

returning to the battle they could only expect to become even more upset, angry, egocentric and alienated, which introduces the final stage that living under the duress of the human condition has resulted in: the extremely tragic ‘Hollow Adolescentman’ stage.

Chapter 8:14 Hollow Adolescentman

The final years of the sub-species: *Homo sapiens sapiens*’ 0.2 million (200,000) year reign (Pseudo Idealistic and Hollowman stages are both characteristic of *Homo sapiens sapiens*’ reign)

The individual now: 50 plus years old



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⁸⁹⁴The ‘Hollow Final Adulthood Stage’ (of Humanity’s Adolescence) represents the time when many resigned post-40-year-olds become disillusioned with the treacherous, weak and cowardly, completely selfish, extremely dishonest and deluded ‘do good to feel good’ born-again existence and return to the upsetting battle to champion the ego over the condemning instincts. But as a result of this return to participating in the upsetting battle, they become even *more* upset, embattled and frustrated than they were when they were driven to adopt the pseudo idealistic way of living. In the context of the aforementioned extraordinarily honest Japanese proverb that described the stages of maturation under the duress of the human condition — ‘**At 10 man is an animal, at 20 a lunatic, at 30 a failure, at 40 a fraud and at 50 a criminal**’ — this is the 50-year-old ‘**criminal**’ stage where men in particular become so soul destroyed, so horrifically angry, punch-drunk, ego-unsatisfied, bitter and vengeful that they brutally and completely repress the condemning voice of their ideal-behaviour-demanding, cooperatively orientated soul, leaving themselves adrift in an empty, hollow, soul-less wilderness.

⁸⁹⁵T.S. Eliot perfectly described this ‘grumpy old man’, vengeful, burnt-out, empty, sad existence that men typically inhabit when they reach 50 and beyond in his 1925 poem *The Hollow Men*: ‘**We are the hollow men / We are the stuffed men / Leaning together / Headpiece filled with straw. Alas! / Our dried voices, when / We whisper together / Are quiet and meaningless / As wind in dry grass / Or rats’ feet over broken glass / In our dry cellar // Shape without form, shade without colour / Paralysed force, gesture without motion //...This is the dead land / This is cactus land / Here the stone images / Are raised, here they receive / The supplication of a dead man’s hand /**

Under the twinkle of a fading star // Is it like this / In death's other kingdom / Waking alone / At the hour when we are / Trembling with tenderness / Lips that would kiss / Form prayers to broken stone // The eyes are not here / There are no eyes here / In this valley of dying stars / In this hollow valley / This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms // In this last of meeting places / We grope together / And avoid speech / Gathered on this beach of the tumid river //...Between the desire / And the spasm / Between the potency / And the existence / Between the essence / And the descent / Falls the Shadow /...This is the way the world ends / Not with a bang but a whimper.'

⁸⁹⁶ Before commenting on Eliot's extraordinarily honest poem, it needs to be explained that no amount of power, fame, fortune or glory could truly satisfy men's egos, because, being artificial forms of reinforcement, such 'success' was never going to genuinely make men feel they were good and not bad—it was never going to truly relieve them of the agony of their insecure, human-condition-afflicted existence—*only* understanding of their fundamental goodness could and now does achieve that. It can be appreciated then that the problem for older men was that there came a cross-over point in their lives when, no matter how much power, fame, fortune or glory they had achieved, they still hadn't satisfied their egos, but life had moved on—another generation of men trying desperately to validate themselves through the artificial, material forms of success of power, fame, fortune and glory had taken over—and they suddenly found themselves ignored. They were silently screaming for attention but no one was listening; no one was interested anymore. I was once told by the son of a retired politician how his father had bought numerous copies of a newspaper that mentioned him and strategically placed them around the house, open at the relevant page. Throughout their life men fought harder and harder to be a 'success' and relieve themselves of the insecurity of the human condition, and this ever-increasing preoccupation meant they lost more and more access to the beautiful all-loving and all-sensitive true world of their soul. So in the end men became just monstrously ego-unsatisfied, ego-embattled, ego-infuriated volcanoes that couldn't afford to explode for fear of all the destruction it would cause. They were soul-less, empty, 'hollow', 'dead', 'broken', 'lost', 'stuffed', 'dry', 'cactus' men with 'paralysed' egos. Each was 'alone' having to 'avoid speech' for fear of either betraying their own immense need to be glorified or offending another older man's immense need to be glorified. This is how it always 'end[ed]' for men under the duress of the human condition, '**Not with a bang but a whimper.**' Truly, what phenomenal heroes, what 'stars' men have been—they '**march[ed] into hell for a heavenly cause**', sacrificed themselves, contributed to the search for understanding that might one day, in the far future, but not in their lifetime, liberate humanity from the horrific insecurity of the human condition. Thankfully their corrupting search for dignifying understanding of humans has been completed, it now only has to be recognised and then absorbed.

⁸⁹⁷ Of course, ageing during humanity's adolescence has been, in its own way, similarly horrific for women because it meant the inevitable loss of the image of innocence that women depended on for reinforcement, the loss of their sex-object 'attractiveness', and with it, the loss of their meaning in the world—a source of meaningfulness that all women's magazines that focus entirely on how to be 'attractive' are testament to. When women are young their beauty is generally so empowering it is as if they own the world—as ABBA's 1976 song *Dancing Queen*, which *Rolling Stone* magazine has rated as one of the greatest songs of all time, says, '**you are the Dancing**

Queen, young and sweet, only seventeen...having the time of your life...you turn them on, leave them burning, and then you're gone', and as Chuck Berry wrote and sang in 1958, 'They're really rockin' in Boston, in Pittsburgh, P.A., deep in the heart of Texas, and 'round the Frisco Bay, all over St. Louis, and down in New Orleans, all the cats wanna dance with Sweet Little Sixteen. Sweet Little Sixteen, she's just got to have about half a million framed autographs' (*Sweet Little Sixteen*). But when women become older and their beauty/'attractiveness'/innocence fades they discover that they have become invisible; when they walk down the street they are no longer noticed—as author Mimi Spencer noted, 'At...46 or 47...people start to see through you at parties, as if you're a pillar or a pot plant' (*The Weekend Australian Magazine*, 20 May 2017). This quote from the French beauty therapist Diane Delaheve describes how devastating it can be for women to lose their sex appeal: 'Her eyes, the mirror of her soul, speak nothing but despair. Her face may have kept its beauty, but it has become a picture of affliction. For some women, the prospect of age is sheer tragedy, worse than death, which might be seen as an escape' (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 Sep. 1988).

⁸⁹⁸ An added dimension to the situation faced by older women is that in not being as responsible for the main battle of having to champion the ego over ignorance as men are, women find that their role of living in support of the battle is limited. It has been observed that a woman's life progressed from 'bimbo, breeder, babysitter to burden'. Men, on the other hand, are directly participating in the battle of championing the ego and aren't faced, as such, with the prospect of one day feeling they are a 'burden' to the extent that women are. In his 1993 book, *The Fisher King & The Handless Maiden*, the Jungian analyst Robert A. Johnson relates the myth of the Handless Maiden, which tells of a miller who makes a deal with the devil in return for the ability to complete more work with less effort. The devil demands the miller's daughter as payment: 'The miller is desolate but unwilling to give up his much expanded mill, so he gives his daughter to the devil. The devil chops off her hands and carries them away' (p.59 of 103). Waited on by her newly prosperous family, the handless maiden is content for a time, until her growing sense of desperation sends her out to the forest alone. Johnson explains that the cry of women, like that of the handless maiden, is, 'What can I do? I feel so useless or second-rate and inferior in this world that puts its women on the rubbish heap when they are through with courtship and childbearing!' (p.56). Indeed, 'one woman set up a blog called The Plankton. She says women over 45 are made to feel like the lowest life form – "flimflam, a nuisance, an embarrassment of landfill"' (Angela Mollard, 'The invisible years', Sydney's *Sunday Telegraph Magazine*, 14 Aug. 2011).

⁸⁹⁹ Yes, being cast 'on the rubbish heap' 'of landfill' because you are not mainframed, part of the main battle that men have been waging against the ignorance of our instinctive self, and because you no longer have the incredible attractiveness of youthful innocence, has been a truly horrible situation for women. I once heard the actor Robert Duvall say on radio 'what man would be with an older woman if he didn't have to be', and it really is true, as high divorce rates and the existence of prostitutes, mistresses, 'first wives clubs', 'trophy wives', polygamy and, in earlier times, harems, all bear witness to. While almost every song written is dedicated to the attractiveness of youthful innocence in women, older women become invisible—they go from a situation where, in their youth, they own the world, as the songs *Dancing Queen* and *Sweet Little Sixteen* so powerfully evidence, to a situation where they are treated as being virtually irrelevant. Thank goodness then with the battle to overthrow ignorance and find understanding of the human condition finally won, this, in truth, absolutely horrific existence can come to

an end and women, the young, the aged—*everyone*—can now be fully involved in the human journey! Again, Olive Schreiner provided an excellent description of the dream women have had of this ‘new time’ that has now finally arrived: ‘if I might but be one of those born in the future; then, perhaps, to be born a woman will not be to be born branded...It is for love’s sake yet more than for any other that we [women] look for that new time...Then when that time comes...when love is no more bought or sold, when it is not a means of making bread, when each woman’s life is filled with earnest, independent labour, then love will come to her, a strange sudden sweetness breaking in upon her earnest work; not sought for, but found’ (*The Story of an African Farm*, 1883, pp.188, 195 of 300). It is truly amazing what women have endured, as Sir Laurens van der Post has written of their wonderful, *immensely* heroic patience and tolerance: ‘She is content, confident and unresentful because she is also the love that endureth and beareth all things even beyond faith and hope. She knows that, in the end, the child will grow and all shall be well’ (*Jung and the Story of Our Time*, 1976, p.158 of 275).

⁹⁰⁰ So, men become ‘hollow’, and women become ‘invisible’; when observing older couples walking together in the park you can see how united they are by their respective afflictions. Indeed, the following drawing by cartoonist Ralph Steadman depicts the full horror of the human condition, for both men and women; in fact, the main dragon in this cartoon provided the inspiration for my drawing that appears at the beginning of this 50-year-old-plus stage, for his eyes show the hollowness that T.S. Eliot spoke of: ‘This is the dead land / This is cactus land.’ The desperately tragic, sickly state of older women is also explicit in the two crow-like creatures leaning against the bar in the background.

⁹⁰¹ Humans *truly* have been the great heroes of the story of life on Earth!



Ralph Steadman’s *The Lizard Lounge*, 1971