

I am complicit.

Kevin Tucker

2013, February

I am complicit.

Genocide. Ecocide. Suicide. All of it.

I want to believe that I am not, but I can't fool myself anymore. We are all complicit in the destruction of this earth, our home, and all of its inhabitants.

And it makes me sick.

It makes my soul cry, it makes my stomach turn, it shoots pain through my spine, it makes my brain melt, it makes my hands shake and twitch, and it kills me that I can't do anything about it.

As I type these words, mountain tops are demolished to get easier access to coal, that composted decay of millions of years of life, a time capsule for an unwritten history, which feeds the grid. Ground water in the area I call home is being filled with hydrofracking chemicals to squeeze a little more life out of the earth to keep the power on. Nuclear power plants surround this area and they are ticking timebombs for the future of life. Rivers all around me are increasingly being filled with the toxic sludge of crude from tar sands.

Every bit of this sickens me to the core and yet I remain complicit.

We are sold a myth when we are born into this world.

The fairytale of Progress is that everything will not only get better, but that it is better. We are told that we are living longer and healthier than our "caveman" ancestors. We told that we are improving the lives of those in the third world through development programs. We are told that our quality of life is improving. We are told that we have access to more and better food than anyone in history. We are told that we have more access to information which gives us more freedom.

We are told that if we don't like it, then we can "love it or leave it".

But we can't.

In the midsts of a globalized, technologically-rooted, finite resource-dependent, ideologically bound, and profit addicted modernity, the largely touted peak of civilization, there is no door. There is no core. There is no periphery. We are all stuck in this mess. It is only those that are the most complicit in the omnicide involved in flicking on a light switch that are told that it is our choice to stay.

We are trapped. All of us.

The remaining gatherer-hunters and horticulturalists are sitting on the front lines, while their cultural traditions which date back tens and sometimes hundreds of thousands of years are deemed illegal (poaching, trespassing), immoral (in the words of the missionaries, you must first become “lost” so that you can be “saved”), and impossible (mining, drilling, logging, and ranching). On the edges of expansion, any question you have about lifestyle choices can be directed towards the military, armed ranchers, miners, and loggers, or “revolutionary” groups that litter their homes.

All evidence to the truth about Progress swept under the rug.

In the Middle East, those questions look like birth defects from residuals of depleted Uranium. Beneath the Arab Spring lie unattainable food costs. In China, you have nets built around factories to prevent suicides and screens projecting sunrise and sunsets since you can’t see them through the smog. Throughout Latin America you have displaced villages and toxin spewing factories demolishing forests. Throughout the affluent nations, you have chronic debt, depression, and people buried under their possessions and gadgets as real world connections wither.

You have a world overrun by resource wars, power grabs, ponzi schemes, crushed egos, isolation and separation induced anxiety and depression, suppressed populations, and unthinkable wealth. But you have no middle ground. You have no escape.

The myth of Progress, the world that civilization has created, needs a door. It needs to give the myth of the way out, because it needs to authenticate the feeling of choice, the myth of freedom. The eternal trick of the domesticators is that you are in this because you want to be. The reality of the domesticated world is that you are in this because you have to be.

That is what makes each and every one of us complicit.

It doesn’t matter if you recycle. It doesn’t matter if you buy local products. It doesn’t matter if you dumpster dive and squat. Lessening your contributions to the economy does not end your complicity. Living on the edges of society does not end your complicity. Rebuilding community doesn’t end your complicity. Rewilding doesn’t end your complicity. As important as these steps are for our future, we can not buy into the delusion that we have a choice.

Civilization is killing this planet, our home. It always has. It always will. The only difference is scale. And with the disjoined and fragmented modernity that we are in, you can’t click a button, turn a switch, or anything without effecting our own fate.

And that is our sickening reality.

It keeps me up at night. It haunts my soul. It has taken loved ones. It wears the body. It withers the mind. It makes me shake in anger and it makes me shake in fear.

We are all born as gatherer-hunters. Every one of us. It is who we have evolved to be.

The process of domestication can not kill this part of us, but it can manipulate our fears, desires, hopes, and needs. But our souls know that something is wrong. Something is missing. But I can’t mourn for our innate being, our wildness, the wildness that encompasses all life. I can’t mourn it because it is not dead.

It can not die.

It will not die.

It is suppressed. Lying dormant in those of us who are complicit in its suppression without knowing it. Being held back by fences, guards, miners, loggers, and missionaries for those on the front lines. It is being held back by laws and prisons and people who worship at the throne of economics.

Reconnecting with that wildness is within our reach, but it carries the impossible responsibility of expanding our Stone Age minds beyond the world of the forest, fields, beaches, and deserts, and recognizing the consequences of a globalized technocracy. Our reach has outgrown our comprehension. The domesticators know this and they have and will continue to use it against us.

I refuse to embrace my complicity, but I can no longer deny it. Part of my journey back into wildness means taking responsibility and acknowledging that consequence supercedes intention.

Running away isn't an option.

Putting my head in the dirt isn't an option.

Civilization needs to die so that the earth, our home, and all of its inhabitants can live.

I will mourn the tragic losses that happen every second that the grid is intact. I am complicit in their destruction because, like all of us, I was born in a time of unthinkable destruction and into the culture that is squeezing every drop of life from this earth.

I am complicit, but I will not accept defeat.

I am complicit in the destruction caused by civilization by my birth and it sickens me. I am complicit in the destruction of civilization because it is what I must do.

I want to walk out that door. I want to pull the plug. I want to flip the switch. But those things are all a lie. We are all complicit and we are all stuck. We do not have an option to leave, but we do have a choice to accept responsibility for our actions and a choice to act on them.

I will mourn.

I will struggle.

I will fight.

I seek the guidance of the wildness that surrounds me.

I will find place from the wildness within me.

For my children. For my family. For my home. For those who have lost everything.

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