

## Chapter 12: Bound to Love

The scriptures cast an unsympathetic light on Zuleika, Pontifar's wife and temptress of the prophet Joseph. Overwhelmed by his physical and spiritual grace, she sets out to possess him, her only defense being that he clearly shared her passion. His ability to master that primitive drive, maintaining his loyalty to the master of his house, only emphasizes her wretchedness.

The Muslim poem *Yusuf and Zuleika* [8] takes us back to the start of her journey. As a virtuous beauty in Mauritania, her dreams are haunted by a vision of a man of lordly grace. Her soul thrills to the power of his call. From Egypt arrives a man of power, temperance and wisdom: Pharoah's Asis Pontifar, tendering a proposal of marriage. In her vanity, she assumes that his man and her dream must be the same, and she accepts his proposal. It is only upon their arrival in Memphis that she discovers her error.

Years go by, and then word goes out of a slave in the market, a young man of great grace. Intrigued, she discovers that this Joseph is the image of her dream. She disposes of her personal fortune in securing his safety, and brings him into her household. There they both struggle with the power of the fate that binds them, until she succumbs.

Her folly is his boon, the event that sets him on the path to power and makes him master of the affairs of Egypt, rising even above her husband. When Pontifar dies, she is left alone and withers, her love for Joseph weighing on her heart like a stone. Finally, despairing of love and bereft of beauty, she calls out and finally reaches with her mind and soul through the door that Joseph's grace had opened for her.

*“My love was pure, no plant of earth  
From my rapt being sprang to birth...  
Virtue was my belov'd: and thou  
Hadst virtue's impress on thy brow”*

And as her love, though perhaps inadvertently, had raised him up, so she finds hope for new strength herself, offering the answered prayer:

*“To my wounded heart this soft balm to lay;  
For naught beyond this can I wish or pray.  
The streams of thy love will new life bestow  
On the dry thirsty field where its sweet waters flow.”*

### **Goodness Gracious**

After writing those words, I stepped out into the June heat, drove through the withered hills of Los Angeles, and couldn't help but hear that prayer whispered by the Earth.

Why are love stories so sad? Why is it not worthy to dwell upon the details of the happy ending? Is fate so cruel to love that the attaining of it makes everything that follows seem pale? Or more than fate, do lovers fight against themselves? Having overcome ourselves to grasp love, are we spent with the effort?

I tend to believe that for those ready to grasp love, fate imposes little difficulty. The development here reflects that perspective: we have considered the psychological transformations necessary for an animal to become human, and then considered the spiritual transformations that create an adult. We've taken a steely-eyed look at the pitfalls, and found meaning in the pain that we all must partake of.

But the inevitable question is, “Look, Brian, how realistic is this? You're a particle physicist, and it took you 30 years to figure it out! What about the rest of us? And we can't save the Earth: it's too big and too messed up. Too few of us have energy or caring enough to devote to adulthood, and we can't carry everyone else along with us.”

### **Wedded to Debauchery**

So let's come back to reality. From a conversation overheard during a fast-food lunch:

*“Yeah, good luck this weekend. You should have seen my Vegas wedding. Ha, ha! What a party! We checked into the room, then she went out to shop with her friends, and I went down to the gambling tables. They serve all those free drinks, and I got pretty high. After playing all afternoon, we hooked up again at the buffet. It was great, for \$5 I got a huge steak dinner. We went out to the night clubs that evening and got shit-faced. About 4 AM we hit the sack, and the alarm went off at 9. We were supposed to be in the chapel at 10! I barely dragged myself out of bed, and finally got my tuxedo on. Damn, during the vows, I hardly knew what I was saying!”*

It's not verbatim, but that's the gist of it. Really.

What drives people to this shallow hedonism? The central problem is implied in our discussion of life: until we have experienced spiritual love, we cannot understand its power. Once that power is revealed to us, we are complete in it. The urge to possess and compete fades. What remains is the desire to create, which is no less rewarding and certainly more fulfilling than the desire to consume – particularly because the first thing we end up creating is usually ourselves.

But, until we have the power to create ourselves, what better is there to do than go out and party?

So what we need is a simple, certain path that leads people into an experience of the power of love. What better way than to discover that reality has provided us an other, different and in opposition to us, having no reason in particular to care for us, but that completes and strengthens us?

You see, I spent 30 years *proving* to myself, in the way that a physicist would, that love will work. For most people, simply to experience it is enough.

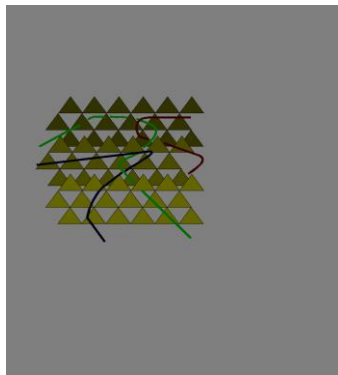
### **Unstable Personalities**

While in our discussion of Genesis we broadened our understanding of the complexity of

evolution, Darwin's principles still hold true. Life evolves to exploit the resources available to it. The diversity of life around us reflects the diversity of forms that have evolved from the basic building blocks of material and spiritual form. That diversity in turn reflects the potential for combination of surprisingly simple elements.

We should consider, however, whether fundamental potentials exist in the two types of form. While structural complexity might mask those potentials from us, we might yet be able to find means to access them if we understand their principles.

In general terms, our model of reality has two components: a lattice of triangles that fills space, and flexible fibers that flow through and around the triangles. (Illustration 23)



*Illustration 23*

The principal characteristic of the lattice is stability. In a stable system, time cannot be said to exist unless the configuration of the system changes. Normally, this occurs only when a fiber drags a triangle to a new location. While the configuration of the lattice does not change, the position of the fiber relative to its neighbors does. It is this change in configuration that separates moment from moment in the lattice.

The lattice also has dimensional isolation. Triangles organized in a particular dimensionality, such as a sheet or volume, tend to interact most strongly with their dimensional peers. This means that the tension propagated into a fiber while moving a triangle depends upon the triangle's context.

Conversely, fibers are fluid and inter dimensional. Being fluid, fiber weaves will collapse unless supported by the lattice. Even when supported, the weaves cannot change their configuration unless they have an anchor point on the lattice.

Weaves also transcend time. Because the individual fibers traverse spaces of differing dimensionality, tension moves along fibers at different rates. The behavior of weaves is therefore controlled by tensions emanating from many different moments in time.

From this analysis, we can see two extreme strategies for life. The first extreme, the material strategy, focuses on controlling the configuration of the lattice and the fibers that penetrate it. To succeed with this strategy, material life must localize changes in space and time: otherwise the behavior of the fibers will erase its efforts.

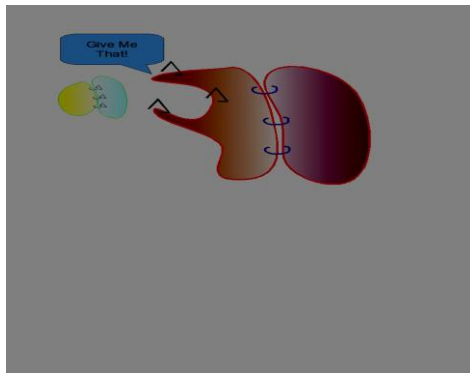
The second extreme, the spiritual strategy, focuses on controlling the development of fiber weaves. Obviously, the weaves must be pinned to the lattice, or they will collapse. In attempting to evolve its form, spirit can succeed only when it is able to use its cross-dimensionality to stimulate matter to assume configurations that implement the changes it desires. Unfortunately, because spirit is not localized in space in time, it will always have difficulty figuring out which triangles it should pull on.

Now, our reanalysis of Genesis illustrated the degree to which the fate of material and spiritual

forms are entwined. We have examined two broad strategies for relation, built around power and love. What consequences might we expect when each is exercised?

## Vicious Cycles

In a relationship of power, changes are motivated only by local benefit (Illustration 24). Imagine a material form making random changes, say by burning down forests or gorging itself on meat. Those changes seem to provide local benefit to the dominant material form (i.e. - humans), but they unpin spiritual forms from their moorings in the lattice.



The spiritual forms feel the change happening, but can't quite tell where and when it arises. Their natural response is anxiety and fear. Unfortunately, their attempts to communicate their concern to the material forms are spread through space and time.

In responding to the energy emitted by the spiritual forms, the material forms are drawn into a context that violates their sense of causality. The messages concern inter dimensional and cross-temporal effects that they simply cannot perceive. Bereft of the ability to reason about the

*Illustration 24*

consequences of their actions, the material forms continue to make random changes.

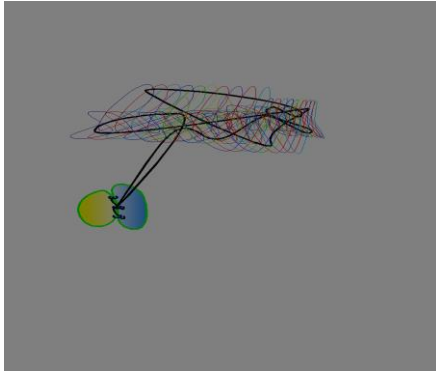
In fact, because disruptive changes draw so much energy out of the spiritual forms, the material forms tend to celebrate individuals that make the most random and disruptive changes (i.e. - that behave most like animals). This accelerates the panic in the spiritual forms. As they disintegrate, the less evolved spirits, in a desperate bid for survival, couple themselves to the more primitive urges of the dominant material forms. Both effects drive the material forms to greater excess, and the viciously destructive cycle feeds upon itself.

Simply: when spiritual and material forms compete, change manifests primarily as waste.

## Virtuous Circles

Let us now consider the pattern of cooperation (Illustration 25).

The spiritual forms sense a problem developing in the structure they share with material forms. Attentive material forms attempt to correlate the problem with concrete behaviors in their domain. Applying models of local behavior, they evaluate changes they could make to modify the concrete outcome of events. By projecting those changes into the spiritual form prior to their implementation, they create a trans-temporal and multidimensional space of imagination. Here, the spiritual forms can assess the impact of the suggested changes. When the optimal change is identified, it is implemented.



*Illustration 25*

When no immediate crisis is pending, the material forms have scope for experimentation. Again, these changes are projected into the trans-temporal and multidimensional space of imagination for assessment.

Because the spiritual forms are freed from disruption, they are able to expand their temporal and dimensional scope. This enables them to anticipate more widely dispersed impacts and benefits. Given this input, the opportunities presented to the material forms become greater and greater, along with the impact and value of their interventions.

Through this synergy, the grace of the cooperation between spiritual and material forms expands into ever larger circles of virtue.

Simply: when material and spiritual forms cooperate, change manifests as improvement.

## **Beyond Venus and Mars**

When we describe men, we use masculine adjectives such as:

- Disruptive
- Independent
- Decisive
- Focused
- Competitive
- Analytical

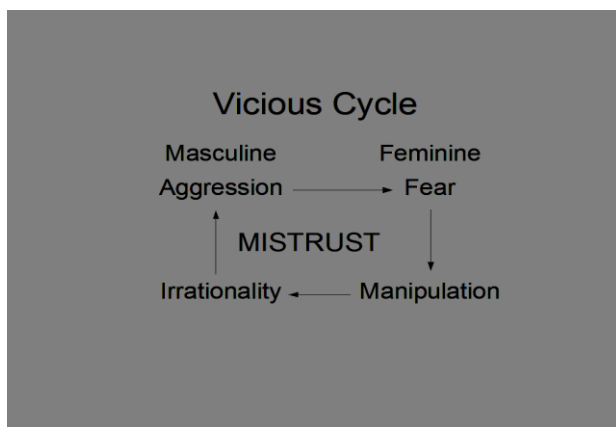
These are the characteristics that allow masculine personalities to separate the future from the past, acting as effective agents of change. Obviously, males tend to the material end of the personality scale.

When describing women, we use feminine adjectives such as:

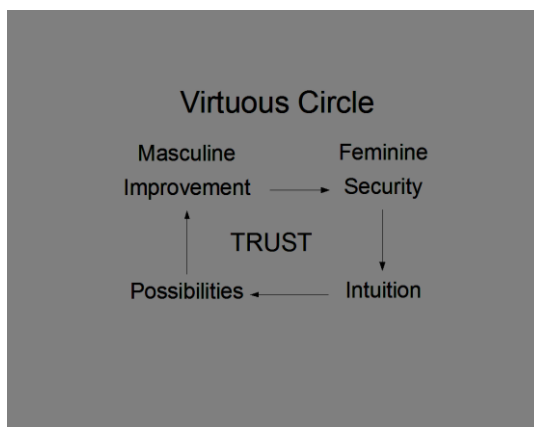
- Nurturing
- Social
- Consensual
- Holistic
- Accommodating
- Emotional

These characteristics enable feminine personalities to escape material limits on time and place and to form extended social gestalts. Obviously, females tend to the spiritual end of the personality scale.

The vicious cycle (Illustration 26) and virtuous circles (Illustration 27), mapped onto human psychology, are:



*Illustration 26*



*Illustration 27*

As a teen, I tended to focus on sexuality as the source of masculine and feminine differences. As an adult, I have come to appreciate that these differences are deeply rooted in neurophysiology, of which the left-brain and right-brain emphasis is the most widely known. The sex apparatus simply couples too crudely to spiritual energy to account for the subtleties of masculine and feminine differentiation.

Naturally, though, when a man enters a feminine space, he feels out of place. He brings in spiritual structures that are inconsistent with the feminine spiritual practice, and so that she has worked hard to expel. Similarly, a woman feels out of place in a masculine space.

I wouldn't suggest that men and women abandon their domains. But it seems pretty clear that when we create spaces and strategies that facilitate collaboration between the genders, we unleash potentials at the very basis of reality that are capable of overwhelming social predation.

Ecologically, predators must be a minority. Consequently, when socially responsible communities couple feminine intuition with masculine resolve, there is no place for a predator to hide. They can control our behavior only by creating a sociology of fear that drives women into isolation, undermining the basis for their intuition. Obviously, we combat that strategy when we look fear and pain in the eye, step into them, and heal the damage they inflict.

How does it go? "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

### ***Married to the Future***

Although I was sunk deeply into my reading – and the over-stuffed chair at my favorite bookstore – I couldn't ignore the thud of the five wedding planners as they landed on the table next to me. A young lady sat down and began thumbing through the books and magazines, but the air filled with a hanging expectation that lets me know I have business with someone.

"Planning a wedding?" I ventured.

Indeed she was. She told me the ceremony was scheduled for the beach down in Malibu. Catching a glimpse of a formal service, I hopefully asked whether that was her style. She flipped

forward to a picture of the bride's party kicking up their heels in knee-length evening wear. "I was hoping for something like this."

Taking a slow breath, I asked "It sounds like you're taking a secular approach to marriage. Tell me, what do those books have to say about the spirituality of the ceremony?"

"The spirituality?"

"Yes."

The hanging expectation returned.

I shared my observation that men were designed to create change, and women to preserve social continuity. These tendencies were rooted in the realities of maternal dependency, but reflected fundamentally different strategies for dealing with all aspects of reality. Woman's intuition, for example, arises from a powerful woman's capacity – long denied by science – to move her consciousness through time. Men, on the other hand, need to ground themselves in the moment in order to separate effectively the future from the past.

"Weddings can be a lot of fun, but marriage is a deep spiritual experience. Properly practiced, it is a process through which the hopes and dreams of the couple are focused. As the words are spoken, evoking the most important possibilities of married life, the groom focuses his strength and pushes his bride into the future. As she travels the events that unfold before them, he identifies the acts that will allow them to reach their goals. In that work, they bind themselves to hopes that make unbearable the thought of casual separation.

"While this work should be prepared in advance – literally through the sharing of dreams – it is only in a marriage ceremony that the protective embrace of the congregation enables the young couple to bind their dreams to a shared future of love."

She sat quiet and still for a while, then thanked me for sharing my thoughts. I returned to my reading. Taking up her books, she walked away.

Her place taken wordlessly by her grateful parents.

I wasn't a guest at the ceremony, so I can only hope it turned out well. Given the role of the community in a marriage, success depends to a degree on its perception of the value of the bonding.

Of the three great love stories we have considered, the most tragic is Zuleika's. Her love for Joseph served no higher purpose than her own gratification. Jesus and Mary, Mohammed and Khadijah: their loves were tied to a higher purpose, and embraced all of Humanity.

It is a matter of faith that we are deserving of them.