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The Whiny-whelmer and Saint Many-Shoes

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When I was a young mother, I used to make up stories for the children about the Whiny-whelmer. The Whiney-whelmer was always speaking in Whinese, lived on Whiner?s Boulevard, and had graduated with a B.S. in Whinology.

In between stories, I?d explain that whining was a tone of voice, but more so, a dead giveaway that we had been taken over by an idea that was ?beneath the dignity of the soul? to believe, a way of thinking that had already decided we would not get/ be granted/ be able to bring about whatever beautiful thing we dreamed, deserved or worked toward.

Instead, we had already decided that the answer to all we were called to, was going to be a forever and resounding, No!

But fortunately, the Whiny-whelmer also had a next door neighbor, whose name was Truthteller.

Truth teller

I taught the kidlettes that Truthteller knew that when a person is called to something unusual and outside the status quo, some gift-in-the-becoming that gives nourishment and satisfaction, a pride of craft, that when any such work of the hands, the back, the mind, the heart, the soul is spoken aloud, the dream is heard by all the hearts which resonate to that dream sound and who can help grant this or move it forward.

But the dream is also heard by darker hearts, and sometimes they begin, like pythons, to unwind and slither forward to poison whatever truths are emerging.

?Being called? -- to paraphrase the Star Trekian motto: "To boldly go where no one has gone before" -- required that we see that the operative word is *bold*. It doesn?t say to go forth milquetoastly, or as HhalfwayHannah or as HubraicHarold, although goodness knows we can carry some portion of all those characters inside us too.

Instead, one could say the Truthteller directs: Go where the *inspiratus* leads, follow it utterly. This inspiratus, ?the one we breathe with,? rooted in the word ?inspiration,? is what you and I -- the old believers -- understand as the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost does not sit in the mediocrity of the middle, nor at the safe center. The Holy Ghost is ever point man, point woman at the frontiers. Since the beginning of Eden, that has been the bold thing to do: Follow the Holy Wind that blows clean and clear. Follow it or else what? Or else murder the holy creative force within oneself.

As my grandmother used to say: ?Don?t be the reason the Holy Ghost can no longer be seen walking on the earth.?

Whining or Truth telling? Redefining a strong woman as a weakling

It can be a challenge to determine which is which. Especially when we can see how truth telling seems to suffer in the mainstream culture as well as in any hierarchical culture of long standing. And poor Truth teller is the first to be draped with tarps and muffled into the background.

Viz: Recently one of the biggest, most daddy-long-legged news stories that many pundits are hammering, is a debate -- serious and time-consuming -- about how, where and why Hillary Clinton is *whining*.

This is considered ?news,? despite us all living in a time of families losing their homes daily, bankruptcy laws barring people from a respite they once were able to rely on until they got back on their feet, parents working two and three jobs to keep body and family together, huge inflation for gas and food prices, ill people going without doctoring for lack of money and insurance, and immigration raids on peaceful workers in fields and factories.

Much of the news media?s perseveration on Senator Clinton?s actual psychology causes me to wonder if it isn?t some factions of the media who are actually doing all the whining. They are carrying on so about a woman who is saying some matters are unjust. Perhaps it?s some in the news media who are using that repetitious, petulant, and high pitched cry we associate with ... well, whining. Whining about a strong woman questioning the status quo.

It has been interesting to note how a woman with a viewpoint can still be seen by some in our culture, as carrying a charge to be defeated frivolously, rather than carrying a charge to be investigated seriously.

Whether it be the society we live in or the hierarchy we grapple with, it appears, still in some quarter, that if a woman?s just plaint, she can be redefined as ?whining.? It has been decided by the great ?they? that said person can be diminished and then completely ignored. And not only ignored. But, their issues kicked to the curb. And not only kicked to the curb, but kicked and kicked until they are ridiculed or scorned into silence.

It seems to me that a just answer to a woman?s statement or question about whether interrogation or fact-finding aimed toward her is also being tinged dark because of gender would not be served by answering her inquiry with an immediate or defensive -- and whiny -- ?No, there is no such thing. You must be imagining it.?

A just answer to a sincere observation and the question arising from that, seems rather: ?Let us inquire and look and weigh carefully and see what we can find out.?

The garroting of the question, before it has a chance to live and develop and be answered is a trick of Old Scratch, old as the human race. Some would say this contretemps of ridiculing or ignoring a woman?s inquiry is not newsworthy, since, it seems habitual that women who act at the frontiers of society have also had to carry the weight of others falsified projections.

But perhaps it is the very repetition of ridiculing rather than answering the query, that makes the strategy of mocking a person, quite clear in a way it might not be if there weren?t a 24 hour day news cycle on the Internet and cable TV that runs and reruns various people?s points of view.

If continuous ridiculing of an inquiry right out of the box rather than investigating it seriouslyis the point, then doing so appears to be aimed at undermining, so that the woman will loathe to be called inferior, will feel

wounded as she is held up as a punching bag for others to misjudge and join in, and that she will just quit or die away.

I don?t know any horse race where the horses agree to not race all the way to the end.

Maybe a Whiney-whelmer can be shamed into fading away from a calling. But a Truthteller cannot. A Truth teller and a truth-keeper and a truth-shelterer has to keep going, despite, as they say, what is actually for many a required ?rite of passage,? ?suffering the slings and arrows.?

Use of Language to Elevate or Attack A Woman?s ? or Man?s?Relevance

Generally, it still seems in some public quarters that when a man has been treated unfairly and he says so, he is often spoken about, journalistically, like this: ?He ?charges? that such and such occurred unjustly.? ?He ?accuses ...? ?He ?states ...? He ?asserts ??

When a woman has been treated unfairly and says so, she is still too often, journalistically, said to be ?complaining? that such and such occurred unfairly... that she is ?bemoaning?? that she is ?whining,? that she is a ?sob sister,? a ?crybaby,? a ?woe is me? person wanting to ?style herself? as ?the victim.?

Rather than stating that she is being discriminated against in some way when such is a fact, journalistically, it is sometimes stated something like this: ?She says? she is being discriminated against.

The difference between reportage that acknowledges an injustice, and reportage that subjectively and without solid inquiry, doubts an injustice despite intriguing pointers toward such is significant.

These age-old tricks of using certain words, like ?complained? instead of ?asserted,? are long standing tropes in what used to be called ?yellow journalism.? It?s far more exciting for some to falsify a demon under every bed, even though a trivial demon, than to seriously follow the threads of what is more seriously just and what is not.

It is ironic also that when such persons in power, be they the press or a prelate, deem to use an invidious manner of demeaning a man and his ideas, they often use the same language used to demean woman. Suddenly, he no longer ?asserts? either. Now, he too, ?complains and whines;? *He says he is* discriminated against... rather than *He is* discriminated against.?

Thus he too is infantilized -- made into, amongst the fearful higher-ups, a disobedient child, a wrongheaded weakling who does not really know ?the right way.? He merits suspicion; he is not a proper (read, trustworthy) man.

The Holy Spirit as Antidote

Yet, and meanwhile, The Holy Spirit goes about wildly colonizing people on earth, left and right, to do its huge works and bidding.

Thus, there have to be antidotes to those who would ?irrelevantize? others who are stalwart souls. There have to be antidotes to the ?You?re just being whiny, now be quiet and go away? poisons that seems the antagonist?s not so secret harms it tries to visit on all souls who carry fresh and refreshing ideas that grow straight up from holy, insistent, and insouciant roots.

One antidote is to understand endurance is not something you do, but a medicine you take. A medicine that makes you strong and keeps you that way. If only you can remember that travail is a kind of strength training; no matter how tired we get, no matter how much we wish for a softer pillow, more rest, an easier way. Endurance is a kind of medicine we hate to take but which is truly good for us. More than good: Imperative.

Frankly, I think complaining is good too. Complain away. Have a complainarama-extravaganza. But, then, go on. No matter what offense or insult or exclusion. Go on.

Here is some endurance medicine to hold you for a while longer. A story is often the best medicine for any matter.

Szent Cipész, Saint Many-Shoes

> There?s a story in my family about Szent Cipész. Saint Many-Shoes is how my father translated this Magyar name to us. During the years of war, Szent Cipész was a holy man who was also a shoemaker. The villages surrounding depended on him to make their shoes, and to make the soles last.
>
> When my people would tell that part about ?making the soles last,? they would nod and laugh at the puns on the words ?soul? and ?sole? and on ?shoe last,? which my father explained as ?the wooden model for making a shoe.? We are born like Pinocchio, rather wooden to begin with, over which God stretches the soulskin, one that we will wear throughout our lives until we wear it all the way through and are free to soar again.
>
> So, while wars were raging and men were being conscripted from the villages and kidnapped right out of the fields by the enemy, Saint Many-Shoes traveled at night in order to avoid detection. He was revered for that bravery alone, let alone that he also came as teacher and helpmate. In each village he had many apprentice shoemakers who also carried the poetry of holy ideas. And he had chosen them to be his students for just that reason.
>
> Thus, each village vied to have the traveling shoemaker come stay in their homes. By day... he?d mend their shoes and make beautiful red boots for the women and fine black leather riding boots for the men. At day?s end, he?d call all the villagers to crowd around the stove, and the gentle Saint Many-shoes would speak to them, telling them stories that soothed and strengthened their spirits for the lives they?d been given to live.
>
> But one night, as Saint Many-Shoes picked his way through the forest, he was captured by the enemy. The villagers heard the soldiers tortured Saint Many-shoes to the point where he lost his mind completely.
>
> The apprentice shoemakers from each village, so grieving their Master, conspired to trek quietly through the forest to where their teacher was imprisoned.
>
> When they came to the barbed wire, they called out as quietly as they could, ?Teacher, teacher are you there? Are you of sound mind? Your students who love you are here to rescue you.?
>
> Their teacher appeared at the door of the hovel where he was chained. He picked up the shoes and boots he had been forced to mend for the enemy, and began to hurl them at his students, hitting them and bruising them, and in some cases, bloodying them.
>
> His students ran away while crying out, ?We have loved you, loved you Master... surely you have lost your mind... why would you ever treat us like this??
>
> Saint Many-shoes called out after them quietly but so that they could hear him: ?How can you say

you love anything or anyone, if you cannot bear the pain and suffering that comes from such loving... if you cannot bear a few or many strikes that come from what or whom you say you love??

The apprentices stood stock still in the forest, and they were ashamed that they had turned away with so little provocation.

At the ending of this story, the old people would say various things, and I?d paraphrase them to you like this: Love of something holy is its own form of magical protection. If we can remember. If we can remember this we will always be making progress on the journey, no matter who throws what in our path, even though what is thrown and by whom can surprise us sometimes. We have to try to remember the Truth teller?s point of view: that things are not always as they seem... and that the strengthening that comes to us through struggle will most often be superior in breadth and depth compared to the obstacle?s actual size.

Blessingcito

May you dear reader, in these coming days be blessed to remember all these things, as well as that the calling is the road, and the tests that come to us are also the road... and that regardless of all else, whatever good we are seeking is also, as devotedly, seeking us.. and one of these is, no doubt, Saint Many-Shoes... the one who makes ?the soles that last.?

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