

[(a)Men]tal Dis(torted)order: a *passionate confessional* **by J. Madia**

Somewhere, between the sacred silence and sleep
Disorder, disorder, disorder (System of a Down—"Toxicity")

I've been accused of having a racing mind...the way things come at me on the carnival carousel of hobby-horse thought-rides, I guess that could be right.

If it truly is a mental disorder, all this visioning and raging wordsmith creation, I intend to protect it fiercely as I am not interested in a cure. In any given 24-hour span (especially one waltzing the jolly Matilda of my bugged-eyed, eager-fingered insomnia) the thoughts come, bidden or not—dark and light, fine and full, fecund and frightening. Synchroserendipities of cosmic convergence and Universal-linkage spider web *coincidences* have me bouncing off the walls of my own sketchy Inspirations and muddled philosophical working-thrus...

What the hell am I talking about, you ask?

The ordering of chaos thru a kaleidoscopic mental disordering of Michael-Mannish film montages, scatological Byron, Marquis, Balzac passages and rock video 32nd-note micro-edits. Full-blast, hard-core spectral imaging. A complete losing and regaining of sanity from nanosecond to nanosecond, with minute-long gaps of blessed, blasé Neutrality thrown in when the circuitry feels like it's finally ready to break.

The best way to explain my own particular mental disorder is to share (in a condensed, *somewhat* literarily palatable form—I know, I get complaints...) a mere few of the hundreds of thought-processes, ideas, Illuminations, brain farts, literary inspirations, Ah-Ha's, and other assorted mental gems I have waded thru over the past several hours.

Here goes.

It all began (this time; it literally can be *Anything* that sets these things in motion) with my 9-year-old son asking me to explain the physiological nature of vampires, ghosts, Ringwraiths, and the like. This got me thinking about a whole plethora of ghoulish anomalies and George Lucas-type watering-downs of Good and Evil and how they are manifest here on Earth in the form of psychic vampires, liars, shams, cons, tricksters, pretenders, and mountebanks.

I'm currently in a fight to recoup \$17K taken from me under false pretenses by a reprehensible combination of all of the above stuffed into the 5 foot 4 inch frame of an almost crippled Italian-American who looks and talks like the love-child of Robert DeNiro, Robert Duvall, and a middle-aged Marlon Brando—hell, this frigging guy could *BE* the cast of the *Godfather, Part 2*.

This is no BS—and it's got my mind in a super-whirl, cherry swirl of reexamination of my spiritual practices, what I ask for and why I want it and the very nature of the Godhead and what it *Expects* from us in return for even the least little bone—a cosmic reckoning, a karmic balancing, a Payment Due in Full at Time of Signing and Services Rendered sort of mentality—perfectly ordered, not at all random...

...and completely, untrustworthingly Sinister.

So Mental Disorder makes all the more sense.

When you've got it, keep it.

All these thoughts of psychic vampirism and the subsequent spiritual blood-gathering they Van-Helsingly involve began doing the jungle-ape watuzi on the fragile back of the recent mini-

successes of my own theatre and literary endeavors, sending me tick-tocking backwards and forwards in a temporal tennis game on the hard court of self-examination and lands-end dead reckoning. It started with a trip back to high school, to this cramped little area reserved for seniors in the music room, where my corkscrew soul-essence was transported for a bit of Blue Chair Retrospection.

Upholstery warm and worn from so long lingering in an undusted corner, holding heat from eager bodies, that old blue chair had made a career of learning outcomes of long-held and deadlocked debates and dime-diary confessional secrets. How I stared at that dumb damned chair—Loved it. Desired it. Jerk-envied all the seniors who would go there before and after classes to make out with this girl I really really Loved.

She had a thing for seniors, and once I was one, and all the others had up and gone, she finally conceded to having me as her beau.

I took her to that chair first thing.

I did nothing but Bitch.

I cursed each stain and rip, launched my structure against each ancient contour, criticized and analyzed each thrusting spring. Why wasn't it new as it once was? Why was remembered heat precluding our own? Cause now that I had finally gone to the head of the line with the girl I wanted to be there with and made that chair feel our impressions and learn our imprint, it was suddenly time to go.

And the going only gets worse in the other-than-Time, There-and-Back-Again journeying of molten mental disorder.

Within the blink of a twitching eye I was back on my own not-yet-paid-for loveseat in an eclectic two-bedroom apartment in Jersey, pouring over crack-spined, orange-highlighted collections of Rod McKuen and gearing up for yet another round of scrawling poem submissions, all the while cursing the lingering pain in my back from the thrusting springs of two-decade-old disappointments and fickle friendships.

Ah yes—a poet before the sending—a secretly eating worrisomeness in imprisoned workrooms viewed from the street edge: the ssonnet ssnake sseeking sshrivelled recognitionss who sslithers thru sshit-sstained Edenss misunderstands, lighting jassmine incensse, thanking god and Ganessha that the weather'ss broken and the phone hass finally decided to sstop its lousy invasive ringing long enough for sSilence to do its abssorptive work.

This is not a healthy train of thought, I told myself, turning my tired, wired eyes to Stanyan Street and contemplating someone else's sorrows.

You've used no punctuation! I suddenly thought (oh how they come, those unbidden spikes of random, drilling thought). That was one editor's not-so-subtle criticism. And though I know the worth is in the words and there is no Right Way to craft a poem, I spent the oddlit evening adding comma knife slashes and period bulletholes and thinking three months is a long time to wait to hear the latest opinion of good.

Punctuational ordering—the discipline of the educated pen.

A torture chamber of neatly rowed grammar machines and Iron Diagrams.

Crawling out and under I sought solace in the Freeform in which I love to live my alter-ego dream-lives—the stream of consciousness ink meanderings that get melted down and poured into the random eyes-closed-while-carving mold-forms of my ongoing works of ultrafictionalized reality.

Magazine clippings, charity solicitations, National Geographic foldouts, encyclopedia extractions, Google cavity searches, History Channel specials, garage-sale book readings—it all gets thrown into the pot of the cut-n-paste-conglomerate world of literary hodgepodge cooking class that has become my neo-jazz lit-riffs.

Overwhelmed by the clattering of the inmates jerking the cell-ribs that secure my inner asylum, I wandered the night-halls, singing whispered, breathy snippets of *Jesus Christ Superstar* in a myriad of dialects, borrowed from the hundreds of characters I've sponged up and assimilated in my three plus decades of TV and movie watching. I am more myna bird than Man in that respect—a human recorder of mannerisms, inflections, attitudes, injuries, tonalities, and cultural phraseologies.

I suffer from the mental disorder of the untempered visionary—a chloroformic mixture of cool rationality, photographic memory, and discharged random exactitude.

When I finally do sleep it is only as a big truck at the pumps, filling up on the super-octane fossil fuel that propels my frequent-flying doppelganger into the primordial, tribal dreamstage of shamanic Plane-passaging and hyperastral flight.

If it wasn't for the Independent Press of the genius, self-alienating fringe, this type of molten mental disorder could conceivably make me scream...

Instead the scream's a whisper hiding hunched behind the words.