

The Rivers of Hades

Epilog

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Prologue

"The Rivers of Hades were born out of necessity; the book is the result of the countless years that I spent in various psychiatric hospitals and clinics, the result of direct observation of the daily life and structure of the hospital, of the patients as well as of the treatment during hospitalization and post-hospitalization. The idea of crossing the rivers of Hades represents the break between the two worlds, the world in which we live and the separate world in which those who are affected by mental illnesses live. Being a book based on reality, it was necessary to make some changes to protect the identity of patients and medical staff." Adrian Şinca

Martha

I thought a lot about whether to mention the Martha case. I rummaged in the depths of my soul looking for reasons that would prevent me from an ethical point of view from doing this, on the other hand, although it is not unique, the Martha case is the second documented case from the world.

The movie *Three Daughters of Eve* (1957), based on the book by psychiatrists Corbett H. Thigpen and Hervey M. Cleckley, describes the first case: Chris Costner Sizemore, known as Eve White, a patient diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder (multiple personality). Sizemore's identity was concealed in interviews and in this film, and was not revealed to the public until 1975.

One of the days I received a new admission, it was a 38-year-old woman, from the accompanying documents, the medical record contained the official diagnosis: Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD). At the first contact, Martha appeared conscious, oriented in time and space, cooperative, non-refractory to treatment.

I have to make a confession, I read Martha's medical record, initially twice. Throughout her hospital stay, I re-read the sheet regularly, the way some people read the Bible daily. The effect produced by her and her medical record on me cannot be translated into words, I admit that I paid Martha increased attention, often consuming a considerable part of my working day.

It seems that the reason for this hospitalization was triggered by a crisis that Martha had in a bar. In connection with this crisis, he could not tell me too many details, but her bizarre behavior led to the intervention of the police, followed by transport to the hospital.

Among other things, Martha suffered from chronic insomnia, which made her want a therapy session with me. I confess that I am not completely convinced of the validity of the diagnosis of Multiple Personality Disorder.

In the past I took several courses in Hypnosis, or Guided Images courses and in my spare time, outside the hospital, I had patients and organized Hypnosis seminars, usually for weight loss, smoking cessation, etc.

On one of the occasions when Martha requested an individual session with me, I proposed a hypnosis session. During some hypnosis sessions, I had the opportunity to interact with two of the three personalities, I tried to maintain a circumspect attitude as much as possible. In any case, to be honest, being an eyewitness, even to this day I don't know what to believe. But it is absolutely certain that I am no longer so convinced as to ignore the existence of this disease.

I want to mention that after a period of hypnosis sessions, Martha managed to get into a roughly normal sleep schedule. Everyone can draw their own conclusions, as for me, I cannot deny the results. After several months of hospitalization and observation, Martha asked to leave the hospital. There being no incident during the hospitalization, her request was approved and Martha returned home.

I must admit that Martha is one of a small number of patients who have marked me, which is why I have included her case now



The meeting

I dreamed that I had a date with Death.

Deep down, I knew it would have been absurd to make the effort to avoid her, so I went three hours ago.

Lost in the hustle and bustle around me, I waited, watching the gallop of the minutes on the wristwatch dial. Unowned women, unseen places and unstarted projects began to flash through my mind. At one point, I felt a light touch on my left shoulder and a scent of lilac invaded my nostrils. I returned. In front of me was a beautiful mignonette, almost frail. She was smiling.

I found myself saying, "Excuse me madam, but I have an urgent meeting and I don't think it would be to your advantage to be present." Her response shocked me:

- Adrian, it seems that I am not living up to your expectations. I abandoned the scythe, it was out of date, but if it helps you, I can carry it. All I managed to say was: "-You?"

Suddenly, everyone disappeared, probably to give us a moment of privacy. I held out my hand, asking: "Shall we go?"

- I didn't come to get you, I simply wanted to have fun. All my life you've been looking for me, you've chased me away.

I thought I'd give you a chance to meet me. To be honest, I didn't expect you to be so naive to come to the meeting.

I answered half-heartedly: "Well, what could I do? What was the point of trying to seduce you? I really had a chance"?

- You could have tried to run away, like many others.

- Aaa, is that how you look in reality?

- No Adi, each person sees something different. What he sees is proportional to the fear he feels. Understand? Being and non-being are just roads, a new door to other experiences.

- And yet, why are you wasting your time with me?

- "Time"? Time does not exist; I am constantly with you all. Now, while I'm talking to you, I've collected another number of souls. I'm just trying to show you how things are.

I felt, a deep level of intimacy, realizing for the first time that I am part of the Universe, that I am the Universe, understanding, feeling, living a fundamental truth that the Universe needs defense, protection from me, from you, from all of us.



We all risk becoming "Them" tomorrow

The novel was born out of necessity and its title was not chosen by chance. As in the land of Hades, the river Styx separates the living world from the afterlife, where the old shepherd Charon transports the dead across the river Acheron and the dog Cerberus allows all souls to enter, the idea of crossing the rivers of Hades represents the break between the two worlds, the world in which we live and the separate world in which our fellow humans living with mental illness live.

My intention is that by presenting that world I will eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness or at least present the human quality of the mentally ill, based on the experience of the countless years I have spent in various psychiatric hospitals and clinics, the result of direct, detailed observation of the life and structure of the hospital, of the patients as well as of the treatment during hospitalization and post-hospitalization. In general, I gained a deep respect for both patients and medical staff. Reminiscences of the ranger are my humble tribute to those who work in psychiatric hospitals, the rangers who guide them on the path between the shadow world and the real world. In general, I gained a deep respect for both patients and medical staff. Reminiscences of the ranger are my humble tribute to those who work in psychiatric hospitals, the rangers who guide them on the path between the shadow world and the real world.

We all risk becoming "Them" tomorrow, cut off from these social "We" and deported across the Styx.

Adrian Şinca -Robert Andrew von Sinca

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