

Follow the money: The maple, the worth, and the price

I ask those of you who are old enough to recall them, to please remember the words of Watergate's Deep Throat. This is how corruption is located.

Today, I have an ugly, true story for you, and a few beautiful ideas.

She was magnificent, the maple was a goddess, her crown of folded green reaching as a feathered brush to sweep the heavens, stretching and broad, royal and silent, but for the shuffling of her leaves amongst distant wind. How many hundred years did it take to nurture and nourish her, I do not know, only that the hours were spent, and it was she, who in Time's way, had come to nurture and shelter us...the arch of her branches a canopy to shelter the heated sky, and under her cool, the days were easy...for in Time's way, she did care for us. What is the worth of a goddess, so silent and ripe with returning...so gracious and giving?

There is a creature who lives in this world, and does not live in it...he struts in pride, casts out the very heart of worth, and soon proclaims he has found ..."value." He is that which squanders, and boasts, prideful and profane is his scent, an ape, and a sour cheat who proclaims, "I feel nothing of this world and its heart, and so, I am above all things, and can spread a new truth upon them, and will mark each twig and leaf...so now you will know, value: for all things, have *a price*." So speaks the strutting ape. So speaks man.

I bought the land, 95 acres of timberland, and the man I got it from was "hard up"...which in this world should mean he lacked resources...but he did not, and had this land, filled with game, field and food, but he was a man, a fool, a weakling and a cheat, so the meaning was shifted round to mean: he had no money. Those who seek money, soon find a pitiful shadow of suffering creeps out from under their..."need." And so, her tender breast of bark and wood, was deemed of value...and he became covetous, greedy and vile, as is his nature. And he did look upon her, as a thing, with a price...and beheld her.

He looked upon her breast, so tender and perfect, holding her in contempt, for he soon understood his ugly spirit and seduced himself with his pitiful need, and began to covet her, and dream of hurting her, for his pleasure. He did look upon her breast, so round and swollen with love and caring, and saw...a price. The breeze did coax music from between her leaves, and the sun did drip gladly upon her and drape its sweet heat over her spirit, and her body, a song of perfect union and sweetness, for all the world is such a song as this...but he heard it not. He was deaf, ugly and blind, but for his..."need." Her sweetness meant nothing to him, her beauty meant nothing to him, her priceless grace, and strength, made him angry...for it would not be so easy to hurt her! He would mutilate her, for a few pennies...and the crack of the engine, stuttering and wretched, did fill the valley, and then...he did rape and hurt her.

So did the stinking ape, cut the goddess, and kill her...so very slowly. Soon, the burl was cut away, and she was damaged...so a rich tourist could have a bowl they did not need, or appreciate...junk for trash...her delicate beauty now a product, for a fool. Her most basic form, hurt, raped and ruined, now a hollow spot left, to sustain her grace, her tender bulk, left...unsupported. Years later, we slept, and heard a terrible sound, crashing through the silence...and woke the next day, to find her, broken, the hollow shattered...she lay upon her side, slowly...dying. I wept, and knew...what worth had been raped, cast aside, and spent...for money. Such is the true price, of money, of human anti-value. Such is the price of the pitiful "need" in the worthless heart...of man. It is greed, which enslaves each to a scrap of paper...and so, we can see, of true worth, price and value. I look upon her, and my heart cries out for

revenge...for I too, am but a man. In my pain, I wonder, how much a single tree is worth...compared to any man...and I shudder, to plainly know the answer.

Can the lack of empathy and the vile heart of man be changed? Yes, it can. I will speak of that next time...for I have found many new things! But not now. Now, I would like you to have these thoughts, and think of how it is, and how it should be.

1. Each morning, is a rose which opens, and in sure fingers, might be held, between its thorns. In gentle hands, she may grace us with the scent of new bloom, and we may see, the dew ...a liquid jewel, clear and round, arched as a spot of glass, in new sun. In this, grace, may yet find grace, and light. It is the fist which gathers round stem and shaft, once closed, which brings her thorn to bear...and blood, showers the earth...as thick tears of salt and rouge. It is in gentle hands, that life might find, grace, and reveal herself. The gentle soul may be warmed, in still light...it is this, which covets and reveals, her true point.

2. It seems: Each second creeps, as a tear slipping down the face of Time, always forward into the distant places, she does press. How gracious is her heart of silver broth, shadow and light, stirred into eternal forgetting...and in newness, the air is cleansed, and becomes light, a feather made of shadow's spending...so is our pain, but butter and sweet light, drop by drop, it is our feeling, which nourishes the earth, and finds her, grateful, new and wise. So do our tears, find damp earth, is but a home...a promise made light... in forgetting.

But... We do not forget, but do remember twice, and so, do spill the new day, as a burst shadow recast, cleansed...made of light.

It is in accepting, and pouring forth, that we might shatter and so reclaim...our broken mirror. Now...we can see: Everything.

3. As we look across the horizon of turbulence which is human history, we can distill a single lesson: Let us try something new.

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