use* the treasure they steal, they just hoard it. Pile it up in a cave and sleep on it. Fly out occasionally and terrorize the countryside. Breath fire. Eat whole cows and coy maidens.



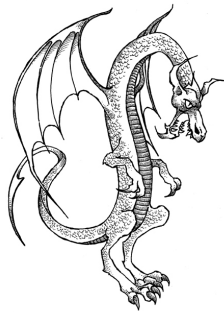
Can we better manage our internal dragon of selfishness by pretending not to be selfish, *I'm not being selfish! I deserve a bigger piece than you do!* Or by keeping an eye out for our selfishness, so that, when we catch ourselves being selfish, we can just admit it, maybe even laugh at ourselves as we see it happening? *Geez, look at that! Cut my piece of pie a lot bigger than yours, didn't I? I'm such a rascal. Here, let me divvy this up better.*

That might work. But if we go around trying to pretend that we're *not* selfish, then we're never going to be able to *stop* being selfish, because we're never going to have an accurate picture of who we are or what we're doing. Plus, we'll have a lousy sense of humor. Where it starts to get really ugly is: we'll have to keep other people distracted, probably by accusing them of being selfish first, so they'll be too busy defending themselves to notice how much bigger we just cut our own piece of pie.

What a lot of work for a little more dessert! And of course—and most importantly—the chance to appear free from all flaws. In black/white, either/or cultures which are quick to judge and harsh to condemn, children learn that it is very important not to be caught in the wrong, at a very young age.

But, alas... our old dragon of selfishness will only get bigger and more demanding the longer we pretend not to know anything about him. Like a troll under a bridge. Like Hyde. Without supervision, our internal dragon of selfishness will eventually swoop out over the countryside, torching people and grabbing whatever he wants. (And if caught he will always have good, solid reasons for his behavior. The Dragon of Selfishness can morph into a Helpless Victim of Circumstance in an instant.)

The trick is to look within once in a while and admit that this internal dragon really is selfish, and that he really is a member of our very own psychic zoo. If we can do that, if we can even manage to say something directly to him occasionally like, “*Oh, there you are. I see you, you greedy old thing,*” maybe throw him a nice juicy steak or buy him a new pair of shoes, then our dragon of selfishness will settle down and go back to sleep. If we just allow him a little conscious space once in a while—not let him get away with anything, just acknowledge that he’s there—then he won’t have to torch or hoard or get 50 feet long or max out the credit card or have an affair or cheat on exams or embezzle company funds to get our attention.



“Medieval heroes had to slay their dragons; modern heroes have to take their dragons back home to integrate into their own personalities.”

—Robert Johnson, *Owning Your Own Shadow*

There’s a good reason why the Beast starts begging in this part of the story. He’s well aware that the beastly parts of a human being cannot be ignored, walled off, denied, or blamed on someone else without getting even *more* beastly. If he loses Beauty’s attention, he will lose his connection to the best and newest parts of himself: consciousness, intellect, culture.

So if he can’t get her to marry him, then the Beast wants to know that she’ll at least stay somewhere near him; that he won’t be pushed out of her sight, exiled from consciousness—symbolically, her father’s house—forever.

Her father's house... at the beginning of this story Beauty lived completely in her father's house. She spent all her time with daddy, and there was no mention of a wife for him or a suitor for her. Now we're seeing a definite maturation in Beauty's outlook toward her father. Now she's talking about visiting Daddy, but living elsewhere. Now she has a suitor, even if he could use a shave.

There's always more than one thing going on in a classic fairy tale, just as there's always more than one thing going on in a myth or a dream or a work of art. This book stresses the Shadow aspects of *Beauty and the Beast* because we want to provide a better understanding of the Human Shadow to the general public. Someone else deconstructing *Beauty and the Beast* might have a different focus. They might choose to dwell on how necessary it is for a woman to 'leave her father's house' and develop in her own way, in order to have a truly erotic relationship with another person.

No one interpretation is ever "it," no one look can exhaust the view. Fairy tales, like myths and dreams and works of art, speak symbolically, and symbols are infinite, inexhaustible. They open out, or perhaps that should read, they open "in." Symbols refer beyond themselves to the big ideas, the ones that cannot be adequately expressed in words.

There is no "final" analysis. The more you look at any classic fairy tale, or myth, or dream, or work of art, the more you're liable to see.



“The important thing is that we recognize the Shadow side of ourselves. This recognition alone produces a powerful and beneficial change in consciousness. For one thing, it greatly aids our humility, our sense of humor, and our capacity to be less judgmental of others. It is essential in developing a conscious personality, and can also be said to be the basis for a truly individual morality.”

—John Sanford, *Evil, The Shadow Side of Reality*



“Becoming conscious of the shadow involves recognizing the unsavory aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge, and it therefore, as a rule, meets with considerable resistance.”

—Carl Jung, *The Portable Jung*



“To honor and accept one’s own shadow is a profound spiritual experience. It is whole-making, and thus holy, the most important experience of a lifetime.”

—Robert Johnson, *Owning One’s Own Shadow*



Beauty woke the next day in her father's house. A gown covered in diamonds and sewn with gold thread lay ready for her. She put it on, inwardly thanking the Beast for his kindness, and went to her father. The merchant hugged her, and laughed, and cried for joy, all at the same time. Servants were dispatched to tell her brothers and sisters that Beauty had returned.

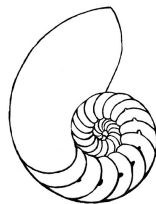
The sisters came immediately, hoping for the worst, and were sorely disappointed to find Beauty healthy and happy, dressed like a queen, and lovelier than ever. Shortly the spiteful creatures went out into the garden, where they moaned over their sister's good fortune.

"Why should that little wretch have a golden gown?" whined one. "We're far more beautiful than she is. We must spoil her game."

"Suppose we keep her here for more than a week? If we make her break her promise to the Beast, perhaps he'll finally get angry enough with her to destroy her," said the other.

So when the week was up, once more the sisters rubbed their eyes with onions. They seemed so distraught and pretended such grief at the thought of her departure that Beauty agreed to stay a week more. But all the time she worried, for she knew that her longer absence would cause the Beast sorrow.

To her own surprise, she began to think tenderly of the Beast, and to miss his company in the evenings. Among all the grand and clever people who were again flocking to her father's door, she found no one who was half as sensible, or as kind.



Regarding Bad Impulses

Here we go again. Beauty lets herself be completely taken in by her sisters one more time. Without a firm connection to her animal nature, Beauty can't sniff out her sisters' real intentions. Because she doesn't listen to her own intuition, Beauty's easy to fool.

The sisters in this story are Beauty's opposite. They stand for everything the heroine doesn't. Since Beauty is an archetype for sweetness and goodness, her sisters represent the opposite—they are archetypes of meanness and evil. These girls are *bad* impulses.

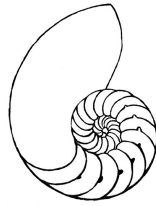
Bad impulses generally stay bad. If it smelled rotten last week, it's probably not gonna smell any better this week. Bad impulses don't need to be coddled, or forgiven, or treated kindly. Bad impulses don't need to be spoken sweetly to, or given a second chance. Bad impulses need to be taken seriously. They need to be recognized for what they are, and dealt with immediately.

There's a good reason why the bad guys are treated so harshly in fairy tales, and one of the worst ideas in recent literature was rewriting classic fairy tales to correct out the harsh remedies they contain. "*All three little pigs lived happily ever after and had the wolf over for tea on Thursdays...*" Gaah! That is a complete misunderstanding of the way the fairy tale functions in our psyches. 'Editing out' unpleasantness doesn't work any better than denial does. The more you push something from sight in one place, the more it pops up in another. The sweeter fairy tales get, the more violent video games get.

These are not real people! These are archetypes! Instinctual impulses. And some of our instinctual impulses deserve harsh treatment. I should not let my wicked queen verbally abuse my coworkers because I got up late and am slightly hung-over. You should not let your stupid giant start a fight because your team lost a game. The bad guys in fairy tales represent *internal* monsters who lurk in every one of our psyches, and we all need to be tough with our internal monsters. We need to stop them in their tracks.

When the third little pig cooks and eats the wolf or the brothers hack Bluebeard to pieces, we are not just hearing about instances of backward medieval violence. There's an important psychological point being made. Bluebeard, the wolf, the wicked witch, the jealous queen, the ogre, the giant, the hateful sisters, the brothers who refuse advice and want all the treasure for themselves—these are all archetypes, instinctual modes of behaving. And any one of them would destroy every sweet little piggy it could get its hands on if allowed to run free. As Beauty's sisters illustrate, bad impulses are dangerous. They don't deserve kindness. Bad impulses should be quickly identified and firmly controlled.





“A true morality must necessarily go hand in hand with personal knowledge of one’s own Shadow...

The essential difference between the teachings of [the apostle] Paul and those of Jesus can be said to be this: Paul urges us to a one-sided expression of “goodness”, Jesus urges us to become complete or whole.

Paul’s psychological ethic can only be accomplished by repression; that is, by a systematic unconsciousness of the Shadow.

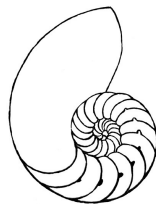
Jesus’ ethic can only be fulfilled by becoming conscious of the Shadow, enduring the resulting tension, and undergoing the developmental process that can proceed only when consciousness of the Shadow has been reached.

Paul’s attitude is expressive of the general attitude of his times. Throughout the centuries the Church has not departed significantly from it.

In this regard, the Church has not lived up to the higher consciousness of Jesus but has remained on a lower psychological level.

The result has been a perpetuation of man’s split and the aggravation, rather than the resolution, of the problem of the Shadow.”

—John Sanford, *Evil, The Shadow Side of Reality*





On the tenth night of her visit, Beauty dreamed she was in the garden of the palace, and that the beast lay on the grass near the fountain, dying of despair. She jumped up immediately, regretting her long absence, and put his ring on the table.

She awoke in the palace. The hours seemed to drag as she waited impatiently for evening. At last dinnertime arrived, but still the Beast did not appear. Then Beauty, fearing he might really be dead, ran from room to room calling out for him, but there was no answer.

Remembering her dream, Beauty rushed into the garden and there at last she found the Beast, lying beside the fountain. Quite forgetting his ugliness, she bent her head to his chest and found that his heart still beat faintly, so she scooped up water from the fountain and sprinkled it on his face.

The Beast opened his eyes. "I couldn't live without you, Beauty. But I'll die happily now that I've seen you again."

"No, dear Beast!" cried Beauty. "Don't die. I love you! Live, Beast. Live! Be my husband, and let me be your wife."

At Beauty's words the palace burst into light. Fireworks and music filled the air. The Beast disappeared, and in his place stood a handsome Prince.

"But where's my Beast?" sobbed Beauty.

"I'm your Beast," replied the Prince. "I was enchanted and changed into a monstrous beast, forbidden to show I had sense or wit until someone should love me for myself alone. You judged me by my heart, Beauty. Take it then, and all that I have besides, for all is yours."

Then the Prince led Beauty inside the palace, where she found all her family, brought there by the beautiful lady from her dream.

"Beauty," said the fairy, "you have chosen well, and now you will be rewarded. You shall be a great queen."

Then the fairy turned to Beauty's sisters. "Your punishment will be to see your sister's happiness. From this moment on you will be stone statues at the door of your sister's palace, and you will stay that way until you realize your envious natures, which I fear may be a long time indeed."

Then the fairy transported them all to the Prince's true kingdom, where his people received them with great joy. There he and Beauty were married, became king and queen, ruled well, and lived happily ever after.

Happily Ever After

There you have it. Beauty did not get rid of her Beast by denying him, or by fighting him, or by blaming his actions on someone else, or by calling him the devil. She got rid of her Beast by claiming him. As her very own. She willingly and lovingly took that old Beast into her heart, which gave him the chance to become human again, to enter the daylight world of consciousness. And not just any old human being, either—an exceptional human being: a prince, then a king.

Robert Bly uses the image of a long black bag to describe the Human Shadow. Imagine that we each have a long black bag that we drag behind us, and anything that we don't know how to deal with, or simply *can't* deal with, gets stuffed down into this long black bag that we drag along behind us as we go through life. It starts with childhood fears, the utter helplessness a small child feels in the hands of huge, inexplicably demanding adults. Then maybe we stuff a fear of the dark down into our bag, or abusive parents, or a bruising sibling rivalry. Maybe we stuff the feeling that we're just not good enough or smart enough down into our bag. Maybe we stuff in a hatred of how we look. Maybe later on we stuff in our despair over soul-killing jobs, or physical or sexual abuse, or grueling poverty, or life-long discrimination...

'That long black bag we drag behind us' is a great image for the Human Shadow. We can feel how heavy those bags would get as the years pile up... and how much damage projecting big, heavy bags full of emotional dynamite like this onto other people could do...

Growing up—really, finally growing up, as James Hollis calls it in *Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life*—requires reaching down into your long black bag and then dealing thoughtfully and respectfully with whatever you can pull back out of it.

Anybody can get old. And does, if they live long enough. But really, finally growing up is rare. It takes thought. Self-examination. Really, finally growing up involves thinking about *what* you've been stuffing down into your long black bag all these years, and *why* you've been stuffing it down in there, and *whether* you need to do something about it at this point in your life. It closes the circle of life. It forms a ring.

The ring is one of humanity's oldest, most sacred symbols. It stands for totality. Enclosure. The uroboros (a serpent circling to hold its own tail in its mouth) appears on extremely ancient shards of pottery. Romans proudly displayed the disc of *Sol Invictus*, halos grace Christian artwork, the mandala is essential to Eastern meditation, and the sand paintings of the Navaho are circular, as were the tepees spread across the Plains.

Rings hold things, rings connect things, rings appear at openings—think of jars and bottles and baskets and mouths of caves. The very planet we live on is a circle, traveling ceaselessly in a ring around the sun. Rings symbolically express the soul's deepest desire: to reconnect, to reach a state of totality, to become whole. So to return to the Beast, Beauty had to put his ring on the table.

The water in the fountain is another splendid symbol. For a human being on the planet Earth, water is the difference between a garden and a desert, between living and dying. Second in importance only to air, water is one of the things we absolutely have to have, thus it symbolizes spiritual as well as physical nourishment—the Fountain of Life. When Beauty sprinkles the Beast with water she brings him back to life. He's being baptized, reborn, into the human realm.

Now the Beast, that old instinctual, animal nature who was relegated to the dark and stormy forests of the unconscious at the beginning of this story, can live openly in Beauty's conscious world. Now the shadowy character can step out into the light. And when he does so with the *cooperation of consciousness*, his beastly nature is transformed into a princely nature. "Married" together, the Beast and the Beauty, the old animal instincts and the new human practice of conscious thinking, form a perfect union.

As Bly says, "Most of the juice is in the Shadow." That's because our most vital, creative and powerful energies are often trapped beneath the surface of our daytime personalities while we try to "fit in" and appear "normal." So while it may sound terrifying, it will actually enrich your life to consciously—intentionally, by thinking about it—start pulling some of the contents out of your long black bag and looking them over.

This process, sometimes called "Shadow Work," is the opposite of projection. Projection is negative, *unconscious*. It seeks to *deny* Shadow material, and it usually harms others. Shadow Work is positive, *conscious*. And it accepts personal

responsibility for what it finds within, which will help out everyone who comes in contact with you. But what the heck do I mean by 'Shadow Work'? And how we do it?

One way is to **let your body express what's going on in your soul.** *Writing Drawing Dancing Painting Storytelling Singing Sculpting Sewing Gardening Building Music Acting Hiking Biking Making puppets Keeping a journal ...* the list is endless. Which creative activity calls to you? That's the voice to follow if you want to look within.

Civilization forces its citizens to specialize. We tend to do one type of thing, over and over again, day after day. What's worse, we've gotten to where we describe ourselves as only one type of thing. "*I'm a _____.*" Thus we've started to think that only someone brave enough to call themselves an "artist" has enough talent to produce works of imagination. That's soul depriving!

We're not talking about talent here, anyway. Talent is not required for Shadow Work. No one is going to see your journal, or the pictures you draw for it. It's not going to be graded or critiqued (unless you post it online).

We're talking about using the light of imagination to explore the hidden places in our own souls. We're talking about *safely* expressing some of the crazy energy we usually try to pretend we don't have, before somebody gets hurt. Creative outlets soothe the savage soul.

Remember Edvard Munch? He didn't stand around on street corners yelling his head off. He didn't get a blog or a twitter account or a talk show so he could berate his countrymen for being losers and idiots at least once a day. He painted "The Scream." Much more effective. And much safer for us all. Certainly Munch was a great artist, but had he not been a great artist, had that canvas never been seen by another person, painting it would still have helped Munch handle the angst in his soul—without blaming anyone else or harming anyone else. Creative outlets soothe the savage soul.

Studying your dreams is another way to reach Shadow material. Dreams provide a natural bridge between intellect and instinct, between conscious and unconscious. Like classic fairy tales, dreams speak in 'symbol,' not English or Spanish, so understanding their language takes some translation, but the effort is worth it. An

ongoing attempt to understand the symbols in your dreams will definitely help marry your Beauty to your Beast.

However, there's a hitch to dreamwork in the 21st century. Most of us spend so much time watching various kinds of videos that personal dream images can get swamped and muddled by images coming from a multitude of outside sources. So this author heartily recommends letting an analytical psychologist help you decipher your dreams. If you can't afford analysis, I also heartily recommend *Every Dreamer's Handbook, A Step-by-step Guide to Understanding and Benefiting from your Dreams*, by Will Phillips. Phillips takes the mystery and anxiety out of studying your own dreams, bless his heart. His process is simple enough for a twelve year old, and effective enough for anybody.

Then there's listening to your self. **Listen to yourself.** Notice what passes through your mind. *Humph. Admit what passes through your mind, would be more accurate...* It can be a real eye opener.

What brings out your Muttering Monster? Who do you just *hate*? That kind of emotional intensity comes directly from your Shadow, from qualities you refuse to acknowledge in yourself. You wouldn't care all that much, it just wouldn't get your goat or chap your ass, if whatever that person were doing didn't have something to do with a sorely neglected part of your own psyche.

So when you find yourself really *loathing* someone, stop and ask: How am I like this person? When do I act that way? Or, am I jealous that I haven't ever *gotten* to act that way? What parts of myself that I don't like to admit are mirrored in my hatred for this person, or this group of people?

Blaming other people for how you feel will not make your feelings any easier to bear. Those feelings will just keep coming back, again and again, on one face or the other, until you recognize them as your own. And if you never *do* recognize those feelings as your own you'll just get stuck there, blaming the same rotten feelings on other people today that you blamed on other people yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that... This is the *opposite* of really, finally growing up. And alas and alack-a-day, I bet in two minutes you can think of ten people who fall into this category.

It is much more prevalent than actually growing up, and much more unpleasant to be around.

But admitting that it's actually *your* feeling (being honest about who's running the projector), seeing what you need to do about it (or not do about it), and trying to express it creatively *will* make it easier to bear. It might even make it go away for a little while.

The word 'integration' is often used in conjunction with the term 'Shadow Work.' We cannot 'get rid of' our Shadows. But we can work on integrating—on successfully combining—our inner and outer lives. We could stop trying to hide our faults, start admitting our mistakes, and accept some responsibility when things go wrong. We could ease up on having to be "right" all the time. We could learn to listen to other view points. We might even be able to develop a respect for opposites—my way and your way; this way and that way. Who knows? *Maybe*. Dualism is a hard addiction to kick.

If you don't mind carrying on conversations with yourself (humor is good), try naming some of the characters who show up over and over again in your behavior.

Naming the characters in your Shadow helps you recognize who they are and what they're liable to be up to when they appear. It takes away some of their power, and makes them easier to control.

Do you have a Preacher in there, who thinks he knows what other people ought to be doing, and goes on missions to tell them so? Or how about a Princess, who gets really pissy about performing household chores? Do you have a Smart Guy in your Shadow, who knows everything? Or a Saint, who does no wrong? How about a Whiner, or maybe a Pouter? Do you see a Bully, or his opposite, the Tail Wagger, when you look into the mirror? Or do you rely on that perennial favorite, A Helpless Victim Of Circumstance? Now *there's* a role we've all played at least once.

Whoever the habitual characters hiding in your Shadow are, name them. Then start talking to them. Find out what they want, and why they keep showing up—how they hurt you and how they help you. Invite them out of the Shadow and into the light of consciousness.

We actually *need* all of these characters in our psyches. Each of them has a value and a use. Preachers care about making the world a better place. Princesses throw great parties. Smart Guys invent things, and Tail Waggers keep the peace. We

just don't need to let these characters drive us—or anyone else—crazy. And we *really* don't need for any one of them to get away with thinking they run our whole show.

A dear friend of mine with a hot temper named the part of himself that falls so easily into a rage 'Short Fuse.' Now if he's driving along and someone cuts in front of him and Short Fuse starts raving, he can talk back to Short Fuse. *But, didn't you drive like that when you were a teenager? And, didn't you cut someone off just yesterday, without meaning to?* And with the wind taken out of his sails like that, Short Fuse quickly falls away.

Our present responses are programmed by past experiences. We react to here-and-now stimuli with emotional complexes that were formed in childhood. And while there's no way to keep a childhood complex from cropping up, *again*, we can learn to recognize that it *has* cropped up, *again*, and talk ourselves out of it.

As Robert Johnson says, unconscious forces are amoral. They are the instinctual results of evolution, nature and nurture. They are not concerned about ethics. They are only concerned about getting their own way.

So if we want to be considered "higher beings," we have an ethical responsibility to examine our unconscious urges whenever possible and bring them into line with our conscious outlook; we have an ethical responsibility to honor the instinctual life with our attention, but to temper its expression with our intelligence.

What happens to those bad girls, the shrew sisters? The fairy lets them have it. Turns them into stone without a moment's hesitation. And no, this does not mean that you can pour concrete shoes for anyone who ticks you off. It means that we're supposed to deal firmly with bad impulses, whether they're coming from within (our own hearts), or from without (those around us). Stone—firmly. We need to deal firmly with bad impulses.

Notice the fairy doesn't get rid of the sisters. She can't. It simply isn't possible. As Ursula LeGuin said in *The Left Hand of Darkness*,

"Light is the left hand of darkness,
Darkness the right hand of light."

Those two opposites fit together to make a whole. And since the collective unconscious stretching back behind us for thousands of years contains just as many slobbering ogres as saintly good guys, there's no way any human being is ever going to be free from flaws. Bad impulses are here to stay. Bad impulses are as much a part of our common humanity as good impulses.

However, the beautiful fairy does give us a way forward. Her solution is to clearly identify the bad impulses and then keep them under surveillance.

She puts the Shadow sisters right out front by the gates, and that just might be the highest form of personal wisdom: putting your Shadow right out front whenever you can, where you can keep an eye on it. Or *try* to keep an eye on it, anyway. It's not exactly possible to be fully conscious of unconscious processes.

But we *can* own up to having bad impulses, without giving them free rein. We can accept responsibility when we *do* goof up. We can learn how to apologize. We can treat others the way we like to be treated. It certainly sounds more workable for humanity in the long run than trying to maintain *façades* of perfection while projecting all frailty onto others.

“Our national pastime of baseball differs from the society that spawned it in one crucial way: the box score of every baseball game, from the Little League to the Major League, consists of three tallies: runs, hits, and errors. Errors are not desirable, of course, but everyone understands that they are unavoidable. Errors are inherent in baseball, as they are in medicine, business, science, law, love and life. In the final analysis, the test of a nation's character, and of an individual's integrity, does not depend on being error free. It depends on what we do after making the error.”

—Carol Tavris and Elliot Aronson, *Mistakes Were Made (but not by me), Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, and Hurtful Acts*

If accepting responsibility for our own Shadow material is the highest form of personal wisdom, then the highest form of collective wisdom would be demanding that our countries and our leaders do the same.

Can you even imagine a USA with no more doublethink, no more newspeak, no more covert actions to serve corporate interests? A USA that publicly recognizes its past faults? Can we even imagine a world where true diplomacy is practiced out in the open, and other countries are treated like respected equals?

Unless corporate interests have rendered the Golden Rule completely obsolete, the way toward such a world seems pretty clear: if it's not business a country would want done to it, then the country shouldn't be doing that business.

“One of the major problems of any society, of any political or large organization in general, is that of preventing unscrupulous, socially adapted psychopaths from gradually taking over the helm...

All dictatorial forms of government, be they left-wing or right-wing regimes, are certainly to some extent dominated by psychopaths...

A democracy whose citizens are incapable of discerning a psychopath will be destroyed by power-hungry demagogues...

Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, William II of Germany, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin... These “great” criminals destroyed the lives of millions.

Happy the nation that gives such “great” men short shrift.”

—Adolf Guggenbuhl-Craig, from “Why Psychopaths Do Not Rule the World,” in *Meeting the Shadow*

Well, here's to developing better methods of discerning unscrupulous, socially adapted psychopaths! Perhaps laughing at them would work. Hitler does look absolutely ridiculous, in hindsight. Further on in the essay quoted above, Guggenbuhl-Craig says that Switzerland has never fallen to a demagogue because its government's powers are too spread out for any one person to gain much of a foothold. That sounds worth a try.

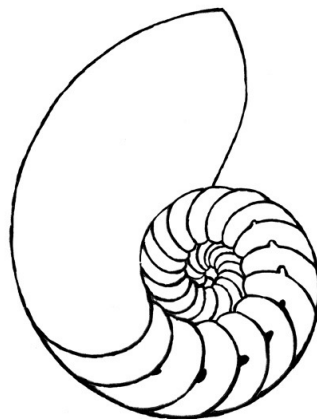
The “Prince's true kingdom” refers to the soul. “Ruling well” in the kingdom of the soul requires a marriage—a true union—of masculine and feminine, of intellect and intuition, of ancient ways and modern techniques, of civilized manners and savage energy.

“Ruling well” also implies that living in the Prince’s true kingdom is neither a static nor an easy process. Decisions have to be made, battles have to be fought, victories have to be celebrated, and defeats have to be mourned.

So Beauty and the Prince don’t make it to the true kingdom and then kick back for the rest of their lives with mimosas and room service. They *rule*, and they *rule well*. Every day. Which takes a lot of vigilance. For inside the borders of the Kingdom of the Soul, any archetype can appear at any time.

Any archetype can appear at any time... now that is downright frightening. There are some pretty grotesque characters prowling around in every human psyche. And knowing that, *accepting that*, is the first step toward ruling well in the Kingdom of the Soul. You can’t even begin to control a behavior until you can admit that you’re capable of practicing it.

Happily enough, however, “any archetype can appear at any time” also means that there are plenty of wonderful characters prowling around in every human psyche. Like the dare to be different, one of a kind thinkers and creators. Like the gods and goddesses, the heroes and heroines. Like the handsome prince and the beautiful lady in the dream.





“It is only when we have the courage to face things exactly as they are,
without any self-deception or illusion, that a light will develop
out of events by which the path to success may be realized.

—I Ching

“We just might be in time to stop the apocalypse, but it will be touch and go.”
—Konrad Lorenz



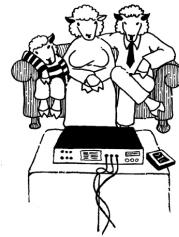
“Unleashing the power of the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking.
We need an essentially new way of thinking if mankind is to survive.”
—Albert Einstein



“The task of confronting the brutal, destructive elements of the shadow
has become the inescapable destiny of our species:
If we fail, we cannot hope to survive.”
—John A. Sanford



“Learning to integrate shadow material is the single most important task facing mankind,
as failure to do so will lead to the extinction of the human race.”
—Carl Jung



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