

## BOOK FOUR

### HEARTLAND

*There are a set of religious, or rather moral writers, who teach that virtue is the certain road to happiness, and vice to misery, in this world. A very wholesome and comfortable doctrine, and to which we have but one objection, namely, that it is not true.*

*Henry Fielding*

## CHAPTER ONE

### LOVE HAS A LOGIC OF ITS OWN

Shaharazzad was telling stories to save her life. Her audience was a clearly psychotic dreadfully unhappy king. He had killed thousands of women after spending one night fucking them. Mr. Goodbar in a turban.

Shaharazad did not want to die. Her idea was to make love each night with this psycho and then tell him a story with a hanging ending. The inventress of the sequel. He couldn't kill her. He would desire, not her, not her body, not emotional connections, not their mutual children who arrived in periodic due course over the years, not her company, not her yoni, not her smile. He craved her ability to weave the yarn that made sense of his days. She knew to keep the story ends hanging loose ready to loop themselves in to the next day and the next and the next.

At night Shaharazad<sup>spun</sup> the magic that would carry him through his days. She made a weave of life for him. For three years she kept herself alive. For 1001 nights, he did not kill any women. She gave him respite from his rage.

What did she say? What did she tell him? What great wisdoms did she impart? What secret truths did she reveal? Only that day will follow day, my love. Night will throw her blue over us. And we will live, my darling, deep, inside the blue. We will dance inside the radiance of the sun burning. We will sing inside the fullness of the moon circling. Life is the continuing, death the following. Life is

the flowering, opening power of joy. Death is the stuttering spluttering powerlessness of fear.

The king had been seriously depressed. This is what had caused his psychotic murderousness. He'd gone on a trip leaving his brother who had himself been recently cuckolded, alone in the palace. The brother who presumably had nothing better to do was hanging around spying when he managed to get a good peek at his brother's wife screwing a very big, very black guy.

This jealousy of black men's genitals goes back really far in history. It's demented. There's masses of really eerie verbiage on this from the most learned sources, men, of course, measuring other guys' dicks and making lunatic assumptions. Like what women look for, want, desire, find exciting and pleasurable sexually is mega dick, which is absurd because only women with large vaginas feel comfortable getting down on a mega dick but also, how trying and infinitely racist to make blanket assumptions about the size of other races' individuals' body parts. Of course, in our own time, there are scholars still writing about brain size. Men's brains are bigger than women's they say, which proves that men are the smarter gender. Only a guy with a large brain would be stupid enough to make a remark as pointlessly patently pathetically absurd as that. So, file the big dick theory in the same subset you put the big brain theory, yeah, that file, the one called Completely Useless Waste of Time Nonsense. That's the file we pull out when we're really bored at parties, the one we use to sharpen our ridicule skills.

The king hides out, doing the sneaky voyeur thing that is now uncool for kings who instead hire private detective services to spy for them, something of the thrill remains, however, in the surreptitious perusal of the photographs of spouse and lover lost in an embrace of the senses, sees for himself his wife's indiscretions and kills her.

Then the boys go on a camping trip, presumably to get away from all the bloodshed that seems to follow them around. One night they are camping on a lakeside commiserating over their miserable luck with women when a giant rises out of the water. The boys are suitably scared. The giant takes them prisoner then falls asleep. A real loser giant because then the giant's wife who's locked in a trunk in chains talks the boys into fucking her lights out. The way she manages this leaves the brothers' innocence intact. Note bene: The boys are absolutely utterly completely astoundingly guiltless because the wife of the giant says if they don't both fuck her she will wake the giant screaming that they have fucked her. They have to fuck her to keep her quiet because they want to live. They only do it because they have to, because she makes them do it, because she's got to have it. It's all her fault. The giant would have ripped their arms (and other necessary parts) out if they didn't pleasure her right there on the box in chains. Amazing how kink remains the same throughout the centuries, isn't it? Chains, chains, chains, the recurring fashion of pseudo fuck.

Right. So cuckold the giant at his wife's insistence. Stories within stories. Wheels within wheels. Her story, which she tells them in the afterglow of group sex, is that her giant husband, so preoccupied with his jealousy and paranoia, keeps her locked up. She hates him so much that for revenge she has screwed hundreds of his captives, she shows them the little notches on the side of her trunk then adds two more.

The boys don't take from this the realization of the oppression of women, the acknowledgment of the destructive results of any kind of slavery, oh no, then there'd not only be no story, there'd be no history. The boys take a tidy uptight moral stance, "women are evil, treacherous and sexually ravenous." The king returns home with his new ethic, his philosophical justification for his screwing then then butchering the sexually innocent women of his kingdom. His non-logic goes something like this: Once girls become knowledgeable of sex, they can never be trusted again. His insecurity about black and giant genital size and his doubts about his ability to sustain reasonable sexual performance is projected onto women who must suffer and die (small sacrifices) for his addiction to superficial temporary palliatives compensating for the emptiness inside him.

The demented king had spared his Vizier's daughter's, presumably because, not being too bright himself, being more the man of action type, definitely not perspicacious, probably adept at instant aggression, excellent at hunting, huffing, puffing and posing, he needed his Vizier to do all the serious business, the math, the diplomacy, to carry through the strategies necessary to run a kingdom. My guess is that the Vizier was Jewish. Anyway, the Vizier's daughters were exempt, but the Vizier's eldest daughter, an extraordinary scholar and poet, volunteers, over her father's severe objections, to be the next virgin brought to pleasure the king.

Shaharazzad set out to save women, not by fighting, cheating or fucking, not by lying, bribing or blackmailing, Shaharazzad sets out and succeeds in neutralizing the vicious vengeance of a confused and bitter man by telling tales, by making love, by living fully and sharing her life, her love and her wisdom with the man she chose to be her lover.

Today the doctors in their infinite wisdom (not) would give him stelazine or some anti-depressants. The drugs would make him impotent, turn him into a version of a vegetable that even a vegetable wouldn't recognize. But in this ancient myth a woman is the solution, a woman's voice, an educated woman with the knack, with the magic of story, with the touch of heart and mind. She brings life back into the equation, brings generosity and forgiveness into the dawn. She makes it possible for the king to move into his next moments without needing to pull life down and end it over and over, and over again.

What is the sound of fear and trembling, rage and sacrifice? A woman fighting for her life. She is not an Amazon. She is someone's lover. She is someone's mother. She wishes not to fight to the death, that sort of victory does not entice her, she has seen blood flowing. She wishes to fight for life, that means the life of her enemies as well as her own life and the lives of ses amies. Every battle she wages is a battle for the life of the soul in physical form. Every struggle is to let life be, to gain time, to achieve ripeness.

It is said that the Holy Ghost is the genderless nomer for the missing female creatrix, the ostracized, the anathematized female divinity made transparent, ghostly and holy, robbed of her blood and pulsing appetites. The holiness of a ghost extracted from the wholeness of womanhood like heroin refined from the gladness of the poppy.

Shaharazzad represents the healing power of the Holy Ghost. She engages the father, creates the son. Patriarchy has transformed her, she exists within her ineffable essence, which is mercy, which is love active, nonjudgemental, nonconscious, nonorganized, noncivilized, the effervescent, ever renewing, translucent, paralucent, transfiguring power of the gentle, of forgiveness renaming, choosing and renewal.

Patriarchy can transform her, take away her ability to rage and fight, humiliate her attempts to establish a noble dignity, but the day she is silenced, we die.

The love that pervades the quantum particle, the wind that brings those particles into existence, is the Holy Ghost, the invisible woman. She has absorbed her powerlessness, achieved the necessary humility in the face, in the presence, in the experience of the dualism of the dueling fathers and sons, the violence and brutality inescapable when she is absent from form, from formal existence. When the magic life of three diminishes to a dualistic, polarized duetic charade, the emptiness of form without spirit, without the creative light of love permeating and enlivening the duality of awareness of the self and other, death, no, not death which can be merciful and lovely but slaughter, purposeless annihilation, is the result.

Community and peace are lacking, achingly lacking, in a world without woman's wisdom. Women scale the ladders of corporate success, sue for their right to be on the front lines in battle, their right to kill, because they want to be equal to men. To kill, we posit, might awaken us to the responsibilities of life. But it doesn't, not often. Men rarely make that leap. Usually violence only leads to more violence, murder to more murder, an eye for an eye, a father for a son, a son for a father.

We create a forced semblance of peace by isolating women, by denying their desires, as if, by ignoring "baser loves" (sex, children, warm homes, soft kisses, bedtime stories, pies in the oven) we could more easily open to "higher loves"

(God, Love, Goodness, Truth, Beauty). But this is not sensible. Abstraction begets a cool reflection of itself. Only love begets love.

The tiniest bit of cruelty and brutality placed in motion in thought will manifest externally somewhere. The creative control we have over our bending simultaneous mystical time so terrifies us because we approach the responsibility of creativity as a competition, as us versus the universe. We project the power we know we have onto others and then, in order to try and regain the power we have fooled ourselves into thinking has been placed in an other, we attempt to conquer and control that other to retrieve a part of ourselves which isn't missing.

Our ability to create in bent, multi-layered time can never be given or taken away. Access to our creativity is ever present, as she is ever present, as the Holy Ghost permeates all that is, as the angels are immediately, everywhere available, at all times, in all places. Take the energy that binds the universe and rip it apart, rape a woman, drop an atom bomb, watch what happens.

How sad we humans are, to have used our great sensitivity and our undeniable intelligence to isolate ourselves one from another. Is the price of individuality isolation? Or have we used our individuality to justify the revenge of our fears?

There we were, a bunch of victims in a room, trying to blame each other. That didn't last long because no one had any connection with anyone else's life. Then we tried to blame ourselves, each one trying to absorb the anger and hatred we were scared to feel for our rapists. That didn't last long either. We were in a therapeutic environment set up specifically to release self hate. Again and again we were thrown back to confront and create, transform and realize reality, the past, ourselves and our potential, to acknowledge the power that will be always be us.