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Battlescars: women's souls cannot be killed

Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés | Jul. 8, 2010 El Rio Debajo del Rio

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My grandmother, Katerin, used to talk back to the priest on TV. She had an entire litany: Don?t tell me to be like Blessed Mother if you don?t really mean it all the way down to your bones, Father. Blessed Mother didn?t let anyone tell her what to do, except God. So, unless you?re God, don?t be trying to tell us what to do all the time. I just got a big phone call from heaven: God says there?s a big difference between really being God, and just thinking you are.?

The Blessed Mother is sometimes called in Spanish, La Sueñodora, *the holy one who shows us we are pregnant with brave new dreams, and she expects us to follow through ... all the way .... as she did ... no matter how many human beings object.*

Some can recognize the co-superiority of women with men. Some cannot. Those who cannot, create a world by rote.

Those who can, do not squelch new life and fresh ideation, nor disparage the heartfully time-tested but rather nurture all of these. With respect that?s easily recognized by everyone. With love that makes one smile in recognition to see its pure sweetness. With encouragement to the soul, for *vivescere*, to grow lively, to do more, say more, show us more!

There is a grave difference between one who would squander visitations from the inspiratus, and those who create heartfelt and amazing works because of its introjects.

The Newest Death Cult: Slander of Women

Watching the overculture slash and burn Hillary Clinton (too wily and driven), Michelle Obama (too _itchy), Judith Giuliani, (too sexual), Theresa Hines (too pushy), Cindy McCain (too rich _itch), Mrs. Tancredo, (too old and ugly), Sr. Dorothy Stang, (interfering _itch), it appears that each day on the TV, on the Internet, by fiat, brings more psychological slashing or actual exiling of some dear sister, nun, holy person, innocent, artist, helper, visionary, would-be leader in her own right.

Calling out women repeatedly in the most vile, uncivil and punitive terms seems to be the newest ?death cult? being ?normalized? by our culture. And with even more finality, some, like Sr. Dorothy are called out by being murdered, shot at point blank range in 2005, because she helped indigenous people in Brazil to hold onto their lands, fending off those who would exploit and steal from the poor.

All these women, and more, sliced and diced for being what? They were all defined as too ... too something or

other, or not enough this other indefinable thing. All these women, being character assassinated without their detractors ever having met them in depth -- or being assassinated literally. This strident, cardboard cut-out misrepresentation of women, this falsely claiming women?s lives are precious, but then not protecting them and their ideas pressed into their very cells by the Holy Spirit. All these desecrations of women?s minds, imaginations and lives come from those who carry calcified custom, petrified tradition, and who insist on atherosclerotic dictums.

The church hierarchy professes the ?specialness of women?

Has it always been so that women are often demeaned and disenfranchised? I think it has. Is it any better now? I think it is. The church has had its time of silencing women by murdering them, and, up to this very day, by not speaking up vociferously and non-stop when women, mothers, daughters, wives, nuns, helpmates and employees are harmed by their own clergy or by others. The tenderness professed by the church hierarchy toward the ?specialness of women? is not proven by rewarding those women who never rock the boat, but rather by standing with those who are innocents, by backing up those who have taken the risks of standing as modern Blessed Mothers in this world so intent on high-tech stoning those women pregnant with brave new dreams, which Our Lady *expects us to follow through with ... all the way .... as she did ... no matter which or how many human beings object.*

El rio debajo del rio

But, at the same times, mysteriously, there is clearly a force that remains alive in women and those who love them, despite all detractions and efforts to silence the women, despite all unspeakable behavior by strangers, pundits, opiners, prelates and their cohorts toward women, both under the table, behind closed doors, as well as in public. Somehow *el rio debajo del rio* continues to flow forcefully and around the poisonous people, those who have too much love of obstructionism. The *rio debajo del rio*, the river beneath the river, flows clean and clear, straight into the souls of those who carry and protect even the slightest movement of sweet and fierce God-shimmer on earth.

One can silence another?s words, but cannot ever kill the Soul

Throughout history, despots and despicables, the purposefully blind and the crony protectionists -- male and female both -- have had to learn the same harsh lesson over and over. That is, no matter how many women they cause to be killed, exiled, slandered, evicted, demeaned, or diminished by innuendo, by omission or commission, there will still be thousands waiting to take the place of any who have been shamed or harmed in spirit, soul or body. When any woman of good intent and true *inspirare* is punished or penalized -- no matter if one living vessel or 100 living vessels are harmed and silenced -- there will still be thousands and millions more living vessels of great capacity waiting to take their sisters? place.

The supply of souls on earth to go up against the minority of those who would attempt to quash direct and humane instruction from a Source greater is legion.

There is an ancient story about such a matter:

Golden Hair was her name; a woman so beautiful of soul and so gifted of spirit, with such a lovely singing voice, that all the villagers wanted to be near her, and all wanted to be like her. No one gathered to her out of deference, but out of true love. And that was returned to them by her a thousand fold.

Whereby some in the village were always pointing fingers at whomever they thought were sinners, she gave love and encouragement to the goodness in all, including those designated by scowlers as ?sinners.? Her way of

being was to lead by singing of the ways of love, and by giving others time enough and reason to grow and develop and learn, through errors and through inspirations, both.

But a giant of a brute saw her lovely golden hair, heard her lovely singing, and noted her beautiful hands that wove cloth so fine it could be passed through a golden ring with ease, and he coveted her -- not just her body, but her mind, her spirit, her very soul for it was so filled with life and vision and love. In contrast, he had made his life self-important, darkened and harsh. He was given to punitive judgment, and he wanted to somehow devour the golden haired woman, as though by so doing, he could somehow take on her light inside his own dimmed self.

And so he courted her, but she refused, preferring to follow her own visions of weaving and being, of ministering to the people who flocked to her to just be near and hear her songs.

The brute became wildly jealous
of the love others had so easily for this woman, for no one cared for his stern visage. He became enraged. Who did this woman think she was to turn him down, he who had pillaged gold and jewels unlawfully from others, he who lived in splendor but surrounded by a sterile land, he who was the biggest condemner, criticizer and fault finder in the valley. Shaming and blaming, blaming and shaming, those were his power madnesses.

And so, he laid in wait for her one night, and when she passed by alone on the road, he sprang out and killed her. Down to the road she fell, her blood soaking into the earth. He dragged her body into the forest and there grunting with sweat, buried her body, believing this would hide his crime.

The villagers grieved terribly, but as time went on, an uncanny event occurred: her golden hair continued to grow in the grave. It grew in the soil of the forest, a small field of golden reeds swaying in the dappled light and singing ever so softly in the wind. Upward and upward it grew until it pierced the earth overhead.

One day, along the road came women and men musicians. Upon seeing the golden reeds swaying near the road, they tramped into the forest and cut the beautiful reeds and fashioned them for pipes.

Thinking how fine a music these unusual reeds would make, they tied them together with raffia and cut their stops, but when they lifted the flutes to their lips, the oddest song came forth, the same song for each of the pipes and the only song the pipes would play, a song that told over and over again who had killed Golden Hair and why.

The brute and his horrible deed were revealed. And the villagers, now seeing the brute down to his cunning and rotten core, shut the brute away and gave away all his ill-made booty.

In our family, the old people say the only song the golden reeds would play, went something like this, my translation of a translation from the Magyar:

Here I am, woman golden hair,
killed by a brute who gave no care.

Lonely hatred is more base than lust.

And so he killed to still my holiness.

But kill me once

and 10 will rise to ring,

for I am not the singer of the song

I am the song the Singer sings.

The brute force in psyche, in culture, in hierarchy

In the exegesis of stories, psychologically and in spirit, one can understand the brute as either inside and active in one?s own psyche, or outside one?s own psyche as a cultural predilection, or in an actual person of influence. The tale can be said to point toward the containment of such primitive and punitive force within or without, and taking from it all the things it has misappropriated from others, thereby setting matters back into balance the soul would agree with, allowing all the plunder to be redistributed and returned to the life of the soulful, for the soul?s use, for the spirit?s nourishment.

A startling truth about what actually underlies the desire to unjustly punish and silence others

We can be sure from looking at such a story, that one way to understand the leitmotif of the brute is that it represents a force bent on stealing the gifts of the Holy Ghost given to each soul. It is an odd thing in human nature that what is undeveloped and unconscious in a person will often seek to punish what it most envies in others. Attempts to silence others are in actuality unbridled covetousness of the gifts others carry.

I have huge evidence that all souls on earth are born gifted. And here, we speak of women. Thus, if there be a gifted woman alive or outside our time who has not been slurred, muddied and bloodied for saying/enacting her wildest God inspiration that is not politically correct, but is definitively Godly coherent, I have not yet met her. It seems, especially in our time, that passing through such opprobrium when one carries anything remotely related to the God of Love, has become a rite of passage in any culture or subculture, large or small, that has forgotten its true soul.

The soul can never die; it keeps coming back in new editions

Nonetheless. There is great hope, for nothing can be destroyed. No good idea, no beautiful God?s light illuming darkness can be done away with. The dousing is only momentary. All goodness comes back. Even from the grave, whether a real one or a psychic one. The ignition is always set for re-start and will often turn over and hum if there be but one small spark offered by a kind soul or a wise mind. Maybe repetitive and thoughtful and generous sparks before the ignition catches in all strength. But it will ignite again. From repeatedly witnessing the mythos of the gifted human over these many decades, I can promise you this is true.

I would like to leave you now with this, offered in what I hope will be solace and also nourishment for our road now and for our road ahead. We may each be carrying diverse ideas, but we are all walking along together.

The Lost Stories of Women Who Were Not Lost

If we were donkeys and

could read holy scripture,

we would look for all

the stories of donkeys

so we would know how to behave

like proper donkeys

in the presence of God.

If we were doves,

and we could read holy scripture,

we would look for

all the stories about doves,

so we would know

the braveness of doves.

If we were men, we would

look for each of the 1000 manly stories

in the Holy Book, and

for how many ancestors

were heroes of record,

and how we could be like them.

If we were women,

we would look for each of the 1000

heroic women stories

in the Bible and we, uh, we...

well, *we are women*,

... and we have been looking hard

for the 1000 stories of heroic women

in the Bible.

Do you know where

The other 987 are being stored?

It took twenty years, but I found

that the not 1000, but the millions

of women?s heroic stories are kept

in a stronghold

whose lock

is an oceanic human heart

and whose keys

are unbearable

desire

and perfect

longing.

Though most of the pages have been wiped out,

having, they say, been accidentally

dropped down wells,

burnt as tinder,

used to wipe babies? behinds,

well, that is all alright,

because women

fish the dream fields every night

and it is there that

the lost stories of women are held in nets.

And I tell you this without equivocation:

If all the woman of the world

recorded their dreams for even a single night,

and then laid them all end to end in the morning,

we would recover the last million years

of women?s lost songs, stories, arts, and theories,

inventions, discoveries and ideas.

... Nothing that can be dreamt

can ever be lost for good.

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